

Form of Interaction between Characters in Novel Senandung Bisu by Aguk Irawan M.N

Syahrul Jadmika Wignya Eka Putra, Herman J. Waluyo, Sumarlam

Master Program in Indonesian Language Education, Sebelas Maret University, Indonesia

Abstract: This study analyzes the value of life in the novel *Senandung Bisu* by Aguk Irawan M. N. The purpose of this study is to describe the form of interaction between the characters in Aguk Irawan MN's *Senandung Bisu*. Researchers used two data collection techniques, namely the library technique and the note-taking technique. The author uses a structural method or approach and sociology of literature. The research results of this novel interaction form include: 1) Superordination and Subordination, Lik Soyi's relationship and also Zulfin who are superiors and subordinates. This is done to establish a reciprocal relationship between those who lead and those who are led. 2) Conflict. The obvious conflict seen in the novel *Senandung Bisu* is the dispute between Zulfin and Wuryani. Wuryani continues to demonize the Zulfin family, from stating that Zulfin is a rich asshole, to insulting Zulfin for wanting to imitate the success of his family and children, to claiming Dlori and Zulfin are a cheapskate family because they don't want to share the abundant citrus harvest with their neighbors. 3) Exchange, the first information exchange was made by the mothers at the beginning of the story who talked about the donation given to Zulfin every time she gave birth. 4) Sexual intercourse, explicitly shown by the main character an invitation to carry out reproductive activities to have another child. A husband and wife are doing reproductive activities to share their sadness until the fetus is filled again.

Keywords: form of interaction, sociology of literature, the novel *Senandung Bisu*

I. INTRODUCTION

Griswold (in Singer, 2011) explained that many published novels describe the interaction of traditional rural communities in the past so that the current generation understands the interaction patterns of past rural communities through the novels they publish. Taine (in Jadhav, 2014) also stated that literature is not merely a form of people's thoughts. It is made from environmental atmosphere and the social process as well from certain time setting, so that literary works are social-cultural documents that become portraits of condition at certain times or era (Endraswara, 2011:26). As stated by Prastowo (2011), all materials (whether in the form of tools, information and text) that have a systematic arrangement which can present a complete picture in the process of studying literature, must be accompanied by a manual for studying literature. Novels are close to vocabularies which have novelty meaning because compared to other types of literary works, novels are newly emerging works (Akbar et al., 2013). Semi in his book then showed the same opinion expressed by Tarigan. Novel is a different work of fiction because it gives deeper human aspect but is still

served smoothly (Semi, 1993). Novel is also a form of art that explores and examines the fragments of life as well as the good and bad values of a virtuous society (Choeda, 2019).

The *Senandung Bisu* novel tells a story about a boy named Rahim, the youngest child of husband and wife, Dlori and Zulfin, who does not get the love and affection from his parents. Readers will be treated to the domestic journey of Rahim's parents told by Kyai Naim throughout the story. Many values for those who wanted to get married can be found in this novel because it delivers some challenges and problems faced by married people. (Whittaker et al., 2014) explained that teenagers should be given a picture of a relationship between genders and the consequences that should be faced when they decide to get married. The objective of this research is to describe the process and the interaction pattern between characters in *Senandung Bisu* by Aguk Irawan MN. Sociology of literature study cannot be separated from understanding towards sociological theories because literary work is the people itself as miniature. Umar Junus (Muslimin, 2011) stated that in sociology of literature perspective, a literary work is seen as a socio-culture document. Wellek dan Warren (dalam Hawa et al., 2019) explained that there is a paradigm in sociology of literature study. In this research, the researcher used sociological theory from George Simmel which focused on the social interaction process of society and the patterns.

According to Blummer (in Aini, 2017:6), interaction can be understood as a process where thinking ability is used and shown with full awareness from an individual. According to Simmel (in Ainun, 2018:3), society is made from real social interaction by individuals in the society itself. Each individual or group can develop towards their thoughts and they can show it as well in the interaction. From those explanations, it can be concluded that social interaction is a reciprocal social act or two ways through a communication process. Before social interaction happens, each individual or group will create a social contact. Without communication process or social contact, the social interaction will never happen.

In relation to human sociological interaction process with literature study, human is a creative creature. Human can interpret symbols delivered in a social interaction process and the situation behind the social interaction process. From that creative ability, human can interpret the background of the social interaction process and process those symbols to a literary work (Aini, 2017:6). Simmel's idea about social

interaction then leads to a symbolic interaction process. With various symbols, human can do interaction each other with various motives and interests. Another Simmel's interesting idea is about conflict in a social interaction. Conflict is a basic form of a social interaction. With conflict, an individual or a group can sit together and establish social interaction (Ritzer, 2014:43).

