

**MALTREATMENT TOWARDS CHILDREN WITH DISABILITY IN SHELLEY'S
*FRANKENSTEIN***



A Thesis

*Submitted to the Faculty of Cultural Sciences Hasanuddin University in partial fulfilment of
the requirements to obtain Sarjana degree in English*

WRITTEN BY

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FACULTY OF CULTURAL SCIENCES

HASANUDDIN UNIVERSITY

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LEGITIMATION

THESIS

MALTREATMENT TOWARDS CHILDREN WITH DISABILITY IN SHELLEY'S
FRANKENSTEIN

BY

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It has been examined before the Board of Thesis Examination on Friday, 12 July 2024
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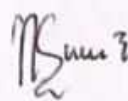

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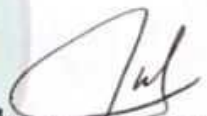
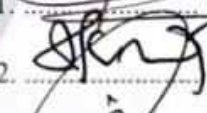




AGREEMENT

On July 22, 2024, the Board of Thesis Examination has kindly approved a thesis by Nadya Nurhidayah Ma'ruf (F041201002) entitled "Maltreatment towards children with disability in Shelley's *Frankenstein*" 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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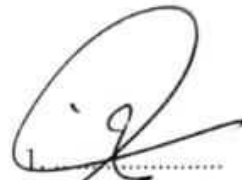
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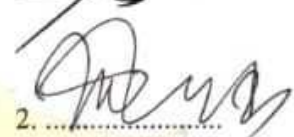
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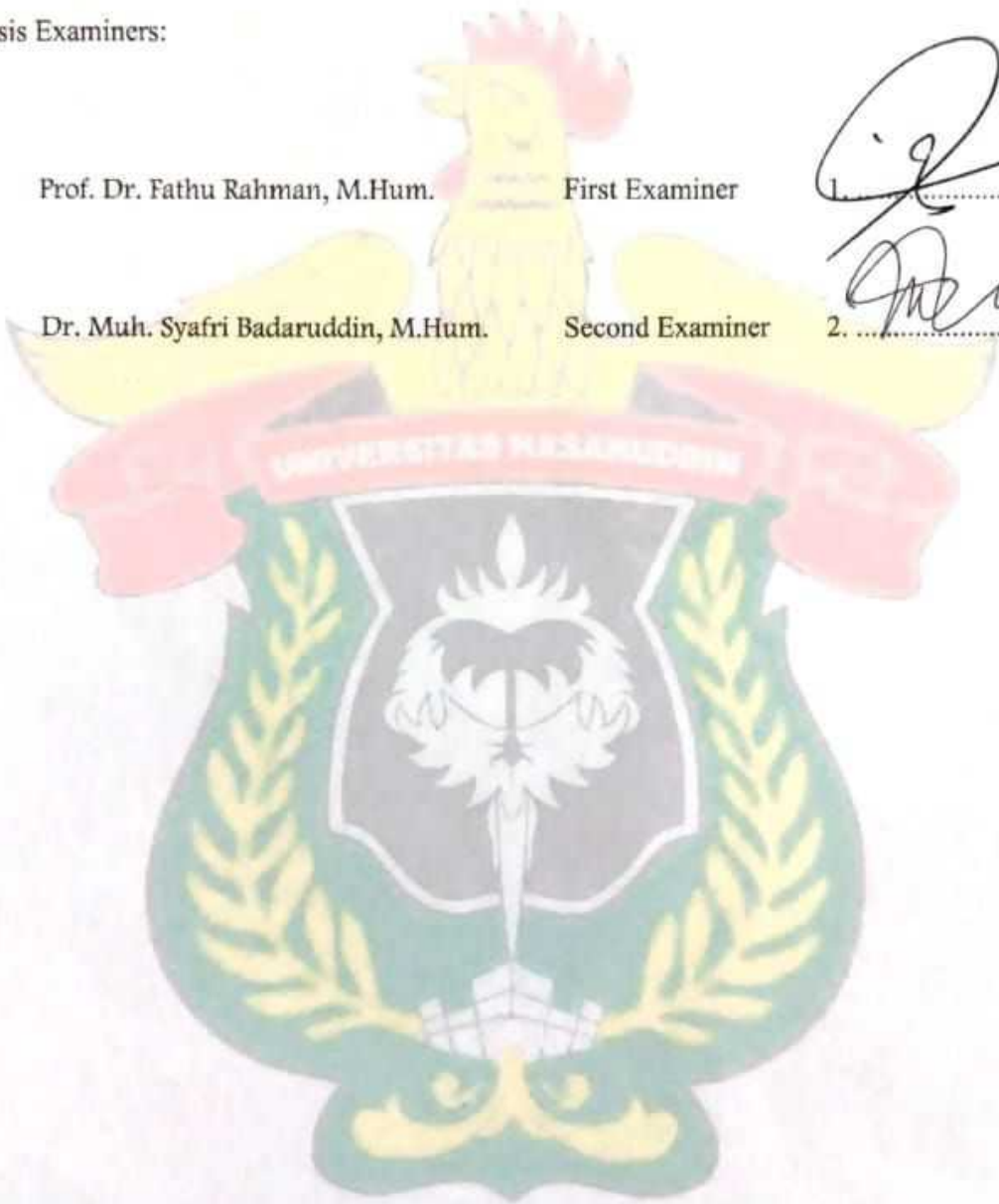
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STATEMENT LETTER

