
THE CHILDREN EMPOWERMENT IN *TANIA'S MONSOON ADVENTURE* BY KANIKA G

¹Adam Anshori, ²Ianatul Khoiriyah

^{1,2}Universitas Islam Indonesia

¹adam.anshori@uii.ac.id

Abstract

This research is aimed at describing the empowerment of children in *Tania's Monsoon Adventure* by Kanika G. The main purpose of this research is to find out whether this book can be considered as a good book for children. The problems formulated in the research will be answered in descriptions consisting of thoughts, actions, and feelings of the main characters in the book. The main source of the research data was *Tania's Monsoon Adventure* by Kanika G. It is considered as a children's literature. The focus of the research was events in the novel which showing the empowerment of the main character. The data consisting of thoughts, actions, and feelings of the main character and presenting other characters' comments dedicated to the main character. The data were analyzed inductively by using qualitative content analysis. The instrument of the research was the researcher himself. To get trustworthiness of the data, the researcher used four criteria, namely: credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability. The findings of the research show that the book contains children's empowerment, which can be divided into three categories. They are Thought Empowerment, Action Empowerment and Feeling Empowerment. Empowerment is an important aspect in children's story. It has great influence to enrich children's intelligence and emotion in their growing period. *Tania's Monsoon Adventure* has these aspects and therefore can be categorized as a good book for children.

Keywords: *children's literature, children's empowerment*

INTRODUCTION

The most important development stage of human in life occurs during the childhood. Children grow and develop in many aspects of life in sequences such as emotionally and physically. In order to grow and to develop very well, children need some assistant from adult to teach them about how to be human being and to learn about the way of life and the entire world. One of ways to help adult in providing assistant for children is through education. Childhood is considered as the best time to get basic education (Stephens, 1994). A good education may help to provide children with appropriate knowledge of the world and life in form of literature as example. Childhood is likely unable to be separated with literature.

Literature tells about life and experience of human. People tend to relate it as text that tells someone's life or any fictional stories. The stories written as literature are mostly unique. It provides something called values and hidden message for the reader. The purpose of literature is as an entertainment for the readers in the leisure time. Therefore, the language of literature is likely considered as 'light' and easy to understand the meaning or the message in it. Literature is not only for adult, but also for children. There are some authors who write a literature intended for children reader. However, in the society there is still small number of children author and no significant balance between children literature and literature for adult that are available.

Children literature does not always define as a book for kids. Children literature is a category of book which is good in term of emotional and moral values written by children or not, both intentionally designed for children or not (Hunt, 1999). Meanwhile according Nodelman (1992) Children's literature means a form style of dominating, restructuring and having authority which done by adult over childhood.

Moreover, children literature influence significantly to children's development of mental, psychological and social (Mwanzi, 1982). It is essential for most of children's growth and development. The children literature can stimulate children's imagination and improve their critical skill. Children do self-improvement of imagination when they read a literature book. Also the kids may get strong awareness about the world as literature is life-reflection. Unfortunately, not all children books are good. There are some which not often taught of as free expression and reflect the reality. It only shows the ideal life.

There a lot of type of children literature. It is stated that all books is probably considered as literature. There are five characteristics of children literature in specific based on Hillman (1999 cited in Nodelman, 2008). They are experience of children in their perspective, children characters, focus on action with simple and direct plots, innocence and optimism feelings, a combination of fantasy and

reality. Further, children's literature does not have clear genre due to it is multiple in term of genre (mystery, fantasy, science fiction, crime fiction etc.) and literacy form (poetry, prose, drama etc.) (Nodelman, 2008). Some categorizations by *The New York Time* on children literature are children's picture books, children middle grade, young adult, children's series, hardcover graphic books, manga and paperback graphic books.

Moreover, children literature gives projection of human life in the character of the story. The characters refers to nor a person, personified animal and an object that live in the story (Lukens, 1999). There are generally two main characters in children literature. They are whether protagonist or antagonist. The protagonist character is the main character who leads the story in a literature (Burman, 2012). Meanwhile the antagonist refers to a character with bad behavior and become main rival of the protagonist (Burman, 2012). The character in the story is usually described in form of dramatic manner where the author explains every action done by the character as well as the speech of the character (Anshori, 2016).

In addition, children love the character that they found the literature in which has similarity with them. They may follow what have the character done and turn it as habit in the daily activity. Decision making and emotional feeling are two aspects that mostly and likely to be implemented by children. This is showing that children literature can give character education and empower children.

