

**THE MISERLY OF EBENEZER SCROOGE REFLECTED AT
CHARLES DICKENS'S A *CHRISTMAS CAROL* NOVEL (1843):
A SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH**



ARTICLE PUBLICATION

**Submitted As a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for Getting the Bachelor Degree of Education
in English Department**

by:

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2014



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Surakarta, 21 Juni 2014.

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ABSTRACT

The major problem of this research is how the miserly character of Ebenezer Scrooge reflected at Charles Dickens's A Christmas Carol novel. It is conducted by analyzing the novel based on the structural elements and analyzing some aspects in England society in the nineteenth century based on sociological approach.

This research is qualitative research. Type of the data of the study is text taken from two data sources; primary and secondary data sources. The primary data source is A Christmas Carol novel written by Charles Dickens in 1843. While the secondary data sources are other materials taken from A Christmas Carol film 3D, books, essey articles, internet and other relevant information. Both data are collected through library research and analyzed by descriptive analysis.

Based on the analysis the researcher draws the following conclusions. First, based on the structural analysis of each element, it shows that the character and characterization, setting, plot, point of view, style and theme are related to each other and form the unity into good quality of the novel. Second, based on the sociological analysis, there is a close relationship between the novel story and the reality of England life. This novel describes the social effect from the Scrooge's character. The social status of main character in this novel can aliterate the bad character (miserly) into good character (generousity) with the way visited by three Spirits.

Keywords: The Miserly, A Christmas Carol and Sociological Approach.

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Background of the Study

A Christmas Carol is one of the famous novel by Charles Dickens was published first by Chapman and Hall on 19 December 1843 in England. *A Christmas Carol* is good book which read by all people,

children, teenagers and adult because the story in that novel is easy to understand and moral message in the novel is good to build a good character. *A Christmas Carol* had been adopted to film on 1984 and on 2009 adopted to 3D Computer Animated (Fairhurst, Robert. 2006).

The story of *A Christmas Carol* starts on Christmas Eve in 1843, with Scrooge at his money-lending business. He is a coldhearted miser with nothing but contempt for the poor, and who despises Christmas as a “humbug”. Ebenezer Scrooge was visited by the ghost of his business partner, Jacob Marley. Like Scrooge, Marley had spent his life exploiting the poor. Marley warns Scrooge that he risks meeting the same fate, and that as a final chance of escape he will be visited by three spirits of Christmas; Past, Present, and Yet to Come.

The Ghost of Christmas Past takes him to see his time as a schoolboy and young man. The spirit then takes him to see a Christmas a few years later in which he enjoyed a Christmas party held by his kind hearted boss, Mr. Fezziwig. Finally, the spirit shows him a Christmas in which his fiancée, Belle, left him upon realizing that money had replaced her in his heart. Then, Scrooge was visited by the Ghost of Christmas Present, who shows him the whole of London celebrating Christmas, including Fred and the impoverished Cratchit family. The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come shows Scrooge Christmas Day one year later. The Ghost never speak when he was visit Scrooge. Scrooge weeps over his own grave, begging the spirit for a chance to change his ways, before awakening to find it is Christmas morning. He immediately repents and becomes a model of generosity and kindness.

A Christmas Carol taught to the readers become a good person, not miserlylike scrooge as a main character in this novel. And all of in this story is intersting start from character, setting place, time, plot, language uses and especially moral message in the novel that good to build readers’s character.

2. Literature Review

The literature review to compare this research to other research, the researcher take two reserach to compare her research. The first study is conducted by Susana Sunarsasi (2002), a student of Department of Language and Arts Education in Sanata Dharma University of Yogyakarta. His research title is *The Cold and Closed-Heart Character of Ebenezer Scrooge the Main Character in Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol*. In her research, she used *A Christmas Carol* novel, novel critical, psychological teori about character as a data.

