CHAPTER II
THEORITICAL FOUNDATION

This chapter discusses the theoretical foundation which contains theories of experts related to research problems to support the research being conducted and also previous research related to this research. It consists of seven sections, namely previous study, narrative, intrinsic approach, elements of intrinsic approach, semantic, comics, and webtoon.

2.1 Previous Study

This section included a discussion of the research's literature review. It has some relevant concepts and some earlier research that was connected to it. The following explanations provide more detailed information. First, the study of Dwi Yani (2022), from Indonesia Institute of the Arts Yogyakarta entitled "*Analisis Karakterisasi Tokoh Utama Sebagai Pembangun Unsur Humor Dalam Serial Netflix "Vincenzo*". The objectives of her study were to identify how the characterization of the main character can be a humorous element in the scene in the drama series Vincenzo. She analyzed and described how the characterization of the main character contributes to building humor in Vincenzo's series using the characterization methods of *telling* and *showing* in the Concise Companion to Literature by James H. Pickering and Jeffrey D. Hoeper, then by analyzing the humor in Vincenzo's series using Arthur Asa Berger's theory of humor in An Anatomy of Humor.

Second, the study of Tesa Helly Rondonuwu (2020) from Sam Ratulangi University entitled "*Analisis Karakterisasi Tokoh Utama Dalam Film Barbie of Swan Lake (2003)*". She focused on the characterization of the

main character. It was purposed to identify and analyze the characterization through the intrinsic approach found in the data and to identify how describing the character development. He utilized the character theory of Edgar V. Roberts to analyze the characterization of the main character and Wellek and Warren's theory to understand how the characters' actions and attitudes change or develop.

Third, the study of Amran and Hajrah (2023) from the University of Makassar, entitled "*Karakter Tokoh dalam Kisah I Marabintang Transliterasi Sahabuddin Nappu.*" This research approaches the study of narrative structure, which focuses on studying the elements of literary texts. Then, this research aims to describe the characters using the fiction theory of Burhan Nurgiyantoro.

Fourth, a journal study by Ika Astia Wardani (2018) from Mataram University about "*An Analysis of Characterization of Main Characters, Plot Structure, and Psychological Conflicts in the Novel Entitled Sense and Sensibility Written by Jane Austen and Its Implication to Character Education at Senior High School*". This study is approaching the study of structuralism. Structuralism means understanding one element and another by considering the relationship between the intrinsic elements by explaining the theme, plot, character, and characterization. Furthermore, she identified and described the characterization using an explanatory and dramatic method, which includes direct and indirect characterization.

Fifth, Endah Destri Rahayu (2023) from the Institute Agama Islam Negeri "*Analisis Semiotika dalam Webtoon (Komik Online) Berjudul "Wee" Karya Amoeba Uwu*". She discusses the presentation of semiotics in the webtoon. The research mainly focuses on how the messages contained in the semiotic analysis of webtoon. By analyzing some vocabulary that contains a deeper meaning of the sign than the actual meaning in general, as well as the message contained in the events and activities of daily life, obtained from the analysis using the data analysis work table with linguistic concepts language, namely signifier and signified. She used a descriptive qualitative method in the research with interviews, literature study, and observation data collection.

Meanwhile, the writer is focused on analyzing the characterization of the main characters and does the role of antagonist and protagonist to the main character that affects the progression of the storyline. By using narrative structure or intrinsic approach and Austin Warren and Rene Wellek's (1949) theory.

No.	Title	Topic/Themes	Method/Theories	Intersection with this study
1	"*Analisis Karakterisasi Tokoh Utama Sebagai Pembangun Unsur Humor Dalam Serial Netflix "Vincenzo*" (2022)	Characterization analysis	James H. Pickering and Jeffrey D. Hoeper, Telling and showing	A similar topic but a different object

