

CHARACTERIZATION OF THE MAIN CHARACTER IN FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT'S NOVEL *THE SECRET GARDEN*

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ABSTRACT

The topic of this study is the personality of the main character, Mary Lennox in "The Secret Garden" Novel. The objective of this study is to describe the personality traits of the main character in Frances Hodgson Burnett's novel *The Secret Garden*. The problem in this study is how the personality traits of the Main Character are portrayed in Frances Hodgson Burnett's novel "The Secret Garden". This study applies Duane P. Schultz's theory to explore Mary's buried emotions, unconscious motivations, and desire for love and connection. Qualitative research is used in this study to provide a written explanation of the findings. The source of the data and data is the novel entitled "The Secret Garden", written by Frances Eliza Hodgson Burnett and the dialogues in it. After analyzing the personality of Mary Lennox, the writer can conclude that it is the environment that forms a person's character. The results of this study indicate that Mary is spoiled, rude little girl, but then as the time goes on she becomes hard-working, considerate and thoughtful.

Key words: *Mary Lennox, character analysis, connections, empathy, character development.*

INTRODUCTION

Literature is a form of expression; it may contain a valuable life lesson to be learned. As a result, every literary work, regardless of form, has a message. According to (Afrizal, 2021, 21), Literature is the human thought that contains elements of beauty that can be enjoyed by everyone. In short, literature is a literary work that derives from the writer's knowledge and experience into writings. Readers will comprehend what it means if they read it carefully. Readers can gain pleasure, excitement, comprehension, fresh perceptions, and information, and so on through reading literary works. Literary works assist readers become more human by sharing readers' life experiences through written language, such as sadness, happiness, struggle, peace, war, and so on. Readers are immediately absorbed into the story's scenario.

Novel is one of the literary works. According to (Prah, 2021, <https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-a-novel>), A novel is a narrative work of prose fiction that tells a story about specific human experiences over a considerable length. It is a popular form of writing and usually lengthier than a short story. It has a connection to the reality of human experience, and greater understanding than a play or poetry. Novel as one of the famous literary works consists of some elements to be analyzed then those elements make the novel lives. The elements are theme, setting, plot, character and characterization. Characterization is one of those elements which describe the character in the novel. Thus, characterization plays important role in novel to be interesting to be read.

The Secret Garden novel is written by Frances Eliza Hodgson Burnett in 1911. It is about Mary Lennox who is known as a very spoiled, rude, and egoistical child. She is neglected by her own parents and mostly spends her time with her maids. When the cholera epidemic appears, many people died, including her parents. She is saved when she is hiding in the closet. Soon, she is found by other survivors. Then, she is sent to her uncle's manor in England. That's how she will learn a lot of new things and gain many friends.

In this study the writer will discuss about how are the personalities of the Main Character portrayed in Frances Hodgson Burnett's novel *The Secret Garden*? The goal of this study is to describe the personality traits of the main character in Frances Hodgson Burnett's novel *The Secret Garden*.

METHOD

The writer will conduct qualitative research in this study. The goal of qualitative research method is to obtain information about existing conditions and has been widely used in instructional research. Qualitative

approach is a method to reveal the factual information, situations, occurrences, as well as variables that occurred while conducting the research and presenting what it is.

PARTICIPANT

In this research the writer will use the novel *The Secret Garden* as a research data source. The Secret Garden novel is written by Frances Eliza Hodgson Burnett in 1911. This novel is about Mary Lennox who is known as a very spoiled, rude, and egoistical child. She is neglected by her own parents and mostly spends her time with her maids. When the cholera epidemic appears, many people died, including her parents. She is saved when she is hiding in the closet. Soon, she is found by other survivors. Then, she is sent to her uncle's manor in England. That's how she will learn a lot of new things and gain many friends.

MATERIALS

The source of the data and data was the novel entitled *The Secret Garden*, written by Frances Eliza Hodgson Burnett. The data was taken from the dialogues of the main character with other characters and authors descriptions about behavior of the main character.

