

PSEUDO-OBJECTIVE MOTIVATION IN MARIAH STEWART'S *MERCY STREET AND CRY MERCY*

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Abstract

This article discusses on popular fiction applying Bakhtin's theory, that is pseudo-objective motivation. This motivation is writing composition which author applies and it relates to ideology. Here, I found that the characters of Mercy Street and Cry Mercy practice capitalism ideology. This ideological practices becomes norm in the novels, because they think wrong if they do not practice it. The norms or values are known as work ethics. The norms are individualism, working hard, discipline, frugality, honest, and independent. Pseudo-objective motivation is categorized into common view, subordinate conjunction and linking words, and collective voice. These categories are found in the novels.

KEY WORDS: *pseudo-objective motivation, Bakhtin, popular fiction, capitalism.*

INTRODUCTION

Novel is an arena to explore human beings life which is created by an author. An author depicts a condition and characters as real as possible, so that readers will imagine that the story is real. An author writes story to describe life which is experienced by people. He or she uses what he or she thinks logically happen in reality. The author applies practices of society in novel, so that the story does not look fictitious. Verisimilitude norms are needed to establish the story, so that the events will be organized logically.

To make a story life, an author will use language that is also spoken by people in social life. Daily language is used to support the story as if the story happened. For example, a story about family life which is depicted in a kitchen seems weird, if the story is told using formal language. This event must use daily conversation, because this event happens between characters created as family members. The condition will be different when a literary work is written using literary language, as found in poetry or some classic drama or prose. In these works, readers often find literary language which is far from readers life. On the other hand, literature institution considers the literariness of language in literary work will make the work as the real literature. Formalist and structuralists argue that it is not literary text itself that is the subject of

poetics but rather – to use Roman Jakobson’s phrase – its “literariness” (Chatman; 1978:17).

Popular fiction is one of literary works which is famous because of the language as one of the reasons. This fiction uses language which is easy to be comprehended by the readers. The readers will not think twice because they read a story told by literary language. In the contrary, classics fiction uses literary language to explore the story. It causes readers get difficulty to understand it.

But, what it is easy to understand does not always have deep meaning. Some readers think that literary language always has deep meaning and daily language does not have it. This condition makes popular fiction become the second class literary work. What readers can explore in popular fiction is not as simple as the story. The story written by author hides meaning. Sometimes it is not realized by the readers, because ‘unit of expression plane conveys meaning, that is, units of the content plane’ (Chatman; 1978:22). Every statement in story has meaning. It is not only description of an author on an event he/she tells. Reader should seek what an author means by writing the statements. It is not as clear as stated.

Statements written to describe events could be experienced by an author, then poured into in his/her writing. It is part of his/her life experiences in society. These experiences of life contain ideological practices. He/she will also use assumptions which he/she often faces reality in writing. Logical thinking will make a story real, and readers will agree or disagree to what he/she writes. Usually, author will write what society thinks right. This kind of writing is a style in writing narrative.

An author uses writing technique in narrative which applies common view. An author writes what people think and conduct in certain condition. He/she uses logic to describe characters or narrators thoughts and acts. This writing technique relates to what people believe on certain value and practice, so that ideology is needed to discuss in this writing technique.

In this article, the writer focuses on capitalism ideology in pseudo-objective motivation. Pseudo-objective motivation as the writing technique of narrative is found in popular fictions entitled *Mercy Street* and *Cry Mercy* written by Mariah Stewart. Mariah Stewart wrote the fiction and created the characters applying capitalism ideology at work and their daily life.

Pseudo-objective Motivation

In this article, I apply Bakhtin theory written in an essay “Discourse in the Novel” to analyze novels entitled *Mercy Street* and *Cry Mercy*. The focus of this essay is heteroglossia which refers to the basic condition governing the production of meaning in all discourse (Shelden; 2005:40). When heteroglossia enters novel, it has some kinds of writing composition. One of them is hybrid construction. It is an utterance that belongs, by grammatical (syntactic) and compositional markers, to a single speaker, but that actually contains mixed within it two utterances, two speech manners, two style, two “languages”, two semantic and axiological belief system (Bakhtin; 1981:304-305). Then, pseudo-objective motivation is a kind of hybrid construction.

Pseudo-objective motivation is a general characteristic of novel style. Pseudo-objective motivation is literary technique that an author uses for representing the “common view” in a work of narrative; that is, what appears to be an authorial utterance in narration is actually the presentation of a commonly held opinion by a given general population (Bodner; 2005:38). This motivation is used to conceal another’s speech. Another speech means common opinion which people often meet in society (Bakhtin; 1981:305). This form is created as though the statement is purely created by author. What people think, conduct, and act in social life is written by author.

