

**A FORMAL ANALYSIS IN TOLSTOY'S *GOD SEES THE TRUTH BUT WAITS* AND THE
*GRAIN AS BIG AS A HEN'S EGG***

KAJIAN FORMAL TOLSTOY DALAM CERPEN *GOD SEES THE TRUTH BUT WAITS* DAN *THE GRAIN AS BIG AS A HEN'S EGG*

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Abstrak

God Sees The Truth But Waits dan *A Grain As Big As A Hen's Egg* adalah dua cerita pendek karangan Tolstoy. Penelitian ini memfokuskan pengamatan pada dua cerita pendek diatas dengan menggunakan teori formalisme dimana fungsi bahasa dalam karya sastra memiliki ciri yang berbeda dengan bahasa sehari-hari. Kajian ini menggunakan penelitian kualitatif karena data yang digunakan adalah bentuk teks cerita pendek. Data dianalisa untuk menunjukkan keterkaitan antara fabula dan sjuzhet dan estrangement. Hasil analisa ketiga hal ini menunjukkan buah pikir kreatif seorang penulis memiliki ciri khas dalam setiap tulisannya. Hal ini juga menandakan bahwa penciri dalam sastra dapat ditemukan dalam istilah – istilah populer Skhlovsky. Kesusastraan memperpanjang proses persepsi pembaca dengan menyentuh seluruh gambaran atas suatu objek dengan melibatkan berbagai macam tanda yang meliputinya. Formalisme memaparkan pemahaman bahwa karya sastra mendapatkan tempat lebih dalam kajian sastra erat kaitannya dengan bahasa yang digunakan. Sehingga, sebuah kajian khusus dalam bahasa sastra menjadi hal yang harus diperhatikan seperti yang ada dalam dua cerita pendek *God Sees The Truth But Waits* dan *A Grain As Big As A Hen's Egg* karangan Tolstoy. Penemuan dalam dua cerita pendek ini telah membuktikan bahwa sastra selalu menghasilkan nilai seni yang ada dalam proses berpikir dan gambaran pola pikir.

Kata kunci: *formalism, fabula, sjuzhet, estrangement, seni adalah berimajinasi dalam banyak citra, kesusastraan,*

Abstract

God Sees The Truth But Waits and *A Grain As Big As A Hen's Egg* are two short stories written by Tolstoy. The focus of the research plays a significant role on formalism which emphasizes the distinction of the language used in literary work and the language in daily life. This study is a qualitative research as the basic data are the whole text of two short stories. The data are analyzed to show the fabula (story) and sjuzhet (the plot). During the process of categorizing the fabula and the sjuzhet, estrangement comes as the bridge to link the two which signifies the creative process of the author. This is also the level to emerge *the art as thinking in images* in Skhlovsky's term. The finding however makes the readers see literariness in the short stories. The literariness prolong the process of understanding by touching every senses of the object and involving the signs that constitute it. Formalism serves the understanding that literary work has its own place to put forward in the literary study, more importantly to language used in it. Thus a better concern should be put forward to analyze the literary language like what has been found in the two short stories *God Sees The Truth But Waits* and *A Grain As Big As A Hen's Egg*. The short stories are indeed rich of art as thinking in images

Keywords: *psychopath, formalism, fabula, sjuzhet, enstrangement, art as thinking in images, literariness*

Introduction

In this thesis, the selected short stories are “*God Sees the Truth but Waits*” and “*A Grain as Big as A Hen's Egg*” by a Russian writer, Tolstoy. Both stories serve not only complicated and paradoxical persona but also extreme moralistic and ascetic views. As a matter of fact, these themes were mostly adopted after a moral crisis and spiritual

awakening in the 1870. Using these majoring ideas, Tolstoy hence becomes a noted moral thinker and social reformer.

More to the story, “*God Sees the Truth, but Waits*” tells about a man accused for a murder that he did not commit. Throughout the entire story, the reader sees that this man would not hurt a fly, and this point is even more strongly emphasized with this quote. He isn't even willing to see somebody else be hurt after what has happened to him. He doesn't believe that even a man, who has put him in jail

and made him lose his happy life, deserves to be flogged, and so he won't take that risk by admitting to the guards that Makar Semyonov was attempting to dig a whole to freedom outside of the jail cell.

