THE ROLE OF FATHER AS A SINGLE PARENT IN MC CARTHY'S THE ROAD



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Submitted to the Faculty of Cultural Sciences Hasanuddin University in Partial Fulfilment for The Requirement to Obtain Sarjana Sastra Degree in English

WRITTEN BY

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On July 26, 2024, the Board of Thesis Examination has kindly approved a thesis by Moch Ichwan Aqilah (F041201056) entitled *The Role of Father as a Single Parent in McCarthy's The Road* submitted in fulfillment of one of the requirements to obtain *Sarjana* Degree in English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University.

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Hereby, the writer declares that this thesis is written by himself. This thesis does not contain any materials which have been published by other people, and it does not cite other people's ideas except quotations and references.

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Makassar, July 15, 2024 The writer,

Moch Ichwan Aqilah

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ABSTRAK

Moch Ichwan Aqilah. 2024. *Peran Ayah sebagai orang tua tunggal dalam novel karya McCarthy The Road*. (Dibimbing oleh **M. Syafri Badaruddin** dan **Abbas**)

Penelitian ini membahas peran ayah sebagai orang tua tunggal untuk seorang putra pada novel *The Road* yang bercerita tentang seorang ayah bersama putranya hidup di dunia yang mati, mereka dipaksa untuk bertahan hidup dengan kondisi sulit. Hampir tiap hari mereka mengkhawatirkan keberlanjutan hidupnya, kekurangan makanan dan ancaman terhadap orang yang mereka temui selalu ada dipikran mereka. Mereka berjalan ke arah Selatan tempat yang diharap ada kehidupan baru namun setibanya disana keadaan sama saja dengan mereka dapatkan sebelumnya.

Pendekatan strukturalisme menjadi metode ilmiah yang digunakan oleh peneliti dalam menganalisis novel *The Road* karya Cormac McCarthy. Pendekatan ini membahas unsur-unsur intrinsik novel *The Road* seperti penokohan, alur, setting, dan tema. Data penelitian diolah secara kualitatif dan hasil penelitian ditampilkan secara deskriptif.

Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa ayah memiliki peran ganda untuk merawat dan melindungi anaknya, ayah mampu menghadirkan peran seorang ibu dalam menghadapi anaknya dengan penuh cinta dan kasih sayang sesuai dengan konsep pengasuhan anak oleh Lamb terdapat ada dua puluh satu dari total peran ayah sebagai orang tua Tunggal. Disisi lain ketidak hadiran istrinya memberikan juga implikasi terhadap ayah yang berperan sebagai orang tua tunggal dalam mengasuh anaknya, ada sembilan implikasi yang dialami oleh ayah.

Kata kunci: peran ayah, single parent, Pendekatan Strukturalisme, The Road, McCarthy.

ABSTRACT

Moch Ichwan Aqilah. 2024. The Role of Father as a Single Parent in McCarthy's The Road. (Supervised by M. Syafri Badaruddin and Abbas)

This research discusses the role of a father as a single parent for a son in the novel The Road which tells the story of a father and his son living in a dead world, they are forced to survive with difficult conditions. Almost every day they worry about their survival, lack of food and threats to the people they meet are always in their minds. They walked towards the South where they hoped there would be new life but when they arrived there the conditions were the same as they got before.

The structuralism approach is the scientific method used by researchers in analyzing Cormac McCarthy's The Road. This approach discusses the intrinsic elements of The Road such as characterization, plot, setting, and theme. The research data is processed qualitatively and the research results are displayed descriptively.

The results of this study indicate that father has a dual role to care for and protect his child, father is able to present the role of a mother in dealing with his child with love and affection in accordance with the concept of parenting by Lamb there are twenty-one of the total roles of father as a single parent. On the other side, the absence of his wife also gives implications to fathers who act as single parents in caring for his child, there are nine implications experienced by fathers.

Keywords: father role, single parent, Structuralism Approach, The Road, Mc Charty.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of The Study

Parents are the first figures to be used as role models by a child. Children often act what they have seen and obtained around them, especially the actions of parents starting from attitudes, behaviors, and speech to guide a child in growing and developing towards maturity. The good and bad of a child depends on how parents give a first impression on their child who is used as a role model. Parents become the most important figure for a child to get love and education to support a child's future. The parents take a crucial stand, when it comes to their children's development and education as whole, as the parents themselves are the ones to take care on the overall children physical and intellectual development, until the point they get independent and ready to face the challenges of the society they live in (Ceka & Murati, 2016).