To conceal another’s speech, author uses subordinate conjunction and linking word to refract the intention (Bakhtin; 1981:305). Linking word and logical sequences blur the direct authorial intention, and the sentences are accepted as someone else’s language. Using the words; thus, because, for the reason that, in spite of, so forth, therefore, and consequently, will make the direct authorial intention refracted. These words make sentences accepted as common sense. Bakhtin writes a quotation from Charles Dickens’ *Little Dorrit* as the example; ‘But Mr. Tite Barnacle was a buttoned-up man, and *consequently* a weighty one (book2, ch.12)’ (Bakhtin; 1981:305). The word ‘consequently’ is italicized to show that Charles Dickens used logical sequence which describe the relation between ‘buttoned-up man’ and ‘weighty one’.

Beside using subordinate conjunction and linking word, pseudo-objective motivation also applies collective voice. Collective voice is concrete voice which is

accepted as truth. Pseudo-objective motivation looks like utterance commented by narrator, but in fact, it is the viewpoint of the collective citizens (Bodner; 2005:36-37). For example, Bakhtin gives the example from Charles Dickens' *Little Dorrit*. "...Noboby, as aforesaid, knew what he had done; but *everybody knew him to be the greatest that had appeared* (book2, ch.13)" (Bakhtin; 1981:305-306). In this exmple, Bakhtin italizes the clause 'everybody knew him to be the greatest that had appeared'. It is collective voice which people think of Mr. Merdle from his appearence and how he should act in front of the society. People as dominant think what a person should act and behave relating to his/her attribute.

Capitalism

To support discussion on popular novels entitled *Mercy Street* (2009) and *Cry Mercy* (2009) applying Bakhtin theory, pseudo-objective motivation, I apply capitalism ideology which is believed by the characters found in the novels. This ideology is taken from book entitled *The Protestant Ethics and Spirit of Capitalism* (1950). This book was written by Max Weber who wrote that capitalism idea comes from Protestant belief.

Weber wrote that spirit of capitalism derived from Calvinism teaching, one of Protestant sects. This teaching teaches that people should have calling to be selected by God in after-life age. Not all of people are destined to be the elect. People who are not the elect should do effort to get it by themselves. It is the start of capitalism norms. To be elected, God sees them from their effort in the world.

Capitalism teaches people to have calling principle. Calling is 'the only way of living acceptably to God was not not to surpass worldly morality in monastic asceteism, but solely through the fulfillment of the obligation imposed upon the individual based on his position in the world' (Weber; 1950:80). People are suggested to do calling in the world, so that they get succeded. Moreover, they will be the elected after-life. This principle guide people to conduct life according to the teaching.

Calling principle is conducted to get God's miracle. In this principle contains norms which help people to be the elect. They are discipline, working hard, frugality, honest, individualism, and independent. They are now known as work ethics. Calvinism teaching also asks people to have self-control. This control will limit people from

worldliness. At work, people earn money, but they cannot spend all of the money for worldly life. They are suggested to do charity.

These values are really known in industrialism countries. They conduct these value not only at work, they also do them in their daily activity, for example at home and at neighborhood. They will think right or wrong relating how they do their activity, whether they apply the values or not.

Now, this teaching changes from religion into secularism. Today, people do not think that what they do is religious teaching. People do not realize that it is religious teaching which focuses on after-life age. They think that it is the norms of what they should do to achieve prosperity in their life. The effect of this condition is that people tend to chase prosperity in world life that to be the elect in after-life.

DISCUSSION

Pseudo-objective motivation as writing technique is found in Mariah Stewart's *Mercy Street* and *Cry Mercy*. This writing techniques is not only analyzed the form, but it is also analyzed from the content, that is the ideology found in each finding. Relating to Bakhtin's theory, theory is applied to connect the formal approach and the content. The content is discussed from the sociological field that has ideological meaning. The ideology discussed relates to the norms or values which are known as work ethics. They are frugality, discipline, working hard, and independent.

Here, I found capitalism ideology imbedded in the characters and narrator of the novel. They apply capitalism norms or values not only at work, but also at daily activity. This practice can be explored from the utterances of the characters and narrator.

Pseudo-objective motivation is found in "*When they found nothing, I realized I was wasting the money.*" (*Cry Mercy*; 2009:149). This quotation is utterance spoken by character named Nick. This utterance comes from capitalism society, because Nick is created to believe in this system. It is the motivation which common view is applied in the utterance. This common view looks like Mariah Stewart's opinion. She only quotes that view and capitalist believes this view as norm. One of capitalism values is frugality. This society should do an activity which makes them get they want or need. They will not spend money in vain. Context of the utterance is when Nick hires

detective to find his missing nephew, but the detective cannot find her. Nick spends a lot of money, but he does not get what he wants. Nick respects the value that is not to spend money in vain.

