THE PORTRAIT OF WHITENESS AS MAJOR CHARACTERS AMONG BLACK COMMUNITY AS REFLECTED IN SERAPH ON THE SUWANEE

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DEDICATION PAGE

Gutta Cavat Lapidem Non Vi Sed Saépe Cadendo!

For my beloved ones:

*Linus, Clara and Felix*
STATEMENT OF WORK'S ORIGINALITY

I honestly declare that this thesis, which I have written, does not contain the work or parts of the work of other people, except those cited in the quotations and the references, as a scientific paper should.

Yogyakarta, February 5, 2015

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ABSTRACT


This study analyzes thenovel written by Zora Neale Hurston entitled Seraph on the Suwanee. It tells the story of Arvay’s and Jim’s deep, fast and odd love. The love is hindered by Arvay’s lack of self-confidence and Jim’s gender roles and dominant rules over Arvay and their marriage.

The aim of the study is to find out the reasons why Hurston writes the novel and the ways she depicts the relationships among characters. There are two questions to answer. The first one is “Why does Zora Neale Hurston, a black author, choose to write a novel by focusing on the white people as the only major characters situated among the black environment in the novel Seraph on the Suwanee?” and the second one is “How does Zora Neale Hurston depict the relationship between the two white major characters and between those two with the black villagers in the novel, Seraph on the Suwanee?”

The writer uses two sources in this study. The primary source is the novel itself, entitled Seraph on the Suwanee. The secondary sources are books on psychoanalytic characters and characterization theories, and internet sources that help the writer in analyzing the problems of the study. In answering the problems the writer uses biographical approach for the first question. The theory of character and characterization are applied to analyze the second question.

Based on the analysis, the result of the study shows that Hurston writes a novel focusing on white characters to show her authenticity and her universal appeal by breaking the old rule about black writer. Moreover, the relationships between characters can be seen from the physical and personality descriptions, and the influence of each character over another.

It is suggested to future researchers to conduct an analysis in how to treat someone who is emotionally and mentally challenged and to get to know deeper about the history of black and white people for centuries to achieve the balanced judgement.

Keywords: seraph on the suwanee, portrait of whiteness, white and black folks, relationships between characters.
ABSTRAK


Berdasarkan analisis yang ada, hasil skripsi menunjukkan bahwa Hurston menulis novel yang berfokus pada orang kulit putih, untuk menunjukkan autentisitasnya dan sifat universalnya dengan mematahkan hukum lama tentang penulis kultur hitam. Selanjutnya, hubungan para tokoh dapat dilihat dari gambaran fisik dan kepribadian, dan pengaruh setiap tokoh terhadap tokoh yang lain.

Disarankan kepada para peneliti mendatang untuk melakukan analisis tentang bagaimana memperlakukan seseorang yang emosi dan mentalnya terganggu dan untuk mengetahui lebih jauh sejarah orang kulit putih dan hitam selama berabad-abad untuk memperoleh penilaian yang seimbang.

Kata kunci: seraph on the suwanee, portrait of whiteness, white and black folks, relationships between characters.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the general explanations of the study. There are four sub-chapters in this part. They are the background of the study, problem formulation, objectives of the study, and definition of terms. The background of the study comes up with reasons that lead the writer to choose the topic. The objectives of the study contain the aim of the study. The problem formulation states the two main problems of the study. The definition of terms discusses important definitions to avoid misinterpretation.

1.1 Background of the Study

African American people are citizens of the United States of America. They were enslaved for over 200 years. There are many stories written about slavery in the United States. The African Americans, who were formerly called as Negroes, have gone through a lot of sufferings because of the effects of the slavery. The tears, sweat and blood have been sacrificed for the sake of the rights they have been seeking for centuries. Walker (1830) in his appeal stated that the colored people living in United States have been seen as the most disgusting creature in the world. They have been historically treated by the White Americans of the United States in more “cruel and barbarous” ways than any other slaves in the world (Walker, 1830, p. 3).
However, through the marriages among African Americans and the phenomena of interracial marriage in the United States, African Americans have become one of the largest groups of people that live under the roof of America. After it was noticed to be one of the factors where African Americans population have increased more and more, the laws were put in force to restrict the interracial marriage. Along with the increase of this population, the slavery became more cruel and cruel as attempt to control the increasing population.

After a long-time suffering, the Negroes were freed from slavery and gained some rights in 1913; 50 years after Emancipation Proclamation which resulted from a Civil War in the United States. Due to the resistance from some popular black people who were born free, such as Booker T. Washington and Du Bois, the Negroes began to utilize their new rights. They owned thousands of homes, operated thousands of farms and conducted thousands of businesses. Indeed, the Negroes need more than courage for doing that. There were still many white folks who saw them as “nothing” and did not want them gain a thing.

Then the real suffer began. Bennett (1962) talked in depth about the way the Negroes suffer. “A wave of residential segregation laws was sweeping the South” (p. 288). Brutal wave of murders happened all over the South. The lynchings increased. The “Mary Turner” lynching – that was how they named the lynching – was the most barbarous actions “ever committed in a civilized country “ (p. 294) as we all thought the United States is a civilized one. The pregnant woman was lynched; many Negroes were burned and killed.
During that time, many letters and information came from North telling all the survivals in the South that jobs were available and condition was better there. “In 1915, Negro America exploded in the Great Migration” to the North and “they settled in the big industrial centers of the North” (Bennett, 1962, pp.288-289). On July 28, 1917 about 10,000 New Yorkers who settled in Harlem, New York, organized by National Association for The Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), marched down to Fifth Avenue in a silent protest against brutalities and lynching (Schilband Clifford, p. 1485). During the year, Negro artists did their silent protests and poured out their feelings through poems, plays and musical compositions. Birch (1994) further noted that Harlem represented the spirit of advancement coming from the artists, musicians, and writers. “Harlem afforded a space in which the self-definition could be developed, and also gave black intellectuals and political readers a chance to raise…” (pp. 33-34).

The big Negro artists came out as the result of Harlem Renaissance. One name from a young woman coming from the South, Florida, appeared. She is Zora Neale Hurston. She came to New York through Opportunity Magazine. “I sent on Drenched in Light and he published it. Later, he published my second story Spunk. He wrote me a kind letter and said something about New York. So … I wanted to be in New York” (Hurston, 1942,pp. 167-168). When Hurston arrived in Harlem, she felt like “she had finally reached the horizon she aspired to when she was younger” (Jones-Jones, 2013, p. 75). She found her path through this. She began writing more and more until her “rocking” novel published in 1937, entitled “Their Eyes Were
"Watching God". That novel depicted the African American women’s journey in reaching their self-actualization and self-discovery. “Hurston thought herself as an artist, a contributor to the literary movement that was showpiece of the Harlem Renaissance” (Hurston, 1942, pp. 21-22).

Hurston’s success in writing has brought her to become one of the great authors as a result of Harlem Renaissance. Birch (1994) stated that the engagement of Hurston in Harlem Renaissance illustrated her position as a black woman. It also described her efforts in recording the richness of black life and culture (p. 38).

But then, the most controversial novel of Hurston’s came up. It was her last novel entitled Seraph on the Suwanee which was published in 1948. Her novel focuses on the main life of white people as her major characters. Seraph on the Suwanee is seen as the failure of her novel in lifting the issues of African American society as the priority. Janet St. Clair (1989) said that many authors from African American culture are disappointed due to Hurston’s abandonment of her “racial heritage and her literary commitment to black folk culture in creating white protagonists” (p. 39). Furthermore, Hurston’s Seraph on the Suwanee is considered as “trash” by the media in 1948 because of Hurston’s prioritization in characterizing whites’ role as protagonists in her novel (Jackson, 2000, p. 641).

Due to the phenomena of a great author in Harlem Renaissance writing what people called “a trash”, I was encouraged to analyze about this novel. I firstly got to know this novel through my exchange study in the United States. I was placed at Bennett College, a Historically African American College for women. It was such a
blessing for me to experience directly one of the big nations living under the roof of America. During my one-semester study, I took an African American literature class. Zora Neale Hurston was one of the main authors discussed in the class. She was like the inspiration of many African American woman authors in the U.S. Seraph on the Suwanee was the book my African American professor assigned me to study. I read the novel and got surprised of what I found. Zora Neale Hurston, the great author of Harlem, wrote all about whites with only small black character’s role. As an outsider and a foreigner, I got confused. I wanted to know more about Zora Neale Hurston and her last novel. It led me to a thought of analyzing this novel deeper in my undergraduate thesis. I was curious about Hurston’s intention in writing this story. There is a possibility that her intention beyond this novel is something hidden that even African Americans’ eyes have not understood. I was going to focus on her reason for writing the novel focusing on white characters as the only main and major characters.

Furthermore, I was also curious about how Hurston, a black author, depicts the relations between white major characters and between those two with the black characters, through her eyes. Since she is a black author but writing about white characters, there must be something interesting that lies beyond the way she depicts the white and black characters. In short, Hurston’s reasons in writing this novel and her ways in portraying the relationships among characters will be interesting to discuss.
1.2 Problem Formulation

By observing the issue found in Zora Neale Hurston’s *Seraph on the Suwanee*, I am formulating the problems by stating these two questions:

1. Why does Zora Neale Hurston, a black author, choose to write a novel by focusing on the white folks as the only major characters situated among the black environment in the novel *Seraph on the Suwanee*?

2. How does Zora Neale Hurston depict the relations between the two white major characters and between those two with the black villagers in the novel, *Seraph on the Suwanee*?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

There are two objectives of the study. The first one is to find out the reasons Zora Neale Hurston, a black author, chooses to write a novel by focusing on the white folks as the only major characters situated inside the black environment in the novel *Seraph on the Suwanee*. The second one is to analyze the way Zora Neale Hurston depicts the relations between the two white major characters and between those two with the black villagers in the novel, *Seraph on the Suwanee*.

