

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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1.1 Background of the study.

It would be difficult to define what literature is. The great eighteenth century English critic, Dr. Samuel Johnson, once said that Literature is like light: everyone knows what light is but few can define or even describe it. Howe, Hollander, and Bromwich (1979:2) state that literature means Imaginative writings which can be stories novels, plays, poems which portray or reflect or deal with human existence. According to Barnet, Berman, and Burto (1968:1), Literature is a performance in words which holds an attention with a complete composition in itself. It is not regarded as a source of factual information, but offers a unique delight or satisfaction.

Literature seems to give something important and valuable about perceptions of the world and its situations with the intrigues of humanbeings. Here, the authors and playwrights are demanded to loath their expertise through the language and also gestures to portray or suggest something significant which leave a great impression to the reader.

Learning Literary work is not as easy as people think. It needs a deep discussion to reveal the message

from the poet or the narrator to the reader. Because of this problem, most students discourage to study Literature and some others even think that it does not worth the effort and also does not support the education. However it's likely only a wrong interpretation. Richard Courtney (1966:vii) knocks down this interpretation by arguing that from ancient times until today drama and education have been closely associated. Actually, by learning any literary works such as: poem, short story, play or drama, and novel, the reader can get not only enjoyment, but also understanding about culture, life value, facts and some other things. Little (1986:1) states that wherever there is education, there is the study of literature. It is important to be learned in schools and colleges because literature is an important element of people's value, their thought, their problems and conflicts.

In some ways, reading and writing about a work of literature such as a poem, a story, a play, an autobiography but nevertheless literary prose is easier than working on most non literary subjects (Annas, Rosen, 1990:1). In addition, studying Literature can also broaden the reader's vocabulary and grammar. They also automatically learn about another culture and way of life. By reading a literary work, they can immerse into

the feeling of happiness, sadness, anger, and struggles of characters' life which are written in there. The beauty and wisdom to be found in literary works become available to the reader who has developed not only the basic abilities in reading but also to the reader who has those special skills of interpreting, appreciating, judging, and understanding what is read (Thonis, 1970:97).

According to the writer himself, learning a literary work is interesting and challenging. If someone observes a literary work carefully, he can find many human's issues that are very essential to learn as a guidance to the better value of life. Learning literary work is able to broaden mind and also deepen insight by observing and learning from human beings' problems and their solutions. Because of the previous reasons, the writer is challenged to write a literary research as his thesis.

There are at least two major types of literary works. The first type is such as poem, short story, and novel. While play or drama and opera are categorized in the second type. The function both of them are the same. They say something worth saying and also help people to appreciate and criticize about the value of life surround us.

The writer here takes play as the subject matter of the study because it is easier to observe the interaction of the characters than if it is done in the novel or poem. It is because of the language of drama or play is more natural and put in the appropriate context. So the reader can see the interaction of the characters which are shown in dialogs and action clearly. Barnet, Berman, and Burto (1989:13) says that the modern playwrights often help the reader by providing fairly full stage directions. The following, as an example, is a passage from Anton Checkhov's IVANOV :

IVANOV (Sees Borkin, starts and jumps up)
 Misha, my God ! What are you frightened
 me I'm upset enough as it is, and now you,
 with your stupid tricks (sits down) You
 frightened me, and of course you're only too
 pleased

BORKIN (Laughs heartily) There, there ! I'm
 sorry (Sits down beside him) I won't do it
 again, honestly I won't.

From the passage cited above, the reader can easier imagine how Ivanov in his impatience waiting for Borkin, suddenly jumped up from his seat as he saw Borkin and then scolded him for making such a worry. But Borkin took it lightly by laughing and then sat beside Ivanov.

Drama as one of Literature genres has a special quality which is hardly found in other genres. It has a magic quality. "Whether We are taking part or looking on, or simply reading a play silently, there is a magic

quality surrounds the drama as it doesn't exist in other form of Literature." (Ross, Thompson, Lodge, 1952:325). The magic quality here such as the glamour and the greatness of the theatre or the beauty and the bitter things about life in drama which are similar to the real life. Another reason why the writer takes play as the subject matter is because play does not take much time to read compared with other forms of fiction. It only takes one or two hours to read. Besides that the plot is more economical and selective; it is interesting, clear, not too long, and possible to be acted on the stage.

He chooses Anton Chekhov as the playwright because his plays are mostly interesting and spot on the characters. His plays are full of action, not in their external but in their inner development. In the very inactivity of his characters a complex inner activity is concealed. He is a modern Russian playwright who mostly concerns about the life of Russian society in the nineteenth century. He often wrote about poverty, diseases, lack of jobs, and love tragedy. He has complete dramatic styles on his plays. At times he is an impressionist, at times a symbolist; he is a realist where it is necessary, and occasionally almost a naturalist. His style was influenced by his harsh childhood. He could never forget his father for having

whipped him when he was quite small. From his harsh family background might have arisen the intense loathing of the pretty-bourgeois domestic routine which inspires the subject matter of Chekhov's short stories, and is often expressed by characters in his plays. The characters behave and talk as if they have lost their way, lost faith in themselves and in their own future; however, they keep on struggling for the sake of their children and grandchildren which somehow profit by their suffering [Fen, 1972:7-11].