In Indonesia, character education is integrated in the national curriculum as one of the main points of education (kemdikbud, 2003). Every subject at primary school until secondary school has to elaborate and implement the element of character education to the students' learning process. Education character is not only important but is highly needed in achieving the national aims as a civilized nation because it emphasize moral, affective, values of spiritual attitude, social attitude, knowledge and application of knowledge (Kaimuddin, 2014).

The use of literature in the learning process for young learners provides enrichment of languages (Collie, 1990) and personal development (Stan, 2015). It means that children literature is able to contribute in giving children character education. The role of children literature is a media to help children learn.

Tania's Monsoon Adventure, one of children literature which has several interesting element to be researched in different point of view. Concerning about the urgency issue related to children literature, the author is triggered to do a research on children

literature for educational purposes of children empowerment through literature. To make this research on the track, the study will focus only on main character's action, feeling and thought. This limitation formulates a research question as follow "what is variety of empowerment for children reveal in this book?"

The aim of this study is to give description on children empowerment of Tania in a children literature book entitled *Tania's Monsoon Adventure* by Kanika G. as means for educational purpose.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study use qualitative method as the research design to answer the research question. A qualitative study is an approach of interpretive and naturalistic (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In similar, according to Creswell (1998) a qualitative study is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions on inquiry that explore a social or human problem (Creswell, 1998). It is meaning-based methodology that studies a meaning instead of behavioral statistics or numerical data. A meaning from holistic interpretation is resulted to discuss the topic further in the end. As for this study, the writer use the definition of qualitative method by Guba (1994) which define as an approach that include interpretation of meaning in the natural context. Also, this study implements descriptive approach as the method.

The main resource of the data is *Tania's Monsoon Adventure* written by Kanika G which is quiet popular among children. The book was launched on last 2016. The main character of this literature is young student girl namely Tania.

This study uses content analysis process as the main tool to analyze the whole data of the research. Content analysis is a technique of study that making reliable and valid inference from a text to the context of use (Krippendorff, 1980). Meanwhile, according to Holsti (in Lincoln & Guba, 1985) content analysis is a description of objective, systematic, and general of content in a text which follows the following five principles:

1. Certain formulated rule and procedures exist during the process of analyzing data.
2. The analysis is systematic. The categorization forming should be based on procedure which is determined.
3. The result of analysis is aiming in generality from theoretical relevance. A relevance to the context is important.
4. Content is manifested in the process of analysis. Content-based conclusion is preferable.
5. Adaption from quantitative research.

Inductive category development is chosen to be the procedure of this research in conducting qualitative content analysis. It refers to procedure that creates a definition criterion from the theoretical background and research question in order to set the aspect of material text into consideration (Mayring, 2014).

All the data of this study comes from events that happened in the book *Tania's Monsoon Adventure* in which also show empowerment toward the reader especially the children reader in dealing and solving problems. To identify the children empowerment is by observing the characterization of children like capability, sensibility of finding solution and understanding other's feeling (Anshori, 2016). The main character of *Tania's Monsoon Adventure* book namely Tania is the focus of empowerment character for this research. All events take into account especially when Tania is coping with her problems.

The credibility data of this research gain through process of triangulation. The author applies the investigator triangulation. It is involving two or more researcher in one study to provide multiple observation and conclusion on the participant (Carter, Bryant-Lukosius, DiCenso, Blythe, & Neville, 2014). In this study, the triangulation process conducted by providing a second reviewer. The reviewer of this study is a lecture of English Education Department at Universitas Islam Indonesia whose high capability in doing article review.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The researcher only use one book in this research although the number of children book is numerous available. The main reason for this is due to the writer is aiming to give detail analysis and to focus in conducting this research of children empowerment. *Tania's Monsoon Adventure* is selected as the data for this study because it is able to fulfill some categorizations of children literature. First, the main character in this story is a child with several unpredictable challenges of daily life. These challenges require Tania to struggle and find the solution by her own using her most of ability and skill. Furthermore, the book contains picture to make children reader get better understanding about the story. Picture book is one characteristic of children literature. The third, the language and word choices are similar as 'light' in children literature.

Empowerment means to give authority, power, or ability for other people (Anshori, 2016). Children empowerment is significant as adult empowerment. A good children book will provide empowerment. It is role model for children. Children love to do imitation of the main character's action in a story.

According to Nodelman (1992), the description of children literature is text which involves with childhood's decision and statement making process and the perspective of children. The psychology of children and children literature is able to be discussed together and follow analysis process. It is believed that adult has higher authority among children to determine children's book (Nodelman P. , 1992).

Thought empowerment

The story of Tania in *Tania's Monsoon Adventure* presents several thought empowerments. The ability of children's brain in thinking and understanding the knowledge or idea is a form of thought empowerment. Thinking ability refers a skill to come up with idea or solution for a problem. Children's ability to understand or to give empathy to other's feeling is also other form of thought empowerment that appears in this book. There are two types of thought empowerment which are thought empowerment through children's knowledge or idea and thought empowerment through Understanding other's feeling (Anshori, 2016).