Sometimes as parents have a different understanding between the roles of father and mother in nurturing and educating their children. In a parenting sometimes father and mother have a different parenting style to shaping their children. A child will get different treatment from his father and mother. Parent's character, talent and personality are essential because this is what a child feel (Kagan,1999). The father in a family is a very important factor, concerning the organization of a nice and appropriately functional development of a house hold, with a specific accent on the children. Helping fathers be the 'best fathers they can be' is therefore of enormous importance to children. Often in general view only

mothers are able to provide good parenting to their children, it turns out that the role of fathers is also able to present good parenting for their children.

Although the role of single father parenting is becoming more common than ever before, assuming that role may be difficult for many because mans are rarely socialized to be the primary caregivers for children. Fathers have few male role models for balancing the conflicting demands of work, socializing, housekeeping, and childcare (Greif and DeMaris, 1990). Individual single fathers are left essentially to themselves to define their roles, and expectations on the part of others are reflected in a wide range of behaviors and attitudes (Nietto, 1982).

The parenting of children by single parents is one of the social phenomena that often occur in society. Single parent is the condition of a parent who lives his life by playing a dual role as a mother or father without a companion figure. Being a single parent is certainly not easy because he plays two roles at once without any help, motivation or support from a companion to raise and care for their children. In reality, raising children alone is not easy, a single parent feels sadness, stress and even fatigue in parenting (Meier, 2016) Being a single father and carrying out multiple roles is not an easy thing to run (Isma, 2016). The father who is basically responsible for financial matters and takes care of his family also has to bear the burden of giving the love he must build when he is a single parent.

One of the novels brings the story of role of father as a single parent is a novel called *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy. *The Road* told a story about a man as a father and his son Fight to survive in difficult circumstances. The story takes place in a post-apocalyptic world that is desolate and full of destruction. The

novel revolves around the journey of an unnamed father and son heading south, trying to survive in the conditions of an extinct world. Every day they have to explore a safe place for them to stop, and try to find an uninhabited empty house to find food supplies left by the owner. This novel tells the story of relationship between father and his son, the journey of a father and his son travel to south in a world that has been destroyed, there is no life to be seen, each person struggles to survive including the father and his son. they are forced to fight and survive in difficult conditions. Their days are always filled with challenges to survive and fight. They live in uncertain conditions for their needs, food is only as good as it can be, they have no permanent residence, and threats to their lives are always there

Cormac McCarthy is an American novelist known for his distinctive writing style, exploration of complex themes, and his portrayal of harsh landscapes. A few novels his write such as *Blood Merdian* explores the brutality of human nature and the thin line between civilization and savagery. *All the Pretty Horses* the novel explores themes of love, loss, and the changing American West. *The Crossing* the novel delves into themes of destiny, loss, and the impact of violence on the human spirit. *Cities of the Plain* the narrative revolves around themes of love, friendship, and the inexorable changes occurring in the American West. *No Country for Old Men* the story involves a hunter who stumbles upon a briefcase of money. *The Road* is a bleak and haunting tale of a father and his young son's journey across a desolate, post-apocalyptic landscape.

Based on the whole explanation above, the writer is interesting to analyze

the novel *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy using the Structuralism Approach to issue of role of a father as a single parent in the novel. The purpose of the writer analyzing this topic is to provide information to the reader that are very important to knowing how the father can guide and carry out his son. Therefore, the writer raises the title *The Father's Role as a Single Parent in McCarthy's The Road*.

1.2. Identification of The Study

Novel *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy had some problem of life as a father and his son after the writer read the novel, the writer found some problems of life as a father and his son in the novel, as follows:

- 1. A father struggle to find some food in order to continue his life.
- 2. A man as a father's concern for the people he would meet while walking through each area he passed.
- 3. The fear of the child being abandoned by his father every time his father asks permission to find food.
- 4. Almost every day the father and his son lack food and starve.
- 5. The difficulty of finding a good person.
- 6. In difficult conditions there is no humanitarian assistance.
- 7. people looted buildings to find anything they could use to survive.

1.3. Research Question

The writer has formulated the statement of problems as follows based on the identification of the problem above as follows:

1. What are the roles of the father in taking on the responsibility of single parent in Cormac McCarthy's The Road? 2. What are the implications for the father of his role as a single parent in the novel?

1.4. Objective of The Study

Based on these research question statement above the writer determines two objectives of the study as follows:

- 1. To find out the father roles in taking responsibility as a single parent in the novel *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy.
- 2. To describe the implications on the father in caring out his role as a single parent in the novel.

