THE HEROISM TO GET DREAMS IN JOHN GRISHAM’S A PAINTED HOUSE

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Abstract: This graduating paper analyzes the American dream in 19th century by the two main characters in the novel. They are Luke Chandler and Mrs. Jesse Chandler. The two of these characters represent the condition and situation of the Americans especially the American farmers at the time trough their characterizations. In this research, the writer focuses on researching these two main characters by using Mimetic theory, including historical approach. The objectives of this research are, first, to know what kind of dream that the characters want to get and the second is what they do to get their dreams, how they do, and why they must to do something to get their dreams. This research displays that these two characters have some attitudes and actions which show the heroism. Therefore, these two characters can be called heroic in terms of the struggle to get their dreams for the better life.

Keywords: fighting, poverty, dream, hard work, success.

SIKAP KEPAHLAWANAN UNTUK MENCAPAI IMPIAN DALAM KARYA JOHN GRISHAM A PAINTED HOUSE


Kata kunci: peperangan, kemiskinan, impian, kerja keras, keberhasilan.
Human dreams often make a strong desire. A man often asks and does something to get his dreams. By the strong desire a man will do something to make his dreams come true although it can make himself in a dangerous way. Like in *A Painted House* there is a reflection of heroism which is wrapped with a title: *The Heroism to Get Dreams in John Grisham’s A Painted House*.

From the first, to get better life a man must have dreams, of course. By their dreams they must have a willing to ask, to know, and to do something to make them real, dream and willing in this case are not always in the form of “money” that someone will get, but it can be something that someone needs to know, to ask, and to do.

According to Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary, there are two meanings of dream. First, dream is a series images, events and feelings that happen in your mind while you are sleeping. Second, it is a wish to have something, especially one that seems difficult to achieve (Hornby, 1995:383). From the explanations the second meaning is that what he writer means about dream.

All of them use a brave of course, in this case the writer most specify brave into heroism,. Hornby in Oxford Learner’s Dictionary, heroism is brave and noble conduct, courage (1995:559). He writer assumes that in this novel A Painted House Luke Chandler and Mrs. Jesse Chandler is the person who has brave, noble conduct or courage. Or the other words they are hero that is Grisham exposes as the representation of the people on that era. According professor Block, a hero I someone who endures unusual risks or sacrifices his material well being in order to achieve some noble goal (http://royhalliday.homemindspring.com. April 22, 2006).

The heroism of the Luke Chandler and Mrs. Jesse Chandler described in their characters by Grisham that is the topic the writer will be talk about. Gill Richard, in Mastering English Literature assert “a character is someone in literary work who was some sort of identify (it needn’t be a strong one), an identify which is made up by appearance, conversation, action, name, and, (possibly) thoughts going on in the head” (1995: 127-128).

The story of A Painted House begins with a description of a farmer family in Arkansas named Chandler family. There was a child called Luke Chandler, he was about seven years old who lives with his family in a small and unpainted house or rented land in the cotton field. He was an active boy; he wants to know anything about what happen around him. He loves to watch baseball games and dreams that one day he will be a baseball player. In fact he was a son of a farmer family so he must work hard to make his dreams comes true. Luke’s mother has made him sure that she never lets Luke be a farmer like Luke’s grandfather. She promised that one day her family will go away from the cotton land to makes their life become well. In the end of the story Grisham writes that Luke with his family had gone out from the cotton land and looked out a better life and it was the beginning
of what were Luke and his family done to change their life forever.

Guerin, W. Labor. E, et al, in A Handbook of Critical Approach to Literature, Fourth Edition, asserts, “Actually a work (novel) is a representation of an era”. Means that what happen on that era, what people do, why they do, and how they do something to get their dreams. Such a work is usually fictitious, but both characters and situations or events may be drawn from the real life. It may emphasize action or adventure (for example, Treasure Island or Mystery Stories) or it may concentrate on character delineation (that is the way people grow or remain static in the happening of life The Rise of Silas Lapham or Pride and Prejudice), or it may illustrate a theme either aesthetically or propagandistically (Wuthering Heights or Uncle Tom’s Cabin). It can, do all three of these, as A Painted House, a foot that accounts for the multiple levels of interpretation (1999: 43-44).

John Grisham is easily and most readily associated with novel focusing on law and legal issues. Indeed this American novelist has achieved tremendous fame and success with title such as A Time to Kill and The Client but this novel is a surprise, going astray of his accustomed fields A Painted House and become one of the best sellers of his books. The plot of this novel has heroism concept which are described in character of the novel clearly. That is why the writer chooses the novel in her graduating paper with the title is The Heroism to Get Dreams in John Grisham’s A Painted House.

