

Chapter 4

Evaluation and Conclusion

Throughout the story of *Peter Pan*, the narrative complexity is due to the inconsistency and ambiguity in the stance of the narrator. It is difficult to determine whether the narrator is an insider who possesses knowledge of the situations recounted or he/she is an outsider who attempts to make sense of the situations. According to the positivist and psychological critics, the ambiguous stance of the narrator is resulted from the author's inner conflict. For example, Rose (1984) says that the author-narrator expresses "trauma of growth" as the narrator repeats the verb "to grow up" in the opening paragraph of the story. Besides, Frey (1987) asserts that the story is based on Barrie's childhood tension and that the narrator may not have control over his narrative.

Unlike those two critical approaches, this research does not focus on the relationship between the author and the narrator because, from the narrative's point of view, the narrator is a function—not a person—of the narrative. That is, the author and the text are separated from each other. The narrative agent actually has two distinctive functions: a focalizer "who sees" and a narrator "who speaks". This research takes account of the difference of these two functions and uses Simpson's narrative point of view as a stylistic device to analyze the text.

Based on "who sees", Simpson's narrative point of view reveals that the narrator in *Peter Pan* is told by a disembodied narrator who is not a participatory character and that the narrator falls under Simpson's B(N) category. However, from the analysis, the B(N) narrator in *Peter Pan* shows both positive and negative shadings. Sometimes the narrator can have a strong commitment in the situations recounted, but; other times the narrator appears to be inconfident. According to Simpson (1993), the changeable shift from positive to negative shading can be seen as hesitation in the narrator's attitude towards certain characters or scenarios recounted; therefore, the shift in *Peter Pan* is a stylistic premise to reveal that the narrator's stance is changing throughout the narrative.

How is Simpson's narrative framework a helpful device?

Simpson's narrative point of view unveils systematic means to scrutinize *Peter Pan's* narrative. Although the narrative structure in *Peter Pan* is complex, as the other critics mentioned, this research proves that the narrative structure can be seen as uncomplicated if it has a meticulous framework and if the distinction between "who speaks" and "who sees" is made. The story is seen through an external narrator who remains disembodied and elusive throughout the story. Simpson's framework makes a clear distinction between each type of narrator, A and B, and that will help to broaden the understanding of the narrative point of view. The only complexity remained in this story is not in the narrative structure, but in the narrator function of the narrative. In other words, the narrator mimics human's realistic narration, showing both uncertainty and certainty shifting throughout the narrative. The story, thus, is not narrated from an omniscient God-like creature's perspective, but from that of an imperfect human being. The contradiction between the fantasy elements in *Peter Pan* and the realistic narration ought to imply the narrator's style to bring the world of imagination closer to readers.

Moreover, not only this research has more systematic framework but it also gains the literary interpretation from the textual evidence. This research is different from the other studies in that they have to draw connections from other sources, such as the author's biography or diaries, in order to offer a literary interpretation. For instance, the positivists and psychological critics have to consider the author's real life in the understanding of the narrator's ambiguous stance in *Peter Pan*. However, this connection is not entirely accurate and logical in fictions because the author cannot always be identified with the narrator. Also, a story of fiction does not necessarily originate from the author's real experiences. Dissimilar to the other critics, this research disregards other external and secondary sources and scrutinizes only the text. Simpson's narrative framework is a crucial device to reveal that the literary interpretation can be gained from the language itself.

This research is not to undermine other literary critics, but only to offer a reasonable interpretation by a systematic stylistic device. Significantly, this research sees the difference between the narrator and the focalizer in which the other critics

may not notice, and this difference might give a new perspective to the interpretation of *Peter Pan*'s narrative. Since modality system can reveal attitudinal features of language, Simpson's narrative framework can be applicable to children's literature and other fictions in order to understand the narrator's stance or character's attitude expressed through their utterances.