Simmel's social interaction based on its forms is divided into:

1. *Superordinate and Subordinate*

Subordinate is a form of observance toward superordinate, it is because superordinate has a higher position than that subordinate. Superordinate and subordinate have a reciprocal relationship proven that however the interaction is, they must have a reciprocal relationship.

Simmel stated that there are three variations of this pattern, they are subordinate below an individual, subordinate below a group, and subordinate below general principles or impersonal rules.

2. *Conflict*

As stated above, Simmel considered conflict as a common thing in a social interaction. Conflict is a basic form of a social interaction. With conflict, an individual or a group can sit together and establish a social interaction (Ritzer, 2014). When engaging in a conflict, each individual and also a group can interact each other and that is where a social interaction happens.

According to Johnshon (in Sumartias & Rahmat, 2013:16), conflict can be divided into two types, they are realistic conflict and non-realistic conflict. Damsar (in Aini, 2017:7) stated that conflict occurs throughout society and it is common. It happens because each one who do interaction has their own interests and motives. As long as society has those differences, therefore conflict will never be unavoidable.

3. *Reciprocity*

Simmel explained that reciprocity is an interaction done by many sides. One of those reciprocity characteristics is that if the values of each side increase after reciprocity happens. When someone does interaction, therefore each side will develop knowledge and enrich each side.

4. *Sexual Intercourse*

The sexual intercourse can be one of important aspect for Simmel. A relationship between two different genders who attract each other without any sexual intercourse so that two individuals can live happily without thinking the content of the relationship.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This research used a qualitative research method along with descriptive design. Qualitative method can be described as a research form with data result such as written or spoken

descriptive data from an individual and the observable behaviour (Moleong, 2017:6)..

The researcher will describe as it is by describing or depicting the condition of the research subject or object based on the empirical facts. Subject or object in a literature study is taken from a novel. In this research, the researcher used two data collection techniques, such as library and interview. The researcher used data analysis by Miles and Hubermans, namely data reduction, data explanation and classification, and drawing conclusion.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In a daily life, communication happens between human. Human who are considered to be social beings, of course they must live in a good society by communicating and interacting with others. It also described in a literary work, especially in a novel where a character does interaction with another character for a certain purpose.

To describe and analyse the social interaction process in a literary work, the researcher then used a social interaction theory from George Simmel. There are some social interaction processes found by the research in that novel.

3.1 *Superordinate dan Subordinate*

Superordinate and subordinate are a relationship between the leader and the led. That is to establish a reciprocal relationship between the leader and the led. In *Senandung Bisu* novel, the interaction form between the leader and the led is between Lik Soyi and Zulfin. Zulfin is the boss of Lik Soyi who works as a housemaid in her house. The relationship between Lik Soyi and Zulfin as the leader and the led begins in this part of the novel:

“And now for the sake of relieving her personal burden as a mother, Zulfin hired Lik Soyi as her housemaid. She asked that widow without children to work and help things in the kitchen, do laundry, sweep and clean the house.” (Irawan, 2018)

The part of the novel above can be seen as a relationship between Lik Soyi and Zulfin which is a relationship between the leader and the led. Zulfin fulfill her obligation as a leader, meanwhile Lik Soyi fulfill her obligation as a worker to Zulfin. All of them is a reciprocal relationship.

3.2 *Conflict*

As stated by George Simmel, conflict is the beginning of consensus happens in society. Where there is a group who wants to overthrow another group or individual, that is where conflict happens. In *Senandung Bisu* novel, there are some social interactions happen between characters where they want to overthrow each other.

The obvious conflict in the novel *Senandung Bisu* is the one between Zulfin and Wuryani. Wuryani keeps demonize Zulfin's family, from stating that Zulfin is a rich jerk, insulting Zulfin wanting to imitate the success of her family

and children, and stating that Dlori and Zulfin are a cheapskate family because they do not want to share their bountiful orange harvest with the neighbours. That is seen in this part of the novel:

“Don’t know where Wuryati’s talk is going. Not only her mouth is venomous, but her tongue is also branched off. Just now, she told her listeners not to follow, no need to eat the fruits from a murder she said; but suddenly when she said it; she blamed Dlori and Zulfin for not sharing with neighbours.” (Irawan, 2018).

Before that, Wuryani had also caused a trouble with Zulfin by intercepting Lik Soyi, a housemaid at Zulfin’s when she came home for shopping. Wuryani scolded the groceries brought by Lik Soyi and stated that rich people should not buy such items in small amount. Then Wuryani also accused Zulfin that she paid Lik Soyi cheap salary and called Lik Soyi a fool because she was willing to work at Zulfin’s house for a cheap salary with piled up jobs.