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Hereby , the writer declares that this thesis is written by herself. 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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APPROVAL FORM


With reference to the letter of the dean of Faculty of Cultural Sciences Hasanuddin University No. 1336/UN4.9.1/KEP/2023 regarding supervision, we hereby confirm to approve the undergraduate thesis draft by Nadya Nurhidayah Ma'ruf (F041201002) to be examined at the English Literature Study Program of Faculty of Cultural Sciences.


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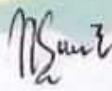
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Alhamdulillah Rabbil Alamin, all thanks to Allah SWT. for His blessing, strength, health, and guidance so the writer could finish the thesis entitled “Maltreatment towards children with disability in Shelley’s *Frankenstein*” in order to finish her study as a student in English study program of Hasanuddin University. Shalawat and Salam are also addressed to the Prophet Muhammad SAW., His family and His followers.

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Abstract

Nadya Nurhidayah Ma'ruf. 2024. *Maltreatment towards children with disability in Shelley's *Frankenstein*.* (Supervised by **M. Amir P.** and **Herawaty**).

This study discusses maltreatment towards children with disability by their family or caretaker, friends, and society in general. From the novel *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley, the writer interpreted that the character "The creature" represents the maltreatment children with disability endured in past and present life. The writer also explains how the maltreatment affected the children's life towards the future.

The writer uses intrinsic elements which focuses on characterization, plot, setting, and theme to highlight the events and also the actions of the character that will play into the realization of the research's main topic of maltreatment towards disability. In addition to that, the writer chooses sociology of literature, especially Ian Watt's sociology of literature theory to analyse the novel *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley. This theory focuses on the notion that literature not only needs to reflect the behaviours of society at the time the work was created, but can also reflect events that occurred at different times. The writer also uses qualitative research and explains the research descriptively.

The result of this research indicates that the creature from *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley received the same maltreatments that disabled children received in past and present from their family, friends, and the society such as neglect, physical and emotional abuse. The maltreatment also affected the creature negatively just how it affected disabled children mentally.

Keywords: *Maltreatment, disability, Frankenstein, Sociology of Literature*



Abstrak

Nadya Nurhidayah Ma'ruf. 2024. *Maltreatment towards children with disability in Shelley's Frankenstein*. (Dibimbing oleh **M. Amir P.** dan **Herawaty**).

Penelitian ini membahas tentang penganiayaan terhadap anak penyandang disabilitas yang dilakukan oleh keluarga atau pengasuhnya, teman, dan masyarakat pada umumnya. Dari novel *Frankenstein* karya Mary Shelley, penulis menafsirkan bahwa karakter “the creature” mewakili penganiayaan yang dialami anak-anak penyandang disabilitas di masa lalu dan masa kini. Penulis juga menjelaskan bagaimana penganiayaan tersebut mempengaruhi kehidupan anak-anak di masa depan.