1.4 Definition of Terms

There are five main words here that need to be explained in this study in order to avoid misunderstanding among readers. Those words are whiteness, African American, Harlem Renaissance, character and relationships between characters.
1.4.1 Whiteness

Henry and Tator (2006) stated that ‘Whiteness’, is essentially a social construct applied to human beings rather than veritable truths that have universal validity. The power of whiteness, however, is manifested by the ways in which racialized whiteness becomes transformed into social, politic, economic, and cultural behavior. White culture, norms, and values in all these areas become normative. They become standard against in which all other cultures, groups, individuals are measured and usually found to be inferior (pp. 46-47).

1.4.2 African American

_Americana Encyclopedia_ defines the term African American as the Africans who were brought to America or the African who were born in America. They are at times called as Afro-Americans, Blacks, or Negroes. The African American people are defined as racial group and have been subject to discriminating treatment because of race.

1.4.3 Harlem Renaissance

According to Birch (1994), Harlem Renaissance is the time when the African American immigrants from the South plus the North struggle to find an identity that previously denied them due to the long-time slavery. Harlem Renaissance was the vanguard of the first black movement in literature, economic and political improvement (p. 32-34).
1.4.4 Character

Forster (2002) said that “The novelist, unlike many of his colleagues, makes up a number of word-masses roughly describing him, gives those names and sex, assigns them plausible gestures, and causes them to speak by the use of inverted commas, and perhaps to behave consistently. These word-masses are his characters. They do not come thus coldly to his mind, they may be created in delirious excitement, still, their nature is conditioned by what he guesses about other people, and about himself, and is further modified by other aspects of his work” (p. 30).

Furthermore, Dickinson (1968) stated that: “Character is the person who can contribute to a story in several ways.” A character that has important role in the story is called main character, while a character that is less important, because her/his role in supporting the main character only, is called minor character or supporting character. (p.17)

1.4.5 Relationships between Characters

Edward Jones (1968) stated that development of the characters and the relationships between them mean observing them in three ways:

1. Personality of the main character

   It describes the main character’s personality. For instance, the characters are responsible, neat, romantic, careless, etc.

2. Social status of the main characters

   This point discusses the background of the main characters, such as: their educational background, their social classes/status.
3. Social relationship of the main characters

In this case, the writer wants to discuss the relationship between the main characters and other characters surrounding them (minor characters or supporting character).
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter provides the related theories used in the study, the criticism regarding Zora Neale Hurston’s Seraph on the Suwanee, the brief review on Zora Neale Hurston, and the theoretical framework in the process of analyzing the objectives of the study. The theories used are the psychoanalytic theory of personality, theory of characters and characterization, and the biographical approach.

2.1 Review of Related Theories

This part contains the related theories which are used to analyze the novel. The theories used in the study are the psychoanalytic theory of personality theory of character, theory of characterization, and biographical approach.

2.1.1 Psychoanalytic Theory of Personality

Sigmund Freud, the founder of modern personality theories develops the idea of psychoanalytic theory. He believed that the most behaviors are caused by thoughts, ideas and wishes that are in a person’s brain but are not easily accessible by the conscious part of the mind (Griggs, 2008, p. 279). In psychoanalytic theory, Freud suggested the concept of mental protection in which the unconsciousness protects human (Griggs, 2008, pp. 282-283). By observing the protection devices, the writer will be helped in noticing the relationships between characters. Those devices are:
a. Rationalization

This rationalization happens when our consciousness creates a well-sounding reason to explain things we hate or we do not like. For examples, if we fail in a test, we will put the blame on others. If our favorite singer does not win the singing competition, we will say that it is for the best anyway. If we are not able to complete the assignment, we will judge that it is due to our teacher’s unfairness in giving that kind of assignment.

Here, the rationalization protects people in combating their anxiety. When we do not get the things we want, we will start convincing ourselves that the thing is better that way. However, apart from being “rational”, this defense mechanism is not categorized into the rational one. It is “rationalizing”. We are not being objective in this case. We are making up a “good-sounding” reason instead of the objective one to calm down our anxiety and worry.

b. Projection

In projection, when there are some thoughts, feelings, and actions that we consider to be wrong or to upset us, we will project them onto others instead of on ourselves. As the example, if we realize that the things we have done is terribly wrong we will claim that others have done the same. If there is a feeling that we have but considered to be wrong, we will judge others on having the same feeling as well. What we say about others might be what is actually true about us. That is a projection.
c. Sublimation

The sublimation happens when we redirect our negative or unwanted emotions, thoughts, and feelings into a more positive way which is socially accepted. For instance, when we are full of anger towards something, we might turn to wash our motorcycle vigorously. Looking at the painters, musicians, or poets, they sublimate their emotions in the form of paintings, musical lyrics and poetry. Their way in overcoming the negative emotions is by sublimating those emotions to remarkable artworks. Sublimation helps people to redirect the unpleasant feelings into more acceptable deeds.

d. Reaction formation

People have their own energy to do whatever they want. Sometimes, the energy can be so threatening that they have to find the way out to neutralize the “threatening” part. Here those people can be protected by the reaction formation as long as they try to adopt the opposite feeling of what they really want. If a person has desire of drinking alcohol yet he thinks that drinking alcohol is a sin, the person will do everything he can, to grow hatred towards drinking alcohol. That is reaction formation.

e. Displacement

This kind of protection shows how a person’s unconscious wishes could appear in the dreams but not exactly like the wishes. The wishes appear in disguise. A wife who is angry at her husband might dream that she smashes her husband’s favorite car. The anger is displaced with the symbol of her
husband. Apart from dreams, this displacement is also used to explain the real behaviors. For an instance, when a person displaces his anger towards someone onto certain object or onto other people.

f. Denial

This defense mechanism explains that when a person feels the horrible emotions, feelings and thoughts, he or she will just simply deny them producing more anxiety. The term ‘denial’ best refers to people who obviously deal with alcohol or drug addiction problems. They simply deny that they have those kinds of problems.

g. Regression

When people are under the state of trauma or stress due to horrible experiences, they might return to the earlier forms of the way they behave and think. This is called regression. If a person is upset about something, he or she will unconsciously begin sucking his or her thumb.

2.1.2 Theory of Character

In this study, character is one of the significant elements in a literary work that is going to be analyzed. Now that these theories will be used in analyzing the problems, I need some theories to analyze the characters. These theories come from Forster (2002) and Henkle (1977).

E.M Forster (2002) stated that, characters are divided into two kinds; flat and round characters.
a. Flat Character

A flat character is built around ‘a single idea or quality’ and is presented in outline and without individualizing in detail, and so it can be fairly and adequately described in a single phrase or sentence. A flat character is characterized by one or two traits. Based on Forster (2002), this kind of character is called flat because we can see only one side of him or her. (p. 49)

Forster moreover stated two advantages of a flat character. The first is that the person is recognized easily whenever he or she comes. The person is recognized by the reader’s emotional eye instead of the visual one. It is due to the fact that emotional eye used in having contacted the reader and the character inside the story. It is not about to see who the real person behind the character is but who the real character is. From the definition, it can be known that by seeing a part of a person’s character, the reader can get the description of the whole character. Then the second advantage is that the readers easily remember a flat character because from the beginning of the story until the end of it the character does not change(p.50).

b. Round Character

A round character is complex in temperament and motivation and is represented with subtle particularity. He states in his book saying “round characters are capable of surprise, contradiction, and change; the representation of human being in all of their creativity” (p. 5). The readers are going to remember the person in connection with the great scenes. Therefore,
he or she is difficult to describe with any adequacy as a person in real life, and eventually, the character is capable of surprising the readers (p. 56).

While Henkle (1977), stated that characters can be described as major and secondary character (p. 88).

a. **Major Character**

Major character is the most important and complex character in a novel. The character can be identified as such through the complexity of the characterization, the attention given to the character, and the personal intensity they seem to transmit. The character performs a structural key function; upon them we build expectations and desires, which, in modification, shift or establish our values.

b. **Secondary Character**

Secondary character is the character that performs more limited functions. The character may be less sophisticated. Therefore, his or her response to experience is less complex and interesting.

2.1.3 **Theory of Characterization**

Characterization is the process of an author creating his character in a story. According to Rohrberger and Woods (1971), “characterization is not merely related to the selection of personality, but the way it is described to facilitate the whole understanding of story” (p. 13). Thus, in order to understand some characters that will be analyzed, the characterization is used. Rohrberger and Woods moreover also stated that “each character is different from the others because they have specific
personalities and “physical attributes” (p. 26). They describe characterization as a process used by an author to create a character. “An individual’s character is that person’s collection of character traits and these can be defined as relatively dispositions to think, feel, and behave in certain ways in certain situations” (Webber, 2004, p. 95).

M. J. Murphy (1972) noted that there are some efforts conducted by the authors in drawing readers’ understanding towards the characters. Those efforts are personal description, how the characters are seen by others, speech, past life, conversation of others, reactions, and thoughts. When referring to personal description, the authors describe the characters from their physical appearance. Characters as seen by others mean to portray the characters from what other characters see and talk about in the story. Speech means the author provides description of the character through what the character says directly in the story. Past life means the author gives chance to the readers to look deeper into the past experiences of the characters or what the characters have undertaken in their past life so it can be clue for the readers in shaping that character’s characteristics. Conversations of others mean the characters can be seen from others’ conversations about him or her. Reactions mean the author let the readers get the clue about the characters by looking at how the characters react towards certain situations or events. Thoughts mean the author is able to depict the characters through what the person is talking about. (pp. 161-172)
2.1.4 Biographical Approach

In the literature study, an approach is the basic principle or the element that is used to appreciate a work of literature. And in this thesis, I will use biographical approach. Biographical approach is one of the literary approaches to take a closer look towards certain literary work. Rohrberger and Woods (1971), stated significantly the way to get better understanding of the study of literature into five approaches. They are formalist approach, the biographical approach, the sociocultural-historical approach, the mythopoeis approach and the psychological approach. Here it can be seen that a particular literary work can be approached from many directions. The readers or researchers can choose any kind of approach as long as it can help them in reaching their inner and better understanding towards the literary work.