The conflict of Zulfin and Wuryani got worst until engaging physical contact. Zulfin then decided to bump into Wuryani, gave her a gift of a slap on that old woman’s cheek as her reprisal of her venomous mouth. It is described in a quote of this novel below:

“Supposing that Wuryani’s blackish brown cheek is brownish yellow, the colour should be bluish red now. Red blue because a slap, slapped by Zulfin a moment ago. So hard. But Wuryani could not avenge. She is too old to face young woman’s anger.” (Irawan, 2018)

After that conflict between Wuryani and Zulfin, it became wider. She then called her daughter, Muniri, who lived in Jakarta and her son in law who worked as a police officer to defend her. Her police officer son in law then came to bump into Zulfin as a revenge of what Zulfin had done the other day and it made her mother in law get a heartache.

Zulfin and Wuryani’s conflict continued. Wuryani felt satisfied when Zulfi and Dlori’s child passed away. Rumours about Zulfin became wider because of Wuryani.

Finally, it was the time for Zulfin to feel satisfied when Wuryani started to get sick, like the wind blew towards Zulfin. When Wuryani’s daughter whom she was proud of, Muniri, passed away, Zulfin felt more satisfied. The more she felt she had the upper hand. No consensus happened from the conflict between Zulfin and Wuryani. Zulfin did not accept Wuryani’s apology, but instead she slandered her even more.

The next conflict is domestic conflict between Zulfin and Dlori. It is seen in the novel several times about the conflict between Zulfin and Dlori. The conflict began when their third son, Musa, passed away. Zulfin blamed Dlori because at that time he went quietly to see *wayang* (puppet show) in *Balai Desa* (village meeting hall). Zulfin cursed harshly several times showed in the quote of this novel:

Zulfin blamed him. Zulfin even cursed him harshly for several times.

“*Wayang* (puppet show) is more important than our son’s life. Oh my God, Are you a human or *Petruk* (one of puppet’s characters)?” And she said it for many times.

Three days earlier.

“You did let Musa die on purpose, Pak. You did it on purpose. You are his murder. A murder of our son!” And she kept saying it, since she woke up after passing out for many times. (Irawan, 2018)

The conflict between that husband and wife was almost calmed down when they had another child, replacing Musa. However, the conflict began to happen again when Dlori had problems to meet the family needs. Their money is drained for their children’s school entrance fee. Besides that, Dlori also accused his wife for spending their rice supply to share with the neighbours for compliments. The conflict got worst when Zulfin knew that she was pregnant again although she actually did not want any kids more. Moreover, their family’s financial condition was in trouble because their other children’s school entrance fee.

The next conflict is a conflict between parent and child. It happened between Usman, Wuryani’s son and Muhaya with his own mother. Usman wanted to give positive advice to his mother related to the problem emerged with Zulfin. Here is the part of the story in *Senandung Bisu* novel:

“When Muniri went to meet Dlori, Usman complained and stated that he did not like his parents’ attitude, especially his mother. then the fight happened. Exciting, crowded.

His sister in law, Zaenab should ask her brother in law to be patient, to not yell. Wuryani herself responded to his youngest son’s complaint and objection in a way that was no less exciting, with louder yelling.” (Irawan, 2018)

The conflict between parent and child then happened between Zulfin and Dlori with their unexpected child, Rahim. Zulfin and Dlori always treated Rahim arbitrarily, he did not get the same treatment as his older brothers and sisters who were treated like other normal children. Rahim was asked to work in the field, not allowed to go to school, and rarely got food in the dining table when breakfast or eating time.

3.3 Reciprocation

One of social interactions is reciprocation. In this novel, the reciprocation showed in an activity called *Buwuh*. According to Wignjodiporero (in Dwi Saputri, 2019:17), the tradition of *Buwuh* is a kind of *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) and *tolong menolong* (mutual help) in Javanese tradition. The reciprocation’s characteristic is that the total value (from the interacting side) is bigger than before, when each side gave more than what she/he owned. After doing interaction, then the individual would get additional information related to the conversation topic.

(Rahayu et al., 2019) the novel delivered feminism values and woman's struggle. The first reciprocal information was done by women in the beginning of the story who talked about *sumbangan* (donation) received by Zulfin every time she gave birth. That reciprocal information made them know each other that they have given donation in a huge amount to Zulfin and they agreed that the donation could never be returned by Zulfin. The following is one part of the novel that tells about this:

After being silent for a while, listening to Jumilah's story, Barokah finally spoke, answering her question, "Not much different from your donation, Lah."