RESULTS

1. Spoiled

Mary is shown to be spoiled in the novel. Almost everybody who meets her dislikes her very much. It was even described by the author herself. The excerpts that show Mary is spoiled are:

Page	Lines
4	She never remembered seeing familiarly anything but the dark faces of her ayah and the other native servants, and as they always obey her and gave her her own way in everything — by the time she was six years old she was as tyrannical and selfish a little pig as ever lived.
10	Mary had liked to look at her mother from a distance and she had thought her very pretty, but as she knew very little of her, she could scarcely have been expected to love her or to miss her very much when she was gone. She did not miss her at all, in fact, and as she was a self-absorbed child, she gave her entire thought to herself, as she had always done.
10-11	What she thought was that she would like to know if she was going to nice people, who would be polite to her and give her her own way as her ayah and the other native servants had done.
21	Mary stood up and tried to keep her eyes open while Mrs. Medlock collected her parcels. The little girl did not offer to help her, because in India native servants always picked up or carried things and it seemed quite proper that other people should wait on one.
30	<p>“Who is going to dress me?” demanded Mary.</p> <p>Martha sat up on her heels again and stared. She spoke in broad Yorkshire in her amazement.</p> <p>“Canna’ tha’ dress thysen!” she said.</p> <p>“No,” answered Mary, quite indignantly. “I never did in my life. My ayah dressed me, of course.”</p> <p>“Well,” said Martha, evidently not in the least aware that she was impudent, “it’s time tha’ should learn. Tha’ cannot begin younger. It’ll do thee good to wait on thysen a bit. My mother always said she couldn’t see why grand people’s children didn’t turn on fair fools — what with nurses an’ bein’ washed an’ dressed an’ tool out to walk as if they was puppies!”</p> <p>“It is different in India,” said Mistress Mary disdainfully.</p>

2. Rude

Mary is a very rude child when she lives in India. It could be seen from these excerpts:

Page	Lines
4	The woman looked frightened, but she only stammered that the ayah could not come, and when Mary threw herself into a passion and beat and kicked her, she looked only more frightened and repeated that it was not possible for the ayah to come to Missie Sahib.
12	But she thought over it a great deal afterwards; and when Mrs. Crawford told her that night she was going to sail away to England in a few days and go to her uncle, Mr. Archibald Craven, who lived at Misselthwaite Manor, she looked so stony and stubbornly uninterested that they did not know what to think about her. They tried to be kind to her, but she only turned her face away when Mrs. Crawford attempted to kiss her, and held herself stiffly when Mr. Crawford patted her shoulder.
15	When the next day they set out on their journey to Yorkshire, she walked through the station to the railway carriage with her head up and trying to keep as far as she could, because she did not want to seem to belong to her. It would have made her angry to think people imagined she was her little girl.
16	<p>“I suppose I may as well tell you something about where you are going to,” she said. “Do you know anything about your uncle?”</p> <p>“No,” said Mary.</p> <p>“Never heard your father and mother talk about him?”</p> <p>“No,” said Mary, frowning. She frowned because she remembered that her father and mother had never talked to her about anything in particular. Certainly they had never told her things.</p> <p>“Humph,” muttered Mrs. Medlock, staring at her queer, unresponsive little face. She did not say any more for a few moments, and then she began again.</p> <p>“I suppose you might as well be told something — to prepare you. You are going to a queer place.”</p> <p>Mary said nothing at all, and Mrs. Medlock looked rather discomfited by her apparent indifference, but, after taking a breath, she went on.</p>
29	<p>“Eh! I can see it’s different,” she answered almost sympathetically. “I dare say it’s because there’s such a lot o’ blacks there instead o’ respectable white people. When I heard you was comin’ from India I thought you was a black too.”</p> <p>Mary sat up in bed furious.</p> <p>“What!” she said. “What! You thought I was a native. You — you daughter of a pig!”</p>

3. Hard-worker

Mary is told to be a hard worker in making the dead garden looks alive again. This is shown through the excerpt:

Page	Lines
81	<p>She did not know anything about gardening, but the grass seemed so thick in some of the places where the green points were pushing their way through that she thought they did not seem to have room enough to grow. She searched about until she made nice little clear places around them.</p> <p>“Now they look as if they could breathe,” she said, after she had finished with the first ones. “I am going to do ever so many more. I’ll do all I can see. If I haven’t time today I can come tomorrow.</p> <p>She went from place to place, and dug and weeded, and enjoyed herself so immensely that she was led on from bed to bed and into the grass under the trees.</p>
82	Mistress Mary worked in her garden until it was time to go to her midday dinner. In fact, she was rather late in remembering, and when she put on her coat and hat, and picked up her skipping rope, she could not believe that she had been working two or three hours.

