



MORAL VALUES AND INTRINSIC ELEMENTS IN THE FAULT IN OUR STARS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

Adhadilah Galuh Andaresta¹, Tahrur², Hanni Yukamana³

^{1,2,3}Universitas PGRI Palembang
E-mail: ^{1,2,3}galuhanadresta67@gmail.com

Accepted :
11 May 2026

Published :
11 May 2026

Corresponding Author:
Adhadilah Galuh Andaresta

Email Corresponding :
galuhanadresta67@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The moral values and intrinsic elements found in the novel *The Fault in Our Stars* and discusses their relevance to English Language Teaching (ELT). Using a qualitative descriptive approach, this study analyzes the novel by focusing on its intrinsic elements, including theme, characterization, plot, setting, and point of view, as well as moral values such as love, bravery, responsibility, respect, tolerance, and loyalty. The findings show that moral values in the novel are not delivered explicitly but are naturally embedded within the narrative through its intrinsic elements. This makes the novel meaningful and effective not only as a literary work but also as a learning resource. The study also reveals that *The Fault in Our Stars* can be used in ELT classrooms to support language development, encourage critical thinking, raise cultural awareness, and promote character education. Therefore, the novel is highly relevant for both literary studies and English education.

Keywords: *moral values, intrinsic elements, novel, English Language Teaching, literature*

1. INTRODUCTION

Literature has an important role in education because it provides not only linguistic input but also moral and cultural insights. According to Irwansyah et al. (2017), literary works allow students to engage with language in meaningful contexts while simultaneously developing social and moral awareness. Through literature, learners are encouraged to interpret meaning, reflect on human experiences, and connect language learning with real-life situations (Aji, 2023; Nurpratiwi, 2024; Fadilah et al., 2023).

In English Language Teaching (ELT), novels are considered effective learning materials because they present authentic language use and complex human experiences. Simaibang (2017) argues that language learning cannot be separated from cultural context; therefore, literary texts help learners understand how language is used within specific social and cultural settings.

By reading novels, students are exposed to natural expressions, varied sentence structures, and pragmatic language that are rarely found in traditional textbooks (Simbolon et al., 2024; Ulfa & Wulandari, 2019; Asharuddin, 2024).

The Fault in Our Stars is a popular young adult novel that portrays adolescents coping with illness, love, and loss. Although widely read, the novel is often perceived merely as a tragic romance. Simbolon et al. (2024) notes that popular literature is frequently underestimated due to its accessible language and mass appeal, even though it contains meaningful moral and cultural values. This perspective causes many readers to overlook the novel's deeper intrinsic elements and moral messages.

Previous studies on *The Fault in Our Stars* have largely focused on thematic or character analysis separately. However, there is still limited research that integrates moral

Vol 8, No 2 (2025): ESTEEM

values and intrinsic elements while connecting the findings to ELT. Therefore, this article aims to analyze moral values and intrinsic elements in an integrated manner and to highlight their implications for English Language Teaching.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature has long been viewed as an effective medium for conveying moral values and shaping human attitudes. Moral values in literary works are embedded implicitly within narratives that reflect ethical dilemmas and human experiences. Alfarisy (2022) explains that values function as guiding principles that influence individuals' judgments and behavior. In novels, these values are internalized through readers' emotional and cognitive engagement with characters and events.

Intrinsic elements play a central role in constructing meaning in literary works. Stanton (as cited in Samsudin, 2019) states that theme, characterization, plot, setting, and point of view form a unified structure that conveys the author's message. Characterization allows authors to present moral values through characters' choices and conflicts, while plot and setting highlight the social and emotional context of moral decision-making.

Literature is also closely related to character education. Suprayitno and Wahyudi (2020) argue that character education is more effective when values are presented through contextualized experiences rather than direct instruction. Literary texts provide a reflective space where readers can develop empathy, responsibility, and moral reasoning. This view is supported by Swandari and Markhamah (2023), who found that novels containing moral values contribute positively to students' character development.