The second study was conducted by Junastri Elfina R. Siahaan (2010), a student of Faculty of Letters English Department University of Sumatra Utara (Medan). Her title thesis is *An Analysis of Moral Lesson in Charles Dickens's A Christmas Carol*. She was analyzed the moral lesson and message in *A Christmas Carol* novel.

The previous research with the researcher research is close same, it was analyzed the character of Ebenezer Scrooge. Although close same, but the issue of each research is diffrences. Susana Sunarsasi analyze what the source the character of Ebenezer Scrooge who cold and closed-heart was formed. While the Junastri Elfina R. Siahaan's thesis was analyzed of moral lesson in *A Christmas Carol* novel.

3. Problem Statement

The most important thing in a research study is knowing what the problem. In this research the problem statement "How is the miserly character of Ebenezer Scrooge reflected at *A Christmas Carol* novel?".

4. Objective of the Study

The objectives of the study are mentioned as follows:

- a. To describe Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* novel based on the structural elements of the novel.

- b. To analyze the miserly of Ebenezer Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol* novel based on sociological approach.

5. Benefit of the Study

The benefits of this study are:

- a. Theoretical Benefit

The result of the study is hoped by the researcher to give a new information and contribution to improvement of the knowledge, particularly the literary studies on *A Christmas Carol* (1843) novel was written by Charles Dickens.

- b. Practical Benefit

This study is hoped to give deeper understanding and enrich both knowledge and experience especially for the researcher, generally for other students of Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta and also can be used as reference by other universities students that interested in literary study on the novel especially *A Christmas Carol* novel based on sociological approach.

6. Underlying Theory

The sociology of literature is a study of literature based on the sociological perspective to comprehend social phenomena in a certain period of time that re described by author in his or her literature work. Sociology of literature is studied and analyzed based on the sociological perspective.

This research is based on sociological approach. Based on Laurensen and Swingewood (1972:113) the sociology study to literature is a fairly arrival, politics and social changes, even of such an imprecise area as ideology. Sociology use the society perspective to give value to the literary work.

The main object of sociology is society and social behaviour. Richard and Robert (1989: 11) assumed that Sociology is the

systematic study of social behaviour and human group. In the behaviour, it focuses on social relationship. It focusees primarily on the influences of social relationship upon the attitude and behaviour, besides how societies are established and changed.

Social relationship, contains the relationship between the society as the creator with the arts or creation like in literature as the human work. Literature and sociology have a close relationship. Literature is a reflection of society, a force in society, or simply a separate of social life. Levin (in Burns and Burns: 1973: 31) stated that literature is not only the effect of social causes but also the causes of social effect.

Literature is created based on the social condition of society, and sociology as a science studying the real life. Literature and sociology are not wholly distinct disciplines, but on the contrary, complement each other in our understanding of society (Laurenson and Swingewood, 1972: 113). Sociology of literature is also the fundamental concepts, principles, and methods of sociology, analyzes the influence of social and cultural factors upon human behaviour, and evaluates effect of group pcesses, social classes, startification and basic institutions on contemporary society.

Discussing relationship between literature and society, according to Wellek and Warren (1962: 110) pointed out that is generally based on the phrase of de bonald that literature is an expression of society. Literature reflects and expresses the life it self, the expression of a man. Then, sociology of literature focusses on the production and consumption of literature in society. Some conceptualizations of the relationship between literature and society are rather straight forward: literature is a reflection of society, a force in society, or simply a separate part of social life.

Furthermore, Wellek and Warren (1962: 113) classified the relationship between literature and society into three parts, namely 1) The sociological of the researcher and the profession and the

institution of literature. It correlates economic basis of literary production, social ideology. 2) The problem of the social content, the implicating and social purpose of the work of literature themselves and 3) The problems of the audience and the actual influence of literature.

