

THE CHARACTER EDUCATIONAL VALUES AS SEEN IN ANNE BRONTE'S AGNES GREY NOVEL

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Abstract

There were some reasons why this research was carried out 1) to describe the setting of the novel entitled *Agnes Grey* and 2) to describe the character educational values reflected in the main character of *Agnes Grey* novel. The approach of this research was a qualitative study. The object of the research was a novel entitled *Agnes Grey* written by Anne Bronte. In the process of collecting data, the researcher used document analysis by reviewing some literary books. The data analysis technique was inductive content analysis. After analysing the data, the researcher found that 1) there were three types of settings found in the main character of *Agnes Grey* novel; they were the setting of place, time, and culture 2) the character educational values in this research consisted of religiosity, honesty, discipline, hard work, creativity, autonomy, democracy, curiosity, rewarding achievement, love peace, joy of reading, environmental care, social care, and responsibility.

Keywords: *Agnes Grey novel, character educational values*

Introduction

Agnes Grey novel was Anne's first debut novel in English. It was written by Anne Bronte. It has 249 pages and tells about the life of a governess in mid-victorian England. This novel was originally published under her pseudonym Acton Bell in 1847, had numerous orthographic, punctuation, and other issues attributed to neglect by the publisher Newby. However, the second edition, republished in Penguin Popular Classics in 1994, had many changes after the careful editing of Charlotte Bronte. Significant themes include issues of oppression, abuse of women (especially governess), isolation, empathy, and the fair treatment of animals. *Agnes Grey* novel has truly an inspirational story, because this novel taught many things, like a struggle, sacrifice and sincerity. The problems of this research were formulated as follows:

1. What are the settings of the *Agnes Grey* novel?
2. What are the character educational values of the main character of *Agnes Grey* novel?

Theoretical review

1. Literature

According to Rexroth (12) Literature is a science gained by humans and used to express their experiences. When most people speak about literature, they may be talking about short stories, novel, poem, verse, plays, and drama. Literature is broadly defined as written and spoken material, but the term most often refers to creative works (Wellek and Warren 93). The example of written material is *Agnes Grey* novel and *The Clerk's Tale* for spoken material.

2. Novel

A novel is the type of the literature. A story is a length of the narrative pages that has complex aspects with sequence events that make the story becomes more interesting. A novel is also called prose. Burges (23) describes a novel as invented prose narrative of considerable length and a certain complexity that deals imaginatively with human experience, usually through a connected sequence of events involving a group of persons in a specific setting.

3. Setting

Abrams (284) stated that setting is background for the actions. It depicts where and when the action is happening in the literary work. Abrams (285) also classifies setting into three kinds; they are setting of place, the setting of time and setting of culture.

4. Character Educational Values

According to Ministry of Indonesia National Education (4), character education is one of the purposes of teaching in order to build the students cultural value and good character. Character education prepares the students to be the part of society who are religious, nationalist, productive, and creative. Based on the values of religion, Pancasila, culture and national education objectives in the book of cultural education and the nation's character there are eighteen character educational values: 1) religiousity, 2) honesty, 3) tolerance, 4) discipline, 5) hardwork, 6) creativity, 7) autonomy, 8) democracy, 9) curiosity, 10) the spirit of nationality, 11) love homeland, 12) rewarding achievement, 13) friendliness/ communicativeness, 14) love peace, 15) joy of reading, 16) environmental care, 17) social care, 18) responsibility.

Research methodology

A quantitative approach is one in which the investigator primarily uses post-positivist claims for developing knowledge (i.e., cause and effect thinking, reduction to specific variables and hypotheses and question, use of measurement and observation, and the test of theories), employs strategies of inquiry such as experiments and surveys, and collect data on predetermined

instruments that yield statistical data (Cresswell 18). In this research, the researcher used qualitative approach because the researcher analyzed the words, phrases, and sentences that were observed in *Agnes Grey* novel. In this case, the researcher analyzed the character educational values and settings of the story of *Agnes Grey* novel.

In this study, the researcher used document analysis technique to collect the data. There were five steps in document analysis technique: 1) plan, 2) gather, 3) review, 4) interrogate, 5) reflect/ refine (O'Leary 179). To analyze the data, the researcher used four steps in inductive content analysis. They were open coding, grouping, creating categories, and abstraction (Ello & Kyngas 110).

Findings

1. The findings of the setting related to character educational values are stated below:

Based on the analysis on the novel, there are two settings that are covered in the *Agnes Grey* novel. Those are setting of time and setting of place. The settings that happened in the novel, even inside or outside the classroom were found in the novel.

2. The finding of the character educational values are stated below:

The character educational values in this study consist of eighteen values. But, in the analysis of *Agnes Grey* novel, there are fifteen character educational values that are found in the novel. Those character educational values are religious, honest, discipline, hard work, creative, autonomous, democratic, curiosity, rewarding achievement, love peace, joy of reading, environmental care, social care, and responsibility. It means that *Agnes Grey* novel has almost all the character educational values.

