

THE STUDY OF CHEKHOV'S CONCEPTS
OF PLOT AND CHARACTERIZATION
AS SEEN IN 'THE SEAGULL'

THESIS



A thesis presented to the English Department,
Faculty of Letters, University of Jember
as one of the requirements to get
the Award of Sarjana Sastra degree
in English Studies

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University of Jember
Faculty of Letters
English Department
2002

Approved and received by the Examination Committee of the English
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With great love and respect, this thesis is dedicated to:

- My beloved father, Muhadjir, and my mother, Umi Harwiyati, who have taught me how to behave;
- My beloved sister, Dwi Setyowati, and brother, Delta Setiadi. Thanks for everything and being such a nice family;
- Fairus, for her great understanding and imagination;
- Everyone who gets involve in Dewan Kesenian Kampus Fakultas Sastra Universitas Jember, who has given me a good comprehension on something and has taught me to be self-reliant;
- All of my friends in Pusat Studi Seni Pertunjukan (...jizmo!) and di Atas Hari. It is really a nice thing to be a part of the family.
- My Almamater.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Water flows and keeps going to make a perfect circle. *The Seagull* written by Anton Chekhov is a magnificent play that contains Chekhov's concepts about plot and characterization which rejects the traditional way of writing drama. There are many problems during the process of writing this thesis. Nevertheless, this thesis finally has come to its completion. Thank God, my Creator who gives me a chance to live in this beautiful world and pours His blessing upon me, so finally I could finish my thesis.

I also wish to express my gratitude to Drs. H. Marwoto, the dean of Faculty of Letters, University of Jember, and Dr. Suparmin, M.A., the head of the English Department for giving me a chance to start writing and composing this thesis.

I would like to give my sincere thanks to my first advisor, Drs. H. M. Busjairi, and the second one, Dra. Meilia Adiana, M. Pd., for their valuable suggestions and patience concerning with the finishing of this thesis.

Moreover I also convey my gratitude to all the lecturers of Faculty of Letters, who have provided me with their various knowledge during my study; the librarians of Faculty of Letters, University of Jember; the librarians of Petra Christian University; the librarians of Indonesian National Library; who lent me a number of books and references which I need.

Finally, a sincere thanks to many people who have given me support and other contributions during the time in writing the thesis. May God, the Most Merciful, bless them all for their supports and helps to me.

Amin...

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1.1 The Rationale

Like other arts, literature is essentially an imaginative act, an act of writer's imagination in selecting, ordering and interpreting his life-experience. Reading a work of literature is interesting because it gives us new experiences and open up our mind to the things around us. We can get enjoyment and also able to obtain further knowledge, especially in relation with the problems of daily life. By studying it, we can see a world in a different way, in a wider range, in order to understand the aspects of life better.

In **Understanding The Elements of Literature**, Taylor states that

Literature presents situations, interactions and oppositions. It suggests a spectrum of values, even of attitudes, but it rarely hands down formulated judgments and conclusions. The reader not only enters into the experience of the action and characters as it unfolds, but he is also left to his own conclusions and evaluations of that experience, of its truthfulness and relevance to real life (1981:5).

Drama is a form of literature intended for performance by actors on the stage. It teaches us that things are not what they seem; we look behind the act and behind the meaning for the act. Drama is life presented in action, since it is related with the presentation of life, the problems in it, and also its complexities.

The Seagull is the first of Chekhov's four major plays, which is published in 1896. It tells about the complexity of relationship between **Trepliov**, a young writer who has written a play to portray his thought about what serious art should be. **Nina**, a neighboring young actress who dreams of a stage career and who has romanced with **Trigorin**, and extremely famous novelist, and **Arkadina**, a well-known provincial actress in popular plays who lives openly with her

lover, Trigorin. These characters are depicted talking stupidities, playing lotto, having dinner, and other everyday affairs.