On the other hand, "*A Grain as Big as A Hen's Egg*" is a short story that is quite philosophical. The story is started with an image of children who found a strange object in a ravine, and they sold it to a passerby for a penny, who then sold it to a curiosity shop. Eventually the object found its way to the king, and the king was very curious to know what it was. He called together his wise men, and they discovered that the object, about the size of a hen's egg, was actually a large grain. The king wanted to know where such a large grain could come from, and he had his men bring him an old peasant, hoping that he might know something of it.

Both of those short stories are different in their forms; such as their plots, settings, the characterization of characters, and also their themes. Those forms can establish an idea of art because there is a poetic sense in every literature. However, to see a text as mode of art requires a theory that can enable a researcher to put away assumptions outside the literary works but more into its literariness. Surely, there is a theory to answer the enchantment of the art in the literary work which is called as formalism.

In this manner, the theoretical basis of this research focuses on Formalism. The initial appearance of Russian Formalism was a reaction to romanticism period whose paradigm set beauty in the literature itself, or in other words, the power of literature lies in the text itself without being influenced by other aspects, hence autonomous. Autonomy is an absolute assessment for intrinsic study, though the theory is possible to consider the extrinsic elements of a literary work. Formalism prioritizes voice patterns and formal words, not the contents. Therefore the way it works is called formal. The main purpose of Russian Formalism is the scientific study of literature, by examining the elements of literary, poetic, associations, opposition etc. (Bennett, 1979).

Literature, especially poetry is typical language support. The use of language is considered to be odd or different from everyday language and language normally. Since in the fifth century, the language of poetry or literary work is distinguished from everyday language. Literary language serves a collection of beautiful letters which negotiate with many images to perform its ideas. Thus, it encourages a research towards the means of the language used in the work.

The Russian Formalists started the literary language peculiarities because they are not satisfied with the research that is psychological, sociological, historical, and positivistic which mostly talk about the characters, themes, and motifs. The emphasis of the study includes the nature and the characteristics of literary work, the literariness. In addition, Russian Formalism liberates literature from the environmental sciences such as psychology, sociology, and history. Hence, Formal study wants to find ways to distinguish literature from everyday expressions.

Next, the deeper study of Formalism requires an understanding of the terms fabula and sjuzet. It is crucial to understand these two terms since literariness can only be constructed by identifying the distinction between sjuzet as

the way in which a story is being re-told, and fabula as the content of that story. The creative process of expanding fabula to sjuzet will create Estrangement as the beautiful letters. The fabula is the "content" of the story while the sjuzet is the "form" of the narrative. It became clear, that when the sjuzet is examined closely, the subtle expression of identity positions becomes evident. More to the point, it must focus on both the what and the how of the telling, upon both the story that is being told, as well as the way in which it is being told.

Furthermore, this thesis is concerned to analyse the fabula, sjuzhet and the Enstrangement as the art of the thinking image in formal studies. Since short story has the same mode of art, it is possible to study it using formal theory. Klarer mentions that "A crucial feature commonly identified with the short story is its impression of unity since it can be read in contrast to the novel in one sitting without interruption" (Klarer, 2005:13). Thus, analyzing a short story becomes interesting, because a short story has a solid structure and form. Literary work exists as "art for art's sake," a written work's "content = its form," and literary works are "texts in and for themselves." These premises lead to the development of reading strategies that isolate and objectify the clear structures of texts as well as authorial techniques and language usage. Hence, this thesis is entitled A Formal Analysis on Tolstoy's "*God Sees The Truth but Waits*" and "*A Grain As Big As Hen's Egg*"

Method of Analysis

Every literary research needs a suitable method. It is used to analyze the content of literary work. The method of this analysis is inductive method which is based on some certain facts and events, and then from those, a researcher can make a general idea. This analysis uses library research. It is a research using a process of collecting data and information that are needed during the discussion. Since library research is done by finding some theories and references, it will mostly include the books which are majorly taken from Viktor Shklovsky's the Art as Technique, the Theory of Prose and other formalist books. For the data, they are gathered from the selected text of *God the Truth but Waits Sees* and *A Grain as Big As a Hen's Egg*. First, the text is sorted into two kinds, the fabula and sjuzhet. The second, the fabula will be underlined to distinguish it from sjuzhet. The third, the process of Enstrangement will be explained to give a broader sense for texts as an art. Lastly, a final remark is stated to explain briefly the relation of literariness and its art as a thinking image. Since most of the supportive data are non numeric data, this research is considered to be a qualitative research.

