

## **CHAPTER V**

### **DISCUSSION**

After analysing the finding data, the researcher interpret the characterization of the main characters as learner. In order to do this, the theory of learner characteristics is needed. In this regard the researcher used Harmer theory of learner characteristics by age.

Before talking the characteristics of young adolescent learner, the researcher discussed the methods in determining the characteristics based on the finding. As it is explained before, the novel used some method of characterization in portraying the main characters. The researcher used Kenney's method of character portrayal since the method is the one commonly used method of characterization. The study in the character portrayal method can give benefits for those who are going to interpret the story so they will get the understanding more deeply. Moreover, for writer the more they understand and skilful in their method, the more realistic and interesting the characters they created. So, in this regard a writer better varied their methods so the reader will attach to them throughout the storyline. Moreover, the method of character portrayal will reflects how people tried to understand another people.

#### **5.1. Method of Characterization**

After examining *Fish in a Tree*, the researcher had found there are four methods of characterization used by Lynda Mullaly Hunt for the three main characters. Furthermore, the result of the methods is illustrated by diagram figure below:



No.	Method of characterization	Definition / Indicators	Corpus
1	Dramatic Method	Characters showing themselves through own words, action, behavior, and the like.	<i>People act like the words “slow reader” tell them everything that’s inside. Like I’m a can of soup and they can just read the list of ingredients and know everything about me. There’s lots of stuff about the soup inside that they can’t put on the label, like how it smells and tastes and makes you feel warm when you eat it. <b>There’s got to be more to me than just a kid who can’t read well.</b></i>
2	Character on Character Method	Character described by other character	<i><b>And I have two friends, Keisha and Albert. Keisha likes to bake and she’s brave. You’d like her, Daddy! And Albert is like a computer; he is so smart. ...</b></i>
3	Contextual Method	Depends on surrounding and verbal context	<i>He clears his throat. “This is a mixture of two parts hydrogen and one part oxygen molecules.”</i> <i>“Will it explode?” yells Oliver.</i> <i>Albert does not answer. Instead, he unscrews the metal lid and drinks whatever it is. I’m silently freaked out, but Oliver goes nuts. “He drank it! Did you see that? He drank molecules! Gross!”</i> <i>“It is merely water,” Albert reports.</i>
4	Mixed Method	Combinations of two or more methods	<i>“You two are just so uncouth.” She turns to me. “I bet Ally doesn’t even know what the word uncouth even means. Do you?”</i>

The dramatic way of portraying character here related with human characteristic as individual being. Because individual has their own nature or tendency to be self-centred they can face phenomena and revealing themselves. The dramatic method is the opposite of The Discursive method. The differences between two of them lies on whether the character is shown or told (Kenney, 1966). The dramatic method reveals the disposition of character by showing through the character itself, while the discursive method is told by the writer. The dramatic method reflects the real life. In real life there is no author to reveal the disposition of character, instead people reveals themselves by their own words, action or behaviour. However, Kenney (1966) said this method having the obstacle to misjudge and taking the revelation of character too long. The researcher agree to that since the character also develops and change through the course of story. In the novel, the main characters; Ally, Albert and Keisha reveals themselves as what they are by their statement and action in the stories. The researcher had found about 29 % corpus of Fish in a Tree novel characterizing main characters' disposition by using this method. This method is the second most frequent method used by Hunt in her novel Fish in a Tree.

Analysing the disposition is not enough only using one method, another method of character portrayal is character on character, it relates with human being as social being. We can know the disposition of someone from what other people told about them. Either they stating it directly or indirectly. However, this method also has the possibility being not reliable. People often misjudge another people for some motives, Kenney stating it as one shortcoming of this method. Similar to the character

in the story, character on character method can be influenced by some factors such as hatred, love or other intention. In *Fish in a Tree*, Ally, Albert and Keisha has classmates who doesn't like them, such as Shay and Jessica. They often describe them as freak, dumb, loser, misfit and such things because they simply only looking for their flaws. It will different from the people who appreciate them they will consider their positive nature and talked about it. Like the way Ally's mother refers Ally as her talented daughter because she knows it more than anyone else. It is better telling the positive rather than negative when we want to encourage someone. Like the way Mr. Daniels addressing his students, especially Ally. Rather than claiming her as having learning disabilities or problems, he addressed dyslexia that Ally's possessed as her learning differences. So, Ally may learn to read using her other dominant senses.

