

## **IDENTIFYING CHARACTERS OF JAVANESE COMEDY *KUNTET EDAN* BY LUDRUK BUDHI WIJAYA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Drama in the world of literature is a form of literary work that provides an overview of human life through dialogues, actions, and emotions. The topic of this research is characters and characterizations in the Javanese Comedy *Kuntet Edan*. The objective of the study is to identify the types of characters and characterization in this Javanese Comedy. The writer focuses on all characters in this Javanese Comedy. The method in this study is a descriptive qualitative method, the object and the source of the data of this study is the Javanese Comedy entitled *Kuntet Edan* by Ludruk Budhi Wijaya, which was performed in 2017. The writer uses the theory of New Criticism focusing on intrinsic elements, e.g., character and characterization. The data of this study are the characters' utterances and actions. This study found that the characters of the Javanese Comedy are categorized as flat, round or dynamic, and protagonist. Next, the types of characterization include (1) direct, and (2) indirect characterization.

**Keywords: Characters, Characterization, New Criticism, Javanese Comedy**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Barnett et. al (2008) argues that drama usually gives us a heightened feeling of life, in which one character interferes with another, actions have consequences, and lives are as amusingly or tragically connected as they are on a daily basis (p. 945). In the 20th century, many world-famous writers made drama growing, such as Samuel Beckett with his best work in 1953 entitled *Waiting for Godot*. Furthermore, we have seen traditional East Javanese arts, such as Javanese Comedy *Kuntet Edan* by Ludruk Budhi Wijaya, which is a sort of play that tells stories about ordinary life with laughs thrown in. However, in the twenty-first century, the popularity of ludruk is waning. *Ludruk* is more than just amusement; it is also the epitome of communication and propaganda media, modernizing rites, and social class representation by Peacock (2005).

Character is one of the important elements in drama. According to Abrams (2009) Characters are people who appear in a dramatic or narrative work and are regarded by the reader as having distinctive moral, intellectual, and emotional attributes by conclusions from what the persons say and their instinctual methods of saying it in the conversation and from what they do in the action (p. 42).

There are types of characters, such as protagonist, round or dynamic, flat, and antagonist characters. In addition, Characterization is a literary method that is used in plays to emphasize and explain facts about the characters. Direct and indirect characterization are the two types of characterizations.

Abrams (1999: 33) states a wide distinction is sometimes noted between two alternate approaches for establishing the distinctive characters of the persons in a narrative: showing and telling. In showing, similar to indirect characterizations, the author may display not only external speech and actions, but also a character's inner thought, feelings, and responsiveness to events in showing, it also known as the dramatic method; for a highly developed mode of such inner showing, see stream of consciousness. In telling, similar to direct characterizations, the author intervenes authoritatively in order to describe, and often to judge, the reasons and dispositional features of the characters.

Character and characterization are included in the intrinsic elements of a literary work. Thus, the writer uses the theory of New Criticism to analyze the drama. Tyson claims that new criticism is the most important instrument in determining the genuine meaning of a text based on the text itself (2006: 136). The writer chooses Javanese Comedy as the data source because Javanese Comedy is a traditional Javanese art that needs to be preserved and maintained. In addition, also Javanese Comedy becomes entertainment among the public at weddings or other events. *Kuntet Edan* is a Javanese Comedy by Ludruk Budhi Wijaya which tells about the Taji family who is in trouble because the son-in-law in the family named Kuntet disappeared and his daughter named Marni and the wife of this Kuntet became blind because she cried all day as a result of her husband not coming home.

The analysis of characters and characterization phenomena has become a long-standing interest in recent decades. There are some previous researches related to this research about characters and characterization. First, research focuses on major characters by Syifa Salamatul Hakiki (2021) from the University of Trunojoyo Madura entitled *An Analysis of Major Characters in Kelly Barnhill's The Girl Who Drank The Moon*. Second, research is focused on characterization by Abdul Aziz (2021) from the University of Trunojoyo Madura entitled *An Analysis of Santiago's Characterization as Reflection of Value of Life in Ernest Hemingway's The Old Man and The Sea*.