Penulis menggunakan unsur intrinsik yang berfokus pada penokohan, alur, latar, dan tema untuk menyoroti peristiwa dan juga tindakan tokoh yang akan berperan dalam terwujudnya topik utama penelitian tentang penganiayaan terhadap disabilitas. Selain itu, penulis memilih sosiologi sastra, khususnya teori sosiologi sastra oleh Ian Watt untuk menganalisis novel *Frankenstein* karya Mary Shelley. Teori ini berfokus pada anggapan bahwa sastra tidak hanya perlu mencerminkan perilaku masyarakat pada saat karya tersebut diciptakan, namun dapat juga mencerminkan peristiwa yang terjadi pada waktu yang berbeda. Penulis juga menggunakan penelitian kualitatif untuk menganalisis topik yang dibawakan.

Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa “the creature” dari *Frankenstein* oleh Mary Shelley menerima perlakuan buruk yang sama seperti yang diterima anak-anak penyandang disabilitas di masa lalu dan sekarang oleh keluarga, teman, dan masyarakat seperti penelantaran, kekerasan fisik dan kekerasan emosional. Penganiayaan tersebut juga berdampak negatif pada makhluk tersebut, seperti halnya berdampak pada mental anak-anak penyandang disabilitas.

Kata Kunci: *Penganiayaan, Disabilitas, Frankenstein, Sosiologi Sastra*



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the writer explains the background of the study, identification of the problem, the scope of the problem, research questions, the objective of the writing, the significance of the writing, and the sequence of the writing. The explanations of these sub-titles are explained in the following.

1.1 Background of study

Literature is the media of human expression in the form of written or oral works that are made based on thoughts or reflections of the creator's real-life situation and served in attractive words through language media. There are some aspects that could differentiate one literary work from another, such as the history of its creator's life, the sociological situation during the creation of the literary work, the place and time where the work was made, etc.

Literary works being the media to reflect the history and other important life event that last long after the event occurred, makes literature become one of the most important and best mediums to spread awareness and to learn about other perspectives of something. Aesthetic words that are used in most literature works can easily attract people to engage with the work while also learning the important contents of the story.



There are three forms of literature, there are drama, poetry, and prose. One of famous forms that still has a huge impact on society is prose, especially a novel is a narrative fiction in a form of prose about certain living

experiences that are published in specified length. Novel is written in purpose to be the media of the writer to tell their individual experiences, this allows the writer to write more specific and accurate events of their individual life. Writer personal life such as their opinion over certain things or personal feelings are implanted through the characters that are contributed in the novel's story.

Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, real name Née Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin is the only daughter of a philosopher couple, William Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft. However, Mary's mother passed away after she gave birth to Mary, but Mary grew up reading all of her books and inherited her mom's interest towards feminism. 4 years later, Mary's father remarried with his neighbour and Mary was introduced with two step siblings. In 1812, Mary met Percy Bysshe Shelley during her home visit to England. Despite the fact that Shelley was still married at that time, the two left England to France in July 1814. They got married in 1816 after Harriet, Percy's wife, committed suicide in December 10, 1816. Mary and Percy's marriage did not run smoothly as they continuously faced money problems and were forced to leave England despite her success with *Frankenstein*. Mary had 3 children who passed away and that disturbed her mental and physical health but overjoyed with the birth of her fourth child, Percy Florence Shelley. The happiness did not last long for Mary as Percy passed away after a boat accident where he drowned on July 8, 1822 (Pearson, 2020).



en Moers argued that *Frankenstein* is a “birth myth” that discloses the n against newborn life, and the drama of guilt, dread, and flight

surrounding birth and its consequences.” (Long Hoeveler, 2003). It is believed that *Frankenstein* was written based on the guilt Mary felt over her mother's death during her birthing after she wasn't able to push out the placenta after she gave birth to Mary Shelley in 1797. This leads to an assumption that the book was written to represent the abnormal expectations between parents and their child.