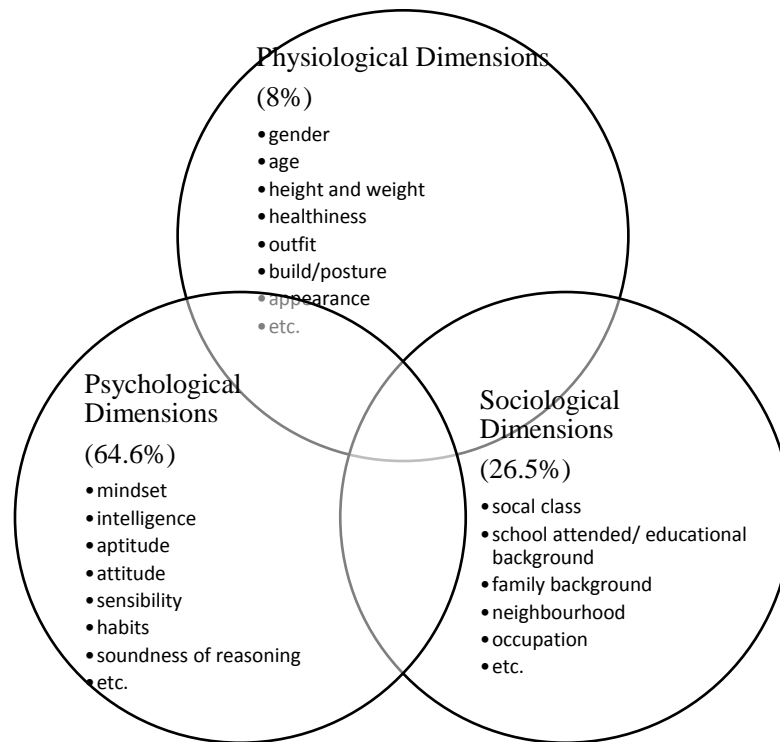
Another way to know someone's character is through the verbal context or the surrounding environment. The circumstance affects the use of language. The pattern of language used in school will be different than the language used in market. It will affect how person tend to use the words whether formal like in school or informal like in market. Additionally, same words may means differently depends on the situation. Psychologist refers context as the totality of conditions influencing a behavioural event (Millers, 1950). By verbal context, it means that the occurrence of previous certain verbal elements may influence the present choice of words of people who talk. For example, if someone said, "children like to-", the choice of the next words is possibly limited to "elephant, punished, loud," and things related to children

(Millers, 1950). In this novel, the contextual method is the most frequent used method of characterization.

Meanwhile, the author also combines each method to describe traits of character. This method is called mixed method. In this novel, the researcher found the combination that Hunt used. They are character on character with contextual, dramatic with contextual or the three of them. The mixing method and character on character method have the same percentage in occurrence which is 12 %. Both of them stand in third place after contextual and dramatic method.

From this discussion, the researcher concludes that analysing the method of characterization is like the way for understanding the people around us. If reader want to judge the character's well, they have to consider all of the method so that the judgement will be more reliable. Same in real life, if we want to know the real nature of person, we can not judge it from only what other people say but also what we actually can see from them.

## **5.2. Technique of Characterization**



In addition, after knowing the method, the writer also applied some approach in using their methods which is a technique. Reader can analysed the traits owned by character through the techniques of characterization. Just like what Lajos pointed out that human being has three dimension (Lajos, 1964). Physiological, Sociological and Psychological. These three aspects is interrelated in giving the information. The information in physics and social can determine the psychological aspects or the personality of the characters. These technique may also useful to analyse people's disposition in real life.