1.5. Sequence of The Writing

This research consists of five chapters. Chapter one is an Introduction consists of Background, Identification of The Problem, Research Questions, Objectives of The Study, and Sequence of The Study. Chapter two is Previous Study which provides an overview of several Related Research, and Structuralism Approach that contains intrinsic elements of the novel which is Character, Plot Setting and Theme. Chapter three is Methodology which contains Methodological Design, Method of Collecting Data, Method of Analyzing Data, and Research Procedure. Chapter four is about discusses data of collection and the results of research related to the *The Road* novel by Cormac McCarthy. And Chapter Five is the closing chapter that consists of a conclusion of the research and suggestion from the writer.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, the writer discusses about Literary Preview, which consist of Previous Study, Structuralism Approach, and Theory of Fathering in literary work.

2.1. Previous Studies

This chapter consists of relevant research in related to this thesis, Structuralism Approach as an Approach used by the writer in analyzing in *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy. Relevant research is used to find out this thesis related to the writer thesis. Some data can be obtained from relevant or close to previous research. There are other writers who have addressed the same object, problem and approach from what the writer analyzed. The writer finds things related to this thesis and most about father as a single parent aspect and the object of research. There are similarities and differences in this study found from researches before such as Paulus D. Rori (2009), Husni Mubarok (2019), and Rizkyta Ayu Pangestuty (2022).

The Struggles for Survival Faced by a father in The Journey to South Beach: an Internal and External Conflict Study on Cormac McCarthy's The Road. It uses intrinsic approach to analyze the character in this novel. In this study writer uses the theory of conflict suggested by William G. Cunningham in his book Theoritical Framework for Conflict Resolution. In this the writer devided concept of conflict for two points they are external conflict and internal conflict that are faced by happen the characters, then focusing discuss about a man and son have a

problem had different experiences in solving problems and focus of conflicts faced by father on the journey to South Beach.

The second is written by Husni Mubarok (2019) under the title *The Main Characters Defense Mechanism In Cormac Mccarty's Novel The Road* discusses seven types of defense mechanism undergone by father they are repression, regression, denial, projection, rationalization, introjection, and displacement proving father performs his defense mechanism to cover his anxiety. It uses descriptive qualitative method and using theory of Sigmund Freud about defense mechanism than secondary theory is new criticism. The result of this research finds that father uses repression, regression, denial, projection, rationalization, introjection and displacement, father performs his defense mechanism to cover his anxiety.

Another thesis written by Rizkyta Ayu Pangestuty (2022) under the title *The Concept of Fathering in Louisa May Alcott's Little Women* it uses psychological approach which focus on Behavioral approach, this study using data in the form of words, lines, phrases, dialouges, and paragraphs related to the research topic to find and use data using Michael E. Lamb and Erini Flouri's theory of fathering. The result of this research is Mr. March in terms of upbringing his daughters greatly influence the development of March's girls named Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy. The four March girls grow up to be women who behaved well and had good character. They are women with good personalities either because of Mr. March's upbringing.

After read some previous studies above, the writer found that all the previous studies have a common study with this thesis it focused on object research and role of father as single parent. The difference between this thesis to Paulus D. Rori (2009) is more focus on internal and external conflict that are faced by a man and son happen the characters, than focusing discuss about a man and son have a problem and had different experiences in solving problems and focus of conflicts faced by father on the journey to South Beach. While this thesis just focused on a man as a father role his fathering to his son. And the difference between this thesis and Husni Mubarok (2019) is more focus on defense mechanism to the man as a main character performs to cover his anxiety. While this thesis focused on a man treat his son in maintainig their survive of life. Then, the difference between this thesis and Rizkyta Ayu Pangestuty (2022) focuses on novel little women by Louisa May Alcott the research talking about fathering Mr. March in terms of upbringing his daughters greatly influence the development of March's girls. On the other hand, this thesis has a difference object which telling a man and his son life in novel *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy. From the research that conducted above, the writer examined the issue of this study is role of Father as a single parent that occur in novel *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy as the object of study.

2.2. Structuralism Approach

Structuralism pioneered by Ferdinand De Saussure in the 1960s in France, De Saussure was a lecturer in the field of general linguistics. However, structural analysis developed in France in the 1965s at the hands of LeviStrauss

and Roland Barthes, which began to appear in the 1950s-1960s. The structuralism approach is an intrinsic approach that focuses on the content of the literary work itself which discusses the work on the elements that build from within. This approach examines literary works as autonomous works and is not related to the social background, history, biography of the author, and everything that exists outside the literary work (Satoto, 1993) Before further researching literary works, the preliminary stage in researching literary works is to understand the content of the text in the literary work. In literary research, analysis or an objective approach to the intrinsic elements (the structure of literary works) is the initial stage of examining literary works before entering further research (Damono, 1978).