In the relevance towards the problems formulated in this thesis, biographical approach is significantly applicable to analyze Hurston’s reasons in writing the novel focusing on white major characters. Honan (1979) stated that:

In theory it is irrelevant that we happen to have piles of evidence for the years of the famous older person and practically none for the youth of the same person: we must somehow “see” the biographee from birth to death. There is-and-should be-no fixed rule as to temporal contraction in biography, but there is an implicit rule that an account of all years is necessary (p. 112).

There, we can see that biography is overall about the description of a person since he or she was born till the day they die. It includes all of their chronological life. Biographical approach is about getting the inner understanding of a certain literary text by looking it from the direction of the author’s life. Eckert, noted that, “When the
reader can accurately assume the author’s perspective, in a sense reenacting the author’s stance throughout the text, then the reader can come closest to discovering the authorial voice, and, consequently, the basic messages inherent in the work” (p. 84). It means that we can go through the author’s thoughts and life and we can figure out the meaning lies beyond the novel even the author’s significant reason in writing the novel. It is conveyed that getting closer to certain literary work from biographical approach will include autobiographies, diaries, journals, letters and etc. Moreover, by observing it from the author’s point of view, the readers are able to understand why the novel comes to be that way (Barnet et al., 2011, p. 1354).

The biographical approach to literary criticism demands the full responsibility and understanding of the author in creating and developing the literary text. Obviously, the author plays a significant role in his or her own text; the way they develop the characters, create the setting, and play with their imagination in the story plot of the literary work. Therefore, in analyzing the perspectives of the author, we can figure out the real purpose, message, and intention in creating the work which are reflected in the plot, characters, and setting the work. Simon Gealy (2008) implied in his summary of *Biographical and Historical Criticism* that “the literary work is a reflection of the author’s life, and their literary work should be studied in conjunction with the author’s life for full meaning and appreciation” (p.2).
2.2 Criticism

Through the portrait of the protagonists, Arvay Henson and Jim Meserve, Hurston gives the best description of the odd great story of romance within white characters. Seraph in the Suwanee is slightly identified into the pattern of a romance story focusing on the heroine. A gender issue is one of the patterns of this conventional romance story to which the writer wants the reader to be concerned. Gender issues are probably too broad to be discussed as it involves many other things and can be seen from many perspectives. Hurston in Seraph on the Suwanee is addressing whiteness issues in whole with black environment as the support.

Jim Meserve, the male major white character, is described as a very ideal presentation of a man. The depiction of his masculinity is something that woman, especially Arvay Henson, the female major white character, has to accept and deal with. Hurston describes in detail what Jim Meserve looks like in appearance and how Arvay finds him very attractive. However, just like a conventional pattern of a romantic story, the woman is someone who is trying to find her selfhood. From the beginning of the story, Arvay is depicted as a religious nice virginal girl – initially in love with her sister’s husband – who is denying her sexuality until she meets Jim. It is seen that even before getting married to Arvay, Hurston has clearly described the way Jim treats Arvay as an object.

However, Hurston does not leave the lifting point in this story which is about love. Jim is madly in love with Arvay and he does everything he thinks is right, to show his love even though what he does is not what he is supposed to do. Since the
beginning of the story, Hurston has made it clear that Arvay is a girl who is trying to get out from her inferiority which makes her believe that she is not worthy of her handsome, perfect husband. Starting from this point, there are many other descriptions of the power that Jim has over Arvay.

Despite the romantic story inside the novel, there are important points related to the “failure” of this novel in lifting the issues of African American society as the priority. Clair (1989)said that many authors from African American culture are disappointed due to Hurston’s abandonment of her “racial heritage and her literary commitment to black folk culture in creating white protagonists” (p. 39). In the consequence of creating white protagonists and placing them among black community (Southern area), the racist ideology happens between the whites and the blacks. In this case, the main characters must be demanded to interpret the environment around her through Hurston’s narration. What comes to Arvay’s mind about the black community is not what black literature expects from Hurston as the writer of the novel. Dubek (1996) noted that Arvay even scripts people of color as subhuman (p. 347). Furthermore, Hurston’s Seraph on the Suwanee is considered as “trash” by the media in 1948 because of Hurstons’ prioritization in characterizing whites’ role as protagonists in her novel (Jackson, 2000,p. 641). Moreover Alice Walker (1975) commented on Hurston’s work that it was “reactionary, static, shockingly misguided and timid” (p. 89).
However, among all the negative criticism coming up related to the novel, there is much praise as well referring to Hurston for creating the novel. Slaughter (1948) stated that:

Arvay Henson, the heroine of this long of novel of the Florida sands barrens and turpentine forests, probably never heard of seraph, but she set out to be one nevertheless. Arvay never heard of Freud either, but she’s a textbook picture of hysterical neurotic, right to the end of the novel. ...The author knows her people, the Florida cracker of the swamps and turpentine camps intimately, and she knows the locale. One gets the impression that she took a textbook on Freudian psychology and adapted it to her needs, perhaps with her tongue in her cheek while so doing. The result is a curious mixture of excellent background drawing against which move a group of half-human puppets. (p. 24)

It seems that Hurston indeed could have made a mistake in acting like she is against her own tradition by choosing to write this kind of novel, but she is a remarkable writer. The great way she is depicting the characters and combine them with her ‘special’ way in portraying characters cannot be denied. Christian Science Monitor (1948) mentioned that *Seraph on the Suwannee* is like the “vegetable garden” because it contains the most impressive element about “Florica crackers” by being supported by Hurston’s remarkable way in framing the characters and making her novel be substantial (p. 11).

Furthermore, related to the content, being apart from the whites and blacks controversy, Hurston has actually done a wonderful job in portraying the characters of an ‘insecured’ woman in Arvay’s self and a ‘perfect self-confident husband’. Hamilton in the journal of *America* stated that:

The first two thirds of this novel is an incredibly good job. The author has caught the idiom of backwoods-Florida whites beautifully, and she presents the relationship between an insecure woman and her adequate and resourceful
husband with fidelity and delicacy that I think excels anything that other writers have achieved.” But, she “neglects motivations and assigns uncharacteristic actions to her other people.” The novel “shows promise if ever a book did. The author deserves credit for portraying man’s man successfully – something that I don’t recall a woman’s having done before. She shows great sensitivity in tracing emotional sequences and reasoning processes, and high skill in setting scenes, utilizing regional phraseology, phrasing sprightly conversation (pp. 354-355).

Hedded (1948) who wrote for *the New York Herald Tribune Books* stated that the novel was great and unique, even though the content was not perfect yet. He stated that “Reading this astonishing novel, you wish that Miss Hurston had used the scissors and smoothed the seams. Having read it, you would like to be able to remember every extraneous incident and every picaresque metaphor” (pp 35-36). This novel is considered magnificent by the white folks even “three thousand copies of the novel sold within the first few days of release and second printing of 2,000 copies was ordered (King, 2008, p. 121).

This shows Hurston’s reputation as the real author of Harlem Renaissance. She made it different among others. She chose to create a totally different point of view of any kind of writing she ever made.

**5.3 Review on the Life of Zora Neale Hurston**

This part presents the brief biography of Zora Neale Hurston who is the author of *Seraph on the Suwanee*. Born on January 7, 1891, in Notasulga, Alabama, as one of the children from John Hurston – the son of former slaves Amy and Alfred Hurston – and Lucy Potts Hurston – the daughter of former slaves Sarah and Richard
Potts (Jones, 2009, p.3), Zora entered the world before her time. Lyons(1993) opened Sorrows’ Kitchen: The Life and Folklore of Zora Neale Hurston this way:

Zora Neale Hurton did things her own way from the day she was born. On a cool January morning in 1891, she waited until the midwife was at hog killing and her father was out of town. Then, eager to get started with life, she rushed into the world, ‘crying strong.’ Her mother had no choice in the matter and delivered Zora all alone. When a neighbor happened to stop by, he cut the cord, applied the bellyband, and Zora was on her independent way (p. 1).

From a child’s point of view, Zora felt as though she was born to suffer, to be different, and to be alone. Lucy, her mother, had a major impact on her growing up and her sense of education. She passed away when Zora was still barely a teenager and it effected Zora greatly. When her father was killed in a car accident, “Zora started the pivotal point in her development as an individual” (Jones, 1968, p. 4).

From 1918-1919, she attended Howard Prep School in Washington D.C and remembered that time as one of the peak experiences of her life. An English major hopeful, her writing would also catch the attention of many of her teachers, especially Dr. Alain Leroy Locke, then chair of the philosophy department and presiding faculty of the Stylus literary society. There existed a magazine, called Opportunity, published by League which provided many writers of the Harlem Renaissance with National and International exposure. First published in 1923, Opportunity was an outlet for Afro-American cultural expression. Hurston’s narrative goes on through Opportunity that brings her to New York.

Hurston got married two times. The first one was Herbert Sheen, her friend from Howard and the son of a Pastor. They divorced four years later. The second one
was Albert Price. But it ended up with divorce as well. She then got engaged to a man named James Howell Pitts in 1944 but they ultimately did not marry.