Chekhov was unhappy with the formulaic theatricalism of Russian dramatic literature and was in full revolt against the popular drama and its style of acting. He was particularly incensed at the derivative nature of the traditional fare on the Russian stage (Styan, 1981:82). It is necessary, he said, that on the stage everything should be as complex and as simple in life. People are having dinner, and while they're having it, their future happiness may be decided or their lives may be about to be shattered (1981:85).

The conventional pre-Chekhov Russian play moved from one emotional crisis to the next while the audience was treated to be a sensational succession of fights, quarrels, confessions, adulteries, suicides, murders, and the like. Chekhov abjured this superficial form of drama. In one of his most famous letters (written as early as 1887) he formulated his revolutionary position: "The demand is made that the hero and heroine should be dramatically effective. But after all, in real life people don't spend every minute shooting each other, hanging themselves, and making confessions of love. They don't spend all their time saying clever things. They more occupied with eating, drinking, flirting, and talking stupidities—and there are things which ought to be shown on the stage. A play should be written in which people arrive, go away, and have dinner, talk about the weather and play cards. Life must be exactly as it is. And people, as they are—not on stilts... Let everything on the stage be just as complicated, and at the same time just as simple as it is in life. People eat their dinner, just eat their dinner, and all the time their happiness is being established or their lives are being broken up (Wexford, 1965:13).

With him it is not particular individuals but the group that should command attention, a play for a team of actors rather than for one or two principals and supporting casts. These concepts influence

the development of drama later, which is called by modern play. The first production of **The Seagull** by Alexandrinsky Theatre in Petersburg took place in October 1896, was a great disaster. The actors and the audience cannot understand Chekhov's new concepts of characters and dramatic technique. It was total flop. In May 1898, he met Stanislavsky, the actor producer, and Nemirovich-Danchenko, the writer. Like Chekhov, they abhorred the over-theatrical style of acting, which was turning the drama into a dead art. They reproduce **The Seagull** in 1898 with a new kind of approach, and it was a resounding success.

From the statement above, it is interesting to find out Chekhov's new kind concepts and discuss it, since it was breaking the conventional rules of drama.

1.2 The Problems to Discuss

Chekhov's concepts of dramatic technique gave a great contribution to the development of drama. Chekhov was reacting strongly against the kind of popular action-filled drama that was entirely divorced from everyday experience. He defied playwriting tradition by placing commonplace activities and shifting focus from a single protagonist to many characters. His concepts were a rejection of the conventional rules. He eliminated the classical hero. His plays were not a conventional star-vehicles but required a strong and coordinated ensembles of actors, a large cast of characters.

These concepts of dramatic technique are the problems to discuss in this thesis.

1.3 The Scope of the Study

It is necessary to limit the discussion in order to avoid broader, unfocussed and more complicated discussion. The analysis is focused on Chekhov's concepts of plot and characterization. It describes how his characters are portrayed and how his plot is presented.

1.4 The Hypothesis

In methodology, hypothesis is a principle offered as a conditional explanation of a fact or a group of facts; or again, a provisional assumption about the ground of certain phenomena, used as a guiding norm in making observations and experiments until verified and disproved by subsequent evidence (Runes, 1962:134).

The hypothesis on this study is whether or not **The Seagull** contains Chekhov's concepts of plot and characterization.

1.5 The Approach to Use

Literary work may provide certain personal satisfaction which comes from physical, intellectual, and emotional responses to what the writer has experienced and what he is trying to communicate to us. It also can be functioned as a record of their physical and psychological experiences, of their thoughts and aspirations.

This study uses psychological approach to analyze Chekhov's concepts of plot and characterization. It is suitable to apply psychological approach, since the first application of psychological knowledge to art provides a more precise language with which to discuss creative process. The second application goes back to a literary biography to the study of the lives of an author as a means of understanding their art, and the third, psychology can be used to explain fictitious characters (Scott, 1962:71-72). Psychological approach can verbalize the writer's judgment about something, telling us in so many words about the background of the work.

