

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Intrinsic Element

Intrinsic elements discussion covers the fundamental aspects relevant to the research focus, including character and characterization, conflict, and setting.

2.1.1.1 Character and Characterization

Character is an imagined individual who takes part in the events of a story and contributes to its development (Kennedy & Gioia, 2007:67). Character can be classified into main character and side character by their level of importance in the story. According to Kennedy and Gioia, the main character is the central figure whose actions and experiences drive the development of the story (Kennedy & Gioia, 2022:142). The text often focuses on this character's conflicts, decisions, and personal development. Because of this central role, the main character is usually portrayed as a complex and three-dimensional individual with both strength and weaknesses (Kennedy & Gioia, 2022:143). In contrast, side character plays supporting role in the narrative. Compared to the main character, side character is the two-dimensional individual that receives less narrative attention and are often portrayed with simpler traits (Kennedy & Gioia, 2022:142).

Characters are revealed through various aspects such as their actions, thoughts, feelings, motivations, and development throughout the story. These methods of presenting a character can be understood through characterization, which may occur directly through explicit description or indirectly through a

character's speech, action, thought, and interaction with others. (Kennedy & Gioia, 2007:70).

2.1.1.2 Conflict

Conflict refers to a clash of wills, desires, or powers that drives the action of the narrative (Kennedy & Gioia, 2007:9). Conflict may occur externally between a character and outside forces, including environment and society, or internally within a character's own mind when opposing desires, beliefs, or emotions clash (Kennedy & Gioia, 2007:10).

2.1.1.3 Setting

Setting refers to the time and place in which the events of a story occur (Kennedy & Gioia, 2007:110). According to Kennedy and Gioia, setting encompasses both the physical environment of a narrative and the temporal context in which the events take place. Setting includes the specific location of the story, such as a house, street, city, landscape, or region, as well as the time period, which may involve a particular hour, year, or century. Furthermore, setting may extend beyond time and place to include the society, beliefs, assumptions, customs, attitudes, and other contextual factors that influence the characters and shape the events of the narrative (Kennedy & Gioia, 2007:111).

2.1.2 Postcolonial Theoretical Framework

This research thesis applies a postcolonial theoretical framework to examine how David negotiates his Indigenous identity in Morgan Talty's *Night of the Living Rez*. Postcolonial studies examine the ways colonial power continues to shape identity, culture, and social relations within literary texts. One of the prominent

theorists in this field is Homi K. Bhabha, who explains the complex relationship between the colonizer and the colonized through concepts such as mimicry, ambivalence, and anti-colonial resistance. Although Native American experience is shaped by the specific history of settler colonialism, including reservation systems, land dispossession, and ongoing institutional domination, Bhabha's concepts remain useful for analyzing how Indigenous identity is negotiated within unequal power relations. Therefore, this research uses mimicry, ambivalence, and anti-colonial resistance as the primary framework for interpreting David's experiences and identity negotiation throughout the narrative.

2.1.2.1 Mimicry

Bhabha defines mimicry as a colonial strategy that produces a version of the colonized subject who is "almost the same, but not quite." (Bhabha, 1994:86). It is a form of imitation that the colonizer encourages, supposedly to reform, regulate, and discipline the Other, yet this imitation is never complete. Because it must remain "not quite" identical, mimicry always contains a slippage, a subtle difference that exposes a contradiction within colonial authority.

Mimicry can also be observed in everyday life through which the colonized subject adopts aspects of the colonizer's way of life. Homi K. Bhabha's discussion implies that mimicry works through the imitation of the colonizer's language, manners, moral values, education, and cultural tastes (Bhabha, 1994:88). Colonial authorities historically encourage such imitation through institutions, such as missionary education and colonial administration, which aim at shaping colonial subjects who could adopt the values and norms of the dominant culture.

2.1.2.2 Ambivalence

Bhabha explains that ambivalence is the unstable, contradictory space between desire and rejection that shapes how the colonized and colonizer perceive each other (Bhabha, 1994:50). It appears when identity cannot be fixed or fully known, because every attempt to define the Other is split between fascination and disavowal. The relationship between the colonized and the colonizer is considered ambivalent because the colonized people do not fully reject or completely agree with the colonizer.

An ambivalent act, like mimicry and its “double vision”, would disrupt the authority of colonial discourse by exposing its contradictions (Bhabha, 1994:90). This idea means that something can have two sides at once. It creates confusion instead of a clear control. Because of this, colonial power does not always appear stable enough. This ambivalence does not only appear in the colonized subjects, but also in colonial authority itself. The colonizer supports imitation, yet at the same time, the colonizer is afraid that such resemblance may weaken the clear distinction between the colonizer and the colonized. As Homi K. Bhabha suggests, this situation makes colonial discourses unstable because it depends on difference, but it also keeps producing similarities.

2.1.2.3 Anti-colonial Resistance

Anti-colonial resistance is the moment when a colonized subject's identity disrupts or exceeds the stereotypes and fixed images imposed by colonial power, leaving behind a “resistant trace” which challenges colonial expectations (Bhabha, 1994:49). This resistance usually comes from the pressure of colonial rule which

make it feels necessary, not optional.

Anti-colonial resistance can also appear in subtle form rather than direct confrontation. The colonized may resist by refusing to comply with colonial expectations, such as rejecting the narratives or explanations demanded by colonial authority (Bhabha, 1994:99). This kind of refusal creates uncertainty. It makes the colonized harder to define or control. As a result, colonial authority is unstable since it relies on clear distinctions and knowledge about the colonized. In this way, resistance can appear in everyday action, ways of speaking, or identity choice which challenge colonial ideas.

