

ABSTRACT

One way to understand the story of a novel is by analysing the aspects of the novel. Characters seem to be the most crucial thing to be analysed since a novel is written to reveal the characters. To avoid the trap of the misinterpretation that can happen because of analysing only one aspect of a novel, the writer then decides to look backward to the setting. This assumption arises from a statement by some scholars saying that setting is the world where the characters live. The information about the setting becomes more important when the writer finds that the setting of *The Good Earth* that takes place in China is unfamiliar to her.

In spite of the reason above, the thesis will also try to show that possibly Pearl S. Buck uses setting to help her to describe her characters in *The Good Earth*. Referring to this possibility, the setting then cannot be neglected. The sociocultural life in China then is presented to equip readers with enough interpretation in order to understand the characters better. This idea grows stronger when she notices that sometimes she cannot understand others because she does not know their custom and tradition. Unknowing their sociocultural background makes her interpret what they do from her own sociocultural background.

The Good Earth was chosen to be analysed after the writer considered that there were too many novels with Western setting taught in the novel class she attended. The fact that she lives side by side with the Chinese ethnic but knowing only a little about their custom and tradition of their ancestors ignores her. Both of these matters then become the basic thought in choosing *The Good Earth*.

The thesis is written descriptively. The analysis of characters is done based on the theory of character analysis which says that we can know the characters thoroughly from some clues such as from their physical appearances, thoughts, speech, conversation with other characters and the like. Believing that a novel can be a representative of real life, the writer then uses the mimetic approach. The setting, on the other hand, takes the sociocultural-historical approach to be the basic theory. Map and pictures, then, are presented to support the accuracy of the information about the setting.