1. Thought empowerment through children's knowledge or idea.

Children have their own intelligence of knowledge and idea about something. Their ability to recognize and to understand something or being familiar with certain issue is named knowledge. They construct knowledge from their prior curiosity. Experience gives information and teaches them about conception and how to deliver opinion.

In reality, adult are likely to judge children as incapable person to solve problem and position them as inferior. However, the story of *Tania's Monsoon Adventure* shows children who have their own intelligence and are able to solve problem independently. Tania is capable to read the situation as well as to process the information that she get from her teachers.

In this story, Tania together with her friends and teachers get stranded in a highway of nowhere. Her teachers start to worry all the students and have no idea. Tania remains calm and tries to identify possible solution. Then she is finally able to know their location.

"I know where we are!" Tania exclaimed. "I recognize that tall building. My aunt Nisha lives there. She is my mother's cousin..... (G, 2016: 5)"

Tania shows how to deal with problem in her daily life by giving example that children's knowledge can be helpful for others to solve

problem. It is evidence that children are intelligent and skillful. This information will benefit children to do the similar and improve their skill and knowledge of life. It empowers children to be confident in delivering their idea or opinion and knowledge.

2. Thought empowerment through understanding other's feeling.

Children are always seen as someone who do not know nothing and unable to understand about feeling. Adult usually assume that it is kind of useless to tell children about feeling problems because it seems to complex. In contrast, children have ability to feel and see what is going on around them. They can sense other's situation and feeling as good as adult.

"But our parents will be so worried" Tania's brows knitted in a frown...." (G, 2016: 10)

The parent of Tania do not expect that their children will consider and care their feeling of worrying her becomes something matter for their children. Tania understands that her uninformed condition will affect the feeling of her parents.

"...But then how do we get the message to Mama? She will be so worried about us." (G, 2016: 11)

Unlike common adult's assumption of children that they never consider other's feeling. Children express their feeling more often than adult do. Tania's ability to concern such kind of affection to her parent is part of children empowerment.

3. Thought empowerment through optimistic.

Optimistic is having positive mind of something that will happen in the future. It also means as having believe in someone or something unseen yet. The story of Tania provides some optimistic action.

"Nisha aunty will figure something out. Won't you aunty?" Tania looked at her hopefully" (G, 2016: 12)

Children have to be always optimistic in order to achieve their dream. This story will empower children to be a hard worker and do not easily give up when they have problem.

Action empowerment

Action empowerment explains about behavior, action and attitude of children to deal with routines

of life. There are two kind of action empowerment appear in this book. The first is action empowerment through bravery. While the second is action empowerment through doing favors for others.

1. Action empowerment through bravery

The main character of this story performs some bravery actions. Bravery action means attitude to tackle scared feelings of something. It also refers to action of confessing mistakes (Anshori, 2016). Children mostly have their something to afraid of. So does Tania.

"At an hour past midnight, when Tania woke up for a drink of water, it was very quiet. Something seemed different. Tania walked up to the window...." (G., 2016: 23)

Tania is young girl who is terrified with ghost and other horror things. In this moment, she does contrast of her fear. Midnight is likely to associate with dark and ghost. She learns that fear is only in her mind when she finally finds herself unseeing the ghost in the darkness. Tania's action can empower children to deal with their fear.

2. Action empowerment through doing favors for others.

In daily social life, adult teaches children to live with other people with peace. Relationship with other will be good when both of parties are willing to give contribution and assistance. Therefore, children already understand to do work together with their friends. They love doing help for other.

One of action empowerment through doing favor for others is when Tania give light without asking so her friend could see the surrounding of Nisha's apartment clearly.

"Tania got the flashlight from her uncle's cupboard, so they could see better." (G, 2016: 17)

In this story, Tania is doing action empowerment. She is never been ask to do so. Initiative is behind for it which leads her to work and help her friend.

"Tania went to the kitchen to get some plates and a few cucumbers, when it suddenly went all dark and quiet. Tania stopped abruptly, terrified." (G, 2016: 13)

Giving other's assistance and help may build children's awareness of responsibility and togetherness. Tania wants to empower children to do positive thing to people and their surroundings.

Feeling empowerment

The sensibility and awareness of incidents around the children's environment is a form children empowerment. It divides into three parts as follow feeling empowerment through empathy, empowerment through unselfishness and empowerment through care.