	Title	Method	Theory	Relevance
2	*"Analisis Karakterisasi Tokoh Utama Dalam Film Barbie of Swan Lake"* (2020)	Characterization analysis	Edgar V. Roberts Character Theory and Intrinsic Approach	Same topic with same method but different object and theories
3	*"Karakter Tokoh dalam Kisah I Marabintang Transliterasi Sahabuddin Nappu"* (2023)	Analysis of character	Narrative structure	Same topic but different object
4	*"An Analysis of Characterization of Main Characters, Plot Structure, and Psychological Conflicts in the Novel Entitled Sense and Sensibility Written by Jane Austen and Its Implications to Character Education at Senior High School"* (2018)	Analysis of character	Structuralism	Same topic but different method and object
5	*"Analisis Semiotika dalam Webtoon (Komik Online) Berjudul "Wee" Karya Amoeba Uwu"* (2023)	Analysis of semiotics	Semiotics	Same object but different titles and topics

2.2 Narrative

A narrative is a form of storytelling about a series of events connected to form a unified story. According to Nurgiyantoro (2010:23), a narrative is a literary work that contains story elements in the form of a series of events arranged systematically and interrelated to form a unified story. According to Burroway (2010:3), narrative is a form of story selected, organized, and framed by the author to convey a particular meaning. It could be concluded that narrative is a form of storytelling that organizes a series of events in a systematic and interrelated manner to form a complete and meaningful story. In literary studies, especially in the analysis of narrative texts, two essential components are commonly discussed: intrinsic elements and extrinsic elements. According to Abrams (1999: 97), these elements form the foundation of narrative, as they both shape and influence the meaning and structure of a literary work.

As stated by Sehandi (2014:106), intrinsic elements are elements that organize and build stories to produce meaning in the narrative. Intrinsic elements serve as the main framework that organizes the story and gives meaning to the narrative. According to Ratih Mihardja (2012:04), intrinsic elements are elements that compose a literary work from the inside that create the structure of a literary work, such as theme, character and characterization, point of view, plot, and setting. Thus, it could be concluded that the intrinsic elements are the main framework in the narrative and function to organize the series of events or directly form the structure of the story.

In addition, there are elements that come from outside the narrative or literary work, whose function is to help provide context and meaning to the experience. This element is called the extrinsic element. According to Aminuddin (2004:85) stated that extrinsic elements are factors that are outside the literary work or narrative but contribute to determining the form and content of the work, such as the author's background, socio-cultural conditions, religion, politics, and the author's outlook on life. Consistently, the extrinsic elements do not build the narrative structure directly, but provide a context that enriches the understanding of the literary work. According to Nurgiyantoro (2010:22-23), despite the different origins of intrinsic and extrinsic elements, they interact with each other. Intrinsic elements form the direct structure of the story, while extrinsic elements provide background and context that help the reader understand the reasons behind the content and form of the narrative.

In literary studies, the terms intrinsic elements and intrinsic approach are often used, but they refer to different concepts. While they are related, it is important to distinguish clearly between them to avoid confusion in literary analysis. As stated by Abrams (1999:98), Intrinsic elements refer to the internal components that make up the structure of a literary work. These elements are found within the text itself and include theme, plot, character and characterization, setting, point of view, and conflict. In short, intrinsic elements are the formal features of a literary text that contribute to its overall meaning and coherence.

In contrast, the intrinsic approach refers to a method of literary analysis that focuses solely on the internal aspects of the literary work without

considering external factors such as the author's biography, historical background, or social context. Wellek and Waren (1949:75) described that intrinsic approach analyzes the literary work as an independent entity, where meaning is derived from the text itself rather than from outside influences. Therefore, intrinsic elements are the parts of the text that can be analyzed, while the intrinsic approach is the analytical method that focuses exclusively on those parts. Although related, they are not the same: one refers to what is analyzed, and the other to how it is analyzed. Furthermore, the writers would like to give a further explanation of the intrinsic approach.

2.3 Intrinsic Approach

The intrinsic approach is an approach to the study of literature that focuses on the analysis of the elements that make up the literary work itself, without taking into account external factors such as the author's background, social conditions, and the acceptance of the reader. The focus of this approach is on the internal structure of the text. As stated by Wellek and Werren (1949:139) in their book entitled *Theory of Literature*, this approach places literary works as autonomous entities that must be studied and assessed based on their literary characteristics, not based on aspects outside the text. It includes elements such as theme, plot, characterization, setting, language style, point of view, and message.

