

THE INTERRELATIONSHIP OF INTRINSIC FEATURES DEPICTED IN 'ON THE BANKS OF PLUM CREEK' BY LAURA INGALLS WILDER

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| KEYWORDS | ABSTRACT |
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| <i>Intrinsic Elements Laura Ingalls Wilder Novel.</i> | This research is entitled "The Interrelationship of Intrinsic Features Depicted in 'On the Banks of Plum Creek' by Laura Ingalls Wilder. It was conducted to answer: how are the intrinsic features related to one another? The writers took the 4th Little House Series Novel with the title On The Banks of Plum Creek to be the object of research. The purpose is to provide information for the readers, that the intrinsic elements are related to one another in this novel, and contribute to the development of literature, especially novels. The research method used is the descriptive method. Primary data comes from the original novel 'On the Banks of Plum Creek' by Laura Ingalls Wilder. The novel was first published on October 20, 1937, by the US company Harper & Brothers. Based on the data obtained, the writers analysed those intrinsic elements that are interrelated to one another that build a storyline from a well-researched novel. |
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INTRODUCTION

Literary works are works of art that are made according to the standards of literary language. The literary language standard intended is the use of beautiful words and attractive language styles and story styles, whereas literature is a work of art whose expression is functional and is manifested in beautiful language. The difference that we can see from research and other works of art is the use of the word. The value that will be conveyed or we can take from a literary work can be more readily accepted and understood by connoisseurs of caste. Literary work itself has a form and its characteristics. Literature has many types, and among them are novels, poems, and short stories. One that has many fans is the novel.

A novel is a work of art that expresses the values of life that are beneficial to its readers. It is a story of fantastic events in someone's life that include intrinsic elements such as plot, theme, characters, characterization, and setting of time and place. A novel must have a

connection with life directly and indirectly, also novels are more fundamental to higher realities and profound psychology. So that the story raised in a novel is an ordinary event in life both physically and psychologically; conflicts experienced can include inner conflict and social conflict. (Jasin, 1985: 78, Lubis, 1981: 15, Wellek and Warren, 1995: 283-278). In line with those thoughts, Esten (1990: 12) stated that a novel is a frame of life, and the emergence of a conflict can ultimately lead to changes in the way of life of the actors.

The fourth novel series of the Little House is *On The Banks of Plum Creek* by Laura Ingalls Wilder. It is a family history novel. The first book only tells about everyday life and life in the big jungle, the second is more about life in the grasslands and hunting, and farming, the third contains the daily life of the future partner of the writer Almanzo Wilder, while the fourth is interesting and becomes the beginning of Laura and Mary getting to know their peers and civil society apart from their families.

This novel is one of the witnesses of how America, which is a developed country, used to be just a stretch of grassland before the pioneers crossed pastures, forests, and mountains and began to build America, how Laura Ingalls Wilder told about her and her family traveling to find new homes and land to occupy. Laura is a witness to how America grew into a big country. Laura's work is one of the best and largest literary riches in America and the world. Full of messages about help, hard work, perseverance, courage, support, and an adventurous spirit.

The purpose of taking intrinsic elements as research material and the book series *Little House: On The Banks Of Plum Creek* as the object of research is seen from the intrinsic elements studied where the plot is interesting. The location settings taken in the first to third series are not too diverse, the adventure begins to be felt in the fourth book. The explanation of the place settings is starting to vary and does not focus on the area around the house only but has been further explored. The third is the characters, where the Ingalls family is the main character, although moving around and getting to know a lot of new people, the Ingall family feels they have close family and neighbors in the first book, and because they move around in the fourth book where the Ingalls family that is reunited again with lovely neighbors, peers for Laura and married couples as well as their small community at school and church which allows them to feel how to socialize and get to know the character of the new people they meet. The fourth one is the theme, although in general the theme of the *Little House* novel series is work, hard, perseverance, courage, help, and a spirit of adventure, the most realistic description of

the above theme is completely detailed in the fourth book, that the disappointment did not dampen the spirit of the Ingalls family, the struggle did not stop and it was amazing.