1.6 The Method of Analysis

The study is based on a library research since the data are collected from some books and references, which are appropriate and suitable for conducting the research. Anton Pavlovich Chekhov's play, **The Seagull**, is the prime data.

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The method the writer uses to study Chekhov's concepts of plot and characterization is deductive method. It is used to analyze all materials that have close relation to the discussion of the study. It is a method of analysis, which is reached by reasoning from general points to a particular point.

As the prime data, the dialogue in *'The Seagull'* will be analyzed and classified into the parts of Chekhov's concepts of plot and characterization.

1.7 The Goals of the Study

The aim of writing this study is to get more understanding about Chekhov's concepts on playwriting, especially on plot and characterization which breaking the rule of traditional drama, which is focused on *The Seagull*.

1.8 The Organization of the Study

In order to understand this study easily, the systematic and interrelated logical division of chapters is needed. This study is divided into five chapters. Chapter I is introduction of the study. Chapter II is talk about the life of Anton Chekhov and his works, and synopsis of the play. Chapter III is the brief note of the terms. Chapter IV is the analysis of Chekhov's concepts of plot and characterization. Chapter V is the conclusion of the study.

**ANTON CHEKHOV'S LIFE, HIS WORKS
AND SYNOPSIS OF THE PLAY**

2.1 The Life of Anton Pavlovich Chekhov and His Works

Anton Pavlovich Chekhov was born on January 17, 1860, in Taganrog, a small provincial town on the Azov Sea in the South of Russia. In the following year, Emperor Alexander II had decreed the abolition of serfdom, and it was a matter of pride in the Chekhov family that their peasant grandfather, Yegor Chekhov, had saved enough money to buy the freedom of his family from his owner, Chertkhov, twenty years before. He had educated his sons and put them into trade. Pavel, Chekhov's father, became a bookkeeper, and was able to marry Yevghenia, an intelligent and warm-hearted person who did all she could for her children.

Anton Chekhov was the third of six highly talented children. He had two elder brothers, Alexander and Nikolai, and later a sister and two more brothers. Anton Chekhov attended Taganrog High School from 1865 to 1879. The Chekhovs had found it difficult to make both ends meet, with the family of six children and the father's preference for the arts, which made him neglect his business. His passion for religious music prompted him to train his sons to sing in church before they were old enough to go to school. **Easter Eve, The Artist,** and **The Bishop,** reflect the profound influence of religious music on Anton Chekhov's own works (Pritchett, 1988:6).

Pavel Chekhov's grocer shop was not a profitable business. The family's financial position became worse considerably in 1875. In the spring of 1876, Pavel Chekhov declared the bankruptcy and went off to join his sons in Moscow, leaving Anton to finish his school at Taganrog.

Anton Chekhov's school work improved rapidly and he also became the editor of the school magazine, **The Stutterer,** to which he

contributes humorous sketches. His first play, **The Fatherless**, written in 1877 when he was seventeen. In early 1879 he obtained his school-leaving certificate. On August 1879, he came to live with his family in Moscow and entered the Medical Faculty of the Moscow University. He graduated in 1884 and began working as a general practitioner.

In 1887-1889, Chekhov produces some major works of considerable sociophilosophical and poetic significance, such as the stories **Ward No. 6**, **The Steppe** (1887), **The Lights** (1888), and **A Dreary Tale** (1889). He began to give more and more time to writing plays. The five one-act humorous sketches: **The Swan Song**, **The Bear**, **The Proposal**, **An Unwilling Martyr**, and **The Wedding**, a one-act play, **Jubilee** (1891), and the two four-act serious plays, **Ivanov** and **Wood Demon**. At the time **Ivanov** was written, Chekhov had very definite notions of what dramatic art ought to be. He told his friends that the theatre should show life and men as they were, and not as they would look if they were put on stilts.