Third, this study is focused on conflict and characterization by Akmal Iman Yudhistira (2021) from the University of Trunojoyo Madura entitled *The Importance of Conflicts and Characterization in Thomas Harris's Hannibal Rising*. Fourth, the research focuses on the basic emotional states of all characters in the film *Inside Out*. by Jelita Dewanty Hendarsyah (2020) in *Apollo Project: Program Jurnal Ilmiah Program Studi Sastra Inggris* entitled *Character And Characterization In The Film Inside Out By Peter Hans Doctor*. After figuring out how the characters and characterizations work, this study may move on to the next step. This research aims to show the characters and characterization in all of the characters from Ludruk Budhi Wijaya's Javanese comedy *Kuntet Edan*.

## DATA SOURCE

The data source is taken from Javanese Comedy *Kuntet Edan* by Ludruk Budhi Wijaya.

## METHODS

This study deals with the dialogues in the drama. Therefore, this researcher applied descriptive qualitative research. The descriptive method is intended to describe characters and characterizations. The analysis was done based on the notion proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Shadana that there are three simultaneous processes in data analysis is used in this work. Specifically, data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification (Miles, Huberman, and Shadana, 2014. p.31). Source of the data is the Javanese Comedy *Kuntet Edan* by Ludruk Budhi Wijaya.

It is available on the official website of Wijaya Record Official, which can be reached on <https://youtu.be/YS3pnnxyvps>. Data are characters' utterances in Javanese languages which are delivered by Javanese theater actors. The English translation was provided to ease-Indonesian readers. As a result, the writer conducted data analysis techniques using the following three steps: first, the writer tried to identify characters and characterizations in the Javanese Comedy *Kuntet Edan*. Next, the writer analyzed the types of characters in Javanese Comedy. There are 5 characters to be analyzed, namely; Taji, Mrs. Taji, Mirna, Kuntet, and Admaji. Second, the writer found that there are 3 types of characters in the drama, namely; flat, round or dynamic, and protagonist characters. To begin with, the data were whittled down by selecting utterances found in dialogue to answer the questions. Second, the writer presented and illustrated data that responds to two interrelated queries. Third, in making conclusions, the writer developed findings that are relevant to this study topic.

## THEORETICAL REVIEW

This study focuses on character and characterization. According to Abrams (2009) Characters are people who appear in a dramatic or narrative work and are regarded by the reader as having distinctive moral, intellectual, and emotional attributes by conclusions from what the persons say and their instinctual methods of saying it in the conversation and from what they do in the action (p. 42). There are types of characters, such as protagonist, round or dynamic, flat, and antagonist characters. First, according to Fink (2014) "protagonist character in every narrative is about a single person, that person is the main character, often known as the hero, the good guy, or the white hat" (p. 44). Second, based on Kennedy and Gioia (1995) a round character is frequently changed they learn or become enlightened, they grow or deteriorate (p. 68). It means that every round character can change the characters for better or worse in the next scene. Third, as explained by Kennedy and Gioia (1995) Flat characters have only one distinguishing characteristic or attribute, or at most a few. Characters who are flat tend to stay the same throughout a novel (p.68). Fourth, Fink (2014) argues that the antagonist, often known as the villain, the evil guy, or the black hat, is the individual who stands in the way of the protagonist achieving his or her overarching goal to the greatest extent possible (p.

52). Besides, Characterization is a literary method that is used in plays to emphasize and explain facts about the characters.

As character and characterization are included in the intrinsic elements of a literary work, the theory of New Criticism is implemented to analyze the drama. Tyson claims that new criticism is the most important instrument in determining the genuine meaning of a text based on the text itself (2006: 136).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Types of Characters and Characterization

There are several types of characters found in this Javanese Comedy. Then, the types of characters were revealed through the direct and indirect characterizations method.

#### 1.1 Flat Characters

As explained by Kennedy and Gioia (1995) Flat characters have only one distinguishing characteristic or attribute, or at most a few. Characters who are flat tend to stay the same throughout a novel (p.68). These characters frequently serve no purpose other than to further the plot, therefore they have little bearing on the plot. The writer found tenses a dialogue was showing that Admaji is just a flat character in Javanese Comedy. The playwright shows that Admaji is a flat character because Admaji is just an ordinary guest who visits the Taji family and wants to find friends, namely Kuntet. He does not experience any emotional development in the story.