Chekhov's plays portray the constant attrition of daily life, and the waste, under the social conditions of old Russia, of youthful energy and talent. At the same time, they contain a note of hope for the future which is heavily stressed on modern Russian productions. This hopefulness seems to accord with Chekhov's own view of his plays (Hartnoll, 1972:93).

Ivanov is the first full length play of Chekhov which was produced in Moscow in 1887. It is taken because it challenges the writer to study the protagonist character who has interesting and unique personalities. This play portrays the tragedy of a character who lost his belief and faith to himself and his wife. His unstable personality drives his sickly wife into grave sooner, and finally he pulls the trigger of a gun on himself to finish his ruin life.

Because of the unique personalities of the protagonist and the well known Chekhov's inner development of character, the writer is interested and challenged to study the protagonist and also the other four minor characters involved.

1.2 Statement of the problem.

The study is intended to analyze Ivanov's tragic life in Anton Chekhov's play, IVANOV. The writer would like to find the quality of the work in terms of character study. The analysis on the protagonist will be done based on Graham Little's Points of analyzing character as formulated in the following questions:

1. What are the basic qualities of the protagonist?
2. How is the relationship of the protagonist with the other characters?
3. Does the protagonist embody the theme?

1.3 The objective of the study.

In line with the problem statement, the purpose of this study is to analyze the protagonist character, Ivanov. The writer wants to find out the basic qualities of the protagonist character, the relationship of the

protagonist character with the other characters, and whether the protagonist character embody the theme or not.

1.4 The significance of the study.

This study hopefully can give some contributions to the study of character analysis in the English Department of Widya Mandala.

Since this study concerns with character analysis, it hopefully can be a good reference and consideration for the students taking character analysis study to be able to understand how to analyze a literary work in terms of characters in drama using Graham Little's Points.

1.5 Scope and limitation of the study.

The protagonist in Anton Chekhov's Ivanov has a very complex character. It needs a very deep and careful discussion to fulfill the objectives of the study. Considering the matter and realizing the primary concern is in the discussion of the protagonist, the writer would like to limit the discussion toward Ivanov as the protagonist and the other four minor characters: Borkin, Lvov, Anna and Sasha.

1.6 Theoretical Framework.

In studying this dramatic art, the writer deals with some theories concerning the analysis on the characters of Anton Chekhov's Ivanov. The Theories are Drama, Types of Drama, Plot, Character, Setting, and Characterization. All the theories will be discussed thoroughly in chapter II.

1.7 Definition of key terms

Some terms employed in this study:

Play is a generic term applied to any work written to be acted [Hartnoll 1942:420]. On the other hand, Scholes and Silverman (1978:73) state that play is a special literary work which has plot, character, and dialogue of the characters. So, play is a literary work made to be acted and it also has fiction elements.

Plot is the sequence of incidents of which a story is composed [Perrine 1966:59]. In accordance with Perrine, Annas and Rossen (1990:1445) define a plot as a sequence of events which is arranged in such a way so it will make a meaningful pattern. The writer tends to choose Annas and Rosen's term to be employed in his thesis because it is more complete and appropriate.

Setting is the location or background of the play,

such as: country, town, village in which the story is set [Bentley 1966:4]. To be more specific, setting is the scenery constructed for a theoretical performance, especially the three dimensional environment (as opposed to two dimensional wings) in which the characters move (Barnet, Berman, Burto, 1992:801). Bentley and Barnet have the similar idea about setting. Their terms are employed in this study.

Conflict is the clash of ideas and personalities, or actions of the characters [Bentley 1966:5]. Conflict could happen to one of man against nature, man against man, or man against himself (Little, 1963:79). Bentley and Little seem complete the term each other, thus, the writer takes both of them.

Climax is the point in the play where the highest point of physical or emotional conflict is reached [Bentley 1966:4]. Climax is also the major crisis or turning point the whole action which the fatal step is taken and the essential decision is made which result in the action concluding one way or the other (Little, 1963:80). The writer employs both of them in this study.

Character is created by the playwright to carry the action, language, ideas, and emotions of the play [Roberts 1989:1011]. He adds that character

is the representation of human beings especially which determine how they react to various conditions or attempt to shape their environment (Roberts, 1964:54).

The **protagonist** is the one who takes the leading part or the principal part in a play and becomes the central character in the conflict and the action [Perrine 1966:59].

Tragedy is a type of play where the protagonist character is defeated in such a miserable way [Potter 1967:139]. To be more specific, tragedy is generally a play that faces evil, depicts suffering, and ends with death or live hero but spiritually crushed (Barnet, Berman, Burto, 1992:804). The writer tends to pick up Barnet's idea since it is more suitable and complete.

Dialogue is the conversation of the characters in any dramatic presentation [Bentley 1966:4]. The communication could happen between one character to one character or more (Roberts, 1989:1006). Bentley's and Robert's can not be separated because they complete each other.

1.8 Organization of the paper

There are five chapters in this study. In chapter I, deals with the introduction which consists of: background of the study, statement of the problem,

objective of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, and organization of the paper. Chapter II will concern with the review of the related literature. Chapter III deals with the methodology. In this chapter, the writer uses analytic method since it is trying to analyze the protagonist character of "Ivanov" by using our perception in analyzing and interpreting the data. The analysis of the data is presented thoroughly in chapter IV, while chapter V concerns with conclusion and suggestion.