Discussions

1. Setting

- a. Setting of place

"beside our little bed, I prayed for a blessing on her and on my parents more fervently than ever I had done before. To conceal my emotion, I buried my face in my hands, and they were presently bathed in tears". (Bronte, 31)

Based on the quotation above, we know that *Agnes Grey* showed character educational values related to religious and happened beside *Agnes's* little bed. It is proven by *Agnes* attitude that pray more solemn than before. She also showed her religious character by asking God to bless Mary and her parents.

- b. Setting of time

"One bright day in the last week of February, I was walking in the park, enjoying of the threefold luxury of solitude, a book, and pleasant weather: for Miss Matilda had set on her daily ride, and miss murray was gone in the carriage with her

Mamma to pay some morning calls". (Bronte, 139)

Based on the quotation above, we know that Agnes Grey showed character educational values related to the joy of reading and it showed in the last of February. It is proven by the way Agnes took the time to read in the park. In that place, she only with her books and a good weather. Agnes considered this as a luxury.

2. Character Educational Values

a. Religiosity

"Having entered the room, and shut the door, I fell upon my knees and offered up a fervent but not impetuous prayer: 'Thy will be done,' I strove to say throughout; but 'Father, all things are possible with Thee, and may it be Thy will'". (Bronte, 175)

The phrase "I fell upon my knees and offered up a fervent" describes character educational values related to religious. Because, the quotation above shows that Agnes prayed earnestly. This was proven by the way she prayed that fiery prayer was accompanied by her kneeling position.

b. Honesty

"I can scarcely tell," was my reply: "I have not even heard him perch."

"Well, but you saw him, didn't you?"

"Yes, but I cannot pretend to judge a man's character by a single cursory at his face."

The phrase "I cannot pretend" describes character educational values related to honest. Because on the quotation above, Agnes Grey really said honestly that she was unable to judge someone just by looking at her or his face. Agnes's attitude must be emulated. Because, we cannot judge someone from his or her face, we should judge someone by his or her attitude.

c. Discipline

"Once I told them that they should not taste their supper till they had picked up everything from the carpet, Fanny might have hers when she had taken up a certain quantity, Marry Ann when she had gathered twice as much, and Tom was to clear away the rest". (Bronte, 72)

The phrase "Once I told them that they should not taste their supper till they had picked up everything from the carpet" describes character educational values related to discipline. Because the quotation above shows that Agnes Grey is taught the pupils to discipline from their bad habits of littering. She tries to discipline her pupils by asking them to clean up the garbage. The pupils did it because they are afraid if not allowed to dinner.

d. Hardwork

“Often he would positively refuse to learn, or to repeat his lessons, or even to look at his book. Here, again, a good birch rod might have been serviceable: but, as my powers were so limited, I must make the best use of what I had”.
(Bronte, 50)

The phrase “I must make the best use of what I had” describes the character educational values related to hard work. Based on the quotation above, Agnes Grey try as much as possible to change the bad habits of Tom and Mary. It is proven by the way Agnes Grey maximizing what she can do to overcome Master Tom which is difficult to learn. Agnes uses this way not only to Master Tom but for all Agnes’s pupils.

e. Creativity

“As there were no settled hours for study and play, I resolved to give my pupils a certain task, which, with moderate attention, they could perform in a short time”.
(Bronte, 50)

The phrase “as there were no settled hours for study and play, I resolved to give my pupils a certain task” describes the character educational values related to creative. It can be seen from the way Agnes made assignment for her pupils because there was no schedule of learning and playing. So, the pupils’ time is not wasted on things that are not important.

f. Autonomy

“How delightful it would be to be a governess! To act myself; to exercise my unused faculties; to try my unknown powers; to earn my own maintenance, and something to comfort and help my father, mother, and sister besides exonerating them from the provision of my food and clothing; to show papa what his little Agnes could do”. (Bronte, 27)

The phrase “To act myself; to exercise my unused faculties; to try my unknown powers; to earn my own maintenance” describes the character educational values related to autonomous. It shows by Agnes becoming a governess with her limited abilities. Even so, she can get money for her needs and family.

g. Democracy

“The servants, seeing in what little estimation the governess was held by both parents and children, regulated their behaviour by the same standard. I have frequently stood up for them, at the risk of some injury to myself, against the tyranny and injustice of their young masters and mistresses”. (Bronte, 115)

The phrase “I have frequently stood up for them, at the risk of some injury to myself” describes the educational values related to democratic. It was proved by the way Agnes acted to defend the injustice of the servants of their young ladies

and gentleman. Agnes acted sincerely even though she had to hurt herself.

h. Curiosity

"Howsoever, I followed his advice: I thought he meant it all for th' best, though he had a queer way with him. But you know, miss, he's rich an' young, and such like cannot right understand the thoughts of a poor old woman such as me. But, howsoever; I did my best to do all as he bade me--- but maybe I'm plaguing you, miss, wi' my chatter."