There are many of Grisham’s novels which talking about the heroism, for example The Client, Time to Kill, etc. The research of this novel (A Painted House) will be concentrated on analysis of heroism to get dreams described by the two characters, Luke Chandler and Mrs. Jesse Chandler.

The two of characters on that novel A Painted House is influenced on that era. In this regard, this study will relate the heroism of Luke Chandler and Mrs. Jesse Chandler with the people on that era, besides presenting some important facts in historical point of view.

The objective of this research is to study about the heroism of the people on that novel by the two characters (Luke Chandler and Mrs. Jesse Chandler). In this paper the writer exposes the characters of Luke Chandler and Mrs. Jesse Chandler as the represents of the people on that era.

This research deals with what the people do, why they do, and how they do something to get their dreams. All of them as a represent of the people on that era, or the other words the object of this research is the novel itself (A Painted House).

METHODS

This research is a study of people’s heroism, dreams. And the characters on that novel (A Painted House), as represent of the people on that era, so it takes a literary approach as the starting point of the discussion, it is mimetic approach. Abrams in his A Glossary of Literary
Terms Fifth Edition assert, “Mimetic criticism views the literary work as an imitation or reflection, or representation of the world and the human life, and the primary criterion applied to a work is that of the “truth” of its representation to the object is represent or should represents” (1985: 39). The method used in this research is library research, utilizing several documents dealing with the topic. The primary source is the actual work, A Painted House. The secondary sources are several concerning historical and several data taken from internet that support and relevant with the primary source. Due to applying mimetic theory, it is also necessary to state historical approach since this approach support the first. According to Meyer in his The Bedford to Literature (1990), historical approach is defined as:

“historian sometimes uses literature as window onto the past, because frequently provides nuances of an historic period that cannot be readily perceived through other sources” (1785).

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**RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Someone is called “heroic” if he or she successfully passes the difficult obstacles with the strong efforts. Grisham’s novel A Painted represents the situation of the American farmer in the 19th century. A painted House reflects heroism to get dreams conducted by the two characters in this novel, namely, Luke Chandler and Mrs. Jesse Chandler. These two characters are exposed by the researcher to show that they are heroic characters who have strong wills and individuals who are not afraid to work hard to achieve their dreams. They try hard to pursue their dreams although they are poor farmers. Their heroic acts and enthusiasm are really valuable to examine. Both of them represent American people in general who always have dreams to realize the American Dream of success. One example of dream on Grisham’s Novel A Painted House is in chapter three:

“my father’s goal was to awn forty acres of land, free and clear, my mother’s dream were tucked away, only to be shared with me as I grow older. But I already knew she longed to leave the rural life I was seven, she had made a believer out of me” (Grisham, 2001: 26-27).

In this paragraph Grisham presented that Mr. Jesse Chandler has dream which can support her life to be wealth and has spirit to do something for her dreams and support her son to get her dreams. By Mrs. Jesse’s character she has willing or done something to get her dreams, in chapter thirty one Grisham exposes one example of Mrs. Jesse’s willing as one of willing which is represent of the people on that era.
“they’ll manage. Listen Luke, we can’t sit here year after year losin’ money while we borrow more. Your father and I are ready to try somethin’ else” (Grisham, 2001: 403).

In examining their heroism, the researcher finds it important to examine at glance the essence of American Dream in general. In this case, the researcher will show what kinds of dreams that the Americans are dreaming of, what kind of success that the American wants to get, and the characters of the Americans to get the success.

There is an assumption which says that one of American dreams is free from war. The American dream is a subjective term usually implies freedom, released free from any war (http://AmericanDream/freedom/historical/International Journal on historical (IJH)). As everybody knows, war is always connected with something which is horrifying and scary things, fighting, bombarding, shooting, and death. It can be imagined how a war can cause the bloodshed. Certainly wars can many kinds of impacts. There are even positive effects or war, for instance bravery. In a war, people of course, will try to do something, exactly to find a way to defend themselves from the enemy. By seeing the reality above, bravery is really needed to save life from the enemy. The American people really respect the people who have been in a war fighting with his bravery to fight for enemy troops. A sense of bravery or heroism is resulted from a war. But, a war usually also brings some bad effects for the economical life. For example, a reduction of farm products. According to Robertson in his book American Myth, American Reality, “World War also brought economic chaos and massive social dislocation. It disrupted the normal development of American industry and brought about the overexpansion of American agriculture, with disastrous result. The war was followed by widespread unemployment, industrial chaos, and agricultural depression. This economic upheaval led ultimately, in this version of the myth, to the collapse of the American and of the world economy and to the Great Depression” (1980: 330). In this case, the war makes the American live in a great depression with their farming products. That is why the American wants to free from the war.