Structuralism is basically a way of thinking about the world that deals with the response and description of structures. Taking the view in this theory, literary works are assumed to be phenomena that have structures that are interrelated with each other. The structure will have meaning if it is connected to other structures. As the definition of structure according to Endraswara (2004: 4) that the structure has complex parts, so that the meaning must be directed into the relationship between elements as a whole.

Regarding structuralism literary studies, Suwondo (2003) explains that structuralism literary studies reject the existence of external influences. to understand literary works means to understand the elements or things that build structures. Or, to put it more explicitly, structural analysis aims to uncover and explain carefully the attachment of everything in a literary work that together

produces an overall meaning. As the definition of structuralism according to Taum (1997: 38) that the theory of literary structuralism is a theory of approach to literary texts that finds the overall relationship between the various elements of the text. The elements of the text independently are not important without the unity that builds the text.

The purpose of structural analysis is to find and explain the interrelation and intertwining of various elements that together form meaning. Structural analysis can be done by understanding, analyzing, describing and explaining the elements that build literary works (Teeuw, 1984: 135). The structural approach is an approach to the structural content that exists in literary works. It could be said that the intrinsic elements are elements of the story itself. The elements build a novel such as character, plot, setting, and theme (Nurgiyantoro, 1998). It is very necessary to understand the elements by elements and the relationship between the elements in order to understand the authors' thoughts.

Based on the above definition, the author argues that structuralism is an approach to a literary work that is composed of elements of the autonomous structure of the work itself, before the work is connected to elements outside itself. Literature is assessed in its literary relationships first, freed from its social relationships. Therefore, this structuralism study can be used by the writer as a first step in understanding a literary work through intrinsic elements such as character, plot, setting, and theme.

2.2.1. Characters

The word of character refers to the person or actors of the story presented by the author, according to Abrams in Nurgiyantoro (1998) characters are people featured in a narrative or dramatic work that are interpreted by readers to have certain moral qualities and tendencies, as expressed in speech and what is done in action. The characters in the story can be anything, but usually the characters are humans (Rochani 2011: 47).

Nurgiyantoro (1998) suggests two types of characters based on the role or importance of the character, namely the main or major and minor. The main is a character who is classified as important and displayed continuously so that it dominates most of the story, while the minor is a character who appears once or several times in the story and even then it may be in a relatively short portion of the story.

Meanwhile characterization refers to the nature and attitude of the characters as interpreted by the reader, pointing more to the personal qualities of a character. Characterization is often equated with characterization, which refers to the placement of certain characters with certain characters in a story (Nurgiyantoro, 1998). Characterization takes an important role in building a novel, the story presented will not be interesting without the characterization that adorns the course of the story. Characterization plays an important role in a novel, without the actors who make the action of the story impossible (Rochani, 2011: 47).

The writer understands that characters are story actors or people described by the author, characters can be divided into two types, namely the main and minor. Then characterization is the nature and attitude of the characters in the story that can be interpreted by the reader so that it plays an important role in building the story.

2.2.2. Plot

Plot is a series of events containing cause and effect in a story that plays a significant role in attracting readers' attention, it can be said that plot is the backbone of a story. In story analysis, plot is the author's way of interweaving successive events by paying attention to the law of cause and effect so that it is a coherent, round and complete unit (Suharianto, 1982).

The plot creates an impulse for the reader to continue reading the whole story, making the reader wonder how the next event will happen. The plot features events that contain conflicts that are able to create an attraction for the reader. One of the important elements of plot is the transition from one situation to another. The plot is the whole series of events that are interrelated with each other in the story. Generally, plot has a convention structure in the literary works according to Chartes (1987: 136-137) divided into five parts such as exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution.

- 1. Exposition is the part in which the characters, scene, time, and situation revealed.
- Rising action, events in the story complicated is the conflict revealed.
 These are events between the introduction and climax

- Climax is turning point of the story where the rising action (complication and conflict) come to further development and to a moment of crisis.
- 4. Falling action is the problem or conflict proceeds towards resolution.
- 5. Resolution is the last event in a novel or the outcome of a conflict. The main character has founded the solving this problem and this result in a happy or sad ending. Resolution refers to stage where the crisis or conflict is resolved either for better or for worse.

Based on the explanation above the writer understands plot is a narrative development pattern formed by causes and effects relationships that describe how the story develops, unfolds, and moves in time. It is structured from exposition (introduction), rising action (conflict unfolds), climax (culmination of the story), falling action (resolution begins), and final resolution (resolution).