According to Nurgiyantoro (2010: 23), the intrinsic approach in literary studies emphasizes the analysis of the internal elements of the literary work itself. He states that in literary analysis, the term analysis "leads to the idea of

the decomposition of the work into its constituent elements, namely its intrinsic elements. The intrinsic approach looks at the literary work as a whole and understands the meaning of the work through examining its inner elements. Thus, the intrinsic approach is in line with the structural or objective approach that focuses on the content of the text itself.

For instance, Yulfa & Rohmah (2021:393) in a study analyzing the film "Bad Genius", an intrinsic approach was used to identify and explain how the narrative structure and characters in the film convey moral messages to the audience. The elements that make up a literary work without involving external factors. It shows how elements such as plot, character, theme, and setting are analyzed in depth to understand the moral messages and values conveyed by the text or literary work. The intrinsic approach is useful for understanding literary works and other media in depth, as it allows researchers to see how the internal elements of the work interact to form an overall meaning and message.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the intrinsic approach is to understand and interpret the text based on its structure and elements. Which are referred to as intrinsic elements. The elements that make up the internal structure of a literary work. The elements that will be used in this research are character, characterization, and plot. All of them are the fundamental components of the work analyzed using this method.

2.4 Elements of Intrinsic Approach

2.4.1 Character

Characters in literary works refer to the characters that the author presents as part of the fictional world that is built. According to Roberts (1995:61), characters in a literary work are individuals developed by the author to play a role in the story. The author depicts characters in dialogue, action, and commentary that are worthy of our sympathy, support, and even love. Although, characters will most likely find funny, dislike, or even detest.

As stated by Stanton (2012:33), characters could be employed in two situations. In the first instance, "character" refers to the people who make an appearance in the story's progression. Character in the second sense refers to those people's diverse combinations of passions, emotions, moral convictions, and interests. It can be concluded that characters in literary works exist not only as actors in the storyline but also as representations of the complexity of human personality. The understanding of characters must include both the external aspects (what they do) and the internal aspects (what they feel and think), as both play an important role in shaping the meaning of the whole story.

Milawasri (2017:89) said that characters are actors who experience events and problems in stories or fictions. The actions, dialogue, and events of a character has with other characters in the story reveal something about their personalities to the reader. Therefore, it is important to know that character is the center of every conflict developed in the story. The characters with all their context of complexities and interactions are what make the story

interesting. Characters are instruments to convey a theme, build a plot, and create a deep and meaningful reading experience.

Moreover, according to René Wellek and Austin Warren in Theory of Literature (1949), characters in fiction can be distinguished or named depending on the point of view of the approach. Naming or classifying characters can be done from different points of view, namely as follows:

2.4.1.1 **Types of Character**

Characters are considered to be narrative constructs that carry with them ideas, conflicts, and emotions that support the theme as well as the overall structure of a literary work. One of the most notable classifications originates from Wellek and Warren, two prominent scholars in the domain of Western literary theory. In their seminal work Theory of Literature (1949:227), Wellek and Warren assert that characters in fiction are not representations of real people, but rather artistic constructs that serve the structural needs of the narrative. The depiction of characters and their inherent complexities can be utilized to categorize them into two primary types:

    a. Flat Character

The term "flat character" refers to an individual presented straightforwardly with a single predominant characteristic, exhibiting no discernible development or transformation as the narrative progresses. These characters are archetypal and often static. According to Wellek and

Warren (1949:227-228), the notion of flat characters does not imply an attempt to represent humans in their totality; rather, they are employed as a narrative device. For Example: *"Mr. Collins was not a sensible man, and the deficiency of nature had been but little assisted by education or society..."* (Austen, 1813)

Mr. Collins in Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice. Mr. Collins is described as an arrogant man and overly subservient to his superior, Lady Catherine. This trait does not change throughout the story. He is a character whose presence does not experience inner conflict or complex emotional development.