In novels, authors are most likely to tell a story which is familiar with their own life, no matter if the story was entirely fictional to the real world. One of the most famous Gothic novels, *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelly is the best example for this phenomenon. The novel follows the story of Victor Frankenstein, a talented and smart young man that will grew up to be a genius scientist. His passion towards natural philosophy brings him to create a creature similar to humans. One could say that the relationship between Victor and the creature should be as close as father and son relationship. However, it is apparent that Victor wasn't ready for the consequences of his own actions of creating the creature. After he saw the appearance of his own creature, he found himself having a nightmare of what was supposed to be his “son”. Victor's mental state took control of him and he ended up abandoning the creature.

Child maltreatment is a form of physical or mental harm, including child neglect towards underage children (under 18 years old). There are many types of child maltreatment such as mental and sexual abuse, neglect and negligence of person, and child exploitation that can cause harm to mental and physical the children, including interfering with children grows (World Health



Organization, 2022). These negative treatments not only injured children physically but also mentally, they often lasted for a long time after the abuse happened and completely damaged the way children live to their adulthood.

Maltreatment towards children with disability are often caused by the inability of the caregiver to raise children with disability. Taking care of children with disabilities and/or children with chronic illness often face caregivers with more challenges in a form of economic, physical, emotional, and social values.(Legano et al., 2021). The stress that was caused by the high demand for the family took a high toll on the way the family treated the children. Caregivers who are unable to fulfil the high demands would turn to abuse or neglect. Neglect, in particular, is the most common form of maltreatment towards children with disability due to the complex care that the children need to receive basic knowledge to live in the society and also to ensure children's health. After neglect, children with disability growth will be disturbed mentally and physically. This will create a gap between the children and their non disabled peers. Therefore, they will be treated differently by people around them.

The writer is interested in analysing this novel because it portrays child neglect which is considered to be understandable by some people. *“Child neglect is a malicious act or omission by a parent or other caregiver that deprives a child of age-appropriate basic needs, thereby causing or reasonably likely to cause physical*

ological harm” (Psychology Today, 2024). According to Bowta & wa (2018), Victor is scared of the creature that he created due to his



appearance, even refused to talk to him and did not care about the creature's life after he neglected him and that is the form of how irresponsible Victor is as a person. The creature was feared by Victor from the moment he was first alive and was forced to leave his place due to neglect. He had to hide from society and live in the forest because they feared and abused him. He did not know how to speak; he did not have food or shelter to survive and he had wounds across his body. The creature's height and form conceal the fact he had knowledge of a child.

From the reason above, the writer assumed that the novel *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelly is interesting to be analysed using the sociology of literature, specifically Ian Watt's theory of sociology of literature, because the novel talks about the maltreatment of the creature from his creator and the society around him because of his appearance that can be seen as a maltreatment towards children with disability by their parents and the society, so the writer choose *Maltreatment Towards Children with Disability in Shelley's Frankenstein* as the title of this study.

1.2 Identification of the Problem

After reading Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein*, the writer finds and identifies some problems in the story:

1. Victor Frankenstein thoughts on the creature that led to the creature being neglected.



maltreatment from people towards the creature based on his appearances.
abandonment impact of the creatures towards Victor Frankenstein's life.
or Frankenstein and the creature's mental issues.

5. The creature serial murder on Victor's innocent family.

1.3 Scope of the problem

In this research, the writer limits the problem to only focus on the maltreatment from people towards the creature based on his appearances. The writer focuses on analysing the issue of violence using the sociology of literature approach.

1.4 Research question

Based on identification of the problem. the writer formulates the research questions as follows:

1. What is the impact of neglect and abuse towards the creature in Shelley's novel *Frankenstein*?
2. How is maltreatment towards children with disabilities presented in Shelley's *Frankenstein*?

1.5 Objective of the Writing

In accordance with the problems construction, the writer intends to present several answers, as follows:

1. To explain the impact of neglect and abuse towards the creature in Shelley's novel *Frankenstein*.



describe the maltreatment towards children with disabilities presented in Shelley's *Frankenstein*.

1.6 Significance of the writing

Based on the study title above, this study can provide theoretical and practical significance as follows:

1.6.1 Theoretical

By using the sociology of literature approach to analyse the character “The creature” from the novel *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley as representative of children with disability, the writer provides the connection between fictional characters and the reality of human beings in present time.

