



An analysis of peer's influence on the learning process and the character building of the children portrayed in the novel *A Little Princess* by Frances Hodgson Burnett

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ABSTRACT

Peer groups are examples of social interactions, sources where children obtain and receive many things, such as behaviour, attitudes, and interests. This research explores the portrayal of peer influence in a children's literature novel titled *A Little Princess* (1905) by Frances Hodgson Burnett. By using the qualitative research method, this research aims to investigate how peers can influence children, in this case how the minor characters are influenced by the model main character. The goal of this research is gained by taking the data from analyzing minor characters' behaviour and utterances towards the main character portrayed in the narrative. Bandura's social learning theory (2008) is used to discover the study of peer group influence. In addition, Kenan's characterization theory (2002) is used to determine how the representation is portrayed in the novel. The research shows the minor characters experienced four sub-functions of observational learning: attentional, representational, production, and motivational processes. Moreover, the main character acts as a model example to be observed by the minor characters. Positive and negative impacts related to the learning process and character building are found for students as observers through observational learning processes.

Keywords: characterization; children literature; peer; peer influence; social learning

How to cite (in APA 7th edition style):

Indrawati, S. S. (2025). An analysis of peer's influence on the learning process and the character building of the children portrayed in the novel *A Little Princess* by Frances Hodgson Burnett. *Passage*, 13(1), 1-11.

INTRODUCTION

In everyday life, humans basically cannot live alone, yet they need help from other people; that is why humans are called social creatures. Humans must live in social relationships in order to create mutually beneficial survival and help each other. According to Little (2016), interaction is a process of reciprocal influence exercised by individuals over one another during social encounters. So, in short, humans survive by making social interactions through interactions with one or dozens of people

who provide information and influence each other.

In this case, peer groups are also an example of social interactions—sources where children obtain and receive many things, such as behavior, attitudes, and interests. As stated by Fajariesta (2017), children trace the norm or resemble their peers, such as in dressing, studying, and speaking, and children usually feel liked and accepted in their interactions with their peers. Therefore, peer groups are very essential, especially for children's learning process and character building. Bandura (2008) suggests

that individuals learn not only through their own direct experiences but also by observing and imitating the actions and behaviors of others. However, peer influence neither always has a good nor bad impact from peer groups. There are some studies on analyzing peer influence. For example, research on positive peer influence and contributes to knowledge of peer influence mechanisms by Liu (2020), an analysis of the effect of the socio-economy of peer groups on the consumptive behavior by Yudiana (2016), and Weisman (2021), shows that peers values were positively correlated with the strengthening of children's corresponding values.

Hence, the researcher used Bandura's social learning theory concepts including observational learning, modeling, cognitive processes, self-efficacy, reciprocal determinism, and observational learning and aggression to analyze the study of peer group influence portrayed in the novel. In addition, the researcher also used the theory of characterization by Rimmon-Kenan to determine how and through what a character can influence other characters. According to Kenan in *Narrative Fiction* (2002), there are two basic types of textual indicators of character: Direct definition and Indirect presentation through action, speech, external appearance, and environment.

From those studies above, most of the studies related to peers' influence issues raised based on the view of reality in society and not from those portrayed through literary work. One of the literary works that represents the issue of peer influence is the novel *A Little Princess* by Frances Hodgson Burnett. She was a British-American novelist and playwright best known for her children's stories. One of her works is *A Little Princess*, published in 1905. The novel tells a story about a daughter of an Indian businessman named Sara Crewe. Sara was sent to a posh boarding school in London with a cruel headmistress named Miss Minchin. At first, Miss Minchin pretends to be a kind and generous teacher because of Sara's wealth. Nevertheless, after Sara's father died and Sara fell into poverty, Sara was forced to work as a maid without getting enough rest, food, or a comfortable place to sleep. Luckily, Sara is gifted with wisdom and good social skills to survive. While she stayed there, she met

other girls and became friends with Lottie, Beckie, and Ermengarde. In some parts of the novel, the story lets us see how the characters interact as peer groups. It is portrayed from the character's perspectives and dialogues while they are trapped in a boarding school together.