She has created plenty of works. She wrote her autobiography entitled *Dust Tracks on Road* in 1942. She wrote four novels; *Jonah’s Gourd Vice; Their Eyes Were Watching God; Moses, Man of the Mountain;* and *Seraph on the Suwanee.* In connecting to the *Seraph on the Suwanee,* the previous novels are different regarding the depiction of the major characters. All of Hurston novels are the depiction of black family or black major characters which make them different to *Seraph on the Suwanee.*

Hurston’s first novel, *Jonah’s Gourd Vine* was set in Alabama and Florida and it was the result of Hurston’s reflection towards oral tradition, dialect, spirituality, and folk customs. The novel focuses on John Pearson, a minister, and his first wife, Lucy Pearson. The protagonists are black family.

The second novel is *Their Eyes Were Watching God.* It was published in 1937 and the most popular novel of Hurston. The novel, which again takes place in the South, tells about the chronological live of Janie, her three husbands, her grandmother named Nanny, and any other person she has in contact with in her life. Again, the protagonists are black people. In this novel, the diversity of the black experience is revealed through Hurston’s presenting the complex cultural expression of African Americans.

The third novel is *Moses, Man of the Mountain.* This novel can be based on the Old Testament story of Moses, which described his quest to take Israelites out of
slavery under the Egyptians and to the freedom. Obviously, the story is the representative of the slavery of black people in United States. The story was undertaken in modern perspective of biblical tale and in connection to African-American tradition.

Seraph on the Suwannee, published in 1948, tells the story of Arvay Henson, a religious enthusiastic young woman, having the feeling of desire towards her sister’s husband which made her decided to live the rest of her twenty-one year old age alone. However, she meets her match in handsome Jim Meserve who continuously flirts her until she agrees to marry him. This is really a story of Arvay, a white woman and Jim, a white wealthy Southerner who live admist the lives of Southern rural black folk.

In 1959, after suffering a stroke, Hurston was forced to enter a welfare home where she died in relative obscurity on January 28, 1960.

5.3 Theoretical Framework

In this study, there are two important aspects discussed. In connecting to the first problem, the writer is going to find out the reasons why Hurston chooses to write a novel focusing on white major characters settled in black environment. The reason is going to be seen from the biographical background. By analyzing the biographical perspectives of the authors, the systematic collection and criticism documents
regarding Hurston and *Seraph on the Suwanee* in particular will help the writer to solve the first problem.

The second problem discussed in this thesis is the way Zora Neale Hurston depict the relations between the two white major characters and between those two with the black villagers in the black environment setting novel, *Seraph on the Suwanee*. Theory of characters and characterization are used to analyze this problem. By analyzing the physical appearance, the speech, the thoughts, the past life, the conversations of others, and the reactions of the characters, I will find the Hurstons’ ways in depicting the relations among characters.
CHAPTER III

METHODODOLOGY

This chapter is divided into three sections. They include the object of the study, the approach of the study, and the method of the study. The object of the study comes up with the physical description of the novel and a little bit summary of it. Moreover, the approach part explains the approaches employed in this study. At the last, the method of the study shows the steps used in conducting the study.

3.1 Object of the Study

Seraph on the Suwanee by Zora Neale Hurston is the object of the study. Christina Daley (2000) explained a lot regarding Hurston’s works and the publications. Due to the powerful soul Hurston has put in all of her writings, Seraph on the Suwanee was firstly being published by the major publishing company, J. B Lippincott in 1948. It was her last edition which even kept coming out until 1965; five years until her death. Seraph on the Suwanee deviates from any other previous novels she wrote, each of which are is Jonah’s Gourd Vine in 1934, Their Eyes were Watching God in 1937, Tell My Horse in 1938, and Moses, Man of the Mountain in 1939.

The deviation inside Seraph on the Suwanee is from the portrait of the white major characters or in other words primarily capturing the white family. African Americans hold the small roles in this novel which brings this novel to the major
controversy at that time, due to the fact that Zora is an African American female
writer and moreover, the *Princess* and the favorite of Harlem Rennaisance. However,
many people are inspired by Zora Neale Hurston and her writings keep coming in
publication. It is mentioned that 1990s is the year of Hurston. It is when the major
publishing company heartily welcomed her writings. More of her writings are
published and *Seraph on the Suwanee* is not left behind. This novel gets the second

This novel gives chronology of the lives of the white family in Florida,
depicting the transition from the agrarian way of the life in the Old South to the
industrialized New South. The minor play of African American roles in this novel is,
anyway, successively with the major African American surrounding the white major
characters and the notable jazz and blue music included. Dedicated to Marjorie
Kinnan Rawlings, author of the novel *The Yearling*, this novel is dealing with nature,
marrige, religion, gender, sexuality, race, and class. Arvay Henson and Jim Meserve
are the major white characters depicted in this novel, along with their white family
members while the African American role is on Joe Kelsey that is described as Jim
Meserve’s best friend and literally gives a little bit African American role into the
story of Jim’s and Arvay’s life.

### 3.2 Approach of the Study

In this thesis, the writer uses the biographical approach to analyze the reason
Hurston writing a novel focusing on white major characters. Biographical approach is
about analyzing the novel from the author’s points of view. This point of view is
observed from Hurston’s autobiography, previous novels, writings, and what other researchers and authors’ thoughts about her. Furthermore, the portrait of the white major characters will raise more questions about the historical background of the author, Zora Neale Hurston, which was formerly the product of Harlem Renaissance, the new rise for African American writers. To obtain deeper knowledge, this approach would be the most suitable one to apply for this thesis. By observing her writings, I can certainly conclude the reason why Hurston chooses to write about white major characters in her novel and to portray the whiteness in her last novel after only focusing on black tradition and black characters during her entire life.

I also use the theory of characters and characterization to approach the literary text in analyzing the relations among white major characters and the relation between white and the black characters in the novel. This theory will help me analyze the personal description of each major character and the ‘major’ black character in the novel. Moreover, after looking at the personal description, I will analyze how those characters are related to each other. This is meant to get the idea how Zora Neale Hurston depicts the relations among characters.

3.3. Method of the Study

I used the library research method in conducting the study. The library study was meant to find out references and sources that provide important information and data for the study. To make it easy, the sources were divided into two, each of which was primary and secondary source. As I was analyzing the novel *Seraph on the Suwanee*, the novel became the first and primary source here. There were some
secondary sources related to psychoanalytic theory of personality and theory characters and characterization to look up the relations among either white or black characters in the novel. The other secondary source was about biographical approach to analyze the Hurston’s purpose in writing the novel. The analysis could be looked from the biographical background of Hurston herself.

The first step was to read in depth the novel itself. The novel, *Seraph on the Suwanee*, would certainly give the important information needed by the writer of the thesis to search for the idea of Hurston’s creating the novel and also the ideas of the situations of characters in the novel. The reading process was conducted several times in order to gain better and deeper understanding of the plots, the characters and the setting. By analyzing the quotations through those theories aforementioned, I believed that the ideas of Zora’s reason of writing this novel and the relationships between characters would be certainly revealed.

The second step was fully reading the secondary sources. I did not only pick up any sources with the theories’ name written, but also I read it carefully and noted it down to avoid forgetting the important points. By doing close reading of those sources, I recognized how supportive the sources were in this process.

The third step was comparing the results which have been found in reading the first and secondary sources. The quotations from the novel helped me to have the general idea of solving the problems aforementioned. At the other point, the quotations from sources strengthened the ideas obtained from the primary source. For the first problem formulation regarding Hurston’s reasons in writing the novel
focusing on white major characters, I was focusing on Hurston’s autobiography (1942), Hurston’s journal (1928), and what other authors thought about her. Their thoughts and quotations about Hurston helped me to find the idea of Hurston’s reasons. Then, I compared those thoughts, ideas and quotations with the novel itself. I did a deeper comprehension towards the solution of Zora’s reasons in portraying the major white characters in her novel. For the second problem formulation, I took a deep analysis on the novel itself by looking at the quotations to find the way Hurstons depicts the relations between the two white major characters and between those two with the black community around them.

By the time the comparison had been conducted, I drew conclusions eventually in having resulted to the expected result. Then, the results of the study can be proposed to the teachers and future researchers for further examination. The study of this novel, *Seraph on the Suwanee*, can be proposed to the learning teaching process as well.
CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS

This chapter discusses the two questions which have been formulated in the previous chapter. To discuss the formulated problems, this chapter is divided into two sub-chapters. The first sub-chapter is about the reasons Hurston wrote a novel focusing on white major characters. The second one is about the relations among characters.

4.1 The Reasons Hurston Wrote a Novel Focusing on White Major Characters

After analyzing Hurston’s own works and what other authors wrote about her, I find the answer of Hurston’s reasons for writing a novel focusing on white major characters. There are two main points that I have found. Those are Hurston’s authenticity and her universal sense by breaking the old rule about black writers.

4.1.1 Hurston’s Authenticity

*Seraph on the Suwanee* does reflect Hurston’s own life. Jones-Jones (2013) noted that Hurston’s authenticity in writing reflects who she really is and who she looks like in her life. This novel is indeed the novel telling about white major characters in general, but the story, the overall experiences, and even the personality of Arvay Henson – the white female major character -, was the representation of Hurston’s own life experiences. The reflection can be seen in three ways; the setting
of the novel, the way Hurston is seeing her life as also reflected in Arvay’s in the novel, and the unresolved attitude towards marriage and love.

4.1.1.1 The Setting of the Novel

First reflection of authenticity is seen from the setting of the novel. Though this novel is focusing on white major characters, the novel is taking place in black environment. It was in Florida. The novel was opened with the description of the setting of west Florida, town of Sawley on the Suwanee River, where the main livelihood there was turpentine industry. “Sawley the town is in west Florida, on the famous Suwanee River. It is flanked on the south by the curving course of the river which Stephen Forster made famous without ever having looked upon its waters, running swift and chemicals leched out of drinking roots”(p.599; ch. 1). From Sawley, after Arvay got married, her husband brought her to the town of Citabelle. It is still in Florida, where all the main stories go on. This Florida reflects Hurston the most. From many places in the South, she chose Florida as the main setting in her focusing-on-white-major-character novel. This was due to her claim of being born in Florida yet she was actually born in Notasulga, Alabama.

