

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides the research methodology of the study to investigate the plot of the story structured in *The Suitcase Kid* by Jacqueline Wilson. This chapter consists of research design, research subject and context, data collection, data analysis, data presentation, and synopsis of the novel.

3.1 Research Design

This study attempts to analyze the plot structures in a novel entitled *The Suitcase Kid*. The study analyzes the data with a qualitative approach. According to Strauss and Corbin (1998), a qualitative design is a suitable approach to understand and discover any phenomenon. In addition, Cormack (1993) suggests that a qualitative approach is an approach to examine and produce descriptive data whether it is spoken or written words of people. The study was guided by using Narratology as theory proposed by Fludernik (2009). Narratology provides tools to analyze literary elements in a narrative text, such as plot, setting, character, focalization, and the narrator. This study focuses on the plot of the story in order to analyze how the plot of the story is structured in the novel and to construct the meaning that can be made from the structure of the plot.

3.2 Research Subject and Context

The novel entitled *The Suitcase Kid* (1992) by Jacqueline Wilson is the main subject of the study. Jacqueline Wilson has written more than seventy books for young reader and won the Children's Book of the Year Award for *The Suitcase Kid*. The novel has the potential to be examined because of its unique plot structures.

3.3 Data Collection

The data were collected from the chain of plots of the story which consists of the sequence of events (beginning, complication, climax, and resolution). Subsequently, the data were analyzed to decide the major plot of the story which gives ways to other interrelated plots. Leggett (as cited in Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1997) suggests that plot in a story tends to come in series because each of the plot is linked to what happened before and what happened afterwards. Hence,

the data were also collected by analyzing the sequence of events of each plot in order to find out the relationship between each event that happened in the story. The data were analyzed to examine how the plot of the story is structured in the novel as well as to find the meaning that can be made from the structure of the plot.

3.4 Data Analysis

This study analyzed the data by using Narratology as theory proposed by Fludernik (2009). The study is conducted to analyze the plot structures of a novel entitled *The Suitcase Kid*. The plot structures can be examined by analyzing the sequence of events which consists of beginning, complication, climax, and resolution. Hence, the plot structures of the novel is analyzed by identifying its sequence of events.

After identifying the data, it is found that the novel is developed by a major plot which gives ways to five interrelated plots. Thus, each of the plot is analyzed to examine the sequence of events (beginning, complication, climax, and resolution) in order to reveal the connection between each plot. In conclusion, the findings of the data are explained and discussed to answer the research questions of this study.

3.5 Data Presentation

The following tables are the sample of the data which are analyzed by using Narratology theory by Fludernik (2009). Each table contains plot analysis and explanation about it. The table consists of element analysis which illustrates the sequence of events of a plot (beginning, complication, climax, and resolution), the textual evidences, the Narratology theory and the explanation about the findings.

Chapter A “is for Andy”	
Textual Evidence	My name is Andrea West but I mostly get called Andy. My sly little stepsister Katie calls me Andy Pandy. <u>Everyone just thinks she’s being cute. Katie specializes in cute. We are exactly the same age—in actual fact she’s five days older than me—and yet she barely comes up to my waist. I happen to be big. Katie is extremely small. People don’t guess she’s ten. They think she’s only about seven or eight.</u>

	<u>and she plays up to them for all she's worth. She blinks her blue beady eyes and wrinkles her small pink nose and puts on this squeaky little sugar-mouse voice.</u> People all drool and practically nibble her ears. Katie is not sugar-mouse. Katie is a King-Size Rat (pp.7-8).
Analysis	From the passage, it can be seen that the beginning of the conflict begins with a description about Katie's appearance as well as her personality. For example, the narrator describes Katie's age, body height, eyes, nose, and Katie's voice as well. The narrator also narrates the personality of Katie which indicates that Katie is an infuriating child. It is significant to know how a character is introduced in a narrative text because a character in a story may be indirectly characterized by their actions (Fludernik, 2009). The excerpt shows that the narrator provides a detail description about Katie in order to indicate the character who is being discussed, to construct visual imagery of a particular character towards the reader, and to show the background issue of this conflict.

Table 3.1 The Beginning of "Adjusting to New Sibling"

Chapter <i>K is for Katie</i>	
Textual Evidence	<p>"What are you doing under there, you stupid jerk?"</p> <p>It was Katie, back from school.</p> <p>"How's the poor little invalid now?" she said nastily.</p> <p><u>"When are you going to shove off back to your boring old dad, heh? I'm getting sick of you cluttering up my bedroom. Your mom's not serious, is she? You're not going to be here always?"</u> (pp.57-58).</p> <p>I had the greatest difficulty controlling myself right that minute. I wanted to scream and kick and hit and rage because it wasn't fair. Katie always hurts me far more than</p>

	I can hurt her. <u>And I don't want to share her horrid bedroom. I want my own bedroom, back in Mulberry Cottage. My own place with my own things where I can be with my own rabbit</u> (p.61).
Analysis	After finding out the background issue of this conflict, the reader will discover the complication of this conflict which is appeared in two different chapters, namely <i>K is for Katie</i> and <i>N is for Night</i> . The above passage is the first complication of the conflict which is presented in chapter <i>K is for Katie</i> . Among all of the characters who appear in the story, Katie is one of the characters who owns one of the chapters in the novel where her name stands as the title of the chapter. Since Andrea's Mom gets remarried, she has to live together with the children of her stepfather. The above passage shows that both Katie and Andrea seem uncomfortable with the condition where they have to share a bedroom. The passage shows that Katie attempts to provoke Andrea to leave their bedroom even up to influence Andrea to live with her Dad. The passage is considered as the complication of the conflict because it triggers suspense which make the reader curious to know what happens afterwards to resolve the conflict.

