CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHOD

2.1 Theoretical Framework

According to Luft et al (2022:5), Theoretical framework is a set of assumptions and perspectives that helps researchers explain and interpret a studied phenomenon through a particular lens. This research thesis focuses on of intrinsic and extrinsic elements to support the interpretation of the narrative. These frameworks help explain how literary structure and moral concepts are connected in the story.

2.1.1 Intrinsic Elements

According to Wellek and Warren (1949:139), intrinsic elements are the internal aspects of a literary work, such as plot, characters, setting, and structure, that are studied to understand the work as a self-contained artistic whole. This research thesis focuses on only three intrinsic elements of short stories: characters and characterization, setting, and conflict.

2.1.1.1 Characters and Characterizations

According to Abrams (2015:47-50), a character is a person represented in a dramatic or narrative work, whose moral, intellectual, and emotional traits are inferred by readers through their dialogue, actions, and interactions with others. Their speech and behavior are driven by their temperament, desires, and moral

nature, leading them to remain stable or undergo transformation throughout the narrative. Some characters maintain a consistent personality, while others experience gradual development or sudden change due to a significant event.

According to Duncan (2006:15-16), the main character is the central figure in a story, responsible for driving the plot forward and engaging the audience through their struggles and development. This character is often referred to as the protagonist, whose journey is shaped by conflicts and interactions with other characters. A compelling main character is typically defined by a strong goal, a flaw that makes them relatable, and a transformation that occurs by the end of the story.

Meanwhile, the supporting character is someone who helps the protagonist develop by creating important conflict and showing the emotional sides of the story (Martell, 2012:9-10). This character plays a key role in supporting the main character, the storyline, and the theme, and is naturally connected to the plot rather than added without purpose. Their presence supports the theme without causing distractions, as they develop organically from the central conflict.

Meanwhile, Lynch-Brown (2011:36), characterization is a technique used by the authors to convey character traits to readers. This is achieved through descriptions of physical traits, personality, emotions, and moral values, as well as the character's actions, speech, and interactions with others.

2.1.1.2 Settings

According to Kenney (1966:38), setting of place is the geographical location where a story occurs, including specific physical elements such as landscapes,

buildings, or interiors. This aspect of the setting provides context and helps establish the atmosphere of the narrative. It is a universe that interacts with the unfolding events, providing context and depth to the narrative in the form of place and time. According to Tompkins (1994:226), the setting of time is the temporal framework in which a story unfolds, encompassing both the specific time of day and the broader historical period. It plays a crucial role in shaping the sequence of events and influencing character actions. According to Schirova (2006:34), the setting of the environment in a fictional work includes the moral values, customs, and societal norms that shape how characters behave and relate to one another. In this research thesis, the writer focuses on setting of place, setting of time, and setting of environment.

2.1.1.3 Conflicts

According to Smeets (2021:151-153), conflict is an overarching term encompassing various negative relational dynamics such as opposition, hostility, avoidance, and confrontation. It emerges when there are unresolved differences in goals, which can take the form of direct clashes between individuals or be embedded within larger societal structures. While conflict does not always lead to violence, violence is always rooted in conflict. In literary narratives, conflict is often portrayed in two ways: internal conflict and external conflict. According to Meyer (1976:45), internal conflict refers to a moral or psychological struggle within a character, arising from opposing desires or emotions. This internal turmoil often manifests as a dilemma or feelings of guilt, influencing the

character's decisions and actions. According to Rector (2002:12), external conflict in literature refers to a struggle between a character and an outside force. This opposition can take various forms, such as a confrontation with another character, societal pressure, or natural forces. The writer focuses on internal conflict and external conflict in this research thesis.

2.1.2 Extrinsic Elements

According to Wellek and Warren (1949:139), extrinsic elements are the external aspects of a literary work, including biography, psychology, history, and society, that are used to interpret the work concerning its background or context. This research thesis will use Lawrence Kohlberg's morality theory and focus on three specific extrinsic elements in short stories: the portrayal of morality, the factors that influence morality, and the effects of morality. According to Kohlberg (1968:2-3), morality is defined through a developmental framework that outlines how individuals progress through different stages of moral reasoning. Kohlberg posits that moral development occurs in three levels: pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional, each containing two distinct stages.

2.1.2.1 The Portrayal of Morality in Every Stage

According to Kohlberg's morality theory (1968:2-3), individuals progress through distinct stages of moral reasoning, starting from obedience based on fear of punishment to acting according to internalized ethical principles. These stages, grouped into pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional levels, provide a psychological framework for analyzing how characters develop morally

through their experiences and decisions. Each level consists of two stages: the pre-conventional level includes the first stage (obedience and punishment orientation) and the second stage (individualism and exchange); the conventional level includes the third stage (good interpersonal relationships) and the fourth stage (maintaining social order); while the post-conventional level includes the fifth stage (social contract and individual rights) and the sixth stage (universal ethical principles).