"Oh, no, Nancy! Go on, and tell me all." (Bronte, 146)

The phrase "Oh, no, Nancy! Go on, and tell me all" describes character educational values related to curiosity. It can be seen when Agnes really wants to know more about what Nancy tells. Whereas, Nancy is afraid if her story will disturb Agnes. But Agnes forced her to continue her story by said "Go on, tell me all".

i. Rewarding achievement

"For music and singing, besides my occasional instructions, she had the attendance of the best master the country afforded; and in them, as well as in dancing she certainly attained great proficiency". (Bronte, 105)

The phrase "in them, as well as in dancing she certainly attained great proficiency" describes the character educational values related to rewarding achievement. It was shown by the way Agnes admitted that Miss Murray had great abilities in music, dancing and singing even though she is not good at sewing.

j. Friendliness/ Communicativeness

"They seemed bold, lively children, and I hoped I should soon be on friendly terms with them--- the little boy especially of whom I had heard such a favorable character from his mamma". (Bronte, 37)

The phrase "I hoped I should soon be on friendly terms with them" describes the character educational values related to friendly/ communicative. It is proven by the way of Agnes's thinking who want to be immediately close with her pupils of Mr. Bloomfield. Because, if Agnes can be close to them she will get a benefit from being easier to teach them.

k. Love peace

"'And mine,' said Mary Anne

Tom lifted his fist with a menacing gesture: she uttered a loud shrill scream, ran to the other side of me, and made a face at him.

'surely, Tom, you would not strike your sister! I hope I shall never see you do that.'

‘you will sometimes: I am obliged to do it now and then to keep her in order.’

‘But it’s not your business to keep her in order, you know--- that is for----’” (Bronte, 39)

The phrase “surely, Tom, you would not strike your sister! I hope I shall never see you do that” describes the character educational values related to love peace. It is proven by the attitude and words of Agnes who forbid Tom to hitting Mary Ann. So, she will feel safe and Agnes is so happy if they both get along well.

l. Joy of reading

“Oh, yes, they are good company sometimes; but I cannot call them friends, nor would they think of bestowing such a name on me--- they have other companions better suited to their tastes.”

“Perhaps you are too wise for them. How do you amuse yourself when alone— do you read much?”

“Reading is my favorite occupation, when I have leisure for it and books to read.” (Bronte, 203)

The phrase “Reading is my favourite occupation, when I have leisure for it and books to read” describes the character educational values related to the joy of reading. It is proven by the way Agnes answering question from Mr. Weston. When he asked how Agnes entertained herself, Agnes answered him by ‘reading’. Not only words, Agnes really uses her free time to read a book.

m. Environmental care

“‘But, Tom,’ said I, ‘I shall not allow you to torture those birds. They must either be killed at once or carried back to the place you took them from, that the old birds may continue to feed them’”. (Bronte, 78)

The phrase “I shall not allow you to torture those birds” describes the character educational values related to environmental care. It is proven by the attitude of Agnes that does not allow Tom to torture the birds because they must also feed their children.

n. Social care

“We manage not only to enjoy comfort and contentment ourselves, but to have every year something to lay by for our children, and something to give those who need it”. (Bronte, 302)

The phrase “something to give those who need it” describes character educational values related to social care. It is proven by the attitude of Agnes who want to help others by saving aside some of their money to be given to poor people.

o. Responsibility

"Frequently I threatened that, if he did not do better, he should have another line; then he would stubbornly refuse to write this line, and I, to save my word, had finally to resort to the expedient of holding his fingers upon the pen, and forcibly drawing his hand up and down, till in spite of his resistance the line was in some sort completed". (Bronte, 53)

The phrase "Frequently I threatened that, if he did not do better, he should have another line; then he would stubbornly refuse to write this line" describes the character educational values related to responsibility. It is proven by her attitude and actions toward Tom. Agnes tried to help him to write by holding his hand, although he against it, Agnes kept trying. Agnes does not give up because she is been trusted by Mr. and Mrs. Bloomfield to teach tom to write. Agnes's attitude shows that she carries out his duties and obligations as a governess.

Conclusion

After doing this reserach which has focused in analysing setting and character educational values, the researcher found two settings and fifteen character educational values. The two setting are setting of place and setting of time. All the settings of *Agnes Grey* novel are related to character educational values. The result of character educational values are (1) religious, (2) honest, (3) discipline, (4) hard work, (5) creative, (6) autonomous, (7) democratic, (8) curiosity, (9) rewarding achievement, (10) friendly/ communicative, (11) love peace, (12) joy of reading, (13) environmental care, (14) social care, (15) responsibility. *Agnes Grey* novel is definitely worth to read, especially if the readers are interested in the position of the governess or the Victorian era in general.

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