1.6.2 Practical

This study also can be the additional reference for the readers, especially the students of the English Literature program of the Faculty of Cultural Sciences about character analysing and moral values of the social issues in the novel.

1.7 Sequence of the writing

This research consists of five chapters. The first chapter is an introduction consisting of background, identification of the problem research question, objective of the writing, significance of the writing, and sequence of chapter. The second chapter is literature review or the theoretical background, consisting of previous study, sociology of literature theory, conflict and social conflict. The third chapter



dology of the study, including methods of collecting data, method of ; data, and research procedures. The fourth chapter is discussion and which includes the structural aspects of the novel and the impact of social

conflict on the main character in the fictional story. The final chapter is a conclusion and suggestion which summarizes the whole information in the thesis and also presents some suggestions to future analysis.



CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This second chapter consists of the previous study which includes several analyses related to the issue of this thesis. The writer then continues to explain about the theoretical background which consists of an intrinsic element, sociology of literature approach, and explanation on maltreatment towards children with disability.

2.1 Previous Related Studies

Previous study is one of preferences which are used by writers to support this thesis. The writer found some previous studies about child neglect on *Frankenstein* and any other issues related to it, such as those written by Hale & Schwab (2001), Bowta & Puluhalawa (2018), and Davies (2021).

The first research is written by Hale & Schwab (2001) with a title *Constructing Connectedness: Gender, Sexuality and Race in Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*. Hale used psychoanalytic theory as a critical tool in her textual analysis of the work while drawing connections between gender and racial issues. The research focused on two layers of concern in Shelley's novel: the local concerns of the nuclear family and the global issues of imperialism and New World slavery.

As the result of this research, Hale found the incorporating references to literary criticism of *Frankenstein* which suggest that Shelley was very much aware of the social and political tensions surrounding these issues, four relational aspects are identified which define the relationships depicted in the novel:



familial, homosocial, sexual, and racial. These four levels of human interconnectedness reveal the inherent instability of the institutions of family and race that society sought so determinedly to establish as stable and immutable in the nineteenth century.

The second research was written by Bowta & Puluhalawa in the year of 2018 which is entitled *Deconstructive Analysis of Main Character in Frankenstein Novel by Mary Shelley*. The purpose of this research is to deconstruct the main character of the *Frankenstein* novel. This is qualitative research with a deconstructive approach. Deconstruction is a method of reading texts which shows that in every text there is always an absolute presumption. The results are the portrayal of Victor after deconstruction that Victor himself was the cause of all the chaos done by the creatures. Victor's ambitions that are too deep in science make him a different person, from a good character to very selfish and cruel.

The third research was written by Davies in the year of 2021 with the title *Constituents of Fatherhood that Represent a Threat to Family and Society in Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*. This research applied Judith Butler's feminist theory, the theory of performativity by examining the different examples of fatherhood in the novel, performing a comparative study whilst applying a historical context. The main point of the analysis is comparing the effects of the existing types of fatherhood in the novel, on family and society, using the theory of performativity.



resulted in the understanding that Frankenstein gives much consideration to constituents of fatherhood which may represent the most immediate threat to

the family as a building block, to the happiness of children, and the improvement of society.

After looking at the three previous studies for this research, the writer found some similarities and differences between each research. Research written by Hale & Schwab, Bowta & Puluhalawa, and Davies focused on analysing “Frankenstein” by Marry Shelley, but used different theories and approaches. Hale & Schwab focused more on connecting gender and sexuality with racial context using psychoanalytic theory. Bowta & Puluhalawa focused on the main character, Victor Frankenstein, as the object of the research using deconstructive analysis. While Davies, focused on finding the role of Fatherhood for the society using Butler’s feminist theory, the theory of performativity. The current study focused more on the maltreatment that are done towards *the creature* by the people around them, using Intrinsic elements and Sociology of literature as theory to analyse the characters and their acts that represent maltreatment towards children with disabilities.