"That much?"

"Yes, that much."

"Even she has not returned all my donations, *Mbokde*."

"Let alone, me, Lah?" (Irawan, 2018)

Then the process of the next reciprocation was done by Dlori when meeting with the owner of the field that he wanted to rent, Muji. The field will be used by Dlori to develop his agricultural business, to grow melons and other fruits that are not being grown by Siwalan Village society. From the interaction, Dlori found out that Muji as the field owner was having a big problem, his mother was very sick so it cost a lot of money. Meanwhile, the field owner found out Dlori's ideas to grow some rare plants in Salawi Village.

Then the next interaction was done by Zulfin and Dlori with Haji Ridlwan. They visited Haji Ridlwan in his *pendopo* house to consult about gossips from neighbours. Their neighbours talked about them that they were shameless because they continued to have a child every year. Haji Ridlwan told them to remember *Rasulullah*'s word in every problem. This is the part of the novel telling the story about it:

"Many children or few children?"

"Of course, many children."

"Who said that?"

"*Rasulullah* said."

"So, do you believe in *Rasul* or not?"

"We do believe."

"That everything *Rasul* said is true?"

"Yes."

"So why do you guys listen to the neighbours but not to the truth said by *Rasul*?" (Irawan, 2018)

From the part of the novel above, it can be found out that both characters done interaction of reciprocal information. Haji Ridlwan found out that the problem faced by Zulfin and Dlori is about the neighbours' said which is really bothering them. Meanwhile, Zulfin and Dlori then figured out the solution to

their problem that they should back to holding on to *Rasulullah SAW* said.

Other reciprocation happened when Zulfin did interaction with Lik Soyi, her housemaid, after Wuryani intercepted that housemaid when going home after shopping. Zulfin asked her a question about what was said by Wuryani to Lik Soyi, especially related to bad things about her.

Then the next reciprocal interaction was when Dlori met Kasmin. Dlori wanted to go to Syam and Muji to give compensation from his harvest of rent field. However, the interaction with Kasmin made Dlori find out new information. The following is a quote of the novel describing that interaction:

"Then, whose cemetery you want to visit?"

"Haven't you heard?"

"Heard what, *Pakde*?"

"It has been three days, his son passed away."

"What?"

"The pain is beyond help. No more money. Oh Allah..., it's been tough lately. It hasn't been a month since Mbok Lah passed away, his son Dik Syam also passed away."

"Who is Mbok Lah, *Pakde*?"

"Mbok Lah, don't you know..., Muji's mother." (Irawan, 2018)

From the story above, it can be figured out that Dlori has not known about Syam's son and Muji's mother passed away. He also just found out when meeting Kasim who was close to those two men. It is called reciprocation because Dlori got new information from that interaction.

Reciprocal interaction also happened when Muniri, Wuryani's daughter then met Kyai Naim begging for suggestions for her mother. She begged for advices from Kyai Naim who has deeper religious knowledge. This is classified as interaction because Muniri got new information related to a solution for her mother who likes to talk about other people and for giving advice to her mother as a daughter.

That kind of interaction by Muniri to Kyai Naim was also done by Dlori. Dlori who was upset because he lost his third son, then came to Kyai Naim's house to ask for a suggestion. This was explained in this novel quote:

"Onetime after *Maghrib*, Dlori's steps has brought him closer to Kyai Naim's quiet *mushala*. As if he was waiting for his arrival, Kyai sat beside him without a word. Then Kyai Naim said: indeed, death is just one displacement from one life towards next life..." (Irawan, 2018)

Then Lik Soyi has also visited Kyai Naim to ask for a suggestion. At that time, Lik Soyi wanted to get an advice related to her work at Zulfin and Dlori's house in the middle of their domestic problems and their financial ability that

cannot pay her as usual. This can be classified as reciprocation because the interaction added information from Lik Soyi.

3.4 Sexual Intercourse

The sexual intercourse became one of important aspect for Simmel. A relationship between two different genders who attract each other without any sexual intercourse so that two individuals can live happily without thinking the content of the relationship.

In *Senandung Bisu* novel, one of interaction forms done by the main character is sexual intercourse. This was not directly described by Aguk Irawan, but explicitly indicated an invitation to carry out reproductive activities to have more children. This is shown in the following quote from the novel:

“Isn’t it good, *Dik*?”

“You feel good, I am the one who is in pain giving birth!”

“In pain, but feel good right?”

“Stop it! Four kids are enough!”

“Two more, *Dik*...”

“No, I am done with giving birth.”

“But not done with making it, are you?”