*“Bojone Taji: Oo konco seperjuangan biyen niku ta?*

*Admaji : Enggeh, nalika kalah londo sesarengan kaleh Kuntet”.*

*(Kuntet Edan, 2017)*

English translation by me:

“Mrs. Taji : Oo, that old fighting friend, huh?

Admaji: yes, when I and Kuntet were defeated by the Dutch”.

*(Kuntet Edan, 2017)*

The dialogue quoted above shows that Admaji is an old friend of Kuntet and wants to find Kuntet. The dialogues above give evidence using the indirect characterization method. It is shown that Admaji is a flat character. When he only plays as a friend who is looking for an old friend, so he has a good character and is loyal to friends. He had no character development. Apart from Admaji, Taji's wife (Mrs. Taji) is also a flat character, because there is no emotional development or anything else. From the beginning up to the end of the story, she only plays the role of Mirna's mother and Taji's wife.

*“Bojone Taji : Mripatmu iki ga ketok nak, dolen ojo adoh- adoh. Engko koen nek gaiso moleh gak eroh dalane, embok ndolek’i kon nondi nak, hihhi (bojone taji nangisi anak e)”.*

*(Kuntet Edan, 2017)*

English Translation by me:

“Mrs. Taji : Your eyes are blind, daughter, if you play, don't go far. Later, if you can't go home because you don't know, where will I, your mother, go to find you, hihhi (Marni's mother cries because she is worried about her child)”.

(Kuntet Edan, 2017)

The above quotation shows that Mrs. Taji is introduced to the audience by applying the indirect method. From her saying "*embok ndolek'i kon nondi anak*", the audience knows that Mrs. Taji greatly cares for her daughter. Mrs. Taji is classified as a flat character because she does not experience any state or mental development. From start to finish, she pays great attention to her daughter. From the dialogue, she was worried about her daughter's safety.

## 1.2 Round or Dynamic Character

Based on Kennedy and Gioia (1995) a round character is frequently changed they learn or become enlightened, they grow or deteriorate (p. 68). The round or dynamic character refers to whether the character changes. It is found in Taji's character in Javanese Comedy with indirect characterization method. Taji's character is included in the round character because it undergoes changes and developments in personality.

- 1) “*Bojone Taji : Iyo nginiki lho wong lek goblok iku. Mangkane nek goblok iku ojo nemen-nemen. Pinter'o titik ngunu lho*  
*Taji : Anane goblok amergo teko awakmu dewe”.*

(Kuntet Edan, 2017)

English translation by me :

“Mrs. Taji : Yes, it's like this, if you're stupid. So if you are stupid, don't be so bad.  
 Do not be too stupid, be rather clever.  
 “Taji: “being stupid because of you”.

(Kuntet Edan, 2017)

The conversation above proves that the playwright utilized an indirect characterization to convey Taji's foolish personality. then, the playwright also uses an indirect characterization way to provide the audiences an overview of Taji. When Mrs. Taji said “*wong lek goblok iku ojo nemen- nemen*”. From this utterance, the word “*wong*” means “*person*” is addressed to Taji. It means that Taji is unintelligent.

- 2) “*Taji: Monggo pinarak mriki, dhayoh iku kudu dihormati, lha sing duwe omah iku kudu ngalah”.*

(Kuntet Edan, 2017)

English translation by me:

“Taji : please sit here, guests must be respected, then the owner of the house must give in”.

(Kuntet Edan, 2017)

From the dialogue excerpt above, the playwright uses the indirect characterization method, to show that Taji has become more polite and wise. This can be seen from the utterances spoken by Taji and his actions shown. Taji's utterance asking guests to sit down-shows politeness. Then, his action was proven when Taji stands up and invites Admaji to take a seat. Furthermore, his wise action is seen in his utterance "*then the owner of the house must give in*", and then, Taji relents to his guest. Therefore, Taji's personality evolved positively. This demonstrates Taji's versatility, because of their erratic nature. So it becomes that round characters frequently startle viewers.

Next, there is a round or dynamic character in Mirna's cast, because Mirna undergoes drastic character developments and changes. When she first entered the theater stage, Mirna was a very desperate, angry, and often crying person.