Table 3.2 The First Complication of “Adjusting to New Sibling”

Chapter <i>N is for Night</i>	
Textual Evidence	<u>Katie keeps me awake half the night.</u> She won't have the light out, for starters. Katie has her own flashlight and she nearly always has her television too. She turns the sound down low but the picture goes on flickering (p.73). It was Graham who helped me figure things out. <u>“When our mom died they told us she'd gone to sleep.” he said, swallowing. “Paula and I knew she'd been ill and then</u>

	<p><u>we knew she was dead. But Katie was just this little squirt and she didn't know what dead meant. So they said it was just like going to sleep. They meant to be kind but she got very scared of going to sleep after that. Andy, don't tease her about it, okay?"</u></p> <p>"I won't." (pp.76-77).</p>
Analysis	<p>The passage is considered as the turning point of the conflict because it presents a significant moment which is involved the narrator and Katie. The passage shows that the narrator attempts to find out the reason behind Katie's attitude that always happened every night. It was the stepbrother named Graham that helped the narrator figured things out. He told to the narrator the reason behind Katie's act. Through the passage, the reader will understand about a mystery that has been proven in this excerpt.</p>

Table 3.3 The Second Complication of "Adjusting to New Sibling"

Chapter <i>S</i> is for <i>Starlight</i>	
Textual Evidence	<p>"What are you doing, you dope?" Katie whispered.</p> <p>"What do you <i>think</i> I'm doing? I'm going to comfort Radish," I said, pulling on sweater.</p> <p>"But it's after midnight. You can't go <i>out</i>."</p> <p>"Just watch."</p> <p>"But your mom.."</p> <p><u>"I don't care. She won't know. And if you tell her I'll...I'll tell you're such a scared baby you won't even lie down to go to sleep. And I know why and I'll tell everyone—if you tell on me. Understand?"</u></p> <p><u>She understood, all right. She still looked worried</u> (pp.101-102).</p>
Analysis	<p>After encountering several complications described in the previous passages, the conflict has reached its climax</p>

	<p>which is presented in chapter <i>S is for Starlight</i>. Actually, the passage also consists of another conflict that will be discussed later on which is about “The Missing Toy”. However, the passage also consists of the climax of conflict between the narrator and Katie. A climax is the highest point in a sequence of events when the action or conflict reaches its peak. The passage shows that the conflict between the narrator and Katie has reached its climax. In this case, Katie seems surprised when she found that Andrea already knows about the reason why she never goes to sleep. The passage portrays the most dramatic piece of the conflict. It can be seen that the passage triggers suspense towards particular character, especially Katie who is being depressed in the situation. Moreover, the passage ends with an unfinished suspense. Thus, it can be assumed that the narrator asks the reader to predict the denouement of this conflict.</p>
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Table 3.4 The Climax of “Adjusting to New Sibling”

Chapter <i>X is for Xmas</i>	
Textual Evidence	<p><u>Katie’s still foul most of the time but just occasionally she’s not too bad.</u> She gave me a little plaster ornament of Andy Pandly for my Christmas presents and I was not particularly amused, especially as I’d sewn her a special velvet hairband to tie back her lovely long hair. <u>But then she cleared up her stuff off half the windowsill and said it was mine now, and I could keep my Andy Pandly ornament there</u> (p.126).</p>
Analysis	<p>According to Fludernik (2009), a sequence of events creates suspense as a result of climax in the middle part, and it will be cleared up when the climax is resolved at the end of the work. However, the climax of this conflict is not</p>

	<p>resolved at the end of the work, but it is resolved in a chapter entitled <i>X is for Xmas</i>. In <i>The Suitcase Kid</i>, the chapter entitled <i>X is for Xmas</i> recounts some events that are considered as the resolution of some conflicts which are happened in the story. Table passage is considered as the resolution of the conflict which is happened between the narrator and Katie. Although the narrator does not explicitly indicate a completion of the conflict, the passage indicates that the narrator begins to accept the existence of her new sibling, Katie.</p> <p>The sequence of events of this conflict which is covered in five different chapters indicates that the narrator attempts to evoke reader's curiosity by withholding some important events that will be resolved in the next chapter of the novel. Furthermore, the structure of plot in this conflict makes the reader keep questioning and predicting the issue that will come up afterwards.</p>
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Table 3.5 The Resolution of “Adjusting to New Sibling”

3.6 Synopsis of *The Suitcase Kid*

The following is the identity of the book which becomes the main subject of this study:

- Book Title : The Suitcase Kid
- Author : Jacqueline Wilson
- Published : Firstly published in Great Britain by Doubleday, in 1992.
- Narrator : *The Suitcase Kid* is narrated by using a first person narrator namely Andrea West. She is a ten year old girl who also becomes the main character in the story.
- Story : Andrea West, a ten year old girl who has to deal with family issue in her early life. Since her parents get divorce and remarriage, she is left without a home to call her own. She finds herself shuttled between her parents' houses. She has to live one week with Mom and the stepfather Bill, and with Dad together with the stepmother Carrie in the following week. This condition is very tough, but having six stepsiblings is even tougher. Andrea's parents said that she should be happy to have two wonderful families. However, Andrea wants her family back. She wants to live with her Mom, Dad, and the mascot toy Radish in their Mulberry Cottage.