A Little Princess is a very popular novel. Some studies use *A Little Princess* as their objectives, such as the analysis of Sulistiana (2005), which showed that there were six Sara Crewe's moral sufferings and Arifin (2023), which showed Sara Crewe's three levels of defense mechanisms. However, the difference between this study and the research above is that the previous researchers focused most on the main character, who is affected by a problem that hits her. Meanwhile, this research focuses more on how the main character causes and influences other supporting characters. Moreover, in terms of characterization, many previous studies about literary works focus on the Rimmon-Kenan theory. For example, Permana (2021) study shows the identity change of characters in a novel, the study of character development by Asmiaty (2022), and the study of five negative representations of the Orient by Asmara (2022).

Thus, this study aims to understand how interaction, in this case, as a peer group, can be influenced by the main character in the novel *A Little Princess* (1905). This analysis used qualitative methods followed by Rimmon-Kenan's Characterization theory to analyze Sara Crewe's character towards her peers to get to know whether Sara's character has a good influence on the other supporting characters or, on the contrary, has a bad influence. Furthermore, the researcher also used the social learning theory by Albert Bandura to support the researcher's argument about Sara's characterization. Overall, through this study, the researcher expects to give a clear understanding to the reader, including parents, regarding the peer group's behavior, especially for children's learning process and character building, then for literature students to gain more insight and as a previous study.

METHOD

The research used descriptive qualitative design in order to analyze how peer influence was portrayed in the novel. The study was

collected through textual analysis to describe and interpret the portrayal. According to (Lockyer, 2008), textual analysis is a research method that examines the content and meaning of a text, as well as its structure and discourse. Qualitative research method primary concerns may come from characters of a particular individual or group situation (Kothari, 2004, p. 37) by describing them, which the researchers considered as the appropriate method to conduct this study as the aim to represent characters from a novel setting. The researcher used descriptive qualitative research because it suits this type of research. This research repetitively focused on the texts in the literary works to achieve a better understanding of the meanings behind peer influence.

The primary data for this study came from text documents collected from the novel *A Little Princess* by Frances Hodgson Burnett, published in 1905. *A Little Princess* consists of 19 chapters and 196 pages. *A Little Princess*, an intelligent child full of imagination named Sara Crewe who used to live in comfort until her father passed away, and she lived in torture for years at a boarding school. Data and information were obtained through reading books, articles related to research, and other information media such as the Internet.

In the way of collecting the data, there were several steps to do. The first was close reading. In this process, the researcher read the novel more than once. It can be re-read several times to understand the story deeply. This close reading also aims to identify the issues and ensure that the data fits the topic analysis based on the theoretical framework, which are Bandura's learning theory and Kenan's characterization theory. The next step was taking note. In collecting the data and taking notes, the researcher analyzed the data based on several aspects, including focused on every character, selected dialogues between characters, observed the character's actions, and narration from the narrator of this novel that contained interactions of the characters and her friends as well as the event that indicated of peer influence. The writer took all chapters to analyze evidence related to the topic.

After collecting the data, the researcher analyzed it by doing three steps, according to Miles and Huberman (1992, p. 16). The first

was data reduction. In this analyzing process, the researcher selected and focused the data in the notes based on the narration and the dialogue that described the characters in the story. The second was data display. Data display gained from the result of data reduction, then the researcher organized data suitable to the related theories as well as compared the findings with other studies. The last was the conclusion. Based on the data that has been reduced and displayed, the researcher created conclusions that were supported by evidence at the data collection stage. Miles and Huberman stated that conclusions are answers to the research questions researchers have expressed.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

In a literary work, apart from the main character, the minor characters also can play an important role in developing a good story. Card (2012) stated that a minor character might be momentarily involved in the action, but then he'll disappear. Still, his individuality will set a mood, add humor, and make the milieu more interesting or complete. In this case, the minor characters in the novel *A Little Princess* undergo peer influence by the main character. In analysing the characterization, this research uses Rimmon-Kenan's theory. According to Rimmon-Kenan, all characters' descriptions and development in the analysis of peers' influence on the learning process and the character building of the children portrayed in the novel *A Little Princess* are mostly direct definitions by the author or even direct definitions by the characters themselves. It is because this novel is intended for children. Therefore, the author tries to describe the characters as simply as possible so that children can easily understand and follow the story.

