

## CHAPTER III

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the method in conducting the research. It contains the research questions, the research subject, research procedure, the data collection, data analysis, and data presentation.

#### 3.1 Research Questions

This research is geared toward answering the following questions:

1. How is the story narrated as evidenced in the novel?
2. How does the narrative construct the main character?

#### 3.2 The Research Subject

The subject of the research is *The Secret Life of Bees*, a novel written by Sue Monk Kidd. The novel was first published by Viking Books in 2002. The novel was downloaded from [www.libgen.org](http://www.libgen.org) in the pdf format on October 3, 2013. The novel is written in English and consists of 14 chapters and 223 pages.

#### 3.3 Research Procedure

This research employs a descriptive qualitative method. The novel was read thoroughly and notes were taken in order to mark the parts which best answer the research questions. This research is limited only to analyze the way the story is narrated in the novel and the way the narrative constructs the main character (Lily Melissa Owens) by using the framework of Barry's version (2002) of Genette's narratology theory (1980).

#### 3.4 Data Collection

The data are in the form of words, clauses, comments and dialogues of the main characters which are critically selected from the novel *The Secret Life of*

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*Bees* (2002). The data were collected by reading the novel thoroughly, then selecting the parts which serve as textual evidence.

### 3.5 Data Analysis

The collected data are then categorized into narrative categories (how the story is narrated) and methods of characterization (how the narrative constructs the main character). The data are then analyzed using Barry's version (2002) of Genette's narratology theory (1980). In conducting the research, the following steps have been taken:

1. Reading the novel thoroughly,
2. Classifying the textual evidence,
3. Analyzing the data,
4. Interpreting the data,
5. Making conclusion based on the findings.

### 3.6 Data Presentation

The analyzed data are then presented in the form of tables below:

**Table 3.1**  
**How the Story is Narrated in the Novel**

No	Chapter / Page	Narrative Category	Textual Evidence	Brief Explanation
1	5/67	Narrative Level	'A long time ago, across the world in Germany, there was a young nun named Beatrix who loved	The story consists of several embedded narratives which means that one of the characters in the

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	6/79		<p>Mary. She got sick and tired of being a nun, though, what with all the chores she had to do and the rules she had to go by. So one night when it got too much for her, she took off her nun outfit, folded it up, and laid it on her bed. Then she crawled out the convent window and ran away.’</p> <p>‘One day,’ August said, ‘a slave named Obadiah was loading bricks onto a boat that would sail down the Ashley River, when he saw something washed up on the bank. Coming closer, he saw it was the wooden figure of a woman. Her body was growing out of a block of wood, a black woman with her arm lifted out and her fist balled up.’</p>	<p>story tells another story within the primary narrative which makes it stories within a story.</p>
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2	1/6	<p>Narrative Time:</p> <p>a. Flashback</p>	<p>My first and only memory of my mother was the day she died. I tried for a long time to conjure up an image of her before that, just a sliver of something, like her tucking me into bed, reading the adventures of Uncle Wiggly, or hanging my underclothes near the space heater on ice-cold mornings. Even her picking a switch off the forsythia bush and stinging my legs would have been welcome. The afternoon my mother died, there was a suitcase open on the floor, sitting near the stuck window. She moved in and out of the closet, dropping this and that into the suitcase, not bothering to fold them.</p>	<p>In the story, flashback is used to refer to an event which happened in the past but has relevance to the present story.</p>
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	6/84	b. Flash forward	I knew one day I would go back into the parlor when no one was around and touch the Lady's heart. Then I would show August the picture of my mother and see if the moon broke loose and fell out of the sky.	The story uses flash forward technique to narrate an event which happens in the future.
3	2/30	Narrative Voice: First-person narrator	Suddenly I felt ice cold, as if something dangerous had slipped into the room. I looked toward the window and felt a tremor slide along my spine.	The story is told from the first person "I" who is also the main character in the story and the narrator directly tells us only what she thinks and experiences.
4	13/194	Focalization: Internal focalization (First-person narration)	I knew Mrs. Watson from church, from all the times she stopped to buy peaches from me. She was kind as she could be, but she'd always looked at me	The event is narrated from a single character's point of view. Therefore, the narrator has a limited access to know about the other characters'

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			like there was something indescribably sad written across my forehead, like she wanted to come over and scrub it off.	feelings and thoughts.
5	8/116	Narrative of Words: a. Direct and tagged	‘I’m Lily,’ I said. ‘She’s staying with August,’ Zach explained.	This is called direct because the actual words are given within a quotation marks and then followed by the name of the speakers.
	12/175	b. Direct and untagged	‘I call him T. Ray.’ ‘Not Daddy?’ ‘He’s not the Daddy type.’	There are two characters engaged in conversation but the name of the speakers are not explicitly tagged.
	4/54	c. Direct and selectively tagged	‘Thank you,’ I said to August. ‘You’re welcome. Now, sit down. I’ll get some orangeade.’	The speech is ‘selectively tagged’ because the first utterance is tagged, but the second one is

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				not.
6	1/5	Narrative Mode: Mimetic	I slid from the covers and dashed through the bees for the door. I woke him by touching his arm with one finger, softly at first, then harder and harder till I was jabbing into his flesh, marveling at how hard it was.	The story uses mimetic mode or 'slow telling'. The mode allows for the creation of great detail and intimacy between the character and the readers, creating the illusion as if the readers are seeing and hearing things for themselves.