…her entire autobiography, Dust Tracks on road, is written from the vantage point of her being born in Eatonville, Florida in January of 1901, whereas researchers have since traced her actual birth year to 1891, and her birth place to Notosulaga, Alabama, where her father John Hurston has his roots(Jones-Jones, 2013, p. 71).

In this point, the choice for Florida reflects on how attached she is to this state. She grew up and had undergone many triggering experiences there. Eatonville, Florida,
has been described in *Mules and Men* and *Their Eyes were Watching God* which give this novel the best description of the richness of black value.

**4.1.1.2 Hurston’s Way of Seeing the Life Reflected in Arvay’s in the Novel**

The second reflection of Hurston’s authenticity is related to Hurston’s experiences which were reflected in Arvay’s in this novel. Calvert (1993) noted that Hurston lived a life to the fullest.

“I feel that I have lived. I have had the joy and pain of strong friendship. I have served and been served. I have made enemies of which I am not ashamed. I have been faithless, and that I have been faithful . . . and that until the blood ran down into my shoes. I have loved 34 interested . . . and I have hated with all the power of my soul . . . I have touched the four corners of the horizon, far from hard searching it seems tome that tears and laughter, love and hate, make up the sum of life (p.72).

*Joy and the pain of the strong friendship*’ of Hurston’s are represented in how Arvay got attached to Joe and his family, in this case, to Dessie, Joe’s wife. “The arrival of the Kelseys made life exactly right for Arvay” (p.685; ch. 8). But she got very painful after growing her own thought about Joe’s family especially in seeing the “insecure” solid friendship between her last child, Kenny, and Joe’s daughter, Belinda.

“Long as Joe ain’t got more influence over you than I have, Jim, I ain’t got a thing against him. I don’t aim to make out that I like the notion of them young’uns being up around the depot naked and all, though. It ain’t Christian. It’s more like little heathens that ain’t got nobody to teach ‘em right from wrong. And Kenny...” (p. 701; ch. 9).

The pain got continued to a certain point when Jim found a new helper at home after Joe’s leaving and Arvay had no idea what to do besides missing the presence of Joe and his family.
“I have served and been served” part of Hurston’s life is represented from the connection between Arvay and Jim, as husband and wife. Arvay has to serve Jim as she is supposed to be as a wife. Even though Jim’s role as a protector of the house seems to show his dominant role over Arvay and the marriage, he does not deny his duty to serve Arvay.

“You married yourself a man, honey. I told you, like that old hymn says, marriage with me was designed to make your pleasure less. Rest easy, you ain’tsee nothing as yet.I aim to have you living so fine some day that this will look like a teppentine camp beside it” (p. 665; ch. 6).

“I have made enemies of which I am ashamed of” is reflected in the experience of Arvay when she first encountered love yet realized that she was betrayed by her own sister. She had nothing to be ashamed of when she grew the hatred towards her own sister. The sister had betrayed her behind her back by being in relationship with the man Arvay loved. The hatred grew until she found herself afraid Larraine would take her ‘Jim’ as Larraine took her ‘Middleton’. Hurston stated in the story that:

“Arvay felt the need of getting her things ready even more than her mother did, but her unease would not permit her to risk letting Jim run into Larraine when she was not there” (p. 636; ch. 3).

“I have been faithless, and that I have been faithful” can be seen from how Arvay was really faithful that it would make Jim happy if she gave him a child, yet turns to be worse because she gave birth to a first son who was mentally challenged. “Arvay thought that it would be herself when and if she could birth Jim a perfect child and by this means tie him forever to her” (p. 668; ch. 6). Since then, she
developed a big love to his son while being faithless in her marriage with Jim. At this point, Arvay just like Hurston has lived their life. They have touched tears and laughters, love and hate, and they sum them up as their fullest key of life.

4.1.1.3 The Unresolved Attitudes towards Marriage and Love

The third reflection of Hurston’s authenticity is being looked from the unresolved attitudes towards marriage and love that Hurston has experienced in her real life which Hurston represent in Arvay’s part in this novel. Arvay is like an unstable woman who keeps looking for happiness. After being betrayed by her own sister and her first love, she found Jim. She found herself surprised at Jim’s falling in love with her. Since the beginning of their love story, Jim has clearly stated that Arvay will always be a passive wife and should remain that way.

“Love and marry me and sleep with me. That is all I need you for. Your brains are not sufficient to help me with my work; you can’t think with me. Let’s get this thing straight in the beginning. Putting your head on the same pillow with mine is not the same thing as mingling your brains with mine anymore than crying when I cry is giving you the power to feel my sorrow. You can feel my sympathy but not my sorrow” (p. 631; ch. 2).

Even though Jim has claimed Arvay that way, Arvay could not deny that she got the warmth and love from Jim. She realized that she could not get it from anybody else.

“To be forever warm and included in the atmosphere that he stirred up around him. The feel of his long-fingered hand on her arm, and the look from his eyes tingled her in a way that she had never felt before.” (p. 620; ch. 2).

However, as she got married, the disappointment she has brought from her young age due to the broken heart was not left behind. She brought it into her new family. The tension got higher when she gave birth of a mentally challenged son. She
grew an unprotected feeling in the middle of her own family. She felt insecure and got the feeling of not making her husband happy with her existence.

“Arvy just had no idea. She had no understanding to what extent she was benefitting from the good will that Jim had been building up ever since he had come to town. She knew nothing of his twisting and turning and conniving to make life pleasant for her sake” (p. 674; ch. 6).

Arvy remains a passive wife until the end of the story. Jim is the one who is responsible for everything in the house; he is the decision maker. Arvy keeps being passive and secretive in her own thoughts until the end of the novel. This state is seen as the unresolved attitude towards marriage and love. She realized how much the man has the power over her but she could not do anything about it.

“Arvy hated herself, because for the life of her, she could not move away from Jim, nor could she fling his hand away. She found herself softening, relaxing, and the throbbing under Jim’s hand. She hated the man violently, and she hated him because he had so much power over her” (p. 740; ch. 14).

This novel actually emanates as much from Hurston’s unresolved attitudes towards love and marriage. Much as Hurston had striven for the elusive goal of perfect love, she did not find it in life. She stated in her biography saying:

“Who had canceled the well-advertised tour of the moon? Somebody had turned a hose on the sun. What I had taken for eternity turned out to be a moment in walking sleep” (Hurston, 1942, p. 251).

Hurston got married twice. In 1927, she wed Herbert Sheen, her friend from Howard University, and the son of a Pastor. They divorced four years later. The second husband was Albert Price III. They got married in 1939 but divorced in 1943. Hurston seemed to search for reassurance and security but she did not even find it in her actual love. I believe that her letting Arvy’s final attitudes that way is because it
reflects her the most. At the very last paragraph of *Seraph on the Suwanee*, Hurston stated that:

“Arvay sat up as best as she could without disturbing Jim and switched off the artificial light overhead, and met the look of the sun with confidence. Yes, she was doing what the big light had told her to do. She was serving and meant to serve. She made the sun welcome to come on in, then snuggled down again beside her husband” (p. 920; ch. 27).

The unresolved attitude towards marriage and love is seen from the static state of Arvay from being a passive wife from the beginning till the end of the story. While Hurston’s, it can be seen from searching for happiness in her marriages but she could not find it until the end of her life.

### 4.1.2 Hurston’s Universal Sense by Breaking the Old Rule about Black Writer

As stated before, Hurston is the result of Harlem Renaissance, the big struggle which has made by Negro immigrants from the North and South to preserve black literature. Moreover, this renaissance is like a seed for the upcoming black writers during that time. Hurston has been noted as the writer who records culture and the life of black folks as the significant movement in black literary tradition. Furthermore, by her being engaged in the Harlem Renaissance, she has shown to the universal writers and readers in general and black folks in specific that “her position as a black woman and aspiring writer was one of extreme vulnerability” (Birch, 1994, p. 38).

In my analysis, the “extreme vulnerability” which comes as the consequence of being black woman and black writer is the factor Hurston has to be on the “right
path” in all of her writings. It means that she cannot turn her face against what it means to be a black writer. She has to write about black tradition, culture, and life.

Since she was a child, as revealed in some of her writings, Hurston never saw herself as “colored girl”. The white people in her childhood were like wanderersto her; they just passed through and she did not really pay attention on them as they did not belong to the town. However, when she was 13 years old, after her mother died, everything changed. “..., I was now a little colored girl. I found it out in certain ways. In my heart as well as in the mirror” (Hurston, 1928, p. 115).

Her upbringing in Eatonville, Florida, an all black city, and her transfer to Jacksonville after her mother died, determined the whole path of ‘tremendous ethic and philosophy of life’ of Hurton’s. She would take and carry those through her wanderings, her writings and her decisions.

Hurston’s educational experience was destined to move her from a variety of reputable universities from 1917 to 1928 which eventually would give her the reputable resume. She entered the Morgan academy, Baltimore, Maryland in 1917 and then earned the high school diploma the year after. Then she attended a reputable university for black students in D.C named Howard University which she fondly called as “The Negro Harvard”. While being at Howard Prep School and being an English major student, she discovered many opportunities, such as drawing attention of Dr. Alain Locke. He then invited Hurston to join the Stylus literary society. This path took her closer to her passion in literature and to Harlem.
Jones (2009) described that after getting an award of a literary competition sponsored by *Opportunity* magazine, an outlet for African American cultural expression, that had published her *Drenched in Light* tale, Hurston moved to New York (pp. 4-5). Entering the world of Harlem was a new world for her. She referred Harlem as her ‘Godmother’ (Birch, 1994, p. 37). Being involved in reputable black community in New York, she was helped to enter Barnard College majoring Anthropology in 1925. At this point, she was the only African American who enrolled there.