### **5.3.Special Traits or Disposition of Main Characters**

In this novel there are the traits possessed by the three characters having similarities and some of them are not. For example how the three of them are clever but in their own way. It implies how people are differs from each other. Each of the

main characters here has their dominant traits creating their disposition such as Ally is sensitive, Keisha is brave and bold and Albert for his stoic and simple being. However, despite having different in nature they can get along together because they have the similarities, passionate about their interest and an idealist or has vision to be success in the future for their interest and aptitude. These traits are a good traits for learners as they must be motivated to achieve great future someday and be a better learner.

Revisiting theories of young adult language learner character, some of the traits found in the main character can be connected.

The main characters are six-grader students. In connection with that, they are included in 11-13 years old age group of learners. Although, experts have some different arguments on the classification of the stage. The researcher decided to choose young adolescent learner for the main characters. Since in this phase, they can be called as young or early adolescent considering the transition between young learners to adolescent learners.

Regarding to the traits, the main characters has already possess some traits of adolescent. They've already reached the highest stage of learning from Piaget which is formal operational stage where abstract thinking become advanced (Harmer, 2007). Ally, Albert and Keisha has already developed their ability of abstract thinking. That are reflected from how they respond toward people speech, how they can relate something that is not present in general. According to Piaget theory of learning, they build their understanding of the world around them from prior knowledge and



experience (Caskey, 2007). One of the example is their ability to understand some analogies.

Another traits of teenage learner is that they have already understand the need for learning and be passionate to learn once they are engaged (Harmer, 2007). This is reflected through Ally's hardworking character or perseverance. Despite she encounters problems with letters and words, she still tried to give her best though she knows that she will fail. Ally's says in chapter three, "... I wish I knew what it was I should learn, because I know that I should know a lot more than I do." Although she is kind of not confident with her ability in the first few chapters, she later begin to understand the potency of herself after the right approach from Mr. Daniels. For Albert and Keisha's character, this is reflected from their critical thought and curiosity. Albert motivation comes genetically and environmentally. It has already illustrated that Albert's father has the same dream to be a scientist that kind of affects Albert to love knowledge. For Keisha, she always has the needs to make everything makes sense for her so she is always curious to know things.

At the same time, Harmer (2007) also pointed out that in this stage, learner can be problematic since they are in search for identity. This is reflected from how the teacher and Ally's friend considered her as a trouble maker. She has done many unimaginable things surprising both teacher side and friend side because she did not truly know about what happen to herself. She concealed her inability to read because she is afraid about their judgement. So, she does not asking for help to solve her problem. That behaviour leading her to be sent into principal room so often. In addition, Ally's thought in chapter 17 dramatically describe it.

*People act like the words “slow reader” tell them everything that’s inside. Like I’m a can of soup and they can just read the list of ingredients and know everything about me. There’s lots of stuff about the soup inside that they can’t put on the label, like how it smells and tastes and makes you feel warm when you eat it. There’s got to be more to me than just a kid who can’t read well.*

Moreover, this traits also clearly reflected from Albert’s statement in chapter 34:

*“People ask what you want to be when you grow up. I know what kind of grown-up I want to be. But **I don’t know who I am now.**” Albert stretches his legs out. “There are always people ready to tell you who you are, like a nerd or a jerk or a wimp.”*

That illustration comes when Keisha tried to motivate Ally to be herself and belief in herself after Ally telling them about her dyslexia. In this scene, Albert kind of wondering, what if someone does not know who he is, how he can be himself. Because sometimes people only believe from what people usually are judging them. Relating to the search for identity, adolescent learner tend to desire being valued by others. They craved for self-esteem; being good about themselves (Harmer, 2007). So they tend to be sensitive from negative judgement of their own age group.