90	Mary was an odd, determined little person, and now she had something interesting to be determined about, she was very much absorbed indeed. She worked and dug and pulled up weeds steadily, only becoming more pleased with her work like a fascinating sort of lay.
109	And then they began to work harder than ever and more joyfully. Mary was startled and sorry when she heard the big clock in the courtyard strike the hour of her midday dinner.
163	The afternoon was even lovelier and busier than the morning had been. Already nearly all the weeds were cleared out of the garden and most of the roses and trees had been pruned or dug about.

4. Considerate

The excerpt that shows Mary is considerate is:

Pages	Lines
148	“She came into the room last night. She stayed with me a long time. She sang Hindustani song to me, and it made me go to sleep,” said Colin.
149	She had spent hours of every day with Colin in his room, talking about rajas or gardens or Dickon and the cottage on the moor. They had looked at the splendid books and pictures and sometimes Mary had read things to Colin, and sometimes he had read a little to her.
195	<p>She was describing it with great joy, and Colin was listening and drawing in long breaths of air, when the nurse entered. She started a little at the sight of the open window. She had sat stifling in the room many a warm day because her patient was sure that open windows gave people cold.</p> <p>“Are you sure you are not chilly, Master Collin?” she enquired.</p> <p>“No,” was the answer. “I am breathing long breaths of fresh air. It makes you strong. I am going to get up to the sofa for breakfast. My cousin will have breakfast with me.”</p>
146	<p>She pulled her stool nearer to the sofa, and her expression quite changed at the remembrance of the wide curving mouth and wide open eyes.</p> <p>“See here,” she said. “Don’t let us talk about dying – I don’t like it. Let us talk about living. Let us talk and talk about Dickon. And then we will look at your pictures.”</p>
177	<p>“Would you like me to sing you that song I learnt from my ayah?” Mary whispered to Colin.</p> <p>His hand pulled hers gently and he turned his tired eyes on her appealingly.</p> <p>“Oh, yes!” he answered. “It’s such a soft song. I shall go to sleep in a minute.”</p> <p>“I will put him to sleep,” Mary said to the yawning nurse. “You can go if you like.”</p>

5. Curious

Here are the excerpts that show Mary’s curiosity nature.

Pages	Lines
35	<p>“One of th’ gardens is locked up. No one has been in it for ten years.”</p> <p>“Why?” asked Mary, in spite of herself. Here was another locked door, added to the hundred in the strange house.</p> <p>“Mr Craven had it shut when his wife died so sudden. He won’t let no one go inside. It was her garden. He locked th’ door an’ dug a hole and buried th’ key. There’s Mrs Medlock’s bell ringing – I must run.”</p> <p>After she was gone, Mary turned down the walk which led to the door in the shrubbery. She could not help thinking about the garden which no one had been into for ten years. She wondered what it would look like and whether there were any flowers still alive in it.</p>