The lesson she encountered in her education journey and in Harlem did not get her down to her “extreme vulnerability” of becoming a black writer.

“Negroes were supposed to write about the Race Problem. I was and am thoroughly sick of the subject. My interest lies in what makes a man or a woman do such-and so, regardless of his color” (Hurston, 1942, p. 38).

She is being opened to any possible chance in inserting the acculturation of a living black culture and white-middle class values in her work. Moreover, she ever stated,

I do not always feel colored. Even now I often achieve the unconscious Hurston of Eatonville before the Hegira. I feel most colored when I am thrown against a sharp white background. …I have no separate feeling about being an American citizen and colored. I am merely a fragment of the Great Soul that surges within the boundaries. My country, right or wrong. …But in the main, I feel like a brown bag of miscellany propped against a wall. Against a wall in company with other bags, white, red, and yellow (Hurston. 1928, pp. 116-117).

I believe that in making this novel that Hurston wishes to have the universal sense in at least one of her works. She once wrote a letter to Carl Van Vechten saying that she hoped one day she will be able to begin “breaking that silly old rule about
Negroes not writing about white people (Hurston, 1942, p. 308). Hurston chooses to focus on white protagonists in *Seraph on the Suwanee* but she realizes her position as a black person as well. She does not leave the living culture behind. She depicts the whites from non-white perspective so the contact with blacks is generally cordial. Joe, the black character in the novel, says to Jim:

> I speck youse right about Saturday night business, mister Jim. Fact of the matter is, I knowsyouse dead right. But if you even was to be a Negro just one Saturday night, you’d never want to be white no more (p.639; ch. 3).

The writer feels that the negative criticism that come towards her regarding *Seraph on the Suwanee* is due to their misconception of Hurston’s position as a black woman. This position is supposed to drive her into categorized writings; all writings should be about black. But Hurston does not come up with the way of thinking.

Above everything else, Zora Neale Hurston was a writer. She was a writer who happened to be female and happened to be black, so that was she wrote about. Zora would have been Zora even if she’d been as Eskimo. That was precisely why she promoted equality: Her joy and power as an individual was so overwhelming, she was in fact the Harlem Renaissance’s most effective attack on racism. Hurston put it best when she said, ‘at certain times I have no race, I am Me’ (Walker, 1975, p. 179).

*Seraph on the Suwanee* is the proof of Hurston’s universal position in one of her writings. She focuses on white folks but does not leave the black tradition behind. This novel contains mostly about the story of love and marriage of white folks but by Hurston’s idea of placing the characters in Florida which is well-known as black environment, the black tradition still appears and lies beyond this novel. In short, Hurston lives up her authenticity –the real Zora Neale Hurston-and breaking the old rule about black writer in her writings, even in this focusing-on-white-folk novel.
4.2 Relationships between Characters

By analyzing the novel, *Seraph on the Suwanee*, in depth, and by having a focus on theory of characters and characterization, I am able to analyze the way Hurston describes the relationships between characters. Hurston depicts the relationships between characters, either between the two white major characters, or between those two white major characters with the black ones in two ways. The first one is by portraying their characters’ physical and personality descriptions and the second one is by describing the influences that each character has towards another person in the novel.

4.2.1 Portraying the Physical and Personality Characteristics of the Characters

This section is divided into three parts. The first is the characteristics of Arvay Henson. She is the white female major character. The second is the characteristics of Jim Meserve. He is the white male major character. The third is the characteristics of Joe Kelsey. He is the representative of main black character in the novel. He plays the small but quite significant role here.

4.2.1.1 Characteristics of Arvay Henson

Most of the narration in *Seraph on the Suwanee* comes from Arvay’s point of view. The novel begins with the physical description of Arvay as a pretty girl who is growing up and discovering herself:

Arvay was lean-made in every way. No heavy-hipped girl below that extremely small waist, and her legs were long and slim-made instead of the much-admired “whiskey-keg” look to her legs that was common. She had
plenty of long light yellow hair with a low wave to it with Gulf-blue eyes. Arvay had a fine-made kind of a nose and mouth and a face shaped like an egg laid by a Leghorn pullet, with a faint spread of pink around her upper cheeks (p. 602; ch. 1).

Soon, it is figured out that the pretty, young, thin and blond Arvay who was blessed with the musical talent, suffers from psychological and emotional wounds due to broken heart she had experienced when she was younger towards her older sister’s husband, Carl Middleton. She once worked very closely to Middleton since he was the minister at the church and Arvay ended up falling in love with him. Arvay was fully aware of the feelings they both had for each other:

“She fell in love, and began to live a sweet and secret life inside herself. The pastor leaning over her shoulder while she sat at the organ, little touches of his hand seemingly by accident, softness in his voice, and telling her that she was an exceptional young girl (p. 608; ch. 1).

The disappointment that she experienced due to Middleton’s betrayal of marrying her ‘excessively arrogant’ older sister, leads Arvay in developing strange characteristics and habits of thinking that no matter what she does, she felt she ended up suffering with humiliation and disappointment. It gives a surprise for her when finding out that Jim Meserve wants to marry her.

She is a kind of a very serious woman. She does take seriously every joke Jim has put on her and she never appreciates any of the joke instead of enjoying them. For instance, when Jim makes a joke of demanding Arvay in her pregnancy to get a daughter and no more son.“A joke! A joke and here I been suffering all this time! Jim, I’m never going to forget you for this thing” (p. 692; ch. 8).
Arvay goes through the development of being a good wife to Jimbut more like a passive wife. She follows any direction Jim leads her to go to. As Hurston stated, “…but she was a slave to that man [Jim]! How? Why? …All that she knew was that it was so” (p. 720; ch. 11). However, she keeps feeling the desperation, humiliation and disappointment throughout her ‘marriage. She is supposed to have a ‘perfect and happy’ marriage as it is accompanied by the increasing of economic fortune in her family, but she does not feel it that way.

Since the birth till the death of her first son and the closeness Jim has with colored people, Arvay develops the gradual unprotected feeling inside her.

“In her fear and desperation, Arvay fled back to her old time religion. Again and again she considered calling to Jim’s mind his promise to love and protect her, but each time she failed of the courage to take her fate into her own hands and bring the matter to a head” (p. 688; ch. 8).

Being a passive wife and having the unprotected feeling inside her remain that way until the end of the story.

4.2.1.2 The Characteristics of Jim Meserve

Jim Meserve is introduced as a good-looking, dark Irish, working “as woodsman on a turpentine camp” guy and is described as the one who “had stirred the hearts of practically every single girl in town” (p. 605; ch. 1). He is such an arrogant guy who realizes all the qualities he has. He feels that he possesses every single quality that a woman needs in this life.

Jim did not seem to notice a thing. He came parading like a king down the aisle behind her, stood until she had entered the pew, came in after her, stood and looked out over the fast filling church, hitched up his pants and sit down (p. 617; ch. 2).
He decides to make Arvay his wife. Since then he has ruled over Arvay and their marriage later on. In the beginning, Jim takes his claim over Avay not because he thinks Arvay really needs a man like him. Hurston states in Jim’s claim that,

“You have made me see into something that I don’t reckon you understand your ownself. I have to stay with you and stand by you and give my good protection to keep you from hurting your ownself too much. No, I can’t leave you be, not until you and me both can see further” (p. 613; ch. 2).

When he finally marries Arvay after ‘raping’ her, Jim feels that he has created a perfect marriage with a perfect woman. He grows responsibility inside him and tries to earn more for his family. He moves his family to Citrabelle and works as foreman of a crew of fruit-pickers. He builds a new house, trying to make Arvay and his children become comfortable and pleased.

Hurston depicts that the birth of his mentally challenged son, Earl, strikes Jim down but he counts on Arvayto take care of Earl. He just makes sure that their needs are fulfilled. Jim becomes a real father after the birth of the second child, Angie. Hurston describes how happy Jim is when Angie is born until he feels hesitant when returning Angie back to Arvay. It is stated that,

“Jim reluctantly placed the bundle in her arms and crossed the hall to the living room and wrote: “Angeline Meserve, Sunday morning, January 7, 1909, at 4:45. A pretty and healthy daughter”’” (p. 676; ch. 7).

Whenever he has a fight with Arvay, he indeed is very angry with her, but he always turns his back and rethinks of everything he has done to Arvay and how important is Arvay to him. The mature thinking is once shown when he thinks of
leaving Arvay due to Arvay’s ignorance and negative feeling on him. Hurston depicts it this way

“My God! What had got into him? Had he really been wallowing around under the tree thinking about quitting his wife? Arvay had acted dumb, but what more could you expect? She was a woman and women folks were not given to thinking nohow. That was what men were made for. Women were made to hover and to feel. He had gotten used to the comforts of a home through Arvay, and her tender and loving care. He could not do without a woman now after that, and what other woman on earth was he willing to suffer with and do for? … He had no business pushing off nothing like that on her. He had played the fool, not Arvay” (p. 694; ch. 8).

He is so lovely and it keeps that way till the end of the novel. He develops his patience towards Arvay’s uncertain insecure feeling and he tries his best in providing the protection and love for Arvay and his children. When his son Earl dies, as Hurston described, Jim puts so much love and attention to Arvay.

“Look at me, darling. Look your Jim in the face. Our Earl is dead, honey. The poor thing was not sufficient for the world he was forced to live in. he has come to his peace at last. But the world ain’t finished for you, honey. You’ve got me beside you. We got our two children and a world of loving friends” (p. 739; ch. 14).

He feels much attached to colored people for no reason. He grows a very closed friendship with a Negro named Joe Kelsey and very attached to a Portuguese family who he asks to come help him and Arvay at home and at his work place.