Result of Data Analysis

Like in the first analysis of *God Sees the Truth but Waits*, the readers easily get the idea that the main character is a person with a very great fortune by the description of the numerous possessions he has. Tolstoy never states the main character is rich but the readers can get the image of rich by the explanation in sjuzhet. The sjuzhet beautifies the

language within the story by touching every senses of being rich person. The next short story is *A Grain as Big As a Hen's Egg* where Tolstoy narrates the story beautifully through the estrangement he has. The idea of the old man becomes strange and odd as he describes it through many signs living in the idea of old man. The *sjuzhet* however performs as enhancement of the story. This way, the language in his story becomes different with the language in practice in daily activities. Art plays a big role in the story to make the story becomes livelier.

Discussion

The first analysis on Tolstoy, *The God Sees the Truth but Waits* will be carried out first. The discussion uncover the *fabula* and *szjuhet* on the short story. The words are images and they are considered as art which perform a beautiful letters that can stand alone in the world of literature. In the next discussion, the estrangement as the process of defamiliarization is explained to show the oddness of the literary works.

Since the data are taken from story which is narrated in sequence, it is preferred to display the data as a narration or sequenced events. Analysis proceeds by first sorting the text down into two units, the *fabula* and *sjuzhet*. Hence, the process of presenting data is going to be a numbered line to make the analysis more systematic. Here is the starting analysis.

In the town of Vladimir lived a young merchant named Ivan Dmitritch Aksyonof.

He had two shops and a house of his own.

Aksyonof was a handsome, fair-haired, curly-headed fellow, full of fun, and very fond of singing.

When quite a young man he had been given to drink, and was riotous when he had had too much, but after he married he gave up drinking, except now and then.

One summer Aksyonof was going to the Nizhny Fair, and as he bade good-bye to his family his wife said to him, "Ivan Dmitritch, do not start today; I have had a bad dream about you." (Tolstoy, 2011: 52)

From the very quotation above, the starting points of the story begin with identity positions constructed through references of location, family, and home. The later will most probably describe the confusion and loss of identity which leads to the problem of the story. The analysis shows the different of the *fabula* and *sjuzhet* by underlining the *sjuzhet*, which means the not underlined lines are the *fabula*. More specifically, the *fabula* reads as a straightforward, the bold one, with no sense of literariness. *Fabula* is rather non emotional narration that makes the story rather flat. The underlined lines, or the *sjuzhet* seems to expand the *fabula*, providing context, emphasis, reflection and subtle positions in conjunction with the events being related.

The image of Ivan Dmitritch Aksyonof who lived in Vladimir is expanded to beautify the narration of the story. The description of him having two shops and house does not change the story but elaborate the plot. The physical appearance of him giving more illusionary image that he is not only in plain way but more in a detailed way which makes the story lively. This description is called as *sjuzhet*

in formalism. The gap between the reader and the author is reduced by this very depiction. Next, the event when Aksyonof had to go to a market establishes the upcoming situation which leads to the next sequence of the story. Indeed, this is the *fabula* that helps the story become meaningful.

Down to the end of the story, the analysis ends by the idea of sorry and forgiveness that are shrouding the theme of the talk. Begging for forgiveness, Semyonitch no longer has the power to fight his feeling of guilt like he did before. The *sjuzhet* expands the feeling of shame by using the word cry, knelt, beat, head and floor. Those words are signs to illustrate the idea of guilt, shame, sorry and betrayal because he knows saying sorry is never enough to convey his guilt. He has done the cruelest thing in life for letting innocent man to live in abomination. The *sjuzhet* is also giving a sign of Semyonitch sorry to deity by using the words "For Christ sake" which indeed this is the ultimate words for salvation because he has hurt someone this innocent and pure and pious. Semyonitch regain his sense of humanity after what Askyonof does to him. He no longer possesses pride before Askyonof, the one who is hurt by him yet still help him to the death.

When Aksyonof heard him sobbing he, too, began to weep.

"God will forgive you!" said he.

"Maybe I am a hundred times worse than you.

