

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals with the methodological aspects of the research. The first subsection, that is, the research procedure discusses qualitative research design, case study, and humor theory from Billig (2005) in brief. There are also phases of research detailing steps taken in the study. As the tools of analysis, humor theory from Billig (2005) and narrative from Nikolajeva (2002) are reviewed in concerning research questions of the research.

3.1 Research Questions

The research is intended to investigate the following questions:

1. How is humor constructed in the texts?
2. What function does the humor serve in the texts?

3.2 Research Subject and Context

The subjects of the research are two selected short stories which are considered as humorous texts. They are *Rape Fantasies* and *The Concert Stages of Europe*. *Rape Fantasies* was written by Margaret Atwood and the story was published in 1977. The author, Atwood is the Canadian writer who has written many literary works like books of poetry, numbers of novels and short stories. *The*

Concert Stages of Europe was written by Jack Hodgins and the story was published in 1978. The author, Hodgins is the British Columbian writer who has published numbers of novels and short stories. Both stories were written in English which consists of twenty pages.

The research is aimed to investigate the construction of humor by analyzing the elements, the role of narrator, types of humor and also the narrative implied in the texts. Moreover, the research is also aimed to analyze the function of humor employed in the texts.

3.3 Research Methods

This research employs a qualitative method in the descriptive approach. The research describes the textual evidences by analyzing words, phrases, and sentences in two selected short stories (*Rape Fantasies* by Margaret Atwood and *The Concert Stages of Europe* by Jack Hodgins) to answer the research questions. A descriptive method is chosen since the research is formed to describe the variables and phenomenons rather than to test a predicted relationship between variables using a numerical code.

The research is conducted qualitatively by employing a textual analysis. Alwasilah (2002, p.54) stated that qualitative research provides an understanding by scrutinizing certain phenomenon in detail which context vitally influences meanings of the phenomenon. Hancock (1998) added that a qualitative research is concerned with the opinions, experiences and feelings of individuals producing

subjective data. According to Lincoln (cited in Ospina, 2004) argued that a qualitative research involves an *interpretive and naturalistic approach*. It means that qualitative researchers learn things in their natural settings, attempt to make sense of, or to interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.

Based on Hancock (1998) a qualitative research can be defined as an attempts to increase our understanding of why things are the way they are in our social world and why people act the way they do. In addition, Locke (2006) argued that the qualitative projects are aimed to create understanding from data as the analysis proceeds.

The text was discussed using humor theory framework from Billig (2005). It focuses on the type, the role of narrator, and function of humor in two selected short stories. In this frame, reader response such a laugh, smile, and cynical response are facilitated. To enhance the validity of the study, the analysis also engages to narrative theory from Nikolajeva (2002) concerning to the issue the narrator of role which construct the humor in the texts.

3.4 Research Procedure

In conducting the research, the writer undertook some steps as presented below:

1. Reading closely the whole short stories *Rape Fantasies* and *The Concert Stages of Europe* by focusing on humor issue.

2. Selecting the evidences from the short stories containing humor issue specifically which results laugh, smile and cynical responses.
3. Selecting the issue of narrative specifically the role of narrator which is related to the humor issue to find out the main focus of humor construction.
4. Determining categories for collecting data. The categories are superiority humor, incongruity humor, relief humor and their connection toward narrative.
5. Collecting the data from two selected short stories by paying attention to clues signifying humor proposed by Billig (2005).
6. Analyzing the text using humor theory from Billig (2005) and relate it to the finding dealing with narrative from Nikolajeva (2002) which focuses on the role of narrator in constructing humor. The role of narrator is mostly described as the main determiner in constructing humor in the two selected stories.
7. Evaluating the data analysis which has been classified into the categories.
 - a. Interpreting result. This steps involve:
 - Clarifying the data analysis concerning into the humor issue and its relation to the role of narrator in the process of humor construction.

- Finding out the way of humor constructing through the role of narrator and how it describes its function in the texts.
- b. Discussing the result of the analysis by meaning of humor theory principles especially in constructing humor through the role of narrator. Finally the essence was conceptualized in conclusion with boundaries and several suggestions.

3.5 Data Collection and Analysis

Data are collected by finding textual evidences in the forms of words, sentences, phrases, and dialogues. The textual evidences are those that contain clues signifying them as the humorous texts and also related to humor which have been explained in the previous chapter. After the textual evidences being collected, they are categorized into three types of humor which is based on the theory of humor proposed by Billig (2005).

