

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Background of the Study

The title of this thesis is conflict in three selected short stories of Flannery O'Connor. They are "*A Good Man Is Hard to Find*", "*Everything That Rises Must Converge*", and "*Greenleaf*". Short story is belongs to prose fiction, shorter in form than a novel. It is single directed either in theme, plot and characters to show unity, to quote Nurgiyantoro (1998:9).

It is true that every prose fiction contains a story. Yet, the point is what kind of story it means. Kenney (1966:12) states that:

“a story is minimum events that occur in temporal sequence that is one after another. The story of a man's life, for example, will include his birth, his growing up, his marriage, his growing old, his death. Obviously, these events occur over a period of a time.”

The focus of analysis in this thesis does not focus only on that minimum of events but also to story that contains a conflict. It is connected to the conflict contained in the stories. To quote what Kenney further says (1966:19):

“ the conflicts with which fiction concern itself are of many kinds. A story may deal with a conflict within a single man, a conflict between men, a conflict between man and society, between man and nature, and so on. “

In reference from what Kenney says about the conflict above, I found that conflict refers to person which deals with life situation. It is only situation that offers a conflict. So, the focus of my attention is the main character's conflict as portrayed in the three selected short stories of O'Connor. Anyhow, a character in literary work is referred to a person who takes the leading story of the work itself.

The main character's conflict is limited to internal and external conflict. Internal refers to his personal conflict of himself; meanwhile, external one covers an individual outside of the main character such as another individual and or society.

Conflict occurs when man fails to fulfill his complete desire. It is natural to every man since complete satisfaction is rather impossible to reach. It happens because a man has restricted capacity to satisfy all his needs. Conflict it self is very close to frustrations stem from three sources: the inability to overcome obstacles in the physical environment, the inability to overcome restrictions imposed by other people, and the inability to satisfy conflicting motives or to obtain incompatible goals, to quote Moskowitz (1965:309).

All the conflicting matters as explained above can be traced in the three selected short stories of O'Connor. That is why, I focus to analyze the main character's conflict in terms of obstacles occurring as portrayed in the stories. This is the background as well as the reason why I analyze conflict in this thesis.

1.2. The Statement of the Problem

There are three selected short stories written by Flannery O'Connor being analyzed in this thesis. They are "*A Good Is Hard to Find*", "*Everything That Rises Must Converge*", and "*Greenleaf*". The analysis is focused on conflict as portrayed in the short stories. The word conflict suggests an intrigue which covers life situation. As life situation deals with man's struggle for living, the analysis of the conflict itself is directed to a person. A person here is referred to a character.

The focus of the analysis in the thesis is the main character's conflict through the three selected short stories, the conflict is about how the main character faces his own conflict, he is in conflict with himself and his conflict with another individual and or with society. It is conflict that makes a story is full with intense. How it is started and faced and solved for better solution in order to get wisdom in living.

1.3. The Purpose of Study

Conflict is the central in every story in literary works. It is an important element that contained in plot of a story. It sounds problem that involves character to take the story all in unity. To say simply, there won't be literary works without sequence of events or plot (especially the conflict) that unites all the elements of literary works. In reference to this, the thesis aims at the exploring of the conflict situation as expressed in three selected short stories of Flannery O'Connor. It tends to find out of how the main character starts and faces and eventually solves his conflict, internally and externally.

1.4. The Scope of Study

The analysis of the present thesis is limited to internal and external conflict of the main character. An internal conflict suggests that a main character is in conflict with himself; while, the external conflict means the main character is in conflict with things out of himself such as another individual and society. Therefore, the scope of the analysis is restricts to main character's internal conflict as portrayed in the three selected short stories.

1.5. Theoretical Framework

Literature is broadly known as a kind of writing that tells a story. This kind of writing is supposed to be imaginative for it tends particularly to tell subjective matters. It deals with rather subjective than objective, then the literary kinds of writing is grouped as fictitious kind of writing.