2.2 Theoretical Background

There are two types of elements that help the writer in doing research of literature work, which are intrinsic elements and extrinsic elements. Using intrinsic elements means that the writer focuses on the Characters/characterization, plot, setting and theme. While extrinsic elements require deeper knowledge about the

and events that took place in the literary work, then use particular theory
ary experts.



In this subchapter, the writer explains the two elements being used to analyse the book *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley. First, Intrinsic elements consist of Characterization, plot, setting, and theme. Second, the writer explains sociology of literature approach and Ian Watt's theory of sociology of literature. In the end, the writer also provides an explanation about the maltreatment towards children with disabilities.

2.2.1 Intrinsic Elements

In this study, the intrinsic elements of literature are being used to define the entire story of the novel *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley. Intrinsic elements are the elements that work with each other to build and amplify the way the story goes. Intrinsic elements need to be properly studied before the writer can analyse the novel using the sociology of literature approach. In this part, the writer explain Intrinsic elements such as characterization, plot, setting, and theme.

I. Characterization

Literature commonly being used to describe a human life, fictional or based on real person. Each literary work has its main characters with their own personality. This personality is one of the most important keys to make a good story. Characterizations are the depiction of the characters, both physical and emotional state.

Bradley (1909), considers characterization as "*the delineation of character by*

f action, speech, thought, or commentary by the author or another

:" To Determine the characterization of a prose work, the reader can find



them directly and indirectly. The Author of literary works often state the personality of the character they wrote on their work. Otherwise, the reader has to determine the personality of the characters by working through the characters' subtle reactions throughout the story, the way the characters speak, and their behaviour. Eventually the reader will conclude the characterization of the characters.

II. Plot

Plot is the series of events throughout the story that takes the reader from the first line to the end of the story. Along with this, the main character will slowly reach the goal that is written from them by the author of the story. In 1863, Gustav Freytag, in his work "Die Technik des Dramas" (The Technique of the Drama), developed what is now known as "Freytag's Pyramid." This concept divides the plot of a story into five essential parts:

1. Exposition is mostly containing character introductions and how they are related towards other characters in the story. This part usually does not contain any conflict that might play in the story later.
2. Rising action is the part where the conflict starts to take alight into the story. In this part, the characters will start to face challenges on their way towards their goal.
3. Climax is the part where the conflict becomes the main thing that the characters have to face.



Falling action is the aftermath of the conflict, whether or not the characters defeated the problem or failed to eliminate them, they will have to adjust their new situation.

5. Resolution is the final part of the story where the whole story connected to each other and created a conclusion of the entire story.

III. Setting

Setting is the location and the time which the story takes place. Aristotle (1967), in his "Poetics," acknowledges setting as essential to the structure of a story. He identifies it as both the physical backdrop and the temporal context that shape the plot and characters' actions. Setting provides the information that is very important to differentiate one situation in the story to another. Setting provides a large context for the reader regarding the social situation during which the story took place. It could explain the way characters behave and the choices they made. There are three types of settings. Setting of time, setting of places, and social setting.

IV. Theme

Themes exist within every single literary work ever created. Theme is the message that the author tries to convey into their works. McKee (1997), in his book "Story: Substance, Structure, Style and the Principles of Screenwriting," defines theme as "*a statement, expressible in a single sentence, about the human condition.*" Themes provide the moral and emotional core of stories. Theme does not only apply to one character or scenes in book or play, but it also an idea or lesson that human can apply to their lives. Theme most likely do not stated directly on works, the reader could find it through symbols throughout the entire book or play.



2.2.2 Sociology of Literature Approach

In doing research about the topic of children with disabilities in the novel *Frankenstein*, the writer uses a Sociology of Literature approach. Sociological approach is one of the branches of literary theories that discusses its relationship with society. The literary study survey reveals a variety of perspectives and ideas about literature and its role in society. While the sociological approach to studying literature has been around since Plato's time, it really made its mark in critical theory during the late twentieth century (Jadhav, 2014).