In this sense, flat characters lack emotional depth and complex motivations, but they are still important in the story because they can reinforce themes, provide contrast for more complex protagonists, and help move the plot along. Flat characters are usually easily recognizable, do not experience internal conflict, and tend to follow certain stereotypes.

b. Round Character

In contrast to flat characters, as stated by Wellek and Warren (1949:227-228) round characters exhibit complexity, emotional depth and undergo development as the narrative progresses. The characters frequently encounter internal conflicts and shifts in their attitudes or perspectives. The

employment of round characters has been demonstrated to elicit convincing surprises and foster emotional engagement among readers. This classification was originally introduced by E.M. Forster in his book *Aspects of the Novel*. Forster (1927:81), defined a "rounded character" as one who could surprise convincingly. If a character consistently fails to surprise, it is indicative of a lack of depth and complexity, then the character is flat. The quality of a character is evidenced by its ability to evolve and respond to conflict in unexpected ways while maintaining consistency with itself. For example:

"Till this moment I never knew myself."

  (Austen, 1813)

Elizabeth Bennet, also from Pride and Prejudice, is an example of a round character. At the beginning of the story, she is prejudiced against Mr. Darcy, but as the story progresses, she changes her views, reassesses her attitude, and admits the error of her judgment.

In other words, round characters are portrayed with complexity and emotional depth, and experience development and change during the course of the story. Round characters also represent human characters that are more vivid and realistic because they have various sides of

personality and experience dynamics throughout the narrative.

Meanwhile, M.H. Abrams in A Glossary of Literary Terms (1999:33) has expanded this classification by adding the concepts of "static" and "dynamic" characters. Static characters are defined as those who demonstrate a lack of substantial change in their attitudes, outlooks, or personalities as the narrative progresses. Conversely, dynamic characters undergo a process of personality development that is both a consequence of conflict and experience. This classification accentuates the pivotal role of character development in reflecting thematic elements and engendering conflict within the context of fictional narratives. Characters who undergo significant change tend to become the focal point of readers' attention due to their high dramatic potential.

Furthermore, Nurgiyantoro (2010:176) offers a more detailed classification. He has devised a classification system for characters, which he bases on their function in the narrative. The categorization system comprises the following:

a. The Main Character and Additional Characters

The main character occupies a central role in the narrative, while additional characters facilitate or support the progression of the story. For example:

"Harry Potter" in the Harry Potter series has always been the character focused on in the story and "Hagrid" in the Harry Potter series supports the story but is not the main focus.

b. The protagonist and antagonist

The term "protagonist" refers to a character who embodies virtuous values and typically serves as the primary focus of the narrative. In contrast, the "antagonist" is characterized as a figure who acts in opposition to the protagonist, thus generating conflict within the storyline. For example:

"Frodo" in The Lord of the Rings (2003) fought with the ring to save the world and "The Witch-king" became his main enemy.

c. Static and Dynamic Characters

According to the explanation provided by Abrams (1999), static characters do not change throughout the narrative, while dynamic characters undergo development. For example:

In the 5cm (2012) movie, "*Arial*" is a complex character who experiences various conflicts and inner development throughout the story. Initially afraid of getting acquainted with women, he becomes more confident. Furthermore, "*Arinda*" is a character who has a simple nature, does not

experience significant character development, and acts as a complement to the story.

d. Simple and Complex Characters

A simple character is characterized by the presence of a singular, dominant trait, whereas a complex character is distinguished by a more multifaceted and nuanced personality, with numerous traits that contribute to a more intricate and profound character development.

Through this classification, Nurgiyantoro (2010:176) provides a comprehensive framework for analyzing characters in fiction, to understand the roles, functions, and characteristics of characters more deeply in the context of the narrative. This classification also helps in identifying how the author positions the character in the story and how the character contributes to the development of the storyline.

A variety of character classifications proposed by experts demonstrate that characters in literary works possess complex and diverse dimensions. The classification of characters is a critical component of literary analysis, as it facilitates a comprehensive understanding of the narrative structure of a work. Furthermore, character classification can serve as a conduit for the revelation of conflicts, values, and dynamics present within the narrative. By developing a comprehensive understanding of these characters, readers and literary researchers can

approach the analysis of fiction with greater systematicity and depth. These characters are not only a means of propelling the story but also play an important role in conveying themes, conflicts, and moral messages in a literary work.

2.4.1.2 The Role of Characters in Building Stories

Character is an essential component of fiction, representing one of its fundamental intrinsic elements. As stated by Wellek and Warren (1949), the character is twofold in its function within a narrative; it serves not only to propel the plot but also to integrate the structural elements of the plot with those of the narrative. The absence of characters invariably impedes the progression of the storyline, hinders the formation of conflict, and curtails the author's capacity to convey the intended message in its entirety. Therefore, it can be posited that characters play a central role in building the overall narrative structure of a literary work.

