

## **MORAL VALUES IN THE NOVEL "ALMOND" BY SOHN WON PYUNG AND IMPLICATIONS IN HIGH SCHOOL LITERATURE LEARNING**

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**Abstract.** The objectives of this research are 1) Describe the moral values contained in the novel "Almond" by Sohn Won-pyung 2) Describe the implications contained in Sohn Won-pyung's "Almond" on literature learning. qualitative research using descriptive methods. This method is used to understand the events experienced by research subjects holistically and descriptively in the form of words related to "Moral Values in the Novel "Almond" by Sohn Won Pyung and Implications for Literature Learning". Data collection techniques in this research were carried out by, namely (1) reading and understanding The novel "Almond" by Sohn Won Pyung Overall, in order to obtain a clear understanding of the contents of the novel, (2) record data about the moral values contained in it The novel "Almond" by Sohn Won Pyung, (3) classify unit data related to moral values The novel "Almond" by Sohn Won Pyung. Data analysis in this research was carried out using the following work steps: (1) data reduction, by selecting data that is considered important, (2) data presentation, which is an analytical presentation in the form of a description of the data with existing contextual evidence, (3) carry out verification and draw conclusions. The research results show 1. The moral values in the novel "Almond" are a. human's relationship with himself. In self-relationships there are (Difference, don't be a bully, friendship, prioritize family, self-acceptance, patience). b. Human Relations with other humans. In human relationships with other humans there are (mutual forgiveness, respect for others, don't be too quick to judge and enjoy gossip, empathy and caring, family strength, simplicity and happiness, diversity, struggle and perseverance. 2. The implications of the research results are moral values in the novel "Almond" by Sohn Won Pyung and its implications in studying literature in high school is that the moral values contained in the novel shape students' characters because through the novel there are various life values that occur in everyday life that should be imitated and carried out by students

**Key words:** *moral values, novels, literary learning*

### **Introduction**

Literary works are a person's expression of views about life in the surrounding environment which are packaged in the form of imagination based on reality which can arouse the reader's desires through the ideas conveyed. According to (Sari, 2021), literary works in the process are a reflection of a person's situation. Literary works usually describe various life problems. One of the functions of literature that will be studied in this research is the function of morality. By (Marentika & Setyawan, 2022), the Morality function is able to provide knowledge about good or bad morals to readers.

One of the currently popular literary works is the novel. A novel is a fictional story in the form of writing or words that has a fairly complex structure where there is more than one effect and emotion (Sari, 2021). The uniqueness contained in a novel can be found in terms of language style, the choice of the novel's storyline, and the title listed on the front cover of the novel. The characters that appear in each storyline can make readers feel curious about the storyline created by the author. The reader's representation of the meaning of a novel can usually be triggered by psychological stimuli that can influence the reader, so the author uses Psychoanalytic Theory to help see what morals can be found in the novel he wants to study. In this case, psychoanalytic theory is a hypothesis that tries to explain the nature and development of personality. (Ever et al., 2023) So that after reading a novel the reader can learn a lesson.

"Almond" is a novel by Shon Won-Pyung which is a translation from Korean with a psychology theme which tells the story of Yoonjae, a young person suffering from Spectrum Alexithymia, a mental disorder that causes him to be unable to feel, read, respond to emotions so he cannot express himself in communication. . He was labeled a monster because he couldn't feel fear, so all he could do was hope in theories that led to doubt, where the belief emerged that the heart could control the head. How he struggles to try to interact with the environment around him, as well as the values of life that the author tries to explain are interesting things that make the author interested in examining the moral messages that can be taken from his story in this Almond novel. Gradually, Yoonjae reached the point where there was a slight change in behavior which had an impact on the level of sensitivity that was increasingly developing. By behavior is how a person's attitude is formed and how that attitude can change through the communication process and how physically (Queen et al., 2021) These changes can affect a person's attitude or behavior.

The author uses a third person point of view in the form (I) to represent the main character's life journey in a light language style. Shon Won Pyung is a novelist from South Korea. He has won two literary awards: in 2016 for Amondeu (Almond) and in 2017 for Seoreunui bangyeok (Counterattack of the Thirty). The novel Almond was published on March 31 2017 by Changbi Publishers and in 2020, this novel won the 10th Changbi Publishers's Literary Award.

This novel raises the issue of the importance of moral education for children as well as mental health symptoms among young people. Bullying is one of the impacts. Yoonjae is considered brave because he doesn't feel afraid even though he can't feel emotions, which triggers bullying against the main character. Sympathy, feelings of utter stupidity, empathy, pain, the bitter reality of life and even a social environment that doesn't really care, as well as the search for identity without someone who can lead and its implications for literary works are the turmoil in this novel which makes researchers increasingly interested in finding value. What morals can be taken after reading this Almond novel?