The Major Principle of Sociology of Literature in this novel is sociology of the society. The correlation between society and literary works can be studied by using sociology of the literature. Sociology is essentially the scientific to understand the nature and the workings of all societies and men's position within society and to know the social process (Burns and Burns, 1973: 10). Literature works consist of prose, poetry, drama and fiction as devices as symbolism to convey the social situation.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

In this research, the researcher used a descriptive qualitative. Descriptive qualitative is a type of research which result the descriptive data in the form of written or oral words from the observed object. The object of the study is *A Christmas Carol* novel written by Charles Dickens in 1843. It was analyzed by using sociological approach. In this research, there are two types of data namely primary data and secondary data that are needed to do this research. The primary data sources of this study is *A Christmas Carol* novel (1843) written by Charles Dickens. The secondary data sources is the supporting data taken from other sources such as: *A Christmas Carol* Film 3D, biography of Charles Dickens, essey, articles, internet and other relevant information. The technique of data collection is by reading the novel repeatedly and trying to imagine and understand the novel. Then, the she takes notes and underlines the important words, phrases of sentences which are related to the study. Next, she tries to relate the data collected and the point of discussion. The technique used in analyzing data in this research is descriptive analyzes. It concerns with the structural element of the novel and sociological approach.

C. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

1. Structural Element Analysis

a. Character and Characterization

1) Ebenezer Scrooge

The protagonist, Scrooge is a cold, miserly creditor whose redemption to kindness and selflessness forms the act of *A Christmas Carol*. Scrooge represents the Victorian rich people who unlike with the poor people. The most motivation Dickens provides for Scrooge's character is his depiction of him as a young boy; neglected by his peers and, it appears, by his father, the young Scrooge seemed determined to live only for himself. Scrooge works in counting house. His counting house's name is Scrooge and Marley.

“Oh! But he was a tight fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge! a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous, old sinner! Hard and sharp as flint, from which no steel had ever struck out generous fire; secret, and self-contained, and solitary as an oyster. The cold within him froze his old features, nipped his pointed nose, shrivelled his cheek, stiffened his gait; made his eyes red, his thin lips blue; and spoke out shrewdly in his grating voice. A frosty rime was on his head, and on his eyebrows, and his wiry chin. He carried his own low temperature always about with him; he iced his office in the dog days; and didn't thaw it one degree at Christmas.”

(ACC, 1843: 4)

“Christmas Eve old Scrooge sat busy in his counting-house.”

(ACC, 1843: 5)

2) Bob Cratchit

Cratchit is Scrooge's overworked employee, a timid man afraid to stand up to his boss's demanding ways. Although Cratchit's family is miserable materials but they rich in love.

Cratchit loves with his family, he cares especially dearly for his crippled son, Tiny Tim. Cratchit is a symbol for the Victorian poor people, good hearted and hard-working but unable to climb out the stifling conditions of poverty.

“The door of Scrooge’s counting house was open that hemight keep his eye upon his clerk, who in a dismal little

cell beyond, a sort of tank, was copying letters.”
(ACC, 1843: 5)

b. Social Setting

The early social life which is portrayed in *A Christmas Carol* novel is the religious society and they will respect to moral values. The social setting of the story is in scrooge’s counting house when the Scrooge’s nephew say “merry Christmas” to Scrooge and invite him to celebrate Christmas together.

“A merry Christmas, uncle! God save you!’ cried a cheerful voice. It was the voice of Scrooge’s nephew
‘Don’t be angry, uncle. Come! Dine with us tomorrow.’”
(ACC, 1843: 5)

The next social setting of the novel is in the same place, Scrooge’s counting house, but the interaction with other people. Two gentlemen who come in Scrooge’s office. They want to endeavour to raise a fund to help the poor in christian cheer.