The American, especially the American farmers, really hates the poverty. In other words, poverty is the enemy of everyone because it makes the poors disrespected by the rich people. Poverty is the state of exiting in amounts that are too small (Hornby, 1995: 904). It means that the poor are regarded as nothing by the other. Realizing this, people try to be rich so they will get respect from other people. To realize this, they do anything which can make them accepted by others. Consequently, they must work hard to fight for the poverty. It is one part of the American dream. The term American dream is used by the modern Americans to signify the result of hard works (as in,”living or pursuing) the American Dream) (http://American Dream. who. dunnit.com.revies/International Journal/103. September 25, 2006).
Therefore, bravery is needed in the process to get the success to be wealthy and get the appreciation. The processes to achieve it are by working hard and doing some hard efforts bravely such as what Luke and Mrs. Jesse Chandler represents in A painted House by John Grisham.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The basic point of this graduating paper is to study about heroism of two characters in the novel (Luke Chandler and Mrs. Jesse Chandler). The heroism is seen in their characterization in the A painted House, a conclusion can be drawn as follows:

Everyone has a dream. A good dream, of course. It also reflected in the two characters in the novel A painted House (Luke Chandler and Mrs. Jesse Chandler). Due to their dreams, this graduating paper exposes them one by one. Starting from Luke Chandler, he has a dream to become a baseball player. As a seven-year-old boy he experiences about how hard living in a peasant community. Dream is a power to reach a purpose. Without hard work it is impossible to get something. It also described in the novel A Painted House. At the time, the World War influences the Americans’ economical life especially American farmers. The World War gives the bad effect for their farming products. It was because of the depression of the World War, but it does not only give bad effect but also give the positive effects for the Americans. The poverty makes them to dream of being successful people. It is seen in Luke’s dream who wants to become a baseball player. He does some efforts to reach his dream. From his efforts he becomes a brave boy who knows that at the time there was a fighting. He also imagines himself in the fighting and tries to do something to save himself from the enemy. In the novel Luke also fights his poverty to be successful. Luke’s efforts make him know many things, he knows that the American farmers must wake up in the morning, prepare themselves to pick the cotton in the cotton field a long day. It means that Luke presents the American farmers’ life to get the success at the time. Dream makes someone respected by the other people. It is also reflected in Luke’s characterization who knows that at the time the Afro-American tries to get the success in their life, it is because the American tries to get the equality from the White Americans. By seeing the Afro-Americans’ efforts he is also enthusiastic to do the same things like the Afro-American. It can be concluded that Luke who is represented in the novel is a character who knows that there is a racial discrimination in the era. He represents how the Afro-American get the equality, the baseball, the Afro-American show their talent to make the White Americans accept the Afro-American community. In the other words, dream is used by many people to get an appreciation and it needs some work hard to get the appreciation.

Dream is needed to support someone’s life. As a support dream is realized in hard work. Mrs. Jesse
Chandler is also presented in the novel as a woman who has a big role to support her family to go out from the cotton field. Mrs. Jesse is described as a woman who always works hard to do her jobs in her family. As a housewife, she also works in the cotton field; it is because at the time she also experiences the poverty. That is why she also dreams to go out from the cotton field. Her dream makes her have some efforts to achieve it. She tries to make her husband sure to go out from their farming. She knows that in other ton there are many factories which can give a chance for her husband to work in one of the factories. That is why she wants her husband to work in other place, and it is because she wants her son, Luke, to get better education. In this case, Mrs. Jesse presents that at the time the Revolution Industry has been experienced by the Americans. The revolution of Industry is also caused by the immigration, so that there are many Americans go to other place to get their dream to be successful. Mrs. Jesse has a big role in supporting her family to leave the cotton field. It means that Mrs. Jesse is a representative of the people in that era, where in the era the migration surely happen. In the end of the story of the novel Mrs. Jesse’s family succeed to leave the peasant community. In this case, dream can be said a spirit of life in order to sustain life.

It concludes that the American dream is used by the Americans to signify the result of hard works. Therefore, bravery is needed in the process to get the success to be wealthy and get the appreciation. The process to achieve it are by working hard and doing some hard efforts bravely. Seeing the story inside of the novel, Luke Chandler and Mrs. Jesse Chandler have had all of the terms above. That is why these two characters can be said a “heroic” because they succeed to reach their to go out from the cotton field. In the other words, Luke and Mrs. Jesse Chandler have the heroism to get their dreams. Someone called “heroic” if her or she has efforts and bravery to achieve their success.

REFERENCES