" And at these words his heart grew light, and the longing for home left him.

He no longer had any desire to leave the prison, but only hoped for his last hour to come.

In spite of what Aksyonof had said, Maker Semyonitch confessed his guilt.

But when the order for his release came, Aksyonof was already dead. (Tolstoy, 2011: 58)

The story ends with tragedy. Not much *sjuzhet* performs in the story but rather a direct story telling. The *sjuzhet* is only the expansion of feeling of the two. Both of them finally losses the fight for life, and know that God is the sole redemption they could get. They both long for the old life, but there is no effort to get it back since earthly paradise is no longer their final intention. At last, the irony is present, when Semyonitch finally confesses his bad conduct to the officer but he never be able to see Askyonof to taste his last hour of freedom because he is dead already.

Formalism has focused on estrangement of the language in a sense that it divides ordinary spoken everyday language from language used in texts. Shklovsky's notion of defamiliarisation or estrangement or 'making strange' also entails a political notion because he stresses that the function of art is to make people look at the world from a new perspective. In Tolstoy language, art is thinking in images. These concepts of deviation, parallelism and foregrounding are the foundations of contemporary stylistics. The language is never direct but touches all senses of the object, hence signs play a major role to form the preferred idea.

By the data from the story *God Sees the Truth but Waits*, estrangement is the on between process, it happens during the transition, or expansion from *Fabula* into *Sjuzhet*.

The most creative process of a writer is tested to beautify the story through this idea, this also determines the author styles to touch every sense of the object like what has been in found *God Sees the Truth but Waits*. Let's say for example from the very first sjuzhet found in the first data. The setting of place and the backround of life of the main character are not described directly as someone who has glamorous life and wealth living in the small town but the author conveys the idea through the idea of glamorous and wealth by telling the main character has two shops and one house for his family. Not only that the author also says that he used to have glamorous life by his old habit of drinking but it stops when he got married. The signs like drinking, two shops, on house, a family, and others like singing as a habit are the references of living of joyful life. By depicting the idea of happy rather than say it directly to the readers give the sensation of estrangement. In this case, readers are asked to redefine and recall the concept of happy, and yes it is implied in the data. Hence the readers perceive the happiness in a form of art and images.

A direct translation of Novalis's German might go: "The art of pleasing estrangement, of making an object strange and yet familiar and attractive: that is Romantic poetics"—but then Shklovsky could not read German and so was dependent for his sense of Novalis's term on the Russian translators, who were either ignorant of *ostranenie* or, more likely, avoided it for political reasons. (Robinson, 2008:80)

It is indeed strange, but also pleasing to tell happiness with telling all meaning and definitions and the signified. It is a rather a beat around the bush way but that what makes the language of literature is different from the daily language. It is art, they say.

The next analysis is to determine the Fabula and Sjuzhet in *A Grain as Big as a Hen's Egg*. This discussion is the same as the previous one. The connection of fabula and sjuzhet are the proof of the art as thinking in images which later be defined by the existence of estrangement. The first subchapter is to sort the fabula and the sjuzhet, and last will be estrangement

The data will be served in order to ease the analysis just like the previous discussion. The fabula and sjuzhet will be described below the data. The underlined sentences are the sjuzhet and the rests are fabula.

One day some children found, in a ravine, a thing shaped like a grain of corn, with a groove down the middle, but as large as a hen's egg.

A traveler passing by saw the thing, bought it from the children for a penny, and taking it to town sold it to the King as a curiosity.

The King called together his wise men, and told them to find out what the thing was.

The wise men pondered and pondered and could not make head or tail of it, till one day, when the thing was lying on a windowsill, a hen flew in and pecked at it till she made a hole in it, and then every one saw that it was a grain of corn.

The wise men went to the King and said: "It is a grain of corn." (Tolstoy, 2011: 215)

To understand the fabula and sjuzhet is to understand the different between the story and the plot. From the above data the underlined sentences are the amplification of the story there existence do not play significant role of the story but to make the plot beautiful. Next sjuzhet is told to express the confusion of the King, by summoning the wise men of the kingdom, because his curiosity toward the peculiar grain. The first sentences and the last sentence are the fabula because their existences affect the understanding of the readers but finally the king now that it is a grain of corn.