The moral in the novel can be said to have the same meaning as the manat or message. Novels always offer moral messages related to the noble qualities of humanity that fight for human rights and dignity. In essence, moral behavior is related to the dignity of humans themselves as noble creatures on this earth. This condition will essentially have an impact on individual happiness and the welfare of the wider community. In social life, moral aspects or values are needed to be

used as a guide in formulating rules that govern life. So far, novels have only been used as entertainment reading to fill free time or part time or as a hobby without value. The novel writer tries to internalize the values he understands to the readers in a very subtle way, which ultimately forms an opinion that will hopefully be useful in the future.

The aim of this research is to describe the moral values contained in the novel "Almond" by Sohn Won-pyung. To describe the implications contained in Sohn Won-pyung's "Almond" on literary learning.

## **METHOD**

This research is qualitative research using descriptive methods. This method is used to understand the events experienced by research subjects holistically and descriptively in the form of words related to "Moral Values in the Novel "Almond" by Sohn Won Pyung and Implications for Literature Learning. Bogdan and Taylor (in Moleong, 1989:3) state that qualitative research is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior.

The data source for this research is the data used in the form of words, phrases, clauses and sentences related to the moral values contained in The novel "Almond" by Sohn Won Pyung.

The data collection technique in this research was carried out by: (1) reading and understanding The novel "Almond" by Sohn Won Pyung Overall, in order to obtain a clear understanding of the contents of the novel, (2) record data about the moral values contained in it The novel "Almond" by Sohn Won Pyung, (3) classify unit data related to moral values The novel "Almond" by Sohn Won Pyung.

To analyze the data the technique used is content analysis "content Analisis". Data analysis in this research was carried out using the following work steps: (1) data reduction, by selecting data that is considered important, (2) data presentation, which is an analytical presentation in the form of a description of the data with existing contextual evidence, (3 ) carry out verification and draw conclusions.

## **RESULTS**

### **Data analysis**

#### **1. Yoonjae character**

Seon Yoonjae or often called Yoonjae is a child who has "Almond" on his head. Yoonjae has an inability to express emotions or in other words alexithymia.

*"I have almonds. You have it too. The person you value most or even curse also has it. But no one can feel it. All they know is that almonds exist." In essence, I'm a monster who meets another monster.*

*The doctor diagnosed that I had an inability to express emotions, or in other words Alexithymia. The symptoms were too deep and I was too young to investigate asperger's syndrome.*

*"The man stabbed him deeply in the chest with a knife and finally breathed his last like the other victims before the ambulance arrived. I was just silent watching all the events before my eyes. As usual, without any expression"*

The main shop also has a tough nature in facing problem after problem. For him, problems are an inseparable part of the human process of living in the world.

#### **2. Yoonjae's mother character**

Yonjae's mother is a hard worker. He is willing to work hard to support his son, Yoonjae, who has an illness Alexithymia. Yoonjae's mother opened a used bookstore with a sign that said Jieun Bookstore.

*"Mother opened a shop in a residential building in the Suyu-dong area. This area, which is inhabited by many residents, is still known as Suyu-ri. Our house is behind the shop. In the evening before opening the shop, mother wiped the dust while smiling,*

*"Now I don't want to move anymore. This is my home."*

### **3. Grandma Yoonjae's character**

Yoonjae's grandmother is a very gentle and kind person, but when Yoonjae's grandmother talks to Yoonjae's mother, she always uses the words rotten woman, even though rotten woman has a very harsh meaning, but grandmother doesn't hesitate to say it to Yoonjae's mother. But Grandma really loves Yoonjae, her only grandson.

*"You are the most adorable monster in the world." After that, grandma immediately rubbed my head until it made me sick. Since then, the lives of the three of us began."*

### **4. Gon character**

The character Gon also has a reason for wanting to be friends with Yoonjae because he doesn't have a bad judgment like other people do towards Gon. And my character also has sincere feelings and appreciates Gon's attitude. As the character 'I' said to Gon's father.

*"It turns out you are very close to Lee Soo (Gon's real name), yes, I heard you also stopped by my house. How could that be? Even though you were beaten by him."*

The 'I' character answers

*"Because Gon is a good boy."*

*"You think like that?"*

*"I just know that Gon is a good boy."*

### **5. Professor Shim's character**

Professor Shim is the owner of Shim Jaeyong's bakery. Professor Shim is 50 years old, but all his hair has turned gray as white as snow which makes him look like he is 60 years old.

*"Isn't it delicious?"*

*"Yeah, it tastes good"*

*"Thank God it tastes good," said Prof. Shim with a smile"*

The moral values shown in every event in this novel can give us an idea that moral values are very important.