1. Feeling empowerment through empathy.

Children's sensibility of feeling may not be better as the adult because they are less experience than adult. However, both children and adult have the similar empathy. Empathy is process of feeling, sharing and understanding other's feeling, thought and condition. Children still need many practices to improve their sense of empathy.

"Tania still looked sad. "Aunty what do we do with the mouse now? You promise not to hurt it, right?.." (G, 2016: 22)

Tania feels sorry for the mouse as she know that animal is also a creature that has right to live. She understands that it is not right to torment the animal. This action of Tania demonstrates children empowerment to love the animals and do care for them.

2. Feeling empowerment through unselfishness

Unselfishness means person with mind of others. It is an attitude to show care by providing other's need. Tania exemplifies unselfishness feeling in this story.

"She is not crazy. I love Nisha aunty and I won't have you speak of her like that." Tania was shouting now. "We were stranded and I got us to a safe dry place. Nisha aunty gave us food, clean clothes, a place to stay all night and found a way to get a message to our parents." (G, 2016: 20-21)

In this situation, Tania is trying to defend her aunty, Nisha. She wants to help her by removing the mouse.

3. Feeling empowerment through care.

Care is an expression of love. Tania expresses a caring for her friend and her aunty. She worried about Nisha's condition.

"Aunty. Are you okay? Don't worry. It is just a mouse." Tania said, perplexed to see her brave and level headed aunty so scared." (G, 2016: 18)

Tania try to convince her aunty is in a good

condition. This action is also a form of children empowerment that found in this story. It empowers children to give attention and respect as well as love to people next to them.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Altogether, the author concludes that there were varieties of children empowerment in this children literature entitled *Tania's Monsoon Adventure*. The empowerment of thought, feeling empowerment and action empowerment are stands in row as the children empowerment. Each empowerment has different number of partition. The thought empowerment has three divisions which are though empowerment through knowledge or idea, empowerment through understanding other's feeling and empowerment through optimistic. The second is action empowerment which has two types. They are action empowerment through bravery and action empowerment through doing favors for other. The last is feeling empowerment. It has three parts. The first is feeling empowerment through empathy, the second is feeling empowerment through unselfishness and feeling empowerment through care is the final. Those empowerments above are very essential for children's development. Children's literature is one way to empower development of children.

Tania's Monsoon Adventure discusses about several type of children empowerment. All values in this book give influence to children's development. It also can help to stimulate children's knowledge and expand their experience. Based on that fact, this book can be categorized as a good book for children.

REFERENCES

- Anshori, A. (2016). The Empowerment of Children in Edith Nesbit's *The Railway Children*. *English Review*, 4(2), 243-254
- Burman, J. (2012). *Protagonist-Antagonist Dichotomy in Palestinian Children's Literature*. Scania: Lund University.
- Carter, N., Bryant-Lukosius, D., DiCenso, A., Blythe, J., & Neville, A. J. (2014). The Use of Triangulation in Qualitative Research. *Oncology Nursing Forum*, 545-547.
- Collie, J. S. (1990). *Literature in the Language Classroom: A Resource Book of Ideas and Activities*. Dzintra: CUPSahhuseynoglu Derya.
- Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. London: Sage.
- G., K. (2016). *Tania's Monsoon Adventure*. Mumbai.

-
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. California: Thousand Oaks.
- Hunt, P. (1999). *Understanding Children's Literature*. London: Routledge .
- Kaimuddin. (2014). Implementasi Pendidikan Karakter dalam Kurikulum 2013. *Dinamika Ilmu*, 47-64.
- Kemdikbud. (2003, January 8). *Undang-Undang No. 20 tahun 2003*. Retrieved from Sistem Pendidikan Nasional: www.depdiknas.go.id
- Krippendorff, K. (1980). *Content Analysis : An Introduction to Its methodology*. London: Sage Publication.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publication.
- Lukens, R. J. (1999). *Genre in Children's Literature in Critical Handbook in Children's Literature (4th ed)*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Mayring, P. (2014). *Qualitative Content Analysis*. Klagenfurt.
- Mwanzi, H. (1982). *Children's Literature in Kenya : An Analysis of Children's Prose Fiction*. Nairobi: University of Nairobi.
- Nodelman, P. (1990). The Hidden Meaning and the Inner Tale: Deconstruction and the Interpretation of Fairy Tales. *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, 143-148.
- Nodelman, P. (1992). The Other: Orientalism, Colonialism, and Children's Literature. *17*(1), 1.
- Nodelman, P. (2008). *The Hidden Adult, Defining Children's Literature*. Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Stan, R. V. (2015). The importance of literature in primary school pupils' development and personal growth. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 454 – 459.
- Stephens, J. (1994). *Language and Ideology in Children's Fiction*. New York: Longman Publishing.