“Under the impression that they scarcely furnish Christian cheer of mind or body to the multitude,’ returned the gentleman, ‘a few of us are endeavouring to raise a fund to buy the Poor some meat and drink, and means of warmth. We choose this time, because it is a time, of all others’”
(ACC, 1843: 7)

c. Plot

The plot is important to build up the story in a novel. Plot is series of events in a story (Stanton, 2007: 26). It is divided into four, namely exposition, complication, climax and resolution.

d. Point of View

Point of view is the identification of the narrator of the story, describing any part he plays in the events and any limit placed upon his knowledge (Kennedy, 1983: 18). Point of view relates with how the author tells the story. The term point of view, or narrative perspective, characterizes the way in which a text presents persons, events and setting (Klarer, 1999: 21). In literary work, there are three kinds of point of view. The first is participant (first participant), the second is non-participant (third participant), and the last is omniscience point of view.

e. Style

Style is usually confined to mean the elements of language that may reflect an authors' originally in writing. The authors' style is an important point to make clear what actually the author wants to say through the story. There are many things involved in style, for example, diction, grammatical structure, rhetoric, and symbol.

f. Theme

Theme is the special meaning of a story that explains most of the elements in a simple manner. Theme also has synonym with main idea and main purpose. Theme is paralled to the main aspects of meaning in human life (Stanton, 2007: 36)

2. Sociological Analysis

a. Social Aspect

Not all of the England social aspects in the nineteenth century are reflected in *A Christmas Carol* novel. The aspect which reflected only the social structure. The character of Scrooge who miserly make his relation with society is not

good. Because of this character, many people who unlike with Scrooge but still some people who care him.

“But what did Scrooge care! It was the very thing he liked. To edge his way along the crowded paths of life, warning all human sympathy to keep its distance, was what the knowing ones call ‘nuts’ to Scrooge.”
(ACC, 1843: 5)

b. Economic Aspect

Ebenezer Scrooge as a main character in this novel is rich people. He has a counting house which built with his friend, Jacob Marley. Someone who has a counting house is rich people. Ebenezer and Marley also begun rich people because of their job.

“Scrooge never painted out Old Marley’s name. There it stood, years afterwards, above the warehouse door: Scrooge and Marley. The firm was known as Scrooge and Marley. Sometimes people new to the business called Scrooge Scrooge, and sometimes Marley, but he answered to both names. It was all the same to him.”
(ACC, 1843: 4)

Not all people who has opportunity to become rich people, not yet name of the world if in the world only rich people, the poor people also dominant in the world and it as complement in the world. In this novel, the symbol of poor people is Bob Cratchit. He works in Scrooge’s counting house as the clerk. Although he has small salary, but he and his family life in happiness.

c. Political Aspect

A law system of poor relief in which paupers were either forced into workhouses or given to overseers who hired them out as cheap labour. The law was in effect in Britain until the modern welfare state emerged after second war world.

“At this festive season of the year, Mr. Scrooge,” said the gentleman, taking up a pen, “it is more than usually desirable that we should make some slight provision for the Poor and Destitute, who suffer greatly at the present time. Many thousands are in want of common necessities; hundreds of thousands are in want of common comforts, sir.” “Are there no prisons?” asked Scrooge. “Plenty of prisons,” said the gentleman, laying down the pen again. “And the Union workhouses?” demanded Scrooge. “Are they still in operation?”

(ACC, 1843: 7)

d. Cultural Aspect

The country in the world has a culture, and each country is different. Such as in London, it has so many cultures such as, music, dance, architecture, clothes, and etc. Every country and every people has own way to celebrate that moment. Many people who celebrate with party, dinner and pray in the Church, visit the family and etc.

“Nephew!” returned the uncle sternly, “keep Christmas in your own way, and let me keep it in mine.” “Keep it!” repeated Scrooge’s nephew. “But you don’t keep it.”

(ACC, 1843: 6)

e. Religious Aspect

The majority religion in England is Christianity. Besides, the people celebrate Christmas moment gladly with their family and friends. But any people still works in Christmas day. He is Ebenezer Scrooge. He hate Christmas, for him Christmas is humbug. He didn’t go to the Church for pray, he keep work to get much money.