## **Almond Novel Story Summary**

### **Mother**

*"Aren't you afraid?" asked Mother.*

### **Yoonjae**

*"No" I answered.*

I remember my grandmother warning the mother and child who had fallen and the other children in a slightly hoarse voice.

### **Grandma**

*"You guys see what? Is there anything interesting? You stupid."*

### **Yonjae**

*"Grandma, why do people always say I'm strange?"*

### **Grandma**

*"Maybe because you are a special child. Usually people cannot accept the differences between themselves and others. You are my handsome monster"*

Some time later, my mother took me on a space trip. However, our destination at that time was a hospital. I lay down in a cold place. I was sucked into the white shadow.

*"Tit.. Tit..Tit.. There was a strange sound"*

Then an older man showed me a rather blurry black and white photo and said that he had recorded what was inside my head.

*"Lie"*

It was clear that that wasn't what was in my head, but my mother nodded her head trying to get me to believe what she was saying.

The doctor said that everyone has something different, so they should pay more attention to the case I experienced. Among other things, they offered interesting suggestions to Padauk. They said that I could play a big role in unleashing the brain's as yet unrevealed wonders. Mother was not happy with the way the doctor treated me as an interesting experimental material, not as a way to cure me. Mother closed her hopes again that the doctors could cure me.

### **Mother**

*"I am the person who understands my child best,"*

*"Base! Brainless people!"*

A few years later my head became bigger, but the size of the "almond" inside remained unchanged. The seasons keep changing, spring to winter, then back to spring. Mother and grandmother still often bicker about everything, then laugh out loud.

Christmas Eve is my birthday. When that day comes, we usually celebrate my birthday by going out to eat together. On Christmas Eve that year, the three of us were ready to go. At that time the city was crowded with crowds. The difference from previous Christmas nights was that it started snowing not long after we boarded the bus. Without realizing it, the flying snow immediately piled up within a few hours and continued to fall as if to hide the city.

*"I really want to eat naengmyeon," said the grandmother immediately.*

*"There is someone selling meat dumplings there," said Mother.*

*"There's broth too."*

In front of the restaurant there is a sign saying 'Pyeongyang Food' where the noodles are very soft. Even so, grandmother and mother still spend *naengmyeon* they. The faces of my mother and grandmother never stopped smiling. I just put and twirled a large ice cube in my mouth.

"Happy birthday." said grandma.

"Thank you for being born into this world," said my mother while holding my hand. I think what they say is boring, but there are days when we have to say those things.

We left without deciding our next destination. When grandma and mother made payment at the cashier, I saw plum candy lying on top of the basket at the cashier, actually all I saw was an empty packet of candy left on top of the basket. When I touched it, a waiter who saw me immediately smiled and told me to wait a moment because he would give me another candy.

Grandma and mother went out first. From the window, I could see grandmother and mother who were still laughing, a very long parade of people passing by the two women. They all wear red Santah hats and robes while singing Christmas carols. *Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, Born is the King of Israel.* At that time, several people shouted at once so that I couldn't hear the previous chorus. Several screams were heard again, followed by other screams. The choir started to fall apart. People covered their mouths with their hands and immediately scrambled backwards.

A man jumps from behind a glass door and stabs something. The person was a man dressed formally and wandering around before we entered the restaurant. Incongruous with his clothes, he held a knife and a hammer in both hands. The man waved his hands while giggling, as if he was going to stab the person he saw. The man approached the choir and several people were seen rushing to take out their cellphones.

The man turned his head and his gaze stopped at the mother and grandmother. He then turned around. Grandma immediately grabbed and pulled mother. After that, a scene that I couldn't

believe happened. The man hit my mother's head with a hammer. Once, twice, three times. Mother fell to the ground with her body covered in blood. I pushed the door to go out but grandma screamed and blocked the door with her body. The man put the hammer on the ground and waved the knife in his other hand several times. I saw blood splatters on the glass. Red blood, very red. I could only see the glass door filled with blood that was getting redder. Everyone was silent and could only look at a man, mother and grandmother as if they were performing a drama. Everyone was the audience, including me. The only survivor was my mother. However, the mother is in a coma and the chances of her waking up are very low. The doctor said even though he was aware maybe she wasn't the mother I knew before.

During the three days of the funeral, I heard many rumors about me not experiencing any changes in my experience. They whispered with various speculations.

*"Maybe he's like that because he's too shaken up, he doesn't know anything because he's still small, maybe he doesn't think that he's now an orphan."*

I think maybe they all thought that because I was feeling sad or lonely and gloomy. However, there are only questions that arise in my mind.