Regarding the issue of peer influence in this novel, an influence happens when there is a willingness to accept the needed information from others. In a friendship or solidarity relationship, the recipient of the information will be more likely to believe the person who provides the information. Because friendships range in solidarity, students would be more or less susceptible to different friends. Students are especially more vulnerable to the influence of close

friends than casual ones because people tend to view close friends as more reliable (Hallinan & Williams, 1990). In this novel, the minor characters are Ermengarde, Lottie, and Beckie, while Sara Crewe, the main character, influences them.

Hence, this research employs Bandura's social learning theory, which emphasizes how the environment, especially other people's behavior, can be a model for the emergence of a person's particular behaviors through observational learning. Sara acts as a model who is observed by minor characters, influencing their learning process and character-building. Meanwhile, there are four sub-functions governing observational learning, namely attentional processes, representational processes, production processes, and motivational processes. Below is the detailed explanation of the modelling process by Sara and the observational learning by the minor characters.

Modelling Processes

According to Bandura's theory, the learning process occurs in three components (elements): model behavior (examples), the influence of model behavior, and the student's internal processes. There are three types of learning processes: live models, symbolic models, and verbal description models. In analyzing peer influence according to Bandura's theory, the main character of *A Little Princess*, Sara Crewe, acts as a live model whom her close friends observe. Live models including parental behavior at home, teacher behavior, peers' behavior, or behavior seen daily in the environment. Sara Crewe is a live model of peers' behavior, as can be seen in the quotation below:

"She liked books more than anything else, and was, in fact, always inventing stories of beautiful things and telling them to herself. Sometimes she had told them to her father, and he had liked them as much as she did." (p. 3)

The excerpt shows that Sara is a good storyteller and she can impress her audience, including her father. This proves Sara Crewe has the material for student observational learning because of her behavior.

The author explains Sara Crewe's physical appearance in the example excerpt below. In analyzing Sara's character, the researcher uses Rimmon-Kenan's characterization theory. The excerpt portraying Sara's character below is an example of direct definition since the author explains narratively to readers.

"She was a slim, supple creature, rather tall for her age, and had an intense, attractive little face. Her hair was heavy and quite black and only curled at the tips; her eyes were greenish gray, it is true, but they were big, wonderful eyes with long, black lashes, and though she herself did not like the color of them, many other people did." (p. 5)

The excerpt above shows that apart from her good attitude, therefore making her worth taking as an example, Sara's physical character is also described by the author as a unique and attractive child, even though Sara herself does not realize that she is a beautiful child. "Why does she say I am a beautiful child?" she was thinking. "I am not beautiful at all. Colonel Grange's little girl, Isobel, is beautiful". (p.4) Actually, Sara's opinion that she is ugly is not true; she may not look at all like Isobel Grange, who is the beauty of the regiment, but she has an odd charm of her own.

The modelling process occurs because Sara has good qualities in terms of personality and is physically attractive. In a direct explanation by the author, Sara is portrayed as a sensible little thing, and she never wants anything that isn't safe to give her. Moreover, she enjoys reading books, full of imagination, and helping friends whose difficulties make her worthy of being a model for other children. Apart from that, her sweet and unique appearance easily attracts people's attention and the desire to keep on following her.

Observational Learning

Impression Through Attentional Processes

Attentional processes are the stage of focusing attention, determining what people selectively observe in the profusion of modeling influences and what information they extract from modeled events. At this

stage, Sara, as the object of observational learning by the minor characters, Sara provides a sense of impressions and changes the minor characters' perspective. First, it can be seen from Ermengarde, whose character is a shy, dumb, and forgetful girl.

"Good heavens!" he had said more than once, as he stared at her, "there are times when I think she is as stupid as her Aunt Eliza!" (p.18)

The dialogue above is evidence of Ermengarde's father's monologue, who feels frustrated about how stupid his daughter is. Ermengarde's character is also proven when she and the main character talk.

"Don't you remember?" she demanded. "I told you about him not long ago. I believe you've forgotten." "Well, I don't remember ALL of it," admitted Ermengarde. (p. 128)

The dialogue above clearly proves that Ermengarde is a foolish child character who quickly forgets whatever lessons she has just learned.