After the data are categorized, the writer looks into how the rounding context of the humorous effect is being analyzed. From the context, it attempts to find out how is humor constructed in the texts. It also will figure out why the humor is being constructed functioned in the texts. After identifying the humorous texts, the writer focuses into the characteristics of each type. The collected data were presented in a table, for instance:

No.	Humor Events	Reason of Smiling or	The Role of	Types of

		Laughing	Narrator	Humor
1.	<p>“You’re intending to rape me, right?” and he nods, so I open my purse to get the plastic lemon, and I can’t find it! My purse is full of all this junk, Kleenex and cigarettes and my change purse and my lipstick and my driver’s license, you know the kind of stuff.” (16th par, line 5)</p>	<p>The narrator is so screwed up to find the plastic lemon, because in her fantasy, the plastic lemon is a must stuff. But when the time arrives, she just can’t find the plastic lemon and can’t make her fantasies come true.</p>	<p>As a punchliner</p>	<p>Incongruity</p>

3.5.1 Data Source

Data source for this research is two selected short stories which are entitled *Rape Fantasies* (1977) and *The Concert Stages of Europe* (1978). These two short stories are considered as humorous texts which is the main focus of this research. In *Rape Fantasies*, the characters are Estelle, Chrissy, Sondra, Darlene, and Greta. Estelle is the main character which also has a role as a narrator in the

story. Chrissy, Sondra, Darlene, and Greta are Estelle's coworkers. In the story, they shared about their fantasies of being raped.

While in *The Concert Stages of Europe*, the characters are Barclay Philip Desmond, Barclay's parent, Cornelia Horncastle, Mrs. Humphries, Richy Ryder, Aunt Jessie, Mr and Mrs Greenborough, Korhonen's family. The concert stages of Europe is a famous talent show which searches a talented child. The main character in this story is Barclay Philip Desmond or known as Clay who is also a narrator. Cornelia Horncastle is a previous pianist winner in the concert stages of Europe. Richy Ryder is the emcee of the recital. Mrs. Humphries, Aunt Jessie, Mrs. Greenborough are Clay's piano teacher. Korhonen's families consist of Mr. and Mrs. Korhonen, Lilja Korhonen, and Larry Korhonen are Clay's neighbors who were Finns.

3.5.2 Synopsis

3.5.2.1 Synopsis *Rape Fantasies*

The story presents the short fiction that discusses about the women's imagination of rape fantasy. Estelle—the narrator—shares about her personal rape fantasies, she is also talking about her friends' rape fantasies. The narrator restrains the whole story which is dominated at each her friends' imagination because she always gives the ridiculous comments. The narrator also describes her

friend as a woman who make up too much and she considers that her friend is not beautiful at all.

Another foolish fantasy of Estelle's friend is when she imagines being raped by some guy. She does not feel fear but she just excited being raped. When her other friend imagines raped fantasies at a romantic situation one, the narrator—Estelle—describes her fantasies into the romance too, but all her fantasy is just broken. When someone is intended to rape her, she was searching the plastic lemon which is a must thing if she is being raped. But she cannot find that must thing and finally she cannot make her romantic fantasies came true.

3.5.2.2. Synopsis *The Concert Stages of Europe*

The story tells about a thirteen-year-old boy named Clay who was forced to learn piano by his own mother. At first, it was his mother's obsession to be a great pianist but she could never reach her dream. Clay who is the narrator in the story brings humor with the description of himself. The story begins with the refusal act from Clay who does not want to take the piano lesson. He makes some excuses to the mother but it never works. One of his efforts is running away from the piano lesson to the creek behind his teacher's house, but unfortunately he was falling down from the raft.

Clay has a fool's dream which is to be a Finn. Finns are people who have a good characteristic based on his perspective. He often acts very strange like

asking money from his neighbors to vote and make him win in the recital. Clay also embarrassed his entire family by his stupid answer to Richy Ryder (the emcee of the recital) which mocks his hometown. At the recital, he cannot show off his ability that is playing the piano as well as the other contestant do. The mother feels disappointed and regretted by forcing her son to learn the piano lesson because all she gets just feel ashamed. The humor precisely arises from Clay's entire bloomer act that cause to one significant result that embarrassed his whole family.

3.6 Closing Remarks

This chapter has briefly discussed the research methodology which includes the research objective, the research subject and context, the research method, the research procedure, the data collection and analysis (how to collect and analyze the data) and the data source and the synopsis of both short stories. Next chapter will discuss the findings and the discussions.