In addition, Culler (2000:80) elaborates on the notion that characters in fiction function not only as plot devices but also as instruments for conveying ideological perspectives and establishing a meaningful structure. He places significant emphasis on the assertion that characters are instrumental in shaping the narrative structure and, as such, contribute meaningfully to the development of the plot. This assertion stands in direct contrast to the notion of characters being merely a function of events. In essence, character can be defined as the nexus where the narrative structure and the formation of ideology or social critique

converge within literary works. Furthermore, Barry (2017:229) expanded the function of character in the context of cultural studies and structuralism. He explains that character is a social and narrative construction that can be interpreted in a layered way that character functions as a mirror of narrative structure and at the same time a representation of the ideology carried by the author, either consciously or unconsciously.

Character in fiction cannot be separated from the narrative structure. Characters are the drivers of the story, the conveyors of themes, the embodiment of ideology, and the bridge between the text and the reader. In both classical approaches and contemporary theories, characters are always placed as the centre that unites the various intrinsic elements of literary works. The success of a work of fiction in conveying meaning and building a strong structure is largely determined by the extent to which its characters are developed effectively and functionally.

2.4.2 Characterization

Characterization is a character that animates the literary work presented by the author. Through characters, the author can raise a problem by solving it and through this representation, readers of literary works can conclude that characterization can be described in various ways by the author. According to Roberts (1995:64), characterization is the process used by authors to create and develop characters in literary works. Characterization includes all the methods the author uses to describe the

character's traits, personality, and development, whether through direct description, dialogue, action, or interaction with other characters.

Jones (2009:165) said that characterization is the painting of a clear picture of a beautiful person in a story. Then, characterization can be defined as the process of defining a character's name and role in a text, but also as the creation of a comprehensive picture that enables the reader to comprehend the character's identity, thought processes, actions, and motivations within the context of the narrative. As stated by Pebrianti (2023:59), characterization is the process of establishing character through dialogue, action, and what the author tells us about character development in a story. Characterization not only involves physical descriptions or actions, but it is a complex element that includes various ways to introduce and develop characters in a story.

It could be concluded that characterization is the character, behavior, and way of thinking of the characters displayed throughout the story being told. Characterization in literary studies involves a multidimensional approach that includes complex narrative elements to describe and develop characters in various forms of literary works. The characterization in the story is fictitious and made up by the author. It serves as the key to bringing characters to life in literary works, allowing readers to connect emotionally and intellectually with the story.

2.4.2.1 **Types of Characterization**

Characterization is the way an author composes, shapes, and presents characters in a work of fiction, either directly or indirectly. As stated by Wellek and Warren (1949:226), Characterization is not only about descriptive aspects of the character, but also includes the communication of the character's nature, motivation, and development over the course of the story. As part of the intrinsic approach, Wellek and Warren (1949) distinguish two main methods of conveying characterization: direct characterization and indirect characterization. These two approaches provide different ways for the writer to convey character traits to the reader.

a. Direct Characterization (Telling)

Direct characterization is a method in which the author or narrator explicitly explains the character's traits. The information may be an explanation of the character's background, personality, or motivation. This method is often found in descriptive narratives that openly explain characters. For example:

In the movie Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (2001), there is a dialog that directly describes the character of Hermione Granger,

"Ron: "*Hermione, you're very smart and always serious about your studies.*"

Hermione: "*I love studying, I want to be ready for anything.*"

Thus, direct characterization (telling) is a character portrayal technique in which the character's nature or character is explicitly described by the narrator, author, or other characters in the story. The reader or audience is directly told about the character without having to interpret it from implied actions or dialogue.

b. Indirect Characterization (Showing)

In contrast, indirect characterization allows the reader to understand the character through the actions, speech, thoughts, and reactions of other characters, or the social environment surrounding them. This technique encourages the reader's active participation in interpreting the character. For example:

In Sam Raimi's Spider-Man (2002), Peter Parker's character is portrayed indirectly through dialog with Mary Jane,

"Mary Jane: *You're so smart and responsible, Peter. You always think about others before yourself.*"

This dialogue does not directly say "Peter is a good and responsible person," but it shows these traits through the recognition of other characters. The audience can infer that Peter is a caring and responsible person based on this dialog.