*"Marni: Niki sampeyan iki seneng nek aku gak ketok ya, seneng nek aku ga ketok".*

*"Taji: Yo ora seneng nak, duwe anak kok ga ketok kok seneng".*

*(Kuntet Edan, 2017)*

English translation by me:

"Marni: Dad, you are happy if I can't see, you are happy if I can't see

Taji: no, I'm not happy, having a blind daughter".

*(Kuntet Edan, 2017)*

From the dialogue above, the playwright using the indirect characterizations method shows that she is angry with her father. She blames her father and thinks that her father is happy to see she becomes blind.

*"Marni : Ngene lho mbok sing tak karepmu yo mbok, bapak iki kon nggoleki kang Kuntet, aku sakjane wes gak kuat ngempet, aku gak petok sedino, biyen aku iku koyo-koyo wes palang gak urip mbok".*

*(Kuntet Edan, 2017)*

English translation by me:

"Marni: You know, mom, what I want, mom, dad, please look for kuntet, I actually couldn't stand on it anymore, I didn't meet him for a day, I felt that I was about to die, mom".

*(Kuntet Edan, 2017)*

In the dialogue above, the playwright also uses indirect characterization, if Marni is desperate to find her husband and wants to commit suicide. The action was also shown by Marni when she cried while sitting with her father. Then Marni's character changes and develops well when she meets Admaji.

*"Marni : Dongakno yo pak yo*

*Taji : Iyo iyo nak*

*Marni : Kulo tak golek tombo, mumpung ono sing nulungi aku*

*Taji : Yo iyo nak, iyo iyo tapi tomboyo tombo, awakmu kudu percoyo ya nak ya".*

*(Kuntet Edan, 2017)*

English translation by me:

“Marni : Pray for me dad  
 Taji : yes, daughter  
 Marni : I want to seek treatment, while someone helps me  
 Taji : Yeah, yeah, daughter, yes, but for the right treatment, you have to believe, daughter.”

(Kuntet Edan, 2017)

From the dialogue above, the playwright shows that Marni has changed to be more polite and enthusiastic to treat her blind eyes by using the indirect characterizations method. Politeness is seen when he asks his father for prayer. Previously, she was always enraged with her father. She grew enthused after that and no longer felt hopeless. She stated that she was willing to accompany Admaji to heal her eyes.

### 1.3 Protagonist Character

According to Fink (2014) protagonist character in every narrative is about a single person, that person is the protagonist, often known as the hero, the good guy, or the white hat (p. 44). The protagonist of the characters in the Javanese Comedy is Kuntet because he is the center of the story. The existence of the protagonist character is the center of all stories, how the storyline goes is with the presence of the protagonist character in Javanese Comedy *Kuntet Edan*. The first evidence is seen when the first conflict comes, When, Marni always looks for her husband and makes her parents worried. The playwright with using the indirect characterization method shows that she is looking for her husband.

“Marni : *Ngene lho mbok sing tak karepku yo mbok, bapak iki kon nggoleki kang Kuntet, aku sakjane wes gak kuat ngempet, aku gak petok sedino, biyen aku iku koyo-koyo wes palang gak urip mbok*”.

(Kuntet Edan, 2017)

English translation by me:

“Marni: You know, mom, what I want, mom, dad, please look for kuntet, I actually couldn't stand on it anymore, I didn't meet him for a day, I felt that I was about to die, mom”.

(Kuntet Edan, 2017)

Then, the second conflict comes when Admaji looks for a Kuntet because he misses Kuntet.

“Admaji : *Nggeh kulo niki kangen kaleh derek kulo Kuntet* “.

(Kuntet Edan, 2017)

English translation by me:

“Admaji : yes, I miss my friend Kuntet”. (Kuntet Edan, 2017)

At the end of the story, Kuntet appears and solves the problems that exist during the story. Everyone looks for him and finally, he comes back, but he becomes crazy. Kuntet goes crazy, it can be seen, when he talks nonsense and he forgets about his father-in-law.

“Kuntet : Niki sinten?”

Taji : Heh

Bojone Taji: Iku bapakmu”.

(Kuntet Edan, 2017)

English translation by me:

“Kuntet : who is this?”

Taji : Heh

Mrs. Taji : That's your father”.