It is discovered that Ermengarde experiences observational learning at the attentional processes stage from the first time Ermengarde sees Sara. It is seen that she pays attention to Sara and feels amazed as well as jealous since there is a child who is so clever and confident. Sara speaks French easily, unlike Ermengarde, who even tries to memorize one French sentence; she feels depressed and wants to cry.

"So, it was natural that, having made Sara's acquaintance, she should sit and stare at her with profound admiration." (p.18)

"Ermengarde could only gaze at her, but she felt that she was beginning to adore her. She was so wonderful and different from anyone else." (p. 22)

Two excerpts above show that Ermengarde is very impressed with Sara, and she adores Sara very much.

Lottie is another minor character who experiences the attentional process stage in observational learning with Sara as a model. Similar to Ermengarde, Lottie feels impressed

with and idolizes Sara during their first meeting. Lottie is a child who has whiny and annoying habits; she often annoys those around her. The description of Lottie is shown through the character's environment, which explains the reasons why Lottie has rebellious behavior.

"She went to heaven," she said. "But I am sure she comes out sometimes to see me—though I don't see her. So does yours. Perhaps they can both see us now. Perhaps they are both in this room." (p. 28)

...

"Whatever story she had begun to tell, Lottie would, no doubt, have stopped crying and been fascinated into listening; but there was no denying that this story was prettier than most others. She dragged herself close to Sara and drank in every word until the end came—far too soon. (p. 29)

The excerpt above tells about a conversation between Sara and Lottie. They both lost their mothers when they were babies. However, like most main protagonists, Sara shows wisdom and determination. Bandura, in his theory, states that one of the factors that influence observational learning is the characteristics of the model. The more similar the model, the easier it is for individuals to be influenced by it. Therefore, in the first stage of attentional learning, it is easy for Lottie to be influenced by Sara's presence because Sara shares one similar characteristic with her.

Not only being a model for Lottie and Ermengarde, but also Sara's character becomes a model for the development of Beckie's minor character. She is a little servant girl in Ms. Minchin's School who gets frightened easily by people. She is a hard-working person but also compliant with any orders that are given to her. Evidence of the excerpt is shown below.

"But she did not look— poor Becky—like a Sleeping Beauty at all. She looked only like an ugly, stunted, worn-out little scullery drudge." (p. 34)

The attentional process stage emerges when Beckie, who seems interested in Sara

and her amazing imagination, quietly listens from behind bars one day. "The small drudge before the grate swept the hearth once and then swept it again. Having done it twice, she did it three times; and, as she was doing it the third time, the sound of the story so lured her to listen that she fell under the spell and actually forgot that she had no right to listen at all, and also forgot everything else." (p.31). From the excerpt, we can infer that Becky pays attention and is deeply interested in what is going on, so she is willing to hide while doing her work slowly, hoping to capture a word or two here and there.

Understanding Through Representational Processes

Representational processes are the process of capturing, processing, and storing information in the form of examples of model behavior in children's memory. The three minor characters in the novel *A Little Princess* also experience a representational stage while observing the model. Sara's influence is the understanding that everyone can imagine and make up stories based on what individuals think.

"She remembered stories of the French Revolution which Sara had been able to fix in her mind by her dramatic relation of them. No one but Sara could have done it." (p. 74)

The example of the quote above is an actual implementation of imagining, which provides positive benefits not only for entertainment but also for learning. It is proven by Sara's skill in telling the story about the French Revolution, making it impossible for Ermengarde, who is poor at remembering, to easily forget the lesson about the history of the French Revolution.

A similar thing happens to Lottie. Lottie's impression of Sara at the attentional process stage brings her to an understanding and keeps it in her memory that imagining is fun; hence, she always enjoys listening to whatever Sara talks to her about. Sara, who is a close friend and acts as a mother to Lottie at school. Only Sara, the main character, is able to calm her down. She makes Lottie into a good child and becomes not fussy because every time Sara tells her imagination, Lottie begins to listen despite herself. "Sara went on

talking. Perhaps some people might think that what she said was rather like a fairy story, but it was all so real to her own imagination that Lottie began to listen in spite of herself." (p.28).