On December 1889, **The Wood Demon** was produced and it was a failure. Chekhov withdrew the play and refused to have it printed or produced, until it emerged under the new title **Uncle Vanya** (Fen, 1954:19-20). Despite a ludicrous failure (The production of **Ivanov**), his reputation as a brilliant young writer grew. In 1888, at the age of 28, he was awarded The Pushkin Prize for distinguished literary achievement.

In 1890, Anton Chekhov went on a journey to Sakhalin which produced a book of essays entitled **The Island of Sakhalin** which was written between 1890 to 1894.

His material position had improved sufficiently for him to acquire a small estate near Moscow. It was Melikhovo that he settled to work on **The Seagull** in the autumn of 1895. The first production by the Alexandrinsky Theatre in Petersburg—took place in October 1896. It was a total flop. Chekhov managed to be present at most of

them and he tried to convey his ideas to the actors by telling them that everything must be simple and that the main thing is not to be theatrical. Needless to say, this did not go down too well with the actors of the 'old school', and in a letter Chekhov wrote at that time to his sister, Maryia, he remarked that **The Seagull** is going in a tiresome way so far (Fen, 1954:21-22).

The failure of **The Seagull** rankled Chekhov for several years. The illness, which had remained concealed from him and his family probably for some years suddenly revealed itself by a hemorrhage in the lung, and was diagnosed as tuberculosis. Chekhov spent several months at a clinic near Moscow, and in September went to South of France, where he stayed through the winter. He returned to Russia in May 1898 when The Moscow Art Theatre came into being. Its creation was the work of two men about the same age, the actor-producer Stanislavsky and the writer Nemirovich-Danchenko. Like Chekhov, Nemirovich-Danchenko and Stanislavsky abhorred the over-theatrical style of acting, which was turning the drama into the dead art. They wanted the acting to be natural and sincere. They were against the tradition, which concentrated the limelight on a few stars while leaving most of the other participants behind. Chekhov managed to attend one of the rehearsals before he left for Yalta.

The second performance of **The Seagull** in 1898 was a resounding success. The situation was suddenly and wonderfully transformed. It now seemed that Russian audiences were capable of appreciating both the new kind of play and the new technique of presenting it (Fen, 1954:23-29).

Since 1898, Chekhov had been living in Yalta, in the Crimea, and was not allowed to travel to Moscow because of his health. It was then he had met Olga Knipper, actress of The Art Theatre, who later became his wife. They got married in May 1901. It was not until 1900, when the directors of The Art Theatre organized a tour of the Crimea. After The Art Theatre returned to Moscow, Chekhov settled to

writing **Three Sisters**. Olga Knipper became pregnant in the second year of their marriage, but miscarried and was very ill for some months. Chekhov concerned for her health. He spent many sleepless nights at her bedside made his own health grew worse.

Chekhov started writing **The Cherry Orchard** in Yalta in February 1903. It was very slow in taking shape. He wrote a letter to Olga, who was in Moscow, that a crowd of characters was gathering in his mind but he could only manage to write four lines a day and "even that gives intolerable pain" (Pritchett, 1988:220). The first performance of **The Cherry Orchard** was planned for 17 January 1904, Chekhov's birthday and twenty-fifth anniversary of his literary career. Chekhov was too ill to attend the anniversary, but he was taken to see the end of the third act.

In a letter, Olga asked what the meaning of life is, when Chekhov was back in Yalta. He replied: "It is like asking what a carrot. A carrot is a carrot and nothing more is known" (1988:225). In Yalta he lay in bed, almost unrecognizable and suffering great pain in his stomach. His doctor advised him to go to the German curative mineral spring of Badenweiler in the Black Forest. Olga traveled with him to Berlin and lived in a warm and comfortable room at a hotel.

He died on July 2nd, 1904, and was taken back to Moscow. He was buried on July 9, in the Novodevichy Cemetery beside his father's grave.