2.1.2.1.1 Pre-Conventional Level

At the pre-conventional level, moral reasoning is primarily based on personal consequences, rather than broader ethical principles. Individuals at this stage determine right and wrong based on the immediate rewards or punishments they may receive.

The first stage of this level is known as obedience and punishment orientation (Kohlberg, 1968:2). At this stage, individuals perceive morality in terms of avoiding punishment or obeying authority figures. Actions are judged not by their inherent rightness or wrongness, but by the consequences they bring. Fear of punishment is a primary motivator for moral behavior.

The second stage is the self-interest and reciprocal exchange orientation (Kohlberg, 1968:2). Here, individuals make moral decisions based on personal benefit and mutual exchange. They recognize that others also have needs and may act fairly, but their understanding of fairness is often pragmatic. Morality at this stage follows a "you scratch my back, and I'll scratch yours" approach, where actions are deemed right if they result in personal gain.

2.1.2.1.2 Conventional Level

At the conventional level, individuals begin to internalize societal norms and expectations. Morality is no longer just about personal gain or avoiding punishment, but about fulfilling social roles and maintaining order within a group or society.

The third stage is the social relationships and approval orientation (Kohlberg, 1968:2). Moral behavior is driven by a desire to gain approval from others and to be seen as a good person. Actions are evaluated based on how they affect relationships and whether they align with accepted social norms. Intentions play a crucial role in moral judgment, and individuals may act kindly or responsibly to maintain a positive reputation.

The fourth stage is the law, order, and duty orientation (Kohlberg, 1968:2). Morality at this stage is tied to following established rules and laws to maintain social stability. Individuals believe in upholding authority and fulfilling responsibilities as part of their duty to society. Right and wrong are defined by fixed rules, and morality is seen as essential for maintaining order and preventing chaos.

2.1.2.1.3 Post-Conventional Level

At the post-conventional level, individuals move beyond societal norms and laws, basing their moral decisions on abstract ethical principles and universal values.

The fifth stage is the social contract perspective (Kohlberg, 1968:3). Here, individuals recognize that laws and social rules exist for the greater good but also

understand that these rules should be flexible and subject to change if they are unfair or do not promote justice. Morality is viewed as a negotiable system where ethical reasoning considers individual rights and the needs of the broader community.

The sixth stage is the orientation of universal ethical moral judgment (Kohlberg, 1968:3). At this highest level of moral development, individuals follow self-chosen ethical principles that emphasize justice, equality, and human dignity. Morality is no longer determined by external authority but by an internalized sense of justice. Individuals at this stage make decisions based on deeply held moral beliefs, even if it means going against societal norms or laws.

Portrayal of morality in literature refers to the depiction of characters' moral reasoning, choices, and moral growth. Kohlberg's morality theory provides insight into this process by explaining how moral reasoning evolves over time, helping to explain the psychological growth that influences ethical decision-making of the character. The framework highlights the transition from self-interest-driven morality to a more complex and principled understanding of ethics. This model is widely used in literary analysis, where characters' actions and moral dilemmas can be evaluated based on their stage of moral reasoning.

2.1.2.2 The Factors Influencing Morality

According to Cosgrave (2000:29-30), the development of moral character is shaped by several factors that influence an individual's moral identity, choices, and actions. These factors include knowledge, freedom, emotions, and social

context, all of which contribute to the formation of moral character and ethical decision-making.

2.1.2.2.1 Knowledge

Moral development requires experiential knowledge of moral values and disvalues, allowing individuals to recognize what is beneficial or harmful to themselves and society (Cosgrave, 2000:29). This includes self-awareness, where individuals understand their own values, attitudes, intentions, and limitations. Such awareness serves as the foundation for moral, spiritual, and psychological growth, enabling individuals to make more informed and ethical choices.

2.1.2.2.2 Freedom

True moral character formation depends on personal freedom, which allows individuals to take responsibility for their choices (Cosgrave, 2000:29). This includes freedom from internal and external obstacles that hinder moral decision-making. Cosgrave refers to this as basic freedom, which enables individuals to make transformative moral decisions that shape their moral identity over time.

2.1.2.2.3 Emotions

Emotions play a crucial role in moral motivation and decision-making (Cosgrave, 2000:29-30). They provide the energy behind moral actions and help individuals appreciate values both intellectually and affectively. Well-formed moral character leads to instinctive moral choices, as emotions enhance one's

ability to empathize and respond ethically. Emotional maturity is closely linked to moral maturity, as controlling negative emotions and cultivating empathy lead to better moral judgments.