METHOD

A descriptive qualitative method was applied in analyzing intrinsic features and indicated the interrelation among those features. It was the most appropriate way to analyze the intrinsic features and their relations such as events, attitudes, behaviors, and processes that occur and their effects on phenomena or storylines.

Primary data comes from the original novel "On the Banks of Plum Creek" by Laura Ingalls Wilder. This novel was first published on October 20, 1937, by the US company Harper & Brothers. This novel tells about Western Children about the Family saga. This novel consists of 239 pages and 41 chapters. To support the data, the writers also collected some other documents from reliable sources.

Some procedures for completing the research include some steps. First was carefully reading the novel and the concepts of literature, in general, to help them understand the contents of the novel. Second, identified all the intrinsic features in the novel one by one. Third, identified some inherent characteristics, the author described all the features, so the author analyzed them to find out the intrinsic features used in the novel. Then the last discussed how inherent characteristics can influence the storyline in a novel.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. The Intrinsic Elements

Based on the data collected, we will first discuss the intrinsic elements and then state the relationship between each element in this novel.

a. Plot

This is a chronological structure where the setting and conflict is that the Ingalls family finds new areas to occupy and starts clearing new land, then follows the action that increases to the climax (peak of action and point back) where the newly created land was attacked by a terrible locust plague and ate up the wheat that was ready to be harvested, and ended with a solution, namely the locust plague they managed to pass with full struggle.

Exposition is the first depiction of a play. Contains character recognition, and problems that will be rolled out. Readers are given information on issues that occur or conflicts that arise in the characters in the play script.

The Ingalls family journey continues from the Indian area, crosses Missouri through Iowa, and arrives in Minnesota, Arrived at a wide field. They stop and stay there. Pa bought the land from Mr. Hanson. Everyone was overcome with happiness. Every week they went to church and gathered with everyone and Pastor Alden until an unexpected incident arrived just weeks before Pa was harvesting his wheat.

"All day long for many, many days, Jack had been trotting under the wagon. He had trotted from the little log house in Indian Territory, across Kansas, across Missouri, across Iowa, and a long way into Minnesota. He had learned to take his rest whenever the wagon stopped." (**chap 1, pg1, prg 3**)

When Pa and Mr. Hanson came back, they heard Pa say: "All right, Hanson. We'll go to town tomorrow and fix up the papers. Tonight we'll camp here." "Yah, yah!" Mr. Hanson agreed (**chap 1 pg 5**)

The rising action is the complications begin to occur, which are manifested into a chain of events. Pa was so excited to open a new field. Long sickle sharpened to a sharp tip; Pa worked morning and night to open new fields. Suddenly appeared weather called grasshopper weather that Laura and her family had never heard of before.

The sun was not so hot now and the nights were chilly. The prairie was almost the tawny color of the haystacks. The smell of the air was different and the sky was not so sharply blue. Still, the sunshine was warm at noon. There was no rain and no more frosts. It was almost Thanksgiving time, and there was no snow. "I don't know what to make of it," Pa said. "I never saw weather like this. Nelson says the old-timers call it grasshopper weather." (**chap 9 pg 65-66**)

The climax happened when the Ingalls family experiences crop failure. The grasshopper's power was truly immortal. Pa and ma struggled to protect their wheat, by burning their stock of pasture.

The grasshoppers were eating. You could not hear one grasshopper eat unless you listened very carefully while you held him and fed him grass. Millions And Millions of grasshoppers were eating now. You could hear the millions of jaws biting and chewing.

Pa came running back to the stable. Through the window, Laura saw him hitching Sam and David to the wagon. He began pitching old dirty hay from the manure pile into the wagon, as fast as he could. Ma ran out, took the other pitchfork, and helped him. Then he drove away to the wheat field and Ma followed the wagon.

Pa drove around the field, throwing out little piles of stuff as he went. Ma stooped over one, then a thread of smoke rose from it and spread. Ma lighted pile after pile. Laura watched till a smudge of smoke hid the field and Ma and Pa and the wagon.