Nurgiyantoro (1994:2-3) confirms that fiction is narrative prose or narrative text in literary kind of writing. It is imaginative story which is far away from the truth. It is relatively compared to reality that offers factual event or truth in order to mean what fiction is. Anyhow, fictions tell various problems of life with the involvement of man as central of intention and exploration. Further he says:

“Fiksi menceritakan berbagai masalah kehidupan manusia dalam interaksinya dengan lingkungan dan sesama, interaksinya dengan diri sendiri, serta interaksinya dengan Tuhan. Walau berupa khayalan, tidak benar jika fiksi dianggap sebagai kerja lamunan belaka, melainkan perenungan terhadap hidup dan kehidupan.”

“Fiction narrates various problems of human’s life in his interaction with his environment and fellows, and his interaction with himself, and also his interaction with Almighty God. Eventhough it is an imagery thing, it is not true to consider the fiction just as the imagery work, but it is a reflection of live and life.” (Trans.)

To quote Robert’s opinion (1995:2-10) about literature in which he means it as composition that tell stories, dramatize situations, express emotions, and analyze and advocate ideas. He classifies literature into four categories or genres: (1) prose fiction, (2) poetry, (3) drama, and (4) nonfiction prose. Usually the first three are classed as imaginative literature. The genres of imaginative literature have much in common, but they have also distinguishing characteristics. Prose

fictions, or narrative fiction, includes myths, parables, romances, novels, and shaped, but today the word refer to prose stories based in the author's imagination.

This thesis presents two important technical terms that is short story and conflict. Short story is belongs to prose fiction. It is a brief, imaginative, unfolding in a single predominating incident and a single chief character. It contains a plot, the detail which are so compressed, and the whole treatment so organized, as to produce a single impression, to adopt Esenwein's idea in Marleini (1999:1).

The suggesting word of plot as stated above brings an understanding of conflict. It is so because plot suggests a sequence of events that show connection, relation, cause and effect. The essence of plot may be referred to E.M. Forster's famous distinction between plot and story. He formulates in Tennyson (1967:13-14) his statement as follows:

“The King died and then the Queen died, is a story”
“The King died and the Queen died of grief is a plot”

It is grasped that plot offers the knot of conflict that contains elements of intrigue and how the intrigue will be resolved. It is a conflict that lies at the centre of the plot. In addition, Tennyson (1967:14) argues that there are three basic plots in all of literature. The three basic conflicts most frequently cited are: (1) the individual in conflict with another individual, (2) the individual in conflict with himself, and (3) the individual in conflict with an outside force (for example, society and super natural agents).

What has been directed to deal with plot anyhow refers to character, and character only does have the conflict. Therefore, this thesis deals with character in

order to understand conflict as portrayed in the three selected short stories of Flannery O'Connor.

1.6. The Review of Related Literature

I use two thesis of my senior university students from University of Sumatera Utara and some theoretical books to help me understand how to analyze conflicts in short story, in which the study of these thesis has quite similar theoretical framework and focusing on conflict through characters in literary works. The two thesis and the theoretical books that I use as his review of related literature are:

1. *An Analysis Of Conflict In Three Hemingway's Short Stories*. By: Marleini

This thesis analyzes the conflicts among characters in three selected short stories of Ernest Hemingway. This thesis provides the definition of short story and conflicts, and also kinds of conflicts among the characters of those three selected short stories.

2. *An Analysis Of Conflict In John Steinbeck's Of Mice And Men*. By: Eka Junita

This thesis also does the analysis on conflict among characters in John Steinbeck's *Of Mice And Men*. Besides this thesis also give brief description about conflict.

3. *How To Analyze Fiction* by William Kenney.

This book explains the steps of analyzing fiction, especially the short stories. Besides it also describe the elements in fictions, especially the short stories.

4. *The Short Story: An Introduction* By: Wilfred Stone

This book gives the clear description about novel and short stories, and the intrinsic elements in short story.