“A merry Christmas, uncle! God save you!” cried a cheerful voice. It was the voice of Scrooge’s nephew, who came upon him so quickly that this was the first intimation he had of his approach. “Bah!” said Scrooge, “Humbug!” “Christmas a

humbug, uncle!’ said Scrooge’s nephew. ‘You don’t mean that, I am sure?’ ‘I do,’ said Scrooge.”
(ACC, 1843: 5)

f. Science and Technology Aspect

The traditional transportation in London in 1843 are cab and cart. Cab is one of the traditional transportation that pulled by horses. The driver of cab sat on back of the horses. Back of the driver is close cart usually consist of two or three peoples. Until now, cab still use to take the passengers and goods. Usually peoples in London take the goods by cart. Cart is a kind of traditional transportation too, to take the goods or people more than two.

“They walked along the road, Scrooge recognising every gate, and post, and tree; until a little market-town appeared in the distance, with its bridge, its church, and winding river. Some shaggy ponies now were seen trotting towards them with boys upon their backs, who called to other boys in country gigs and carts, driven by farmers. All these boys were in great spirits, and shouted to each other, until the broad fields were so full of merry music, that the crisp air laughed to hear it.”
(ACC, 1843: 21)

3. Discussion

After analyzing the structural elements of the novel *A Christmas Carol*, the researcher continues the study for the next step that is the discussion. It is the way to relate all elements one to another and to put them into a unity *A Christmas Carol*. It is a work of fiction. It is written by Charles Dickens, and published in 1843. Dickens tries to show the readers that characteristic and attitude can be changed by the way and time certainly. In this novel, the transformation of Scrooge by the three spirit guides, along with each of their tales, carry out a thematic function the Ghost of Christmas Past, with his glowing head, represents memory; the Ghost of Christmas Present represents charity,

empathy, and the Christmas spirit; and the reaper like Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come represents the fear of death. Scrooge, with his Bah! Humbug! attitude, embodies all that dampens Christmas spirit greed, selfishness, indifference, and a lack of consideration for one's fellow man.

The theme of this novel is transformational character of Ebenezer Scrooge who self-serving, insensitive people can be converted into charitable, caring, and socially conscious members of society through the intercession of moralizing quasi-religious lessons.

The major character in this novel is Ebenezer Scrooge Scrooge as a main character in this novel who very miserly and hates Christmas. And the minor character are Jacob Marley, Bob Cratchit, Fred, Ghost of Christmas Past, Ghost of Christmas Present, and Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come. Jacob Marley is Scrooge's partner. Bob Cratchit is Scrooge's Clerk. He is poor people in wealth but rich in love. Fred is Scrooge's nephew. He always celebrate the Christmas day with his family and friends. Ghost of Christmas Past, it is spirit which take Scrooge in his memories. Ghost of Christmas Present, he has big body. He shows to Scrooge the situation in Bob Cratchit's house and Fred's house. The last ghost is Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come. It is a phantom, not speak. He shows to Scrooge what will happen in the next, the fear death of Scrooge.

The setting in this novel is divided into three, namely the setting of place, setting of time and social setting. Setting of place of this novel are in Scrooge's Counting House, Scrooge's house, Bob Cratchit's house, and etc. The second is setting of time. Dickens takes a time in 1843s. In that time is special time for Christianity in England, it is Christmas day. The last is social setting. The social setting in this novel is religious society and they will respect to moral values.

Next, the plot of the novel begins in Scrooge's counting house. In that place the narrator shows the characteristic and attitude of Ebenezer

Scrooge to Christmas and poor people. Then, continued by the Jacob marley ghost who warning to Scrooge that he will be haunted by three spirits. The complication of this story when Scrooge was came by three spirits. The climax of the novel is when Scrooge was visited by the third spirit. It shows the future time of Scrooge. The ghost takes Scrooge into the funeral. He shows the death of someone, and in that time Scrooge feel fright, and he ask to the ghost for don't show the year of Scrooge death and he promise will be generosity people and change his bad character. The resolution of the novel when Scrooge can be converted into charitable, caring, and socially conscious members of society through the intercession of moralizing quasi-religious lessons.