However, indirect characterization through dialogue occurs when a character's traits or character traits are not

explicitly mentioned, but are revealed through the words of other characters or the characters themselves that contain implied meanings. The reader or audience must make inferences based on the dialogue to understand the character's personality.

Stanton (2012:18) also explained that characterization involves two aspects *What the character is like (traits) and how the reader learns what the character is like (technique)*. Thus, characterization is the reader's knowledge of a character that comes from what he does, what he says, what others say about him, and how he is described by the author. Meanwhile, Nurgiyantoro (2010:16) explained that characterization is a technique used by the author to present and develop the character of a character in a work of fiction. He categorizes characterizing techniques into three main types, which are:

A. Analytical Technique (Direct)

Also known as the expository technique, it is the way the author directly and communicates the character. The character is explained through the author's narration or commentary.

B. Dramatic Technique (Indirect)

Also known as the presentational technique, it is the technique of conveying character through the actions, speech, thoughts, and reactions of other characters. The

reader is expected to interpret the character's traits based on the information presented.

C. Mixed technique

It is a combination of analytical and dramatic techniques. The writer sometimes explains the character directly and sometimes shows the character's nature through behavior or dialogue.

2.4.2.2 **The Roles of Characterization in a Storyline**

Characterization is closely related to plot development in fiction. Characters created with strong characterization will promote the development of conflict, change of situation, and resolution of the story. Wellek and Warren (1949:224) asserted that character is not an object of psychological study, but rather part of the structure that supports the overall narrative. This means that characterization is a major determinant of plot dynamics, both in shaping conflict and in structuring dramatic stages such as introduction, complication, climax, and resolution. Strong and complex characters create a non-linear and suspenseful plot, while static characters tend to create a simpler plot.

Following Wellek and Warren, E.M. Forster's Aspects of the Novel (1927:78) states that character is the driving force of plot. He distinguishes between flat and round characters, and states that only round characters can create a plot that develops and is full of surprises. Characterization is an important tool for logical and emotional story

development. A convincing change in a character's traits will drive the plot toward a new conflict or be the catalyst for the story's resolution.

Another view comes from Abrams (1999:225), who asserts that character interaction, constructed through characterization techniques, is the main element that determines the development of story events. Thus, character traits and attitudes revealed through dialogue, actions, and thoughts not only enrich the characters, but actively shape the complex plot. The close relationship between character and plot is also emphasized by Nurgiyantoro (2010:164). According to him, character and plot are two elements that form each other and cannot be separated from each other. In this framework, characterization becomes an element that explains not only "who" the character is, but also "why" and "how" the character does things, which then becomes part of the story's structure.

Therefore, it can be concluded that characterization is not only a descriptive tool in the introduction of characters, but is also a structural component that has an active and dynamic role in the shaping of the plot of the story. The role of characterization in the plot is not limited to the introduction stage but reaches all stages of the story until its completion. In order to analyze the coherence and success of a literary work in building a complete, logical, and meaningful story, a deep understanding of the techniques and functions of characterization is very important.

2.4.3 Plot

Plot is one of the literary work's features, and it plays an important role in literary works. Plot is a series of events designed by the author to create an interesting and meaningful narrative. Those events are organized to produce meaning and provide an emotional experience to the reader. As stated by Roberts (1995:59), the sequential or chronological development of cause and effect is the basis of plot.

According to Heni (2021:708), plot is a very intricate thing. Plot is not limited to what is observed during an event. The characters' emotions or conflicts can be heightened by the events that occur. Nurhidayati (2017:494) stated that plot is conflict. The elements of plot are introduction, onset of conflict, culminating conflict, climax, and resolution. The power of a story is based on how the author takes the reader through the onset of conflict, the culmination of conflict, and the end of conflict.

However, it may be stated that plot is the basic framework that sustains a story, giving structure and direction to the narrative. Through plot, the author organizes events in a strategic order to create tension, develop characters, and reveal themes. The presence of plot can assist the readers in understanding how the story works as a whole and how each element in it contributes to the meaning and ultimate impact of the literary work.