4.2.1.3 The Characteristics of Joe Kelsey

The character of Joe Kelsey first appears in chapter three of Seraph on the Suwanee. Hurston described his physical appearance this way:

Joe Kelsey was reddy brown Negro, ugly as sin, but with the best looking smile that Jim had ever seen on a man. It always lit him right up. It always made Jim feel like playing and joking. Just seeing Joe put him into a playful
mood and he decided at once to slip up on Joe and play some practical jokes (p. 638; ch. 3).

In this description, we can see that Joe is an easy-going person and a humorous one too. He is able to balance Jim’s jokes since he loves playing jokes too. It is clearly seen as well that the description is opened by stating the “ugly” stuff about Joe but it ends up stating he has the best smile ever. Hurston made Joe’s description by looking if from Jim’s thoughts.

Moreover, the description of Joe Kelsey does not stop there. Joe is well-known for experienced nature. It makes Jim come to him again and again in searching for advice and help. For instance, it happens when Jim faces the confusion in maintaining his heart for marrying Arvay.

He could think of no one but Joe Kelsey, and possibly his wife, Dessie, who cooked and did for him around his bachelor quarters on the camp. Joe had plenty experience with women, certainly. Maybe he could help (pp. 639-640; ch. 3).

Besides being so good in helping Jim with advice, Joe has the best quality of a worker as well. From Jim’s conversation with Arvay, Hurston clearly stated that Joe is the best co-worker.

[Joe] is the very man I need. I can easily throw upa house back there in the grove for him, and him right here. I’m going to send for him(p.679; ch. 7).

Joe is a reliable worker. He has all the quality of a working man. He can manage his work well and he knows the best thing to do in his work.

Everything had gone off swell, and a very good time had been had by all. They could look forward to good likker, because, Joe really knew how to make it, charred barrels and all (p. 686; ch. 8).
Jim is the best in working as well as the best in music. This description shows how Hurston shows her dedication for black culture and heritage even in her white-focusing novel. Hurston does not leave the richness of black culture behind. In the beginning of Arvay and Jim’s marriage life, Hurston stated the way Jim praises Jim for his ability in playing music.

The ballad went on for many more verses, and Arvay was all but moved to tears. After a few minutes, she noticed that the serenade was over. “Oh, that was just too sweet and too wonderful, Jim. Don’t expect to forget this night, the longest day I live.” “This is some of that damn Joe Kelsey’s doings,” Jim grumbled to hide his own emotion. “It would be just like the bastard to cut a caper like that.” He stooped over quickly and fetched a five gallon jug from under the bed and hurried to the window. “Thank you, folks. Me and my wife both thank you for the music of welcome home” (pp. 652-653; ch. 4).

This is how Zora Neale Hurston keeps the black culture in her white novel. She does not depict the negative things about black people. She even describes the good quality the black people have through the eyes of the whiteness.

4.2.2 Describing the Influence that Each Character has for Another Character in the Novel

In this part, I will explain one of the ways Hurston depicts the relationships between characters. It will be clearly stated the influences that each main character has over another character in the novel. The description of the influences will be between Arvay and Jim as the major white characters and between those two with Joe Kelsey, as the representative of black character.
4.2.2.1 The Influences that Jim and Arvay Have for Each Other

Hurston has actually made a great description of development of the characters in *Seraph on the Suwanee*. Either Arvay or Jim goes through experiences which trigger their characters’ change. For instance Arvay has experienced humiliation and disappointment since the beginning of her girlhood due to her breaking heart as a result of the marriage of the guy she had a crush on with her older sister. As the consequence, the feeling of disappointment continues even after she has already married and gets a visit from her older sister. Those feelings turn into the sense of unprotected feelings in her own house. It is due to the situations in her surroundings and to the negative feelings that she builds inside herself.

Jim experiences the same thing. The birth of his first child, the mentally challenged Earl, seems to change his deed in his own marriage. The birth of the child is actually fine for him but Arvay’s attitudes of keeping all her feelings by herself since the birth of Earls, disturbs Jim. He starts to feel uncomfortable in his own home. In addition, he is thirsty for the love of Arvay because Arvay tends to spend all of her time with Earl and gets to complicate all what matter for Earl. Hurston stated that,

“Jim went right to work clearing and planting his land, and laying the plans for his new home. He would have loved to tell Arvay how he managed in so little money, and let her laugh with him, but Arvay seemed very listless about it, and kept dwelling on the matter of the swamp every time he brought the matter up” (p. 672; ch. 6).

Jim and Arvayneconnect to each other and their characters are developed because of each other’s influence. Arvay grows a certain kind of jealousy to any kind of outside attachment Jim gets from any other person beside her. She even gets
jealous of how closed Jim to Angeline, her second child. Hurston describes of how annoyed Arvay gets to be because Jim always takes Angeline’s side.

“This is my first time to see a man cut the crazy over a child to that extent. Look like I done b orn somebody to be over me in my own house. I don’t count for nothing no more around here, I see. Angeline is the boss” (p. 687; ch. 8).

Hurston clearly stated that Arvay hated to feel the jealousy over her own child. Moreover, she grows another negative feeling to Joe, Jim’s best friend by seeing how Jim feels so attached to Joe until finally Joe has to move out from their house because he is feeling “hurt-ed” of Arvay’s words. It does not stop there. Arvay feels more unprotected when Jim finds another helper in his business, a Portuguese family. It is described that,

“All unconsciously, Jim was giving Arvay more cause for worry every day. Jim was fond of children and petted and played with Felicia too when he came upon her playing with Angeline and Kenny in the grove. Arvay noted with displeasure that within a week of the coming of the Corregios, her two younger children had made friends with Felicia and included her in everything, even begging her to eat with them when they were called to supper if she happened to be up around the house at the time” (p. 717; ch. 11).

This threatened feeling that Jim has subconsciously has put on her has caused Arvay to think of leaving Jim several times.

Just like Arvay, Jim’s characteristics are also influence by Arvay’s mood. He loves to make jokes, but it seems that Arvay never takes them as jokes. In the scene when Arvay’s second child is born, Jim is making a joke but Arvay does not see it as he intended.

“But Arvay, I thought that anybody at all would see through a joke like that. Anybody even with a teaspoon of sense knows that you can’t tell what a
child’ll turn out to be until it gets born. And furthermore, you know so well that I’d go to Hell for my daughter, and wade through solid rock up to my hips do it. And then again, I’d be bound to love any child that you had for me” (p. 692; ch. 8).

His comedic personality in the house balances Arvay’s negative moods and feelings. Jim often felt angry at himself for seeing Arvay’s pain. He first takes Arvay as his property which Intereste refers to something with no feeling, but as time goes by, living with Arvay changes these thoughts. Hurston put it beautifully by saying,

“The sight of Arvay’s drooping figure, the piteous tone of her voice made Jim see the month of pain and fear that Arvay had lived through in silence and so needlessly, and it was almost more than he could bear. It made him angry that Arvay should have suffered so uselessly, and through her belated revelation, make him agonize so” (p. 693; ch. 8).

Both of them are trying their best to create a perfect marriage. They could not stand for each other’s leaving. When Arvay went out of the house due to taking Earl, the first child, to her mother’s house, she took the opportunity to think about leaving Jim. But after leaving Jim just for several days, she could not hold even for a minute a thought of staying away from Jim. Hurston describes:

The sacrifice of parting from Earl was almost more than she could bear, but the call of Jim could no more be resisted than the sun-flower can help turning its face to the sun. Her heart, her body, everything about her cried for the presence of that man. How in the world she ever thought that she could stay away?” (p. 722; ch. 11).

The same like Arvay, no matter how crazy Arvay actions were in protecting his first born, Earl, and how illogical her ways are, Jim will keep it logical.

“No why the goddamn hell Arvay want to act so contrary for?” He walked out to the top step and took a stand. “But Arvay is a true mother, bless her heart! I can’t fault her too much for what she’s done, crazy as it is. Mother-meat never gives over, I reckon. They’ll die and go to hell for their young.”
With that conclusion, Jim simmered down. He was not blind, and shuddered at what might be ahead of him. Then his manhood and the obligation of it took hold of him.

“‘I’ll have to throw my strong arm of protection around her the best I can.Nothing else left for me to do” (p. 725; ch. 12).

The influence that they hold tight as husband and wife develops their characters. Their surroundings and each other’s moods play the main role here.

4.2.2.2 The Influences that Arvay, Jim and Joe Have for Each Other

Hurston has chosen to write about a novel focusing on white major characters while not putting aside the black tradition and the characters of black people in this novel. The significant role of black people in this novel is represented by Joe Kelsey. Joe Kelsey is a black man who works at the Sawley’s turpentine camp where Jim and Arvay settle initially. Joe and wife Dessie become close friends of the Meserves, achieving a status that is higher than employees are supposed to have, but they can be so intimate with white friends.

Since the beginning, Hurston has stated that, “He [Jim] had made a friend out of the Negro, or the Negro had made a friend out of him, one or the other,” (p. 637; ch. 3). Indeed, the relationship between Jim and the Kelseys is going from the “pet Negro syndrome” as Hurston stated in the conversation between Arvay and Jim about Joe; “Joe is your pet, I’ll bound you.” But the conversation goes to a positive way of thinking about Negro, “every Southern white man as his pet Negro. His Negro is always fine, honest, faithful to him unto death, and most remarkable” (p. 653; ch. 4).

To a certain degree, the next generation of Kelsey will share a similar relationship with the Meserves. After the Meserves move from Sawley to Citrabelle,
the Kelseys are invited to join them- to live and work on their property. Joe also runs a still for Jim, and enterprise that contributes a great deal to Jim’s growing wealth. In contrast to the Meserves, the Kelseys never accumulate wealth; Hurston suggests stereotypically that they simply lack the capacity to manage money.