Apart from that, the children who were born from wealthy parents, whose parents send them to great schools and are able to fulfill any wish from their children, in order to make Sara think that they are not fluent in fantasizing. It turns out, without realizing it, she could make even a child-like Lottie see what she saw, as in the quote below.

"In fact, when she was lifted down from the table and returned to earthly things, as it were, Sara was able to point out to her many beauties in the room which she herself would not have suspected the existence of." (p.78)

The excerpt above explains the scene when Sara and Lottie are in the room under the empty and dusty roof. Sara is able to make Lottie understand her imagination about how an old room turns into a beautiful one filled with luxurious furniture.

In addition, it is similar to Beckie, who faces representational processes during her friendship with Sara. Beckie always set aside time after working hard to clean the entire dormitory room as well as other additional tasks so that in the end, she would visit Sara's room and, with joy, listen to, capture, and save in her mind every story Sara told.

"What you have to do with your mind, when your body is miserable, is to make it think of something else." (p.110)

An example of the quote above shows the representational process experienced by Becky, which happens when Sara gives a message to put in her mindset that imagining can help divert complicated thoughts.

Imaginary Through Production Processes

This is the stage where all imagery or symbolic codes containing information, knowledge, and behavioral models that have been stored in the child's memory are produced again by doing what they have absorbed. The three minor characters, Ermengarde, Lottie, and even Beckie, are well influenced by Sara in terms of their creativity in using their imagination. Starting with Ermengarde, a character who, along with her friendship with Sara, receives a lot of good

development, as in some of the dialogue quotes below.

"Ermiel!" she said. "Let us PRETEND! Let us pretend it's a party! And oh, won't you invite the prisoner in the next cell?"
"Yes! Yes! Let us knock on the wall now. The jailer won't hear." (p.134)

Even at the level of Ermengarde, who has poor academic abilities, the piece of dialogue above shows a significant change for Ermengarde to be able to follow the imagination created by Sara so that she can be involved in the pretense action planned by Sara.

"She was walking round the small place, holding Lottie's hand and making gestures which described all the beauties she was making herself see. She quite made Lottie see them, too." (p. 78)
"Oh, Sara!" cried Lottie. "I should like to live here!"

Next, the example above is a scene where Lottie and Sara both manage to imagine a previously ordinary room becoming very beautiful, making Lottie very happy and interested in living there.

Then, for an extremely busy servant like Becky, who is not allowed to study, her meeting and becoming close friends with Sara is a priceless gift. For her, being able to fantasize is not just entertainment when she is tired of working but also a form of self-defense when she feels hopeless and hungry. Imagining allows her to divert it all.

"How soft and thick it is!" she said, with the little laugh which Becky knew the meaning of; and she raised and set her foot down again delicately, as if she felt something under it." (p.136)
"What is the matter, Becky?" Sara cried.
"What are you doing?" Becky opened her eyes with a start."
"I was a-'pretendin',' miss," she answered a little sheepishly; "I was tryin' to see it like you do. I almost did," with a hopeful grin. "But it takes a lot o' stren'th." (p.137)

The presence of Sara, who is able to make the three minor characters willingly try to use their creativity and imagination, is what

is called the production processes phase. They begin to be able not only to hear and process the stories Sara has created but they are also able to practice and create their own fantasies. Basically, fantasizing has many benefits, both for thinking patterns and developing children's character. According to Ken Robinson, imagination is the key to creativity, the ability to innovate, and helping children learn well (Robinson, 2011, p. 154). It is especially suitable for helping Ermengarde's learning process and also for Beckie since imagining will increase creativity and create individuals to be able to solve problems and avoid stress.

Motivational Processes

This is a process where the model becomes not only a tool for observation but also a motivation for observers to continue doing something since they do not practice everything they learn. Observers will put into practice what they have observed if it provides benefits. Based on the results of analyzing Sara's influence on her peers related to using imagination, including its benefits. It is found that the character most motivated by Sara's presence is Becky. Becky gets a lot of positive benefits not only from being influenced in terms of pretending but also because of the presence of Sara herself as her best friend.