2.2 The Synopsis of The Play

A makeshift stage has been built across the avenue for an amateur theatrical performance. Trepliov, is a young man who dreams of new art forms. Nina acts as the one who dreams of stage-career. She plays as the one lonely living soul in Trepliov's play. She knows that in Sorin's estate she will find famous people who make her dream comes true.

The play has begun and the characters talk among themselves. Arkadina mocks the play and it makes Trepliov flares up loudly. The

play has been stopped. He lets the curtain down and storms away. Everyone breaks up and leaves the theatre. Masha finds Dr. Dorn. She confesses her unrequited love for Trepliov. She asks him to help her or she will do something stupid.

Arkadina dislikes the situation in the country and has a plan to drive into the town, but Shamrayev has used all the horses for carting the rye. Shamrayev rejects the order and the rejection makes Arkadina angry. Sorin gets angry too and gets an asthma attack. Trepliov suddenly appears before Nina and lays a killed seagull to Nina's feet as a symbol of bitterness. He threatens her that he will end his life in the same way when Nina despises his kind of aspirations.

Trigorin tells Nina about his dissatisfaction. For some reasons, as soon as he has finished one novel, he feels that he must start writing another and then another. His writing never pleases him and he never understands what he has written. He says that it is fatuous life.

A week has passed. Trepliov has depressed and behaves very tactlessly. He shoots himself and the bullet hits his head, he also tries to challenge Trigorin into a duel. Arkadina and Trigorin has a plan to leave for Moscow. Masha leaves out and Nina gives a farewell present to Trigorin. It is inscribed by an inscription which reads: 'if you ever need my life, come and take it'.

Arkadina and Sorin discuss Trepliov's tactless behaviour. Arkadina says that the main reason is jealousy. Sorin believes there are other reasons. Trepliov has no money and no position. Sorin asks Arkadina to give her son a little money, but she replies that she is an actress and she needs money to pay for her dress-bill.

Trepliov enters with a bandage round his head. Arkadina changes the bandage tenderly. He memorizes about his childhood when he loves Arkadina tenderly and uncritically. The tenderness vanishes when they talk about Trigorin. Trigorin has taken Arkadina

away from him and now Trigorin is standing between him and Nina. Arkadina acclaims him of envy and talking about mediocre people who try to make unjustifiable claims about themselves. Trepliov refuses his mother's valuation. He gets angry. He tells her to take herself to her theatre and her miserable plays. He tears off the bandage. Both of them mock each other. As they always do, they make peace. Trepliov leaves as Trigorin comes in.

Trigorin asks Arkadina to let him go and free so he can get a chance to live with Nina. Arkadina begs and kneels before him. Trigorin crushes and feels that he has no will of his own. They prepare their leaving for Moscow. Nina tells Trigorin that she decides to go to Moscow. Trigorin confesses his love for her and makes an appointment to meet her at Moscow.

Two years have passed. Masha and Medviedenko have married. Sometimes Masha neglects her baby just to get close to Trepliov. Trepliov turns out to be a real writer. People in Petersburg and Moscow very intrigue by his writing. Dr. Dorn asks Trepliov about Nina, and Trepliov tells him a long story about her. She runs away from home to make her dream of stage career comes true. She has an affair with Trigorin. She acts in a small theatre at some holiday place near Moscow, then goes to the provinces. She takes on big parts, but she acts them crudely, without distinction, false intonations, and violent gestures. Her personal life turns out to be a complete failure.

Trigorin brings a magazine with Trepliov's new story in it. A game of lotto has played. The game occupies with characters have in mind, all of them speak about themselves, but none listens to others. All of them pretend to be absorbed in the game. Dr. Dorn asks Arkadina whether she glads that she has a writer for her son. She replies that she never reads Trepliov's work because she never has a time for it.