Apart from many negative perspectives about black folks by white people, Hurston here in this focusing-on-white-major-characters novel depicts all the good things about black folks. For instance, when Joe moves to stay with Arvay and Jim, it is stated that, “they could look forward to good likker, because Joe really know how to make it, charred barrels and all” (p.686; ch. 8). Hurston gets a very clear description about the friendship between Jim and Joe.

Arvay and Jim were once having a fight because Arvay had created her own negative feeling towards Joe’s family since seeing her youngest child spending most of her time with Joe’s daughter, Belinda. Jim does not see the big matter of it, but Arvay thinks the opposite. Arvay just keeps trying to open Jim’s eyes that Arvay is having “a half-grown son” and she is afraid that her son will be in danger with the presence of Joe’s family. However, instead of listening to his wife, Jim takes Joe’s side and put the blame on himself. Hurston stated, “He [Jim] was the one who was responsible for the whole thing, and that she [Arvay] was not to tackle Joe on the subject at all. Let Joe right alone” (p.705; ch. 9).

Even though the consequence of the fight is what Arvay expects (Joe and family get out of the house in their own wish), Arvay happens to miss them eventually and starts comparing the abilities of what Joe’s wife, Dessie, and her new
home helper, like, “Dessie wouldn’t have let this thing happen” (p. 726; ch. 13). This idea has shown that Hurston keeps the black folks in positive tone no matter how unstable Arvay’s feeling is. Hurton even gives a plus opinion to Joeby describing him for having a musical talent which finally makes Jim ask him to teach Kenny, his last son, music.

Jim encouraged Kenny to tell him all about a new tune that he had just learned from Joe, and how he had got it down perfect how to tune the box from the key of C into Sebastopol, called “Vasterpool” by Joe, and back again. Kenny asked for a quart whiskey bottle so he could break off the neck and keep it. Joe was going to start teaching him to bottle-neck (p. 724; ch. 12).

The friendship that they have for each other binds them tightly. They realize that they need each other’s presence, assistance and guidance. Jim and Arvay do not take Joe as their worker but as the friend of a lifetime. Joe and his family do the same thing. Even though they have moved out from Jim’s and Arvay’s house, they still keep the relationship. The connection that Jim’s and Arvay’s last son, Kenny, builds with Joe through their musical talents makes the friendship even stronger. Hurston lifts up the friendship point as the influence that those characters have for each other.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter consists of three parts; the first one is about conclusion of the two problems formulated; the second part is reflection of the primary source and things can be learned from that novel; the third and the last part is suggestions where the writer provides to the readers and future researchers who may use Seraph on the Suwanee as their primary source.

5.1 Conclusions

By reading all the things stated in chapter 4 and the connection with the theories and approaches in chapter 2 and 3, there are some conclusions regarding the problems formulated since the beginning of this thesis. The conclusions are the summary of the analysis.

The reasons Hurston decides to write a novel focusing on white major characters is not to insult the black tradition or to turn her back on the black people. She, indeed, seems to go against the grain of what she is supposed to write as black writer. However, in this analysis, it is found that there are two main reasons why she wrote this novel. The first one is that she wants to show her authenticity. In Seraph on the Suwanee, she shows her authenticity in one main way: this novel reflects her own life. It can be seen in three ways; through the setting, the way of seeing life, and unresolved attitudes towards marriage and love. The second reason is to get universal appeal by breaking the old characteritises of a black writer. She thinks that black
writers have lived long enough inside the old rule saying that blacks cannot write about white people. She believes that those perceptions should be broken and she was inspired to write a novel at least focusing on white major characters, without leaving the black cultures behind. Since she enters the realm of Harlem, she realizes that her way of thinking might get her into controversies within the community of black writers. She thinks that black writers should also be free to write about anyone regardless their color. In short, she wants to show her authenticity and to break the old rule so she can appear to be an author who has a universal appeal.

Hurston has made a very good description to get the writer the idea of characters’ relation to one another and the character’s development from the beginning of the novel until the end. There are two main ways that is used by Hurston in depicting the relations among characters. The first one is by portraying the physical and personality descriptions of each character. The second one is by describing the influences that each character has over another character. Those characters are Arvay and Jim as the white major characters, and Joe as the main black character. Arvay remains a passive wife and hides all her negative feelings herself. Her character does change since her disappointment towards Carl Middleton, the one she cannot marry with. The fear and negative moods get bigger after she gives birth of her mentally challenged son, Earl. Jim takes the role as a balancer in the house because he notices Arvay’s negative feelings and emotions. He firstly gets annoyed that Arvay never takes the jokes he has made but then he realizes that those jokes just get Arvay down. He tries his best to earn money for Arvay and family. Even though Hurston chooses
to write a novel focusing on white major characters, the description about black folks and black environment is not all negative. The development of the relations between white characters and the black folks in this novel is going well until the end of the story where there is a slight complicated scene showing Arvay saying rude words to Kelsey family which then triggers their movement out of the house. But the relation does not end at that point. The relation continues with the last child of Arvay and Jim, Kenny, who takes Joe as his teacher in music.

5.2 Implications

*Seraph on the Suwanee* is presented as a love story, a romance about a psychologically repressed and emotionally underdeveloped woman and her chauvinist but loving and prosperous husband. It is the story of Arvay who is trying to get recover from her fear, disappointment and desperation due to breaking heart that she had experienced when she is younger; the story of a mother who is trying to give the full love she has for her only mentally challenged son but eventually just leads her to another negative sense of being unprotected. Furthermore, it is also the story of a man and all his love and affection to his beloved wife; the story of a father who is trying his best to provide protection for his children and his family; the story of a man, a husband, and a father who pours all his efforts to give his family all they need. In terms of the content, the novel teaches us to give our best for the ones that we love.

With this novel, Hurston no doubt wanted to illustrate the basic tenet of her overall philosophy that human beings are human beings, regardless of skin color. We
have lived in modern world with discrimination still surrounding us. It is found everywhere and comes in many shapes. The relationships between whites and blacks have been going on for centuries and there is still no end until now even though the word “slavery” had ended for long. Discrimination is still found.

This novel is actually presented to change our mindset. We sometimes cannot be open-minded with the cultures and people in our own society. Hurston’s decision in writing about her ‘opponent’ in the context of racism in the United States should open our eyes that the openness just gets us closer to our opponent and creates an unexpected platform for peace.

Moreover, *Seraph on the Suwanee* is highly recommended for the teaching and learning process in the classroom. Hurston provides the readers with simple language which can be easily understood even for those students who are just beginning to learn literature. This novel can be used as materials in the English class, like for English reading, writing or even speaking class. The novel consists of 321 pages with various things which can be possibly learned based on the novel.

Related to the implications in teaching, there are two things that I can state here. The first one is related to the moral values or moral messages from the novel that can be teacher’s inspiration in teaching. The novel teaches us about developing the positive mind throughout our behaviors, attitudes and thought towards our surroundings. Moreover, there are parts in this novel where the values of friendship, tolerance, solidarity and appreciation are being lifted up. We cannot deny that those values are very important for the teacher to spread them out among students. The
teachers can use *Seraph on the Suwanee* to motivate them students in having the sense of positive thinking to avoid living in fear and anxiety since those feelings will just lead students to the non-confidence state. Thus, the teachers should explain the impacts of the negative and positive feelings for students’ learning process. Furthermore, the teachers or soon-to-be teachers can be motivated about how to apply the friendship value, how to appreciate students’ works, how to tolerate the diversity and how to treat students equally no matter what their backgrounds are. For example, the teachers can facilitate a moment every other Monday in a month to meet their students and have a sharing moment where they can share about the experiences they have been undergoing in the school through their association with friends and other teachers. Students and teachers can learn from each other through this activity.

The second one is related to the lesson material. The teacher can certainly use the novel as the source in English reading class. The teacher can possibly assign the students to read certain chapter in the novel then gives them assignment about analyzing the setting, characters, or plot of the story. *Seraph on the Suwanee* can also help the teachers in developing critical questions for students so they can think critically towards certain issue addressed. The issues can be related to cultural diversity, racial discrimination and so on. By addressing the issue, the students may increase their critical thinking and their sensitivity towards those social issues.

5.3 **Suggestions**

In this suggestion part, I emphasize on the suggestions for future researchers. First thing that they have to understand is that this novel is a very rich one. Though it
triggers many controversial issues since Hurston seems to turn her face against the black tradition by writing this novel, Hurston’s last novel *Seraph on the Suwanee* is highly recommended for those who are interested in analyzing literary works.

First, I suggest future researchers to take a look deeper about the relationship about white Americans and African Americans which have been undergoing for centuries. The researchers are hoped to be open-minded and learn to set their minds objectively in order to get the better understanding of what both sides have experienced for long time. By then, the future researchers will see clearly Hurston’s intention behind writing this focusing-on-white-major-character novel. Furthermore, they are hoped to conduct the research more about the friendship between white and black folks as being shown in the novel by Jim and Joe Kelsey. This study can be conducted by using the historical or socio-cultural approach since the comparison with the real life of the relations between whites and blacks at that time can possibly happen.

At the second place, Hurston has been experiencing a lot of things until she comes up with *Seraph on the Suwanee*. The process of growing up as a daughter from former slaves, being left by her inspired mother, being educated in some reputable universities, being included in an African American honor society, and coming up with many remarkable writings have led her to get to her last novel published in 1948 by focusing on white folks as the major characters. The novel and her ownself indeed have been through controversial issues but she never gives up in providing her best writings. I suggest the writers to take a shot on analyzing *Seraph on the Suwanee* in
the content, by looking it deeper to the characters and observing their tendency of attitudes and behaviors. Then, the researchers can make a study of how to deal with the characteristics in the novel. For instance, they can conduct the study of Arvay’s emotions and how to deal with them. By doing so, there will be more and more deeper understanding, either about Zora Neale Hurston or about *Seraph on the Suwanee*. 
REFERENCES


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