"When Becky went downstairs, she was not the same Becky who had staggered up, loaded down by the weight of the coal scuttle. She had an extra piece of cake in her pocket, and she had been fed and warmed, but not only by cake and fire. Something else had warmed and fed her, and the something else was Sara." (p. 38)

The narrative explanation above shows that Sara is a person who really motivates Becky to be enthusiastic about working and continuing to fight for her life. With Sara's presence, Becky no longer feels like the coal box she carries every day feels heavy. Becky always has an opportunity she waits for every afternoon, which is the opportunity to meet Sara in her sitting room.

"Sara—who was only doing what she unconsciously liked better than anything

else, Nature having made her for a giver—had not the least idea what she meant to poor Becky, and how wonderful a benefactor she seemed.” (p. 45)

The excerpt shows that Sara is also a priceless person for Becky. How Sara doesn't realize that just her presence, without having to always listen to Sara's stories or get pieces of cookies from Sara, just because of her presence fills the heart of Becky, the lonely and poor maid, who rarely knows the sound of laughter in her life.

Positive Influence Related to Learning Processes from Main Character to Minor Characters

The observational learning experienced by the minor characters towards the main character, who acts as a model and peer, has several positive impacts on the minor characters Ermengarde and Lottie, including helping to increase enjoyment in learning as well as improving achievement at school.

“She plunged into the gory records of the French Revolution, and told such stories of it that Ermengarde's eyes grew round with alarm and she held her breath. But though she was rather terrified, there was a delightful thrill in listening, and she was not likely to forget Robespierre again, or to have any doubts about the Princesse de Lamballe.” (p. 128)

As in the example, Ermengarde got help in terms of remembering the lessons about the French Revolution well. She also surprised his teacher with the progress she made in her studies.

“Miss Minchin couldn't understand why I did my exercises so well that first morning” (p. 129), she said to Sara one day.

The presence of the main character, Sara, who is mature, also impacts the other minor character, the annoying little girl, Lottie, who is affected in terms of enthusiasm for learning.

“It happened that Lottie had been seized with a sudden desire to come in the

schoolroom, and had begged Sara to come with her.” (p. 40)

In the text above, apparently, Lottie, who is too spoiled to study and whose days are only full of whining and playing, has the enthusiasm to come and learn in the classroom since she is motivated by her friendship with Sara. However, only Beckie is not affected by the benefits of formal education at school because, basically, Beckie is only a poor child servant who is not given the opportunity to go to school.

Negative Influence Related to Learning Processes from Main Character to Minor Characters

On the other hand, the influence of intensive peer interaction apparently has a negative impact because the influence of peers creates dependence on each other or even just one person. However, in analyzing peer influence, it is found that only Ermengarde who is identified as being negatively impacted by her closeness to the model, as in the text quoted below.

“I dare say you could live without me, Sara; but I couldn't live without you. I was nearly DEAD.” (p. 73)

The piece of dialogue above shows that Ermengarde is very dependent on Sara, so one day, when she feels that Sara is avoiding her and doesn't want to talk to her, she feels very hopeless because she thinks that Sara is the only one she could rely on in this world.

“It could not be contested that Ermengarde was as dull as she was affectionate. She clung to Sara in a simple, helpless way; she brought her lessons to her that she might be helped; she listened to her every word and besieged her with requests for stories.” (p. 70)

The excerpt above shows the impact of dependence on someone else; Ermengarde becomes dependent on Sara and abuses Sara's kindness, and she uses Sara to do tasks that she should have done herself. Bandura introduces the term basic assumptions in social learning theory, called self-efficacy, which is a person's belief in their

ability to exercise control over their functions and over events in their environment. Ermengarde does not reflect self-efficacy behavior since she lacks confidence in her ability to face and solve problems effectively.

Discussion

The data found shows the portrayal of minor characters in *A Little Princess* (1905) who are influenced by the main character in terms of learning process and character building. According to Bandura's social learning theory (2008), the influencing process occurs in several steps, from the modelling process to the observational learning process, which has four substages: attentional, representational, production, and motivational. So that produces good and bad changes to the minor characters. Data regarding the portrayal of characters is revealed through direct definition by the author and among the characters.

