

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter consists of the conclusion of this study and the suggestion for further studies. The findings, which have been explained in the previous chapter, are summed up in the conclusion. Meanwhile, the suggestion contains recommendation for further studies on this particular topic.

5.1 Conclusion

The aim of the research is to answer the research question regarding how Landon Carter's journey to maturity is depicted in Nicholas Sparks' *A Walk to Remember* (1999). From the analysis, it is found that Landon's journey to maturity is depicted through the use of one literary element, namely characterization. An indirect characterization through thought is used in majority to construct how Landon grows as a character. Moreover, it is discovered that Landon's journey to maturity fluctuates. This means that the process is not merely a steady change from him being immature to becoming mature. Throughout the process, Landon, who at the beginning is immature, is described to be mature in one event, but then becomes immature again in another event. This occurs until Landon completely matures by the end of the story as he completes his metaphorical journey, a term to describe a character's progression through self-understanding.

Furthermore, the analysis also shows that there are six general criteria of maturity and immaturity that can be identified from Landon's journey. The six criteria, which are based on Allport's (1961) theory of maturity, are: (1) extension of

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the sense of self, (2) warm relatedness of self to others, (3) emotional security, (4) realistic perception of skills, (5) self-insight, and (6) unifying philosophy of life. In contrast to these types of maturity, Landon also demonstrates three opposite types in his journey which indicate immaturity, namely (1) ego-centric sense of self, (2) emotional insecurity, and (3) lack of self-insight. Indicators of immaturity are found in four specific events in the beginning of the book, while maturity can be observed in seven specific events. A combination of both immaturity and maturity is performed by Landon in one event. It is discovered that the people who influence the immature and mature sides of Landon are his friends and his significant other, Jamie Sullivan.

To an extent, the analysis displays that there are other moral values that can be obtained by young adult readers if they use different perspectives while reading Landon's journey to maturity. These moral values, which are based on Bean and Moni (2003) framework of young adult literature, revolve around the ideas that young adults can and must change their immature behavior in order to achieve their mature identities. In the case of Landon, for instance, a previously self-proclaimed 'bad boy' is able to discover his mature identity through encountering a significant other and wanting to make her happy. Young adults, in this case, can also learn about the struggles of achieving maturity that might be relatable to most of them. The struggles often concern several aspects, including doing good things for others, showing unconditional love to others, and even owning self-mistakes. The important aspect about this is that these struggles will eventually result in the achievement of maturity.

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5.2 Suggestion

This research has analyzed the maturation of the main character in the novel *A Walk to Remember* by using one literary element which is characterization. It was difficult to find similar research with a similar topic on a journey to maturity.

Therefore, there are some suggestions proposed for further studies. Further researchers on young adult literature can try to analyze a character's maturing process in other young adult books through other literary elements that construct the process. The elements of theme and structure, for instance, are not comprehensively examined in this study. Therefore, it is suggested that these elements become the focus of further studies on the topic of maturity.

In the context of *A Walk to Remember* (1999), moreover, it is recommended that other topics, including other characters than the main character, can be investigated by further researchers. The topic of religion, for instance, is very evident in the book. Some young adults in the book frequently mock religious behaviors, while some appear to be obedient followers of a particular religion. These distinct viewpoints can be compared and analyzed in the scope of young adult literature and cultural studies. The researcher hopes that this study will encourage other critical approaches to this particular popular young adult book.

Besides the suggestions above, future researchers who will conduct similar studies can use this research's framework to analyze other novels which have the same theme about a journey of maturity.

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