The field of literary sociology was first established in France in 1791 by Jonathan Herder (1744–1803). Herder shows the uncertainty towards the purpose of rationalism and enlightenment in his book *Idea for Philosophy of History for Mankind* (1791). Herder made claims on the connections between literature and social structures, race, culture, and customs. Madame de Stale (1706-1817), said that the inspiration taken for literature writing is part of literature and it is characterized by the environment and national characters. For her, major changes aiming towards a better life in the world should be depicted in literature.

According to Jadhav (2014), In 1871, Hippolyte Taine (1828-1893) was dubbed the Father of Sociological Literature due to him being the first person to provide the method to analyze literature with sociological approach as part of literature study. According to Taine, literary works serve as a national monument

ures the spirit and consciousness of their respective eras. On the other hand, x (1818-1883) and Frederick Engels (1820-1895) stated that literature is a



form of the social structure which focuses on the economic factor and social class. Their primary focus is to showcase the connection between the material and aesthetic methods of production. Additionally, they assert that the nature and mode of economic production establish social relations, in which individuals form class relations, ultimately becoming the ideology of society.

In 1961, Leo Lowenthal stated that authors are responsible for creating characters and placing them in situations that involve interactions with others and the communities in which they reside. It is the role of the reader to establish the connection between the author's fictional characters and the historical context in which they were conceived. A subsequent theory on the sociology of literature was put forth by Robert Escarpit in 1970, which characterized the reader as a cultural consumer within literary works.

Ian Watt stated that literary works do not necessarily only reflect the society during the work were created (Watt, 1957). The idea comes from the fact that society's behaviour might change during the time the book is being read. The author also often makes the story based on their own creative thinking that might not be implied to the author's environment, but to another type of group in another time and place. Literary work that detailed the conditions of the society at the time it is written, might not be reliable to describe the society. While a complete fictional work can be interpreted to be the reflection of the society. Essentially, the sociology

ire underscores the significance of readers in the realm of literary works.

the discussion, the sociology of literature can be categorized into three



main components: the sociology of the author's environment, the sociology of literary works as reflections of society, and the sociology of readers as consumers of literature.

2.2.3 Maltreatment towards children with disability

Children are the most delicate part of our society. Children are innocent and clueless about the world, for this reason, they must be accompanied and taught how to live their life. Unfortunately, in the world where the children must be protected and loved, they often have to face a lot of maltreatment from irresponsible people. The maltreatment sometimes even comes from the people they should be trusted.

“Child maltreatment is the abuse and neglect that occurs to children under 18 years of age.” (World Health Organization, 2022). There are a lot of types of maltreatment, such as physical and emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, child exploitation, or any other type of treatment that has a negative impact of the children's growth, physically and mentally.

Dr. Wendell (1996), argues that disability is not merely a medical condition but a social phenomenon deeply influenced by societal norms, structures, and attitudes. People with disabilities often stand out from non-disabled people and easily become targets of abuse due to their disability. Children with disabilities are even more prone to abuse, especially neglect, than non-disabled children due to the fact that disabled children need more attention than non-disabled children. *“the disability” and “special health care needs” include the full spectrum of mental, and emotional impairment.*” (Hibbard et al., 2007). Disability can



be tracked down to the genetics of the parents and birth defect during the pregnancy. Neglect towards children with disability starts when parents do not take full attention to the baby during pregnancy, allowing the birth defect to last until the baby is born.

“Children with chronic illnesses or disabilities often place higher emotional, physical, economic, and social demands on their families.”(Legano et al., 2021).

Parents who are not prepared to have disabled children might abandon their need for intensive care by the professional. When disabled children do not receive proper care, they most likely cannot fit into the society once they grow up. Besides the caretaker, abuse and neglect also come from their friends and society in general. A lot of people purposefully avoid engaging with people with disabilities. A lot of disabled children find it hard to find friends, especially with other non-disabled children. Bullying cases still often happen and are ignored by responsible adults around them.

Due to the abuse and neglect, Children who grow up in an abusive environment will face a lot of trouble in socializing with other people their age to their adulthood or might be injured permanently over the abuse. Disabled children might lose their identity and also think badly about themselves due to being treated indifferently by others. While the case of neglect and abuse has proven to be fatal once it disturbs the mental stability of the victim, a lot of people still ignore the full

how it might turn into the worst case imagine.