“Ah, *Mas*...”

“Ouch...” (Aguk Irawan, 2018: 67-68)

The next interaction of sexual intercourse is when Zulfin and Dlori just list their third son, Musa. In the middle of the sadness of losing Musa, that couple of husband and wife did reproductive activity to express sadness together until the womb is filled up again by a foetus. It was shown in the part of this novel:

“In the nights, from two gloomy hearts, from two hearts who lost, surrendering together to rumours, strengthening to become best parents for their children, an overflow of love and affection between both, tight hugs allied with cold night and the wind blows through wall cracks, Zulfin’s stomach then began to fill up again.” (Irawan, 2018)

Interaction form of another sexual intercourse is shown when Zulfin and Dlori were back together after domestic problem hit their family. They hug each other to make love again. They started to do sexual intercourse and finally Zulfin was pregnant again. The sexual intercourse often happened unplanned by that couple until it produced their fifth child.

IV. CONCLUSION

From the research results, it can be concluded that *Senandung Bisu* novel has four social interaction forms such as; 1)

Superordinate and Subordinate, the relationship between Lik Soyi and Zulfin that is superordinate and subordinate. This is to establish reciprocal interaction between the leader and the led. 2) Conflict, the obvious conflict seen in *Senandung Bisu* novel is the one between Zulfin and Wuryani. Wuryani keeps demonize Zulfin’s family, from stating that Zulfin is a rich jerk, insulting Zulfin wanting to imitate the success of her family and children, and stating that Dlori and Zulfin are a cheapskate family because they do not want to share their bountiful orange harvest with the neighbours. 3) Reciprocation, the first reciprocal information was done by women in the beginning of the story who talked about *sumbangan* (donation) received by Zulfin every time she gave birth. 4) Sexual intercourse, it is shown explicitly in a persuasion to carry out reproductive activities to have another child by the main character. That couple of husband and wife then did reproductive activity to express sadness together until the womb is filled up again by a foetus.

REFERENCES

- [1] Akbar, S., Winarni, R., & Andayani. (2013). Kajian Sosiologi Sastra dan Nilai Pendidikan dalam Novel “Tuan Guru” Karya Salman Faris. *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra*, 1(1), 54–68.
- [2] Choeda, C. (2019). The Origin and Development of English Novel: A Descriptive Literature Review. *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*, 4(4), 1099–1104. <https://doi.org/10.22161/ijels.4429>
- [3] Ela Nur Aini. (2017). Interaksi Sosial Dalam Novel Suraya Karya Nafi’Ah Al Ma’Rab. *Journal of Chemical Information and Modeling*, 8(9), 1–58.
- [4] Endraswara, S. (2011). *Metodologi Penelitian Sastra*. Caps.
- [5] Eviana Dwi Saputri, M. H. A. (2019). Tradisi Buwuh Dalam Perspektif Akuntansi Piutang dan Hibah di Kecamatan Lowokwaru Kota Malang. *Prive*, 2(1), 16–25.
- [6] Hawa, M., Andayani, A., Suyitno, S., & Wardani, N. (2019). *Learning Model of Literary Sociology with Contextual and Spiritual Quotient(CSQ) Approach*. <https://doi.org/10.4108/eai.19-10-2018.2282174>
- [7] Irawan, A. (2018). *Senandung Bisu*. Republika.
- [8] Jadhav, A. M. (2014). The Historical Development of the Sociological Approach to the Study of Literature. *International Journal of Innovative Research and Development*, 3(5), 658–662.
- [9] Moleong, L. J. (2017). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif (Edisi Revisi)*. Remaja Rosdakarya.
- [10] Muslimin. (2011). MODERNISASI DALAM NOVEL BELENGGU KARYA ARMIJN PANE " Sebuah Kajian Sosiologi Sastra. *Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra Dan Budaya*, 1(1), 2088–6020.
- [11] Nadira Ainun. (2018). Interaksi Soaial dalam Novel Tanjung Kemarau Karya Royyan Julian (Kajian Teori Georg Simmel). *Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia*, 1(4), 1–8.
- [12] Prastowo, A. (2011). *Panduan Kreatif Membuat Bahan Ajar Inovatif*. Diva Press.
- [13] Rahayu, I., Muliawati, H., & Pujiatna, T. (2019). *Women’s Struggle Against Colonial Imperialism in the Tetralogi Novel Bumi Manusia by Pramoedya Ananta Toer*. 297(Icille 2018), 177–180. <https://doi.org/10.2991/icille-18.2019.38>
- [14] Ratna, N. K. (2013). *Paradigma Sosiologi Sastra* (P. Pelajar (ed.)).