(Kuntet Edan, 2017)

The dialogue above is proved that the playwright shows Kuntet does not know about his father-in-law. And, the playwright uses the indirect characterization method to show that Kuntet's being crazy is indicated by his way of dressing. In the drama, Kuntet wears a shabby and untidy dress like a crazy person.

The findings of this study are in line with the research of Syifa Salamatul Hakiki (2021) which explains that using the characterizations method can show the characters that exist in a literary work. It means that the reader can find out every type of character that exists in a literary work by using the characterizations method, so the reader better understands the existing storyline. Because characters are an important element that governs the course of the story of a literary work. In Syifa's study, she uses data sources from Kelly Barnhill's work entitled *The Girl Who Drank The Moon*. In her research, Syifa uses the theoretical characters by Edgar V. Robert and M. H. Abrams. Syifa uses Edgar V. Robert's theory to analyze the personalities of the major characters. Syifa also uses the theory of M. H. Abrams to analyze the characterizations method. She uses the characterizations method to make it easier to find and analyze the main characters. Meanwhile, the findings of this study are also in line with the research of Akmal I. Yudhistira (2021) who uses the theory of Russian Formalism. Akmal uses the novel, *Hanibal Rising*, by Thomas Harris as the source of data. Akmal analyzes the characterization and conflict in the novel. He explained that characterization and conflict are important elements for the development of the plot of a literary work. He has used the theory of Russian Formalism because he only focuses on the intrinsic element in literary works. Akmal was used direct and indirect characterizations methods to find the personalities of the main characters. The use theory of characterizations was used to find the personalities of the main characters in a literary work. In line with this, Abdul Aziz's research (2021) was used the New Criticism theory to find intrinsic elements, namely, characters with characterizations, so as to find a set of values of life reflected in the main character. He used *The Old Man and the Sea* by Ernest Hemingway as the data source. Finally, the writer named Jelita Dewanty Hendarsyah writes about basic emotional characters such as joy, anger, sadness, fear, and disgust, which can be found in the film *Inside Out*.



Characterizations are also used by the author in her research. Hendarsyah (2020) also states in her study that delves deeper into this fundamental emotional character using semiotic analysis.

Based on the theory and research above, two things make this research position support the research above. First, this research supports the use of the New Criticism theory. This can be proven, when Abdul has used the same theory, namely the theory of new criticism to analyze the intrinsic elements in literary works. In addition, Tyson claims that new criticism is the most important instrument in determining the genuine meaning of a text-based on the text itself (2006: 136). Second, this research also supports the theory of M.H. Abrams to use the characterizations method. Furthermore, how characterization method applied in the drama is based on the characterization method by M.H Abrams (1999). Another characterization contrast mentioned by Abrams and Harpham (2009) in *A Glossary of Literature* is that there is a broad distinction established between two strategies for characterizing the person in a narrative, which are showing and telling. The point is, showing refers to direct characterizations while telling refers to indirect characterizations. In Indirect methods, the writer merely displays the characters talking and acting, leaving it entirely up to the reader to deduce the motives and dispositions that lie behind what they say and do. This study uses direct and indirect characterizations methods to analyze each type of character. Furthermore, the writer only finds the use of indirect in expressing each types of characters. Because in a drama, the types of characters can be conveyed through character's dialogue and character's action, while the playwright's narration is very little or sometimes non-existent. However, there is the opposite of the three writers, they use characterization to find the personality of the character, while this study only uses it to find the types of characters that exists.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the above description, it can be inferred that the characters and characterizations in the Javanese Comedy *Kuntet Edan* play an essential part in a drama since they can provide humorous components in a drama. Furthermore, knowing the characters might help the audience comprehend the plot of a drama or other literary work. Characters can add to the length and intrigue of the story. There are many different types of characters, such as flat, round, or dynamic characters, protagonists, and so on. Character and characterization are intertwined in this scenario when studying each character. These two components are crucial in the Javanese Comedy and other drama works, such as in the Javanese Comedy *Kuntet Edan*, because each character may be distinguished through characterizations. Furthermore, there are two types of characterizations: direct and indirect characterizations. In most dramas, however, the characters are depicted through indirect characterizations, because it is frequently demonstrated through character actions and utterances. Not only the important elements, but also the characters can entertain the audience, because of the various types of characters displayed by the Playwright.

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