Common view is also written in *"You always say it's rude to be late."*(*Cry Mercy*; 2009:216). 'Being late is rude' is capitalism common view. This society does not like to be late, they will come on time. It is not Stewart's utterance. Capitalist thinks that it is important to come on time, because they finish one activity, then do next. They dislike wasting time by only waiting someone who promise to come. It is pseudo-objective motivation because the utterance spoken by character named Chloe conceals another's speech. Another speech here is capitalist' speech which is considered as norm that it is not polite making another people wait. 'Being rude to be late' is the implication of capitalism norm, discipline, so that it will be polite to be on time.

'Doing something is better' is common view which is believed by capitalism. This view is spoken by character named Mallory to Charlie. She says:

"Charlie, do you think we're just spinning our wheels?"

"Probably. If you have any better ideas, I'm all ears."

"I don't."

"Well, then, doing something is better than nothing. Just my opinion, of course" (*Mercy Street*; 2009:313).

This utterance conceals another's speech. It is not from author or character, but it is from society. Capitalism does not agree to spend time in vain. It is not appropriate conducting this activity, people should work. In the context, Mallory searches someone missing by going around the city. For capitalist, it is better to work than doing nothing.

Spending much money is not capitalism norm. Society which believes in this system teaches to live simply. They tend to be frugal in spending money. Luxurious things are not good for people, because they think it can make them spoiled. This belief is adopted by the author in :

"...There's a pretty good fitness center, which I haven't been able to use as much as I'd thought I would, and an indoor pool, which Chloe and I have used several times. And they do have a pretty good restaurant, so we're able to eat well. Though I'm afraid Chloe is getting spoiled..."(*Cry Mercy*; 2009:173).

The utterance (*'Though I'm afraid Chloe is getting spoiled'*) conceals another's speech. It conceals capitalism's speech, that getting spoiled because of luxurious facilities. Capitalism does not teach to live in glamour. Humble is the way of life.

Pseudo-objective motivation is not only found in common view, but also in subordinate conjunction and linking word. Subordinate conjunction is found in quotation: "*We'll set the rules with her before we get there, and we'll set an itinerary so that she'll be able to see you. I'm assuming you can walk and talk to Henry and Lory at the same time*" (Cry Mercy; 2009:205). I italicize 'so that'. This conjunction makes the utterance blurred whether it is author's speech, character's speech, or another's speech. It makes the events run logically. The events run from first activity (set the rules) and the next (set an itinerary). The events results to 'she'll be able to see you'. It conceals another's speech because it is logical if we do the plan and it works. It is not from Nick's utterance or author's utterance, but author quote it from capitalism society. Capitalist will arrange activity before they do it, so that it will work well. Beside that, the utterance also contains word 'assuming'. This word means thinking that something is true, although there is no proof. This utterance is not author's, because the condition in the utterance can be accepted as common, especially by capitalist.

Collective voice can also form pseudo-objective motivation. This voice comes from people. One of collective voice is rumor which is often heard by people in a certain society. Here, collective voice is found in "*The money it must have cost aside, I heard he picked out everything himself, didn't even use a decorator. That says something to me about the man, like it must have been real important to him that everything be just right for her, you know?*" (Mercy Street, 2009:2). The word 'heard' italicized because it shows collective voice. It is utterance by Ben Miller who heard about Robert Magellan's condition. So that, this utterance conceals another's speech. This speech is inserted by Mariah Stewart in Miller's utterance.

This utterance also contains ideology which start from the sentence 'The money it must have cost aside'. As a rich man, Robert Magellan does anything by himself to decorate his house. If someone does anything by himself/herself, he/she can save the money. In capitalism, people should not waste money. They earn money, but spend it for charity. It is one of norms which they believe. But, for the next sentence, Miller says that the house is really important for Robert, so that he does it by himself. It is

irony. He does it for his beloved wife. It means that his wife is really special for him. The context of the utterance is Ben Miller meets Roberts Magellan, but Ben does not know that he meets Robert, the owner of the house they stand in front of. Then Ben tells the rumor to Robert.

CONCLUSION

Novel *Mercy Street* and *Cry Mercy* written by Mariah Stewart can be categorized as popular fiction. This category can be seen from the language the author uses to write this novel. Relating to Bakhtin's theory, Mariah Stewart applies pseudo-objective motivation as one of writing composition in writing narrative. This motivation found in *Mercy Street* and *Cry Mercy* uses common view, subordinate conjunction and linking word, and collective voice.

Common view which becomes focus of this discussion is capitalism. This view is practiced as norms. Mariah Stewart, the author, conceals these capitalism norms as another's speeches in some characters' utterances. They look like characters' opinion but they come from capitalism ideology believed by the characters of *Mercy Street* and *Cry Mercy*.

Common views found in pseudo-objective motivation contain the capitalism norms. The common view included in capitalism norm found in the novels are frugality, independent, discipline, and working hard. The characters are created to apply these norms by the author.

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