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**Table 3.2**  
**How the Narrative Constructs the Main Character**

<b>No</b>	<b>Main Character</b>	<b>Chapter / Page</b>	<b>Method of Characterization</b>	<b>Textual Evidence</b>	<b>Brief Explanation</b>
1	Lily Melissa Owens	1/8	Physical description	<b>He did not care that I wore clothes I made for myself in home economics class, cotton print shirtwaists with crooked zippers and skirts hanging below my knees, outfits only the Pentecostal girls</b>	In the story, Lily describes herself as an ordinary and unpopular girl, there is nothing special about her looks, except her Pentecostal dresses.

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				<p><b>wore.</b> I might as well have worn a sign on my back: <b>I AM NOT POPULAR AND NEVER WILL BE...</b> My hair was black like my mother's but basically a nest of cowlicks, and it worried me that I didn't have much of a chin...I had nice eyes, though, what you would call Sophia Loren eyes... <b>Matters below my neck had shaped up, not that I could show off that part.</b></p>	
2		2/29	Dialogues and actions	<p><b>'You don't scare me,'</b> I said, mostly under my breath. He'd already turned to leave, but now he whirled back. <b>'What did you say?'</b> (T.Ray)</p>	Through the dialogue and action, Lily is portrayed as a brave girl, especially when she is dealing with her cruel father,

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				<p><b>‘You don’t scare me,’ I repeated, louder this time.</b></p> <p>‘You better watch your mouth.’</p> <p>(T.Ray)</p> <p><b>‘Go ahead, try and hit me!’ I yelled.</b></p> <p>When he swung, I turned my face. It was a clean miss. I ran for the bed and scrambled onto the middle of it, breathing hard.</p>	T.Ray.
3		12/178	Thoughts and feelings	<p><b>“It was my fault she died. I—I killed her.”</b></p> <p>I sobbed and dropped straight down onto my knees on the rug. It was the first time I’d ever said the words to another person, and the sound of them broke open my heart... Kneeling on the floor, unable to</p>	Through the story, Lily thinks that she is truly responsible for her mother’s death, and when she finally knows the truth that her mother was leaving her when she was a little girl, she feels of being unwanted and unloved. Moreover, Lily finds herself

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		1/8	<p>stop shuddering, I heard it plainly. It said, <b>You are unlovable, Lily Owens. Unlovable. Who could love you? Who in this world could ever love you?</b></p> <p>I might as well have worn a sign on my back: <b>I AM NOT POPULAR AND NEVER WILL BE.</b></p> <p>I needed all the help that fashion could give me, since no one, not a single person, had ever said, ‘Lily, you are such a pretty child,’ except for Miss Jennings at church, and she was legally blind... <b>There was nothing I hated worse than clumps of whispering girls</b></p>	<p>feeling very much alone, unpopular, friendless, and motherless.</p>
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		1/9		<p><b>who got quiet when I passed.</b></p> <p>I had thought my real chance would come from going to charm school at the Women's Club last spring, Friday afternoons for six weeks, but <b>I got barred because I didn't have a mother, a grandmother,</b> or even a measly aunt to present me with a white rose at the closing ceremony.</p>	
4		1/9	What other characters' say about the main character	<p><b>'You're charming enough,'</b> Rosaleen had said, washing the vomit out of the sink basin.</p> <p>'You don't need to go to some highfalutin school to get charm.'</p> <p>(Rosaleen)</p>	Through the other characters' opinion, Lily's personality can simply be described as a charming, smart, brave, and lovable girl. As the story progresses, Lily is described as a liar

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		1/13		<p>‘Please, Lily, you are insulting your fine intelligence. <b>Do you have any idea how smart you are? You could be a professor or a writer with actual books to your credit.</b> Beauty school. Please.’ (Mrs. Henry)</p>	<p>too, but it is because she is not ready to tell other people about her life secret. Other characters also see how Lily looks like she is in a kind of trouble, feeling lost and does not have place to stay.</p>
		5/63		<p>‘<b>You know she’s lying,</b>’ said June. ‘I know,’ August told her. ‘<b>But they’re in some kind of trouble and need a place to stay.</b> Who’s gonna take them in if we don’t—a white girl and a Negro woman? Nobody around here.’ (August and June)</p>	

		12/182		<p>‘It doesn’t sound like me and my mother were anything alike,’ I said.</p> <p><b>‘Oh, but you were. She had a streak in her like you do. Suddenly she would up and do something other girls wouldn’t dream of.’</b></p> <p>‘Like what?’ August stared over my shoulder and smiled.</p> <p><b>‘One time she ran away from home. I can’t even remember what she was upset about. We looked for her long past dark. Found her curled up in a drainage ditch, sound asleep.’</b></p> <p>(August)</p>	
		12/178		<p>‘Listen to me now,’ said August, tilting my chin to her face.</p>	

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				<p>'That's a terrible, terrible thing for you to live with. <b>But you're not unlovable. Even if you did accidentally kill her, you are still the most dear, most lovable girl I know.</b></p> <p>(August)</p>	
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