2.5 Semantic

According to Palmer (1981:1), semantics is the technical term used to refer to the study of meaning. Since meaning is part of language, semantics is a part of linguistics. As previously stated, it is evident and can be concluded that semantics is the study of semantics as part of the structure of language related to expression, the structure of the meaning of speech. Semantics is defined as the system and investigation of meaning in a language or language in general. As stated by Tarigan (1995:3), semantics is defined as the study of the relationship between signs and objects that serve as the container for the application of the sign.

Concurrently, Hurford and Heasley (1983:1) state that semantics is the study of meaning in language. A sentence may appear to possess multiple meanings; however, the utilization of a particular word within a sentence can facilitate the discernment of its intended signification through thorough analysis. This principle underscores the notion that semantics is a discipline focused on the examination and interpretation of meanings. This assertion is further substantiated by Saeed's statement (1997:3) that semantics encompasses the study of the meanings of words and sentences. As indicated by these definitions, it is understood that semantics is a linguistic discipline concerned with the study of meaning in language. The subsequent sub-chapters will delineate the definition of meaning and its typology. These definitions will subsequently serve as a point of reference during the analysis of the data.

One of the most influential figures in semantic theory is Geoffrey Leech, who, in his book Semantics: The Study of Meaning (1981), introduces

a comprehensive classification of meaning into seven distinct types. These categories aim to capture the various dimensions of meaning that go beyond the literal interpretation of language.

2.5.1 Seven Types of Meaning

According to Leech (1981: 9-19), meaning can be broken down into the following types: conceptual meaning, connotative meaning, social meaning, affective meaning, reflected meaning, collocative meaning, and thematic meaning. Each of these plays a role in how language is understood and used in communication.

    a. Conceptual or Denotative Meaning

    Conceptual meaning, also referred to as logical, cognitive, or denotative meaning, is the core meaning of a word or expression. It is the literal, dictionary definition that is independent of personal feelings or cultural associations. This type of meaning is essential for clear communication and forms the basis of all other meanings. Example: the word "*woman*" conceptually means +*human, +adult, +female*.

    b. Connotative Meaning

    Connotative meaning refers to the additional implications or associations that a word carries beyond its literal definition. These associations are often shaped by personal experience, social background, or cultural context. Connotative meaning is less stable and more subjective than conceptual meaning.

Example: the word "*home*" connotes feelings of warmth, safety, and belonging, even though its conceptual meaning is simply *a place where one lives*.

c. Social Meaning

Social meaning reflects the social context in which language is used. It conveys information about the speaker's social identity, status, relationship with the listener, or the formality of the situation. Social meaning can be found in choices of dialect, register, honorifics, or styles of speech.

Example: the difference between "*Hello*" and "*Hi*" may indicate levels of formality or familiarity.

d. Affective Meaning

Affective meaning expresses the speaker's emotions, feelings, or attitudes. It reflects the personal stance or mood of the speaker toward the content or the listener. This kind of meaning is often conveyed through intonation, word choice, or sentence structure.

Example: saying "*Shut up*!" versus "*Please be quiet*" conveys different emotional tones

e. Reflected Meaning

Reflected meaning arises when one sense of a word automatically triggers another due to multiple meanings or associations, especially when a word has a taboo or religious interpretation. In some cases, this reflected meaning can overshadow the intended literal meaning.

Example: the word "*cock*" may provoke discomfort because of its slang meaning, even if it is used in its original sense (as a rooster).

f. Collocative Meaning

Collocative meaning refers to the associations a word acquires because of its habitual co-occurrence with certain other words. It is related to the tendency of certain words to appear together, which influences their meaning in context.

Example: the word "*handsome*" typically collocates with "*man*", while "*beautiful*" usually collocates with "*woman*".

g. Thematic Meaning

Thematic meaning is concerned with how the structure or arrangement of a sentence contributes to its meaning. It involves focus, emphasis, and the way information is organized, affecting the interpretation of a message even if the conceptual content remains the same.

Example: "*John broke the window*." "*The window was broken by John*." Although both sentences convey the same conceptual meaning, the focus differs: the first emphasizes the doer (John), while the second emphasizes the object (the window).