Grasshoppers were still falling from the sky. The light was still dim because grasshoppers covered the sun. (**chap 25 pg 194-197**)

Falling Action also serves to provide the preparation time for the reader to reflect on what they read. This point is marked by finding a solution to the problem that befell the main character.

"Never mind, Charles," Ma said. "We've been through hard times before." Laura looked down at Pa's patched boots under the table and her throat swelled and ached. Pa could not have new boots now.

Pa's hands came down from his face and he picked up his knife and fork. His beard smiled, but his eyes would not twinkle. They were dull and dim. "Don't worry, Caroline," he said. "We did all we could, and we'll pull through somehow."

Then Laura remembered that the house was not paid for. Pa had said he would pay for it when he harvested the wheat. (**chap 23 pg 202-203**)

The Denouement is a settlement of drama, which ends with happiness and suffering. In this phase, the protagonists and antagonists have solved their problems and both the protagonist and antagonist win the conflict.

There was not a grasshopper left in the air or on the ground, except here and there a crippled one that could not fly but still hobbled westward.

The stillness was like the stillness after a storm. Ma went into the house and threw herself down in the rocking chair. "My Lord!" she said. "My Lord!" The words were praying, but they sounded like, "Thank you!"

Laura and Mary sat on the doorstep. They could sit on the doorstep now; there were no grasshoppers.

"How still it is!" Mary said.

Pa leaned in the doorway and said, earnestly, "I would like someone to tell me how they all knew at once that it was time to go, and how they knew which way was west and their ancestral home."

But no one could tell him. (**chap 32 pg 266-267**)

b. Setting

This explains the place is the geographical location of the story. In describing the arrangement, the author is expected to provide a geographical location in general. This entire story is set in an area called Redwood County, Minnesota, in 1874-1876. Based on the research results, there are five locations, namely: house in the ground, plum creek, church, school, and wheat field.

The setting of time refers to the period of the story when the story is set in the past. While, if the story could happen now or at some recent unspecified time, we say

that it is contemporary. There are six data of time. First, in the evening after supper where it was their first Christmas. Second, when the grasshopper came during bedtime. The third is in the afternoon when the Ingalls family went picnic by the Plum River. Fourth, in the evening where Pa showed Laura, the wheat field began to sprout. Fifth, during Christmas time where the Ingalls family celebrated Christmas in Minnesota. Sixth, one day when the grasshopper where the locust plague attacked their area, there was nothing they could do but sit alone and keep quiet.

Climate is an aspect of the setting, which is often forgotten, but it can be crucial to the novel. In this novel, there were five data found: sunset, grasshopper period, winter, rain, and snowstorm.

To support the setting, the atmosphere of the story is also important. There were five data provided. First is sad, where grasshopper attacked, and the family lost their crops. Second, the family felt hopeless when the harvest failed. Third, they enjoyed their time during Christmas time, they were happy at that moment. Fourth, We can find some embarrassing moments in this novel when Laura and Mary go to school. Laura shouted a few words which disturbed them. Fifth, the Ingalls family was very grateful when the grasshoppers suddenly left the entire Minnesota area, and when Pa was trapped for three days, but finally can be home for Christmas.

c. Characters

Abrams (1971: 21) defines character as the person, in a dramatic or narrative work, endowed with moral and dispositional qualities that are expressed in what they say-the dialogue and what they do in the action. In this novel, there are two kinds of characters that appear such as the round and flat characters.