From an ELT perspective, literature offers authentic language input and supports critical thinking. Chen (2014) emphasizes that literary texts provide comprehensible

input slightly above learners' proficiency level, which is essential for language acquisition. In addition, Yahya et al. (2019) states that teaching literature should engage students in observing life more closely, encouraging interpretation, analysis, and evaluation. These activities foster Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in language classrooms.

Furthermore, literature promotes cultural awareness and intercultural communicative competence. Wijayanti et al. (2025) highlights that understanding cultural values is essential for effective communication in a foreign language. Through novels, students encounter different cultural perspectives and social norms, which helps them develop tolerance and cultural sensitivity. Amalia et al. (2024) also note that emotionally engaging texts increase student motivation and reduce anxiety in language learning.

3. METHODS

This study employs a qualitative descriptive method, which is appropriate for analyzing meanings and values in literary texts. Qualitative descriptive research aims to provide a comprehensive summary of events or phenomena in everyday terms (Patton, 2020; Tisdell et al., 2025). This approach allows the researcher to describe moral values and intrinsic elements as they naturally appear in the text.

The primary data source of this study is the novel *The Fault in Our Stars*. The data consist of words, sentences, dialogues, and narrative passages that reflect intrinsic elements and moral values. Data collection was conducted through close reading and note-taking, a technique commonly used in literary research to ensure depth of understanding (Samsudin, 2019).

Data analysis involved identifying intrinsic elements such as theme, characterization, plot, setting, and point of view, as well as moral values reflected in

Vol 8, No 2 (2025): ESTEEM

characters' actions and thoughts. The data were then classified and interpreted descriptively. To enhance credibility, triangulation was applied by comparing the findings with relevant theories and previous studies, as suggested by Sandelowski (2000).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION***Intrinsic Elements of the Novel***

The findings show that the intrinsic elements of *The Fault in Our Stars* work together to convey moral meanings. The main theme of the novel focuses on life, love, suffering, and the search for meaning. According to Stanton (as cited in Samsudin, 2019), theme functions as the central idea that unifies all narrative elements. This theme is developed through the experiences of Hazel Grace and Augustus Waters, who are portrayed as emotionally mature adolescents despite their illness.

The plot alternates between moments of hope and despair, reflecting the uncertainty of living with cancer. Fatmawati (2024) notes that contemporary narratives often use such structures to represent psychological struggle. The setting, which moves from Indianapolis to Amsterdam, provides cultural and emotional depth to the story. Meanwhile, the first-person point of view allows readers to experience events through Hazel's perspective, fostering empathy and emotional engagement.

Moral Values in the Novel

The analysis reveals several moral values embedded in the novel. Love is depicted as sincere and selfless, emphasizing honesty and mutual support. Salfia (2015) states that literature often portrays love as a moral force that shapes human relationships. Bravery is shown through emotional resilience rather than physical strength, reflecting the characters' courage in facing pain and loss.

Responsibility is reflected in Hazel's concern for her parents' future, demonstrating moral maturity. Respect and

tolerance are shown through the characters' acceptance of limitations and life's unfairness. According to Sharma and Charulatha (2024), moral values in literature help readers develop ethical awareness by presenting complex and realistic situations. Loyalty is also evident in the strong emotional bonds among the characters, reinforcing the importance of commitment and empathy.

Implications for English Language Teaching

The findings support the use of *The Fault in Our Stars* as a learning resource in ELT. Irwansyah et al. (2017) argue that literature can integrate language skills with moral and cultural learning. The novel provides authentic language input that supports reading comprehension and vocabulary development.

Moreover, the moral dilemmas and narrative complexity encourage critical thinking and discussion, supporting the development of Higher Order Thinking Skills. Hapsari (2022) emphasizes that literature-based learning transforms the classroom into a space for intellectual inquiry. Additionally, the novel promotes cultural awareness and character education, aligning with holistic learning goals in ELT.

5. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that *The Fault in Our Stars* presents moral values through well-developed intrinsic elements. Values such as love, bravery, responsibility, respect, tolerance, and loyalty are embedded within the narrative and conveyed through theme, characterization, plot, setting, and point of view.

The novel is therefore suitable for use in English Language Teaching, as it supports language development, critical thinking, cultural awareness, and character education. Integrating literary works into English classrooms is recommended to create meaningful and engaging learning experiences. Future research may explore other novels or investigate the classroom

Vol 8, No 2 (2025): ESTEEM

implementation of literature-based instruction in ELT contexts.

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author would like to express sincere gratitude to all parties who have contributed to the completion of this article. First and foremost, appreciation is extended to the thesis supervisor and academic lecturers for their valuable guidance, constructive feedback, and continuous encouragement throughout the research and writing process. Their insights greatly contributed to the development and refinement of this study.

The author is also grateful to family members for their constant support, patience, and motivation during the completion of this research.

7. REFERENCES

- Aji, K. A. (2023). Literature review: The relationship between Merdeka curriculum and student learning achievement. *Jurnal Pendidikan Jasmani (JPJ)*, 4(1), 17–30. <https://doi.org/10.55081/jpj.v4i1.732>
- Albloly, A., & Ahmed, E. (2015). Literature and EFL students' engagement: Enhancing motivation and language learning. *International Journal of Language and Linguistics*, 3(2), 45–52.
- Alfarisy, F. (2022). The use of SILL Oxford on understanding the speaking learning strategies. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation*, 5(6). <https://doi.org/10.32996/ijllt.2022.5.6.11>
- Amalia, S., S, S., & Ulva, S. M. (2024). Differentiated learning integrated with social emotional awareness and digital learning media in improving the students motivation and learning outcomes. *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan IPA*, 10(1), 239–245. <https://doi.org/10.29303/jppipa.v10i1.5354>
- Aryangga, D., & Nurmaily, E. (2017). Gender representation and moral perspectives in literary works. *Journal of Literary Studies*, 5(1), 33–41.
- Asharuddin, M. (2024). *Kya Clark's sensitivity in protecting the environment in the novel "Where the Crawdads Sing" by Delia Owens based on Lawrence Buell's theory* [Undergraduate thesis, UIN Malik Ibrahim]. <http://etheses.uin-malang.ac.id/id/eprint/66204>
- Chen, Y. (2014). Using children's literature in EFL classrooms: Theory and practice. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 24(3), 356–372. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijal.12045>
- Fadilah, I. A., Jaya, A., & Uzer, Y. (2023). Visual representation and comprehension: The exploration of multimodal text to energize reading of the tenth grade students at State Vocational High School 5 of Palembang. *Esteem Journal of English Education Study Programme*, 6(1), 125–130. <https://doi.org/10.31851/esteem.v6i1.10226>
- Fatmawati, D. (2024). Narrative disruption and psychological trauma in contemporary young adult novels. *Journal of Narrative Studies*, 12(1), 55–68.
- Hapsari, D. (2022). HOTS implementation in Indonesian ELT classrooms: Challenges and strategies. *Indonesian Journal of English Education*, 10(1), 23–38.
- Irwansyah, I., Supriyanto, A., & Wahyudi, W. (2017). Literature in English language teaching: Integrating language skills and character education. *International Journal of Instruction*, 10(3), 221–236. <https://doi.org/10.12973/iji.2017.10314a>
- Nurpratiwi, F. I. (2024). Designing ICT competences-integrated lesson planning course teaching model for English language education. *Journal of Literature Language and Academic Studies*, 3(02), 52–63. <https://doi.org/10.56855/jllans.v3i02.1159>

Vol 8, No 2 (2025): ESTEEM

- Patton, M. Q. (2020). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice*. Sage Publications.
- Rahayu Putri, S. L., Berliana, D., & Lestari, F. (2025). Nilai moral dalam novel *Algrafi* karya Dwi Berliana. *Jurnalistrendi: Jurnal Linguistik, Sastra, dan