## **DISCUSSION**

Based on the results of research in Above, it is clear that the novel "Almond" is seen from its moral value. In this research, data on moral values in the novel Almond works were produced, including:

a. Man's Relationship With Himself In human relationships with themselves there are of course Difference

As told in this novel, Yoonjae is considered strange by most people because of his cold, expressionless behavior like a robot.

His grandmother said to Yoonjae, "Maybe because you are a special child. Usually, people cannot accept differences between themselves and others." Hmm, yeah. If only Yoonjae was in an environment where the majority were like him, then maybe he wouldn't be considered different.

Basically, no human being is exactly the same as another human being. No individual is perfect because humans are born with strengths and weaknesses. Something that is popular does not necessarily suit us and make us comfortable. As long as the difference does not harm other people, it is an attraction and a gift that should be grateful for.

a. Human Relations with Other Humans In human relationships with other humans there is of course mutual forgiveness

Through the main character of this novel, Seon Yoonjae, there are messages that can be learned for everyday life. As social creatures, humans always live by interacting with other humans, in these interactions sometimes there is something that makes the atmosphere awkward or other things. Having a good relationship is very important. So within ourselves we must also adopt an attitude of forgiving each other for mistakes that originate from our own nature as creatures who will not escape mistakes and forgetting.

In this novel, the character I wants to convey his apology to Gon because he feels he has made something that may not make Gon feel good and vice versa. Apart from that, the character 'I' also tells his friend Gon to apologize to his father because of his attitude and habits which caused chaos.

c. Empathy

1. Empathy and Caring

Even though Yoonjae has limitations in understanding other people's emotions, several characters around him are still able to feel compassion and empathy towards him. This reminds us of the

importance of continuing to understand and care for individuals who may be different from the majority.

## 2. Family Strength

This novel emphasizes the importance of strong and supportive family relationships. Even though Yoonjae may not be able to relate like other people, his family is still by his side and provides the moral support he so desperately needs.

## 3. Simplicity and Happiness

Through the character Yoonjae, readers are invited to reflect on what is really important in life. Its limitations help us understand that sometimes happiness can be found in simple things, like living a daily routine.

## 4. Diversity

Through the various characters present in the novel, "Almond" conveys a message about human diversity. Each character has a unique story and background, reminding us of the diversity of human experiences in this world.

## 5. Struggle and Perseverance

Yoonjae faces big challenges in his life due to his limitations, but he also shows perseverance and fighting spirit in facing them. It inspires readers not to give up even when faced with difficulties.

In relation to the Implications in Literature Learning The implications contained in the novel "Almond" by Sohn Won-Pyung are the focus in literature learning:

### 1. The importance of accepting yourself and others

This novel presents main characters who have different physical conditions. The moral implication that can be taken is about accepting oneself and others as they are. In studying literature, students can analyze how the character learns to accept himself and how this acceptance affects interactions with other people. This could be an opportunity to discuss the importance of accepting differences in society.

### 2. Consequences of Actions and Decisions

Another important implication in studying literature is about the consequences of actions and decisions. Students can analyze how the actions of the characters in the novel shape the plot of the story. Discussions about how certain decisions can affect plot and character development can teach students about considering the consequences of actions before making decisions.

### 3. Struggle and Resilience

In literature studies, novels are often used to describe characters' struggles in facing obstacles. The moral implications of struggle and resilience can be taught through the characters in "Almond." This provides an opportunity for students to discuss the importance of determination and passion in facing challenges in life.

### 4. Empathy and Humanity

Literature studies often emphasize the importance of empathy for fictional characters. In "Almond," the moral implications of empathy and humanity can be explained through how the characters interact with each other, especially in the context of their challenges and weaknesses. This can inspire students to better understand other people's feelings and experiences in real life.

### 5. Character Growth

Moral implications regarding character growth are an important element in literary learning. Students can analyze how the characters in the novel experience change and development throughout the story. Discussions about what triggers these changes and how characters learn from their experiences can provide important lessons about personal development.

### 6. The meaning of family and friendship

Moral implications about the meaning of family and friendship can be drawn from the interactions of the characters in "Almond." Students can understand how the relationships between these characters influence the development of the story. It can teach about the importance of social support in life and valuing deep relationships.

In literature learning, "Almond" can be a learning source that is rich in moral values. Through analyzing characters, plots, and themes in novels, students can reflect on these value implications and learn how to apply them in real-life contexts..

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the research and discussion that has been carried out, conclusions can be drawn about the moral values contained in the almond book by Sohn Won-Pyung, such as the relationship between humans and themselves and other humans. Some of the positive values found were the importance of friendship, prioritizing and understanding family, forgiving each other, respecting other people, and being responsible in relationships with other humans. Apart from that, there are negative values: Don't be a bully, don't be too quick to judge and enjoy gossip.

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