2.1.2.2.4 Social Contexts

Moral character is also shaped by social environments, including family, communities, and institutions (Cosgrave, 2000:30). These groups influence moral beliefs, values, and behaviors, reinforcing ethical principles and guiding individuals toward moral responsibility. While people shape society, society in turn influences personal moral development, emphasizing the interplay between individual and collective morality.

The interplay between knowledge, freedom, emotions, and social context highlights the complexity of moral development. These factors collectively contribute to the formation of moral character, guiding individuals toward ethical decision-making and personal growth of the character.

2.1.2.3 The Effects of Morality

According to Ellemers (2008:1397), morality has a major role in shaping both individual and group behavior, overrides competence, quick decision-making, and develops group identity and solidarity strength. Morality guides actions by establishing ethical standards that individuals and communities follow, often taking precedence over other considerations such as personal benefits or skill-based competencies. Ellemers (2008:1397-1400) emphasizes that morality impacts behavior in several key ways that affect how individuals make decisions,

interact within groups, and contribute to collective identity, such as Override of Competence, Quick and Decisive Decision-Making, Group Identity and Solidarity Strength.

2.1.2.3.1 Override of Competence

Morality exerts a greater influence on decision-making than competence norms, especially within low-status groups (Ellemers, 2008:1398). When individuals perceive a certain behavior as morally correct, they are more inclined to follow it, even when it contradicts personal advantages or competence-based rewards.

2.1.2.3.2 Quick and Decisive Decision-Making

Morality not only influences what choices individuals make, but also the speed and certainty with which they reach decisions (Ellemers, 2008:1399). Aligning with moral standards reduces internal conflict, allowing individuals to make ethical choices with greater clarity. This is particularly evident in group contexts, where moral norms provide a shared framework that minimizes uncertainty and streamlines decision-making. The presence of strong moral guidelines helps individuals resolve dilemmas more efficiently, reinforcing group cohesion by ensuring that members act in alignment with collective values.

2.1.2.3.3 Group Identity and Solidarity Strength

Morality plays a fundamental role in shaping group identity by reinforcing shared values and ethical principles (Ellemers, 2008:1400). When individuals

adhere to moral standards, they contribute to the group's positive reputation and maintain a strong sense of belonging. This prioritization of moral norms strengthens unity within the group, fostering trust, cooperation, and mutual respect. As individuals align their behavior with the moral expectations of their community, they reinforce collective identity, ensuring that ethical considerations remain central to group cohesion.

By understanding these effects, morality can be examined as a driving force behind character behavior in literature. It offers insight into how characters navigate ethical dilemmas, experience moral growth, and contribute to broader social dynamics. Through moral conflicts, personal development, and adherence to ethical principles, literary works reflect the profound impact of morality on both individual and collective experiences of the character.

2.2 Research Method

According to Greener (2008:10), research methods are specific activities such as questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, or observations used to collect data. This section discusses the methods used in this research, including the research approach and method of data collection.

2.2.2 Research Approach

According to Grover (2015:1-2), the research approach is the overall plan and strategy used to conduct a study, encompassing philosophical assumptions, research design, and specific methods for data collection, analysis, and

interpretation. Based on the background of the study that reveals moral phenomena, the writer uses a moral approach in literature. According to Haski-Leventhal (2017:220), Moral approach is an individual's ethical perspective shaped by their values, attitudes, and overall worldview, which in turn guides their actions and decisions, involving processes of moral reasoning and judgment that help determine what is right or wrong in a given situation, serving as a framework that influences behavior. The object of this research thesis is three American short stories entitled "The Golden Windows", "The Pig Brother", and "The Coming of the King", all written by Laura E. Richards. These stories are selected for their shared themes of moral growth in childhood and will be analyzed using Kohlberg's theory of moral development.

2.2.3   Method of Data Collection

In this research thesis, the writer employs library research as a methodology. According to George (2008:22-23), library research is a systematic process of investigating and analyzing existing information sources to develop a deeper understanding of a topic. It involves identifying, locating, evaluating, and effectively using information from various library resources, such as books, journals, databases, and other scholarly materials. Saunders (2012:678-681) classifies data in library research into two categories: primary and secondary. Primary data is specifically collected for the research project at hand, while secondary data is compiled to provide additional insights, perspectives, and conclusions. The primary data of this research thesis are derived from three of

Laura E. Richards' children's literature short stories entitled "The Golden Windows", "The Pig Brother", and "The Coming of the King". Meanwhile, the secondary data is sourced from credible references related to moral behaviors, including books, articles, theses, and various internet sources.