The game has ended. He prepares to write and reads through what he has already written. He realizes that he talks about new

forms in art's lot. Nina sneaks out into the room and tells Trepliov to lock the door. Nina remembers the old days while she sees the stage near the lake, a place to act for the first time. She has lived happily near the lake, she used to wake up in the morning and break into songs. She tells Trepliov that she has an engagement for the whole winter. She has to go to Yelietz in a third class carriage with the peasants; and at Yelietz upstart tradesmen will pester her with their attention.

Trepliov still adores Nina. He curses her a lot, tears up her letters and photographs. He realizes that he cannot stop leaving her. He implores Nina to stay or lets him come with her. Nina just cannot stand anymore. She puts on her hat and cape, prepares for leaving. She tells him what the matters in their works. What really matters are not fame or glamour but knows how to endure things, bears one's cross, and have faith. When she has it, she is not afraid of life.

Trepliov has not found his right path just like her, he is still floating about in a world of dreams and images without knowing the use of them. He has no faith and does not know what his vocation does. Trepliov feels depressed. He tears up all of his manuscript and throws them away.

Others gather from their supper. Everyone starts as a shot has been heard off-stage. Dr. Dorn went out to see what has happened. He is assuring everyone that a bottle of his medicine has burnt. He puts his arm around Trigorin's waist and leads him to footlights. He tells Trigorin to take Arkadina away somehow. The fact is that Trepliov has shot himself.

THE MEANING OF THE TERMS

This chapter explains and clarifies the terms found in the title. By understanding the meaning of the terms applied within the title, it is hoped that it will make the way of comprehending the contents of the play as a unity easier. There are quotations and statements taken from various sources which have correlation with the topic discussed. It will be concluded with specific meaning of the terms to avoid the readers from uncertainties.

3.1 The Meaning of Plot

It is a need for human to know what is going to happen next when they read a literary work. That need is fulfilled by plot.

M. H. Abrams states that the plot in dramatic or narrative work is the structure of its actions, as these are ordered and rendered toward achieving particular emotional and artistic effects. The definition is deceptively simple, because the actions are performed by particular characters in a work, and are the means by which they exhibit their moral and disposition qualities (1981:137).

In **Dictionary of Literary Terms**, it is described that plot is a plan or scheme to accomplish a purpose in literature, plot refers to the arrangement of events to achieve an intended effect. A plot is a series of carefully devised and interrelated actions that progresses through a struggle of opposing forces to a climax and a dénouement (1972:289).

Goldman gives an explanation about plot wider. He says that plot is a time when each moment in a play receives a maximum concentration; it is there in its own right, not subordinated to the line of development. Ideally, the total complex of meaning is thus continuously present. Such a play is shaped by the internal, organic

relation of characters, ideas, motives, and symbols rather than by the largely external, mechanical linkages of scenes (1968:310).

X. J. Kennedy states that plot refers simply to the events in a story. It will mean the artistic arrangement of those events (1991:7).

Moreover, in **Understanding the Elements of Literature**, Taylor explains the number of ways in which events can be ordered or interrelated but in each case the relationship must be logical. His explanation defines as follow:

1. Chronological sequences are often thought to be the natural and most realistic ways to tell a story; that is, recounting events in the order of their supposed according to the conventions of time measured by a clock. But a narrative fiction is not always an actual record of what really happened. In the first place, events are fictionalized by the author's selection and re-creation even if they were once real; in the second, great many literary events are wholly imaginary. In any case, it is not the events themselves which are important, but rather the idea or theme which they exemplify.
2. A structural pattern in which events are ordered according to their logical relationship is merely an alternative to a chronological arrangement. As an author determines a strategy for expressing theme and subject matter, the need to join one episode with another depends on their interrelationship, their association with a central theme, and the logic of the story as a whole, not on the order in which events might actually have taken place. Even in everyday life events do not necessarily have a direct relationship with those that are close to them in time, and, since fiction concentrates even more heavily on the logical and thematic relationship between events or episodes, an extra-chronological order of events is to be expected. Only significant incidents are included in fiction and they are so arranged as to lead the reader to a particular understanding of the action (1981:50-51).