Flat characters are first, Mr. Hanson. He is a kind-hearted man who owns an underground house on the land that Pa bought. The Ingalls family temporarily occupied the place so Pa could build a house for them. Second, Mr. & Mrs. Nelson are a husband and wife who come from Norway. Pa borrowed money from Mr. Nelson, to make a house, besides that Pa was also given a cow which he could pay for later. This can prove that Mr. Nelson is a generous person, and a kind and helpful neighbor. Mrs. Nelson is a beautiful, plump woman with blue eyes and golden blonde hair. A lovely woman and also a good neighbor like her husband. Third, Christy Kennedy was Laura Ingalls' first

friend at school. She is a cheerful girl who almost looks like Laura. Fourth, Miss Eva Beadle is a teacher at the school. She is described as a very beautiful young woman. Brown hair with bangs cute brown eyes and a friendly smile. He helped Laura and Mary learn their lesson. Fifth, Mrs. Tower is the Sunday school teacher at the church. She is described as a kind and gentle woman with beautiful blue eyes. The last, is the reverend Alden, a good and friendly church leader. He liked the two Ingalls girls.

Furthermore, there are three round characters found. First, Charles Ingalls or known as Pa. He is a hardworking man who is around his age. He was a kind and strict father to his children, good at hunting and trapping, and full of affection for his wife and children. Pa is a man who is romantic with his wife Caroline. Pa was always looking for a way out of every difficulty they faced and was never discouraged. Pa always cared for others above himself for the common good. Second, Caroline Ingalls or known as Ma. She is a housewife who is good at cooking and good at taking care of the house and her children and husband. Ma always supports and helps Pa. Ma is a mother who cares about the education of her children. Ma is a very loving mother and very caring for everyone. Third, Mary Ingalls. She is Laura Ingalls' sister who has the same type as her mother, calm, affectionate, and doesn't like outdoor activities and adults. All duties and responsibilities he completed well. She loves school and sewing, sits indoors, and doesn't move much. Mary Ingalls is the opposite of Laura Ingalls. Last, Laura Ingalls is a beautiful girl who loves adventure; she likes to explore new things, feels very attached to the things she has, a little naughty but always polite and honest about her heart. Laura doesn't like to sit quietly in the house, she prefers to be free to run here and there, but Laura also likes school, the only thing she doesn't like is Nellie Oleson.

d. Theme

The theme of the novel *On the Banks of Plum Creek* is perseverance, hard work, courage, helping one another, and adventure from the Ingalls Family.

e. Point of view

The third-person point of view was found in this novel. This is the collective term for the assumption in a work of fiction that agents and events; that he is entirely free to move as they will in time and place, and to shift from character, reporting what he chooses of their speech and action. In this point of view, the narrator is not a participant in the story while he/she is in the crudest sense.

4.2. *Interrelationship Among Intrinsic Features*

In addition to finding the intrinsic elements in the novel, the writers also investigated the interrelationships between each element. There are five relationships between each element. First, is the theme and characters, second is the theme and setting, third is the characters and setting, fourth is characterization and plot, and the last is characterization and point of view.

a. Theme and characters

In a literary work, themes are binding and unify all the elements of fiction. As the main element of fiction, characterizations are closely related to themes. The characters in the story convey the themes implicitly or explicitly. The characters who most support this novel's theme are Pa and the new land he is cultivating.

She jumped up, and she could see the deep, shady pool under the willows. It was cool and wet, and her whole skin felt thirsty. But she remembered that she must not go there. She remembered with all her might that she must not go near that deep, shady swimming pool, and suddenly she turned around and hurried toward it. She thought she would only look at it. Just looking at it would make her feel better.
She came into the path that Pa had made, and she trotted faster.
Right in the middle of the path before her stood an animal. (**chap 5, pg 29-30**)

From the quote above, we can see that Laura is a character that full of curiosity and high curiosity. She loves exploring. Even though Pa had banned her, she still do it. Therefore, if it is related to the theme, it can be said that the character of Laura, who likes to be tedious, is associated with the theme of this novel, which is a high spirit of adventure. Then a close relationship is obtained where Laura, as the main character, shows the relationship between the characters and the theme through her actions.

b. Theme and Setting

The background affects the choice of the theme; the author's theme will require the selection of a background that can support an event. All the settings in this story support the theme namely persistence and hard work.

"It's no use, Caroline," he said. "Smoke won't stop them. They keep dropping down through it and hopping in from all sides. The wheat is falling now. They're cutting it off like a scythe. And eating it, straw and all."