37	<p>“What is this place?” she asked.</p> <p>“One o’ th’ kitchen gardens,” he answered.</p> <p>“What is that?” said Mary, pointing through the other green door.</p> <p>“Another o’ em,” shortly. “There’s another on t’ other side o’ th’ wall an’ there’s th’ orchard t’ other side o’ that.”</p> <p>“Can I go in them?” asked Mary.</p> <p>“If tha’ likes. But there’s nowt to see.”</p>
42-43	<p>“What did he do that for? Asked Mary.</p> <p>“He’s made up his mind to make friends with thee,” replied Ben. “Dang me if he hasn’t took a fancy to thee.”</p> <p>“To me?” said Mary, and she moved toward the little tree softly and looked up.</p> <p>“Would you make friends with me?” she said to the robin, just as if she was speaking to a person. “Would you?” And she did not say it either in her hard little voice or in her imperious Indian voice, but in a tone so soft and eager and coaxing that Ben Weatherstaff was as surprised as she had been when she heard him whistle.</p> <p>“Why,” he cried out, “tha’ said that as nice an’ human as if tha’ was a real child instead of a sharp old woman. Tha’ said it almost like Dickon talks to his wild things on th’ moor.”</p> <p>Do you know Dickon?” Mary asked, turning round rather in a hurry.</p> <p>“Everybody knows him. Dickon’s wanderin’ about everywhere. Th’ very blackberries an’ heather-bells knows him. I warrant th’ foxes shows him where their cubs lies an’ th’ skylarks doesn’t hide their nests from him.”</p>
49-50	<p>“Why did Mr Craven hate the garden?” she said.</p> <p>She had made Martha stay with her and Martha had not objected at all. She was very young, and used to a crowded cottage full of brothers and sisters, and she found it dull in the great servants’ hall downstairs where the footman and upper-housemaids made fun of her Yorkshire speech and looked upon her as a common little thing, and sat and whispered among themselves. Martha liked to talk, and the strange child who had lived in India, and been waited upon by “blacks”, was novelty enough to attract her.</p> <p>She sat down on the hearth herself without waiting to be asked.</p> <p>“Art tha’ thinkin about that garden yet?” she said. “I knew tha’ would. That was just the way with me when I first heard about it.”</p> <p>“Why did he hate it?” Mary persisted.</p> <p>Martha tucked her feet under her and made herself quite comfortable.</p> <p>“Listen to th’ wind wutherin’ round the house,” she said. “You could bare stand up on the moor if you was out on it tonight.”</p> <p>Mary did not know what “wutherin’” meant until she listened, and then she understood. It must mean that hollow shuddering sort of roar which rushed round and round the house as if the giant no one could see were buffeting it and beating at the walls and windows to try to break in. But one knew he could not get in, and somehow it made one feel very safe and warm inside a room with a red coal fire.</p> <p>“But why did he hate it so?” she asked, after she had listened. She intended to know if Martha did.</p> <p>Then Martha gave up her store of knowledge.</p>
122-123	<p>“The rain is as contrary as I ever was,” she said. “It came because it knew I did not want it.”</p> <p>She threw herself back on her pillow and buried her face. She did not cry, but she lay and hated the sound of the heavily beating rain, she hated the wind and its “wuthering.” She could not go to sleep again. The mournful sound kept her awake because she felt mournful herself If she had felt happy it would probably have lulled her to sleep. How it “wuthered” and how the big raindrops poured down and beat against the pane!</p>

	<p>“It sounds just like a person lost on the moor and wandering on and on crying,” she said.</p> <p>She had been lying awake turning from side to side for about an hour, when suddenly something made her sit up in bed and turn her head toward the door listening. She listened and she listened.</p> <p>“It isn’t the wind now,” she said in a loud whisper. “That isn’t the wind. It is different. It is that crying I heard before.”</p> <p>The door of her room was ajar and the sound came down the corridor, a far-off faint sound of fretful crying. She listened for a few minutes and each minute she became more and more sure. She felt as if she must find out what it was. It seemed even stranger than the secret garden and the buried key. Perhaps the fact that she was in a rebellious mood made her bold. She put her foot out of bed and stood on the floor.</p> <p>“I am going to find out what it is,” she said. “Everybody is in bed and I don’t care about Mrs. Medlock—I don’t care!”</p>
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DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the writer’s analysis of *The Secret Garden* novel, it was found that the main character’s personalities are spoiled, rude, hard-worker, and considerate. According to Duane P. Schultz (Schultz, 2015, p. 33), Personality can be defined as an enduring, unique cluster of characteristics that may change in different situations. Personality development may be affected by gender, race, and cultural background differences.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, a person's personality can be influenced by the surrounding environment. It is the environment that forms a person's character. If only Mary Lennox lived in a good environment, cared for and educated by her parents, her personality would definitely be good. It shows in the novel how her character grows in a good way because of the people around her.

A child’s mind is super fragile and pure. They can only be mean and rude if the people surround them are like that. If we display a good attitude in front of them, then they will also model our attitude in front of others. That’s why people say adults should be a good example for children to emulate. Mary’s transition serves as a powerful illustration of how human beings are capable of development, empathy, and self-discovery.

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