From the notion, the sjuzhet gives clear illustration of there was no class structure but the king seems to curious even more with the awkward event he has just experienced. His curiosity is emphasized by the last question shown in the above data. The fabula is only when the king gives two more questions and first question like what is stated in the first line.

And the old man answered: "These things are so, because men have ceased to live by their own labor and have taken to depending on the labor of others.

In the old time, men lived according to God's law. They had what was their own, and coveted not what others had produced." (Tolstoy, 2011: 217)

This is the end of the story. The questionis answered but there is additional information as sjuzhet. The sjuzhet is to strengthen the concept of egalitarianism, where every people live in equal. There is no bad will to the others because they live a good life. Not much can be told from the essence of the story but comparison of the present and the past, the more the people evolve, the more they become unwellthy, unable to suffice their basic needs. The huge grain is just a symbolization of the prosperous life of the past while small grain the present is the representation of the less quality of life people could have these days.

The estrangement of the story is depicted through the metaphor of the present and the past. The analogous of a better life in the past is the irony for the present in which people in the past do not have broad knowledge to sustain their life but they can live to the fullest unlike present people who have enough knowledge but they accept themselves to be enslaved by other people and live a little. The fabula is the curiosity of the King which later be transformed into summoning wise man and peasant to answer his needs about the origin of the unusual grain. The sjuzhet is the plot where the story gets lively and gives more touch of art, to make the language different from the others. By analyzing the above data, the linguistics elements in the story like words are closely related to the social perception to make the words meaningful.

Without the present of the linguistics elements and the social perception the estrangement and the sjuzhet will never form an art as thinking images because people do not have the knowledge of the word and what it refers to. If the readers do not know the concept of grain, disable person or curious king then it is impossible to comprehend the story. Here the linguistic elements and the social should work together. Thus a meaning can be unified, the images constitute the meaning.

Many people try to define what art is, and many definitions are generated from it. This is true, that working

with art helps people to think in many images, since art has unique way of conveying itself through a peculiar language. Since many definitions are given the purpose of the art becomes blurry. Even skhlovsky could not answer the purpose of art

The more you know the less you get, the more people try to define the purpose of art the more they lose to define its meaning. In conjunction with the two story there are no absolute determination to state the fabula and sjuzhet but what is more important here is to separate the unfamiliar language found in the daily language and to differentiate the story and the plot hence people can understand which one is the grand narrative and which one is the amplification of the story.

The God Sees the Truth but Waits give more sjuzhet since many object are becoming odd, and they never be explained directly but to imply it using close reading. Not to mention the length of the story but *God Sees the Truth but Waits* serves more example of the sjuzhet like what has been discussed priory. The images of the rich guy yet pious person are the main theme of the story. While *A Grain as Big as a Hen's Egg* presents less sjuzhet because not many objects are illustrated in images, more direct expression is applied and the length of the story is not that wide after all. However, they share the same style since the author of the two is same. *God Sees the Truth but Waits* and *A Grain as Big as a Hen's Egg* have their own assets and liabilities in performing their art in images and it is true only *God Sees the Truth but Waits* is better in preserving the art as thinking in images.

Conclusion

Russian formalism concerns with the study of literariness which distinguishes literary language from ordinary language. In reaction against the vagueness of previous literary theories, it attempts a scientific description of literature as a special use of language with observable features. This means deliberately disregarding the contents of literary works, and thus inviting readers to see more to the arts performed in literary work. Formalism has become the tool to categorize the systematic in making readers to regain their senses of an object. By understanding, the fabula as the story and sjuzhet as the plot, formalism has approved that art in literary works is thinking in images. Symbolism, signs and methapore become a non direct sentence to convey meaning of the story. Moreover the idea of estarangement has become the bridge to link the two ideas, fabula and sjuzhet. Enstrangement challenges the creativity of the author to create their own uniqueness in performing their works.

In conclusion, the formalism has served a new understanding reading two stories "*God Sees The Truth But Waits*" and "*A Grain As Big As A Hen's Egg*" in the literary criticism to concern more the language used in literary as arts. The language used has already shown the literariness of the stories by sorting the concept of fabula and sjuzhet as well as estrangement. The finding of this thesis also gives the contribution that such images or understanding in literary can be grasped through many signs revolved in the story.

Moreover, it helps to convey the implied meaning of the story with a more esthetical ways

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