From these quotation about plot above, we can conclude that plot is the artistic arrangement of events which is shaped by organic relation of characters to lead the reader to a particular understanding of the action.

Each playwright will tend to form his own theory of plot, to derive his own emphasis according to his separate analysis. In **An**

Introduction to The Study of Literature. Hudson says that plot has its elements which consist of: **introduction** or **exposition**, which is put the spectator in possession of all such information as is necessary for the proper understanding of the play he is about to witness. The playwright shows who the characters are, explains the relationship in which the characters stand to one another before the action begin, what motivates them, and usually some aspects of their environment. Secondly, **initial incidents** or incidents in which the conflict originates. Thirdly, **rising action**, the growth of the action to its crisis, the conflict continues to increase in intensity while the outcome remains uncertain. It purposes to intensify the emotions, arouse suspense—a particularly intense kind of narrative curiosity which stimulates an unusually strong expectation of possible consequences, one of which may be dreadful, to illustrate and determine what happens to the characters. Fourthly, **crisis**, at which one of the contending forces obtains such controlling power that henceforth its ultimate success is assured. A crisis involves a clash of interest. The protagonist is faced with alternatives that will determine his fate. Fifthly, **the resolution**, comprising that part of the play in which the stages in the movement of the events towards this success are marked out. And the last, **the catastrophe**, in which the conflict is brought to a close (1965: 201-203).

There are two types of plot within the play: it might be the closed plot or the open plot. In **Outlines of Literature**, Edward H. Jones Jr., explains that closed plot is the plot in which the author gives resolution or conclusion of the story for the readers. In open plot the story frequently ends at climax, so the readers are left to decide what they think about the resolution or outcome of the story might be (1969:32).

3.2 The Meaning of Characterization

Before analyzing directly to the meaning of characterization, actually we must understand about the word character. It will guide to a comprehensive understanding toward a whole one.

Harry Shaw describes character as the aggregate of traits and features that form the nature of some persons or animals. Character also refers to moral qualities and ethical standards and principles (1972:70-71).

Whereas M. H. Abrams in **The Glossary of Literary Terms**, writes a description as follows:

The character is a literary genre: a short, and usually witty, sketch in prose of distinctive type of person. Characters are the person presented in a dramatic or narrative work who are interpreted by the reader as being endowed with moral and dispositional qualities that are expressed in what they say—the dialogue—and by what they do—the actions (1981:20).

By the explanation above, there is an easier understanding about the meaning of character, and its significance of character in literature means a person represented in a story, novel, play, or other artistic piece combined of moral or ethical structure, qualities, principles that distinguish a person from the others. All of them are expressed in what one says and by what one does.

In **Reading Narrative Fiction**, Chatman says that characters are given traits by a process called characterization. They may be characterized in a variety of ways. The most obvious is the narrator's *direct naming* of a trait, and the trait-naming of one character by *another character*. Both of these characterization devices are *direct*, that is they work through actual words, typically adjectives, which the narrator assigns as trait-names. But traits are also *implied*. For example, we can infer from the actions, speeches, and thoughts of characters what they are like (1993:59).

Shaw also has a definite idea about characterization. He defines the term characterization as the creation of images of imaginary persons in drama, narrative poetry, the novels, and the short story.

Several basic meanings of characterization, a character is revealed by (1) his actions, (2) his speech, (3) his thoughts, (4) his physical appearance, (5) what other characters say or think of him (1972:71).

M. H. Abrams describes characterization as methods for characterizing the person in a narrative. He divides it into showing and telling. In showing (also called "the dramatic method"), the author merely presents his characters talk and act and leave the reader to infer what motives and dispositions lie behind what they say and do. In telling, the author himself intervenes authoritatively in order to describe, and often to evaluate, the motives and dispositional qualities of his characters (1981:21).