The point of view in this novel is Omniscient. Omniscient is the narrator knows everything, can tell the audience not only what the characters are physically experiencing but also what the characters are thinking; this type of narrator can read all of the characters' thoughts. It seem from how long Charles Dickens wrote this novel, for six weeks he could finish this novel.

Charles Dickens wrote this novel used standard British English language, so the reader can understand the story easily. Charles Dickens as the writer of this novel takes some figurative languages, such as simile, allegory and imagery. The symbols in this novel are Scrooge as a rich person and Bob Cratchit as a poor person of Victorian.

The analysis above shows that all structural elements of *A Christmas Carol* novel such as character and characterization, plot, setting, point of view, style and theme are the whole of unity and have close relation that can't be separated each other. So it makes this novel be very interesting to read.

Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* novel based on social aspect, Britain society still consideres about the existance of social class

influenced of social class. The social class in Britain are upper class, middle class and working class. In this novel the main character in this novel is Ebenezer Scrooge. Scrooge lives in the upper class in the nineteenth century, it was showed from his occupation and house. Scrooge has big house and has cleaning service for cleany his house. Scrooge also has occupation which increase his social status in society. The working class position in this novel is Bob Cratchit. It was showed from his occupation as clerk.

Economic aspect in A Christmas Carol novel describes about the economic condition of England people in the nineteenth century. In this novel the economic condition was showed by Ebenezer Scrooge. Ebenezer Scrooge who has good occupation, big house, employee and much money. All of this which made Scrooge become people who cold and close heart.

Meanwhile, politic aspect in this novel is human right. Human right is the right which gived by God since the people born. Celebrate the Christmas day is one of the human right of the Christianity. Scrooge who money hunter take the human right from his employee, its to keep work in Christmas.

The cultural aspect in this novel is so much. The cultural aspect in this novel is Christmas celebration and dance. Christmas celebration in this novel is dinner with family and friends. It is showed by Scrooge's nephew, Fred and Scrooge's clerk, Bob Cratchit. The next culture is dance. Dance is kind of form of communication with the partner. Dance in this novel is shown by young Scrooge when dance in his apprenticed. He was dance with a beautiful girl who his leaved because of money.

The religious aspect in this novel is Christian. The main character in this novel, Ebenezer Scrooge also has christian religious. Usually, the christianity to welcome the Christmas with gladnessityto celebrate with family and friends. But, Scrooge also christianity hate the

Christmas. Christmas for Scrooge is humbug, like another days not special. In the end Scrooge who hate Christmas finally celebrate Christmas gladness with his family and friends. He always waiting Christmas coming soon.

Finally, the researcher concludes that there is relationship between *A Christmas Carol* novel and the social background of England society in the nineteenth century. This novel also describes the effect of social from the character and condition of someone. And the last the social status of the main character in this novel can alterate the bad character into better character. The researcher can find the answer of the problem of research in which how is the miserly character of main character reflected at *A Christmas Carol* novel.

After analyzing the Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* novel using sociological approach, the writer draws the following conclusion. Firstly, based on the structural analysis, it is obvious that in the novel, Dickens wants to convey a moral message of the novel which can giving the character change for the readers to get the life more beautiful and have a meaning. All of the aspects in this novel support each other. Starting from the character, the setting, the plot, and the style of the language that can bring the same feeling between the author and the readers of the novel. They are complemented each other in order to create the good quality novel that suitable to be read by the society.

D. CONCLUSION

Secondly, based on the sociological analysis, it is obvious that there is a close relationship between story of the novel and the social reality underlying it. The story of the novel rather tells the poverty condition of Scrooge, then hard work to get much many and can be rich people. He has want much money with the way whatever. He didn't think

what his way true or false which he knows only work, work, and work to get much money, and he was blinded by it. The different social status between rich people and poor people had become problem in the world until now. To decrease this problem, all of the people have to be aware if part of our wealth is the effect of this character, he has not friends and the relation which other people especially poor people is not good. With this novel he wanted to try to fight his bad character can be better character.

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