"Don't worry, Caroline," he said. "We did all we could, and we'll pull through somehow." Then Laura remembered that the new house was not paid for. Pa had said he would pay for it when he harvested the wheat. (Chap 25, pg 199)

From the quote above, we can see that the place's setting is in the house and the field, filled with grasshoppers; the atmosphere is tense, dark, and full of sadness, plus the weather of grasshoppers that have never been experienced before. Everyone tried to save the wheat, but too many grasshoppers stopped in such a state of despair. Pa and Ma strengthened and supported each other. From the perspective shown by Pa and Ma, we can relate to this novel's theme, namely perseverance and hard work. It can be said that the setting affects the character's behaviours and way of thinking.

c. Characters and setting

Both the character and characterization with the background have common characteristics. A character shows individual traits and behaviour reflect themselves.

The hens were funny. The two hens and their gawky pullets were eating grasshoppers with all their might. They were used to stretching their necks out low and running fast after grasshoppers and not catching them. Every time they stretched out now, they got a grasshopper right then. They were surprised. "Well, we won't have to buy feed for the hens," said Ma. "There's no great loss without some gain (chap 25, pg 199)

From the quote above, we can see how ma responds to the situation in a positive way. In a tense atmosphere, full of worry and panic, Ma, as one of the main characters, sees a right side that may be very small to see at a time like this. Ma was even grateful for the abundance of chicken feed because grasshoppers were everywhere. So optimistic and positive. In addition to the words ma, there is no loss without gain. From the description above, it can be concluded that character and characterization have an inseparable reciprocal relationship; the existing setting shapes the characterization.

d. Characterization and plot

From the novel On The Banks of Plum Creek traced from the beginning of the story to the end, we can see how Laura, as one of the main characters in this story,

develops in a search for identity. From a very passionate explorer and adventurer full of curiosity, she should slowly start maintaining her attitude and behaviour because she is now a girl starting school. Speech and how to speak have begun to be guarded. She could not be free while in school, and Laura would return to being herself after she came back from school. Besides, the Ingalls family is the main character in this novel how they weathered the locusts that destroyed their crops and the great blizzard they had to go through. The Ingalls family does not give up easily and struggles to find a way out for the problems they are facing. Strengthen and help one another. The existence of a character that distinguishes him from other characters is more determined by the plot. The identity of a character is determined by the events that accompany it, and conversely, the events themselves are depictions of the character.

e. Characters and point of view

The novel writer expresses various attitudes and views through the story characters with a point of view. The author tells the main character in the short story from a third-person perspective and presents the story characters by mentioning their names or pronouns.

"It's no use, Caroline," he said. "Smoke won't stop them. They keep dropping down through it and hopping in from all sides. The wheat is falling now. They're cutting it off like a scythe. And eating it, straw and all."
He put his elbows on the table and hid his face with his hands.
"Never mind, Charles," Ma said. "We've been through hard times before." (chap 25 pg 202)

Characters and characterizations with a point of view cannot be separated, through this relationship how the novel writer tells the characters in the short story to identify who the character is telling or who is acting. Characters who act and have a big role in the story, namely: pa and ma who strengthen each other in the midst of crop failure that is faced due to the weather of grasshoppers.

CONCLUSION

Intrinsic features of the novel *On The Banks of Plum Creek* by Laura Ingalls Wilder are plot, setting, characters, themes and points of view. In the plot, there are several

frameworks for the initial incident, the crisis faced by the protagonist (conflict), the climax, and the resolution.

There are several settings that appear in this novel but only a few important places that occur in the story, namely wheat fields, houses, schools, churches, and plum creek. In addition, there are several characters consisting of the main character Laura Ingalls and her family, and Nellie Oleson and several supporting figures. The theme of this novel is perseverance, hard work, courage, help and the spirit of adventure of the Ingalls Little Family. The story is told by the third-person point of view.

Beside the intrinsic elements, the writers also related the features into five categories; . First, is the theme and characters, second is the theme and setting, third is the characters and setting, fourth is characterization and plot, and the last is characterization and point of view.

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