In **Context of The Drama**, Goldstone states that the character has established through: (1) dialogue spoken by the character, (2) dialogue spoken about the character, (3) action taken by the character, (4) the personality and interpretation of the actor playing the role (1968:6).

Hatlen adds that the character may be delineated in four ways: (1) by appearance, since the actor's physical qualities give an immediate stimulus to the audience, (2) by speech, for the kind of language employed by the person, his manner of speaking, his voice quality, his inflection pattern, pitch, rate, and general vitality, all say something about him. The dramatist takes great care to write dialogue that makes an immediate impression about the characters, (3) through a character's external actions, we have clues to his inner motivations. Sometimes the playwright may choose to create an initial impression that is misleading or ambiguous and then reveal the truth as the play progresses, and (4) by what others say about a character and the way in which they react to him, we may begin to form an opinion before he even appears (1967:18-19).

Now we can conclude that the definition of characterization, which means the author's methods of characterizing his characters through the action taken by the character, the dialogue spoken by

characters, the thought of the characters, and their physical appearance.



CONCLUSION

Chekhov is unhappy with the standards of playwriting of Russia at that time and refuses to conform to it. He makes his own methods, which are attached to real life. The methods are applied to *The Seagull* which is published in 1896.

In arranging his play, Chekhov does not follow the traditional arrangement of plot, which usually has scheme: introduction, rising action, which is followed by climax, the falling action, then ends in a resolution. He makes his own arrangement, because he believes that life has its own order. He introduces his characters from the beginning; all of them are presented and know each other, or at least become acquainted with. He builds the emotional network between them. Preparing the ground for conflict, he uses arrival and departure. The arrival of the outsiders, Arkadina and Trigorin, rises the tension. Problems are set. The irruption of the outsiders into the lives of Nina and Trepliov leads to friction, emotional tension, and in time emotional crises. After the crisis has come, he does not give it denouement or resolution. He shifts to another problem and then prepares its own climax. He wants to show the reality in this life; where problems come over and over, before we can find the right solution.

Eliminating classical heroes from his plays and replacing them with a group of characters, making minor characters memorable, exposition and the scheme of arrival and departures to create the climax of the story, the emotional undercurrents of the dialogue, and overall shape of plot are his concepts of what playwright should do in writing drama. In *The Seagull* he makes Trepliov, Nina, Arkadina, and Trigorin as the group of characters. He does not give them any judgement. The problems that surrounding them and the way they face it, give the readers enough exposition about their state of mind.

Chekhov presents his characters in terms of what they feel about themselves and other people, about their situation in life and about life in general. Trepliov with his attempt to prove his worth and existence, Arkadina and her glittering world of theatre, Nina with her dreams and Trigorin with his self-existence in this world.

In order to make minor characters memorable, he gives them a strong colouring of the comic or eccentricity. Masha with her vodka and black dress, Medviedenko with his vision of life, Dorn with his support to Trepliov, Polena with her affairs, and Shamrayev as the only character in the play who is brave enough to reject the Arkadina's control over himself. He does this to achieve the balance of lifelike in the play and makes these characters not just lost within the group or being subordinate to those major characters who are more in the centre of attention. He gives them independent status with their own attempt of their longing for better life.

He also tries to create the impression of the casual, haphazard flow of ordinary conversation in the emotional undercurrents of the dialogue. Trigorin talks to Nina about his situation in life in a long-term dialogue. He allows his characters to talk among themselves when the game of lotto is set, everyone pretends to be absorbed in the play and no one listens to others. The problems among the characters do not appear and vanish suddenly but remain largely unsolved, persisting perhaps for a lifetime and being momentarily highlighted during the course of the play.

Those which are explained above are the proofs of Chekhov new concepts of playwriting, which are applied to *The Seagull*.

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