

CHAPTER II

THEORY AND METHOD

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This research use structuralism as the primary theoretical framework to analyze *Jane Eyre* as a system of relational structures. Structuralism views a literary text not as a reflection of the author's psychology or personal experience, but as an organized network of signs whose meaning emerges through internal relations, differences, and oppositions. In this perspective, meaning is not inherent in individual elements but is produced through their position within a structured system.

The foundation of structuralism originates in the linguistic theory of Ferdinand de Saussure. Saussure defines language as a structured system of signs in which the linguistic sign unites, not a thing and a name, but a concept and a sound-image (Saussure, 1972:67). This formulation emphasizes that meaning is not derived from direct reference to reality but from relational function within a system. Furthermore, Saussure asserts that in language there are only differences without positive terms (1972:120). Meaning, therefore, arises through difference and opposition rather than through isolated substance.

Structuralism is further developed in anthropology by Claude Levi-Strauss, who argues that human thought is fundamentally structured through binary oppositions. According to Levi-Strauss, the purpose of myth is to provide a logical model capable of overcoming a contradiction (1963:229). This concept of binary opposition becomes central in the present study, as *Jane Eyre* is analyzed as a

narrative structured through oppositional patterns that generate tension and resolution.

Within this framework, trauma is not interpreted as a psychological disorder but as a structural condition of oppression, contradiction, and imbalance within the narrative system. Trauma is constructed through recurring oppositions such as oppression versus freedom, dependence versus independence, passion versus principle, and isolation versus belonging which organize Jane's transformation across the novel.

2.1.1 Intrinsic Elements

Structuralist analysis emphasizes intrinsic elements as components of a system. These elements are character, conflict, symbol, plot, and setting function relationally within the narrative structure.

2.1.1.1 Character

Character is a central structural element. According to Forster, characters are divided into flat and round, the test of a round character is whether it is capable of surprising in a convincing way (Forster, 2002:78).

Jane Eyre is a round character because she undergoes transformation across different structural stages. Within the structural organization of the novel, Gateshead functions as the space of oppression, Lowood as the space of discipline, Thornfield as the space of passion, Moor House as the space of independence, and Ferndean as the space of equality. Each setting gains meaning relationally, as its significance emerges through contrast with the others, consistent with Saussure's principle that meaning is produced through difference (Saussure, 1972:120).

Structurally, Jane's character is constructed through oppositions such as powerless or empowered, dependent or independent, and child or adult. Her identity gains meaning through difference, consistent with Saussure's principle that meaning exists relationally (1972:120).

2.1.1.2 Conflicts

Conflict in structuralism represents tension between binary forces. According to Levi-Strauss, structure functions to resolve contradiction (196:329). In *Jane Eyre*, conflicts operate structurally such as individual vs authority (Jane vs Mrs. Reed, Mr. Brocklehurst), passion vs morality (Jane vs Rochester's proposal), and independence vs submission (Jane vs St. John Rivers). These conflicts are not merely emotional struggles but structural oppositions that move the narrative toward resolution.

2.1.1.3 Symbolic

Structuralism views symbols as part of a system of signs. Since signs operate through difference (Saussure, 1972:120), symbols function relationally. Major symbolic oppositions in *Jane Eyre* include fire, ice, and red room. Fire symbolizes passion and destruction, while ice symbolizes restraint. The Red Room symbolizes confinement, gaining meaning through opposition to open spaces such as the moors. Symbols are not isolated metaphors but structural codes that reinforce binary patterns.

2.1.1.4 Plot

Plot organizes events into a meaningful structure. Forster distinguishes story and plot for example, "The king died and then the queen died" is a story. "The king

died and then the queen died of grief' is a plot (Forster, 2002:87).

Plot in *Jane Eyre* is structured developmentally. The narrative follows by patterned sequence such as confinement, resistance, escape, reconstruction. This repetitive structural cycle reinforces transformation. Each phase resolves a contradiction introduced earlier in the narrative.

2.1.1.5 Setting

Setting functions as a structural sign. According to Saussure, meaning is relational (1972:120). Within the structural organization of the novel, each setting functions as a signifying unit that produces meaning through relational difference. Gateshead represents domestic oppression and childhood marginalization within the family structure. Lowood signifies institutional discipline and moral regulation under rigid authority. Thornfield embodies romantic intensity combined with hidden instability, creating emotional tension within the narrative. Moor House represents spiritual and economic independence, marking a phase of self-reliance and identity reconstruction. Finally, Ferndean signifies reconciliation and equality, where previously unresolved oppositions are structurally harmonized. In accordance with Saussure's principle that meaning arises through difference (1972:120), each setting gains significance not in isolation but through contrast with the others, forming an interconnected structural system within the novel.

2.1.2 Structuralism

Structuralism asserts that meaning is not fixed or individual but systemic. This research applies structuralism to analyze *Jane Eyre* as a system of relations. Structuralism views a literary text not as an expression of an author's psychology,

but as a structured network of signs that produce meaning through difference and opposition.

The foundation of structuralism originates from Ferdinand de Saussure. According to Saussure, the linguistic sign unites, not a thing and a name, but a concept and a sound-image (Saussure, 1972:67).

He further explains that meaning arises through relational difference, in language there are only differences without positive terms (Saussure, 1972:20). Thus, meaning in a literary text emerges not from isolated elements, but from contrasts within the system.

Structuralism is further developed by Claude Levi-Strauss, who argues that human thought is structured through binary oppositions. According to Levi-Strauss, the purpose of myth is to provide a logical model capable of overcoming a contradiction (Levi-Strauss, 1963:29).

This concept of binary opposition becomes central in analyzing the structure of *Jane Eyre*, particularly in examining how trauma and transformation are narratively constructed.

2.2 Research Methods

In this research, the writer will be uses qualitative method for study. Qualitative methods demonstrate a different approach to scholarly inquiry than methods of quantitative research. Although the processes are similar, qualitative methods rely on text and image data, have unique steps in data analysis, and draw on diverse designs (Creswell, 2018:292).

2.2.1 Data Collecting

In the data collecting step include setting the boundaries for the study through sampling and recruitment. Collecting data in the form of words rather than numbers (Creswell, 2018:190). The writer uses to collect the data by close reading, journal, and novel.

2.2.2 Data Analysis

For the data analysis in qualitative research needs also to specify the steps in analyzing the various forms of qualitative data. Data analysis consists of preparing and organizing the data for analysis, then coding and reducing the data into themes. (Creswell, 2018:197)