

CHAPTER I

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1.1 Background of the study

Literature is an interesting topic to be discussed and analyzed. As in Composition and Grammar, Farmer (1985:167) edits that the poet Ezra Pound wrote, "Literature is news that stays news". It means that literature is unending. People talk about it years even centuries, as Farmer said. Besides that, it gives the readers knowledges in finding possibles solutions to problems when they meet characters in book whose problems are like their own. It also gives them pleasure in learning about human values and messages which the authors expressed in their words.

As the writer knows, literature has been divided into two main divisions: (i) fiction and (ii) non- fiction. The World Book Encyclopedia stated that fiction is a writing that an author creates through his imagination which consists of the facts about real persons or real event combined with imaginary situation in narrative form. Novel, short story, drama, and poetry are considered as the examples of fiction. While non-fiction is factual writing about real life situations. The examples of non-fiction are the essay, history, biography, autobiography, and diary.

From all of the literature forms, drama or play is considered to be the most interesting subject to the writer. The writer chooses to analyze drama because in drama, the readers are able to feel and follow the characters' conversation. In addition,

as Hatlen (1967:7) states that drama is a blend of several satisfactions. First, it tells us an entertaining story. A play might hold the readers' attention, arouse laughter or excitement; and in this case, the play has fulfilled its purposes. Second, a play will give the readers or the audience pleasure in witnessing an achievement and considering the manner in which a thing is done. The third satisfaction of a play is that a play has a function as a means of "extending ourselves beyond the narrow circle of everyday existence" (1967:7). In short, drama becomes a way of enlarging our experience. Besides that, according to the curriculum of the English Department of Widya Mandala University, there are two credits for Drama class in the fifth semester. This fact makes her believe that this drama analysis will be able to give some contributions to the students of the English Department of Widya Mandala in understanding a drama better. This is another reason why she takes drama as her analysis for the thesis writing.

In writing a play, most writers must have something in their mind to achieve. A playwright might have an intention to criticize his society. He might concern with the condition of the society which he lives in. Therefore, it is always interesting to discuss literary works that tries to show the condition of a certain society. This is one of the reasons why the writer chooses Oscar Wilde. He is an English dramatist who becomes popular because of his four plays which tell about the life of London society in his own time, nineteenth century (Hochman 1984: 141-2). In

his four plays, Wilde tells about the London society which deals with the rich, the idle, even the frivolous people who spend their lives in or around parties, teas, divorces, and scandalmongering.

In this study, the writer chooses one of Wilde's plays, A Woman of No Importance for it is a bright and amusing play as Thornley (1982:13) says. It is principally written at a rented house near Cromer, Norfolk in summer 1892 and it ran for 113 performances.

As the writer found out in Wilde Comedies: A Selection of Critical Essays edited by William Tydeman, Arthur Ganz (1982:126) says that Oscar Wilde's society comedies have foolish plots and brilliant dialogue. Based on this statement, she wants to analyze how the plot of A Woman of No Importance is organized and to discuss that the play has a foolish plot.

In other words, the writer would like to say that in doing this analysis she has some considerations. First, she takes drama for it gives satisfactions to its readers. In addition, there are two credits for Drama in the English Department of Widya Mandala University and she believes that the students of it will need further knowledge to understand drama better. Second, she chooses one of Oscar Wilde's work; A Woman of No Importance for he was a great playwright and A Woman of No Importance is a bright and amusing play. There is a critic for this work. It is said that it has a foolish plot. This is the main reason why she wrote the thesis. She is intended to know how the plot of this play is organized and to discuss its foolish plot.

1.2 The statement of the problem

Arthur Ganz in the Selection of Critical Essays of Wilde Comedies (1982:126) said that the society comedies of Wilde's have foolish plots and brilliant dialogue. He also said that Lady Windermere's Fan, A Woman of No Importance, and An Ideal Husband do in fact have foolish plots and brilliant dialogue. Based on the information above, the writer has problems which are formulated as follows:

1. How is the plot of A Woman of No Importance organized?
2. What are the evidences indicating that A Woman of No Importance is a play with foolish plot?

In other words, firstly, the writer wants to find out how the plot of A Woman of No Importance is organized. Then, she will find out and prove that this play has or does not have a foolish plot.

1.3 The objective of the study

In doing an analysis, the thesis writer must have something to achieve.

In this case, the writer is intended to find out and discuss:

1. How the plot of A Woman of No Importance is organized.
2. What evidences that show A Woman of No Importance has a foolish plot.

For these purposes, first, she is going to analyze the plot of the play. After that, she will find out the evidences and discuss that it is really a play with foolish plot.

1.4 The significance of the study

This analysis is about how the plot of the play is organized and giving the discussion that the play has a foolish plot since there is an expert saying that it has that kind of plot. Since this study relates to the literary work, the writer expects that through it, she can give the contribution to the literature field of study particularly in drama.

According to the catalogue of courses of the English Department of Widya Mandala University, there are two credits on Drama class for the S-1 students in the fifth semester. This makes the writer believes that the results of this study will be useful for them in reading a drama especially in reading its plot.

As far as the writer concerns, most of the students in reading a literary work mainly read for the story. They do not care about what is beyond the story such as how the plot of the story is organized, how the characters are characterized. For this reason, the writer hopes that the analysis of the plot of A Woman of No Importance would give insight to the reader in understanding drama better especially in understanding what is beyond the plot.

I.5 The limitation of the study

According to Hatlen (1967:18), plot and characters cannot be separated. Both of them will make a good drama. Based on this statement and related to the analysis emphasizing on the plot, the writer is going to analyze the plot of A Woman of No Importance through its characters.

There are main characters and minor characters in this play. Nevertheless, the writer is going to analyze the plot through the main characters since they are considered as the important ones in terms of plot. The main characters are Mrs. Arbuthnot, Lord Illingworth, Gerald Arbuthnot and Hester Worsley.

I.6 The definition of key terms

To avoid the misunderstanding and ambiguity, the writer would like to give the definitions of key terms used in this thesis.

This study is dealt with an analysis about the plot through character, it is believed that the meaning of character need to be known. It means any person taking part in a story narrative poem, novel, or a play (Havighrust, 1968:596).

In Elements of Literature, Scholes, Klaus and Silverman (1978:754) state that plot is the arrangement of the events in a story into casual sequence which consists of exposition, conflict, suspense, climax, and resolution or conclusion.

It is said that a play will have a foolish plot, if the author is guilty of plot manipulation. The example of author is guilty of it is if he relies too heavily on

chance or coincidence to bring about a solution to his story. For this reason, it is believed that the meaning of the word “coincidence” has to be known. According to Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English, “coincidence” is a noun which means as the condition of coinciding or happening by chance.

Besides plot and character, there are two more elements of drama. They are setting and theme. Setting, as Ann Charters (1983:1235) states, is the place and the time in which a story’s action takes place. While the meaning of theme according to Perrine (1966:102) is the controlling idea or the central insight of a literary work

1.7 The organization of the study

This thesis is divided into five chapters. The first chapter presents the introduction of the study which consists of the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, the limitation of the study, the definition of key term, and the organization of the study. The second chapter consists the literature related to the topic of this thesis. In chapter three, the writer describes the methodology of research in conducting her analysis. While in the fourth chapter, she shows the analysis and interpreting findings. Finally in the last chapter, the writer gives the conclusion and suggestions.