2.2.3. Setting

Setting, also known as a foundation, refers to the meaning of place, historical time relationships, and the social environment in which the events being told occur (Abrams, 1999-284). Also, Brooks in Tarigan (1983) states that setting is the physical background, elements of place and space. The setting can describe the environment of the place, time and social environment of the events in a story that will bring readers to feel or imagine an event happening.

Settings can be used for several purposes. (Tarigan, 1983: 136) explains that, firstly, a setting that can be easily recognized, described clearly and vividly, easily remembered usually tends to increase the belief in the characters, their

movements and actions. Readers will accept the setting as something real, natural, normal, and not exaggerated. Secondly the setting of a story can have a more direct relation to the overall meaning and general sense of a story. The setting can create an atmosphere that is beneficial to the storytelling. The setting is divided into three main elements, time setting, place setting, and social setting.

a) Setting of Places

The setting of place is the location of the events told in a work of fiction in the form of a place with a certain name. The setting in a novel usually includes various locations. The setting will move from one place to another in line with the development of the plot and characters. The description of a place must be convincing, which requires a mastery of the geographical situation of the location concerned, complete with its characteristics and characteristics. The setting becomes something distinctive, typical, and functional.

b) Setting of Time

The setting of time relates to the issue of when events occur in the story in a work of fiction. The word about when is connected with factual time, time that is related to historical events. Bringing historical elements into a work of fiction causes the time told to be distinctive, typical, and can be very functional, so that it cannot be replaced with another time without affecting the development of the story. The issue of time in fiction is also often related to the length of time used in the story. Some novels take a long time, almost the whole life of the characters. There are also novels that take a relatively short period of time.

c) Setting of Social

Setting of social, things that relate to the behavior of people's social life in a place told in a work of fiction. The way people live their social lives covers a wide range of issues in a fairly complex environment. Social settings can include living habits, customs, traditions, beliefs, worldviews, ways of thinking, and ways of behaving. The social setting is part of the overall setting and exists within the cohesion of the other setting elements.

Based on the explanation above, the writer concludes that setting, setting is a time base that is built with three elements, setting of places, setting of time, and setting of society. Setting explains the circumstances or conditions of a fictional story that can bring readers into the story.

2.2.4. Theme

Theme is something that becomes the basis of the story that is always related to various life experiences, such as the problem of love, love, longing, fear, death, religion, and so on. (Nurgiyantoro, 1998) defines theme as a story that specifically explains most of its elements in a simple way. The theme will be known after the work is studied by revealing the author's main idea in making a story. Theme is hidden, meaning that it is not directly mentioned or expressed by the author. In order to determine and interpret the theme of a novel, Nurgiyantoro (1998: 87) suggests a number of criteria that can be followed as follows:

1. The interpretation of a novel's theme should consider each prominent story detail;

- 2. The interpretation of a novel's theme should not contradict each story detail;
- 3. The interpretation of a novel's theme should not be based on evidence that is not stated either directly or indirectly in the novel;
- 4. The interpretation of a novel's theme should be based on evidence that is directly present and or suggested in the story.

Based on the explanation above, the writer understands the theme is the foundation of a story that is always related to life that we can get after reading the whole story, because the theme is hidden and requires interpretation from the reader of a story.

2.3. The Concept of Fathering

Michael E. Lamb in his book entitled *The Role of The Father in Child Development* explains that the role of fathers in children live continues to change from previous conceptualization. Father role is often focused on narrowly on breadwinning for his family life. That is based on the conceptualization that developed during the industrialization period. Fathers have a role in being responsible for supporting the family economy that consist to make sure it will be right through to his family. It is a necessity that a father must be able to provide for the necessities of life for his family and children. After that, the Great Depression which began in August 1929 was coming. In this dark era, social scientists claim that the role father is changing again. Many poor-men who are less able to play the role of poor providers, portray fathers as sex role models.

That is also supported by commenters who express concern about the failure of many men to model masculine behavior for their sons (Lamb, 2010).

The concept built by Lamb in an effort to involve the father's role in shaping children divides it into five parts, among others:

- Warm and responsive attitude, father's care is not only related to the quantity of time, but also the quality through a warm and responsive attitude.
- 2. Control and supervision, a form of parenting by knowing the child's whereabouts and also supervising their behavior and decisions.
- 3. Positive involvement in activities, as seen through efforts to spend time with the child, providing emotional support, providing daily help, monitoring the child's behavior, and non-threatening discipline.
- 4. Indirect care by preparing for the child's care and future needs.
- 5. A sense of responsibility by taking the initiative to engage in caregiving activities.