Positive impacts are found for students as observers through observational learning processes. In this novel, the behaviour of imagining is described. Sara's influence is the understanding that everyone can imagine and make up stories based on what individuals think. Therefore, Sara's enjoyment of pretending and stories her imagination with her friends impacted their enjoyment of following Sara's behaviour. Regarding imagining and its relationship with the learning process of children, getting used to using imagination not only provides entertainment but also helps in the learning process since imagining or fantasizing is the key to creativity for children, helps in forming thinking patterns as well as creates children to be able to solve problems. Moreover, imagining gives children hope and can help divert complicated thoughts, thus avoiding stress, as in the example of Beckie.

Moreover, related to children's character building, the main character is diligent, mature, and willing to help others when they are in difficulty. It indirectly sets an example for her peers to do the same thing. That positive behaviour may change children's character from previously evil and rebellious, and they will develop and become motivated to behave and enjoy learning, as in the example of Lottie. This can also impact children's learning achievement at school, as in Lottie and Ermengarde. However,

depending on each child's character, some sometimes become dependent on their friend. They rely on others for what they should have done themselves, as in Ermengarde's example.

After experiencing the stage of learning processes, it is found that the minor characters are influenced to behave better in terms of creativity and education. The characters Ermengarde and Lottie become more creative in using their imagination, thus making the learning process easier and more enjoyable. There is Beckie, who is starting to get used to imagining as well; the impact is giving her enthusiasm and motivation to work and keep on fighting for her life. Hence, this study has a similar discussion to Liu's (2020) study, which revealed positive peer influence and contribution to student knowledge. However, the study focuses only on positive influence by revealing an important moderating role of prestige status, especially social visibility, in relationships. Meanwhile, this study revealed that apart from the positive impact, there is also a negative impact, in this case, Ermengarde, when one day she relied too much on Sara's kindness, making her dependent on Sara.

Previous research examining the novel *A Little Princess*, such as Sulistiana (2005), studies the main character who suffers her life because of mental pressure and child labour by the headmaster, thus resulting in a study of several moral and physical sufferings experienced by the main character. Similarly, the study of Arifin (2023) reveals three levels of the main characters' defence mechanisms. However, the difference between this study and the previous research above is that the previous researchers focused most on the main character, who is affected by a problem that hits her. In contrast, this research produced new discoveries; that is to say, it focuses more on how the main character causes and influences other supporting characters.

Furthermore, this research contributes to the use of learning theory in fiction. Therefore, it uses in-depth observation of literary works. Difference to other studies of learning theory, Yudianta's (2016) analysis of the effect of the socio-economy of peer groups on consumptive behaviour, and Liu's (2020) research on positive peer influence and contribution to the knowledge of peer

influence mechanisms, the study uses quantitative methods to use humans as objects. However, this study has limitations since it uses fiction as analysis material, so it cannot be fully justified, only that this study can be used as a tool for analyzing fiction.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to analyze how peers can influence children. The data are taken from analyzing minor characters' behaviour towards the main character portrayed in *A Little Princess* (1905). Based on findings and discussions that refer to Bandura's social learning theory, the minor characters experienced four sub-functions of observational learning: attentional, representational, production, and motivational processes. Moreover, the main character acts as a model example to be observed by the minor characters. Regarding characterization, it refers to Kenan's theory, and it reveals that the author elaborates on the character's portrayal using direct definitions since the author explains narratively to readers.

The modeling process occurs because Sara has good qualities in terms of personality and is physically attractive. Sara is portrayed as a little girl who enjoys reading books, full of imagination and helps friends whose difficulties make her worthy of being a model for other children. Apart from that, her sweet and unique appearance easily attracts people's attention and the desire to keep on following her. Positive impacts are found for students as observers through observational learning processes. Sara's influence on the behaviour of imaginings impacted the minor characters in the learning process. Moreover, imagining gives children hope and can help divert stress. Furthermore, related to children's character building, the main character changes other children's characters from previously evil and rebellious, changes and develops and becomes motivated to behave. However, depending on each child's character, some sometimes become dependent on their friend. They rely on others for what they should have done themselves. This novel is chosen to contribute to using learning theory in fiction. Since the characters and setting are in school, this novel is considered relevant to what often happens in

social life regarding the negative and positive influence of friends and the environment on children's learning process and character-building.

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