Leech's classification of meaning offers a thorough framework for comprehending language's operation beyond its literal use. The seven types of meaning demonstrate the complexity of linguistic expression and illustrate how words can have multiple layers of meaning. This theory is useful for analyzing language in literature, media, and everyday communication, where meaning

often extends beyond the literal. In this study, the writer focuses only on two types of meaning: conceptual or denotative and connotative.

2.6 Comics

Comics are a medium of visual storytelling, integrating images and text to convey narratives or information. According to Scott McCloud (1993:9), comics are defined as "an arrangement of images and text in a particular order that aims to provide information or generate an aesthetic response from the reader." The definition highlights the significance of sequence and the integration of visual and verbal components in comics.

Will Eisner (1985:5) characterized comics as "sequential art," underscoring the importance of sequential panels in conveying a narrative. Furthermore, Eisner underscored the potential of comics to convey emotion and nuance through the integration of images and text. According to Groensteen (2007), comics are "complex semiotic systems that combine visual and verbal codes in a distinctive narrative structure." As Groensteen emphasizes, the distinctive nature of comics is predicated on their unique structure, which distinguishes them from other forms of narrative. This distinguishing characteristic, in Groensteen's view, is the interaction between images and text, which complement each other in a manner that is distinct from other forms of narrative.

Comics represent a distinctive form of visual narrative, characterized by the integration of visual elements and textual information to convey a narrative. Comics boast a rich history and diverse functions, and they continue

to evolve and adapt to changing times, including in the Indonesian context. A comprehensive understanding of the elements and roles of comics is imperative for the appreciation and further development of the art form.

2.7 Webtoon

Webtoon is a form of digital comic that is intended to be viewed exclusively on the internet. Webtoon is a representative genre of Korean pop culture. The concept of webtoon is a combination of the word's web and cartoon, and it is formed when manhwa is published online. Manhwa is a Korean term for comics. Jang and Song (2017: 174) define Manhwa as all forms of Korean comics produced in printed form, whereas webtoon is more commonly produced in digital or online form. Thus, the webtoon genre emerged in Korea as a new manhwa format enabled by digital technology and a network of web portal sites and mobile phones.

Webtoons frequently combine engaging storyline with visually beautiful artwork. As stated by Kim and Yu (2019: 2), webtoon production differs from both web or digital comics and traditional comic strips in South Korea. Web and digital technology significantly reduced the cost of digital picture creation by eliminating the need for drawing instruments (e.g., drawing pens, screen tone) while increasing the readiness with which a broader audience may be reached. The vertical scrolling structure of webtoons makes them ideal for reading on mobile devices and desktop computers. To enhance the reading experience, they employ a variety of strategies such as panel composition, colour utilization, and dynamic movement. Furthermore, many

webtoons include sound effects and background music, which further immerse readers in the story.

2.8 Weak Hero

"Weak Hero" is a Korean webtoon that tells the story of Yeon Si-eun, a physically weak and fragile-looking student who possesses high intelligence and strategic fighting skills to protect herself from bullying at his school. Despite his small stature and quiet demeanor, Si-eun does not back down in the face of bullies, but instead uses his intelligence and surroundings to fight back against the violence he experiences. The story highlights the struggles of teenagers who appear physically weak but are mentally and intellectually strong in the face of social pressure and school violence.

The main character "Yeon Si-eun" is described as having a complex personality; he is not only a brave person but also full of inner wounds and trauma due to the violence she experienced at home and school. The webtoon also features Si-eun's friendship with Ahn Su-ho and Oh Beom-seok, who together try to survive and find the true meaning of strength. The conflict focuses not only on physical combat but also on the psychological and social dynamics between the teenagers. "Weak Hero" is also known for its realistic portrayal of bullying and violence in schools, and how victims fight back in smart and unconventional ways. The story shows the dark side of school life ruled by bullies, and how Si-eun's presence changes that order.

According to reports, "Weak Hero" has been read more than 181.4 million times and has around 1 million subscribers, with a high rating of 9.88

on the Naver Webtoon platform. The success of this webtoon prompted an adaptation into a Korean drama titled Weak Hero Class 1, which was released in November 2022. The drama received a positive response and won the "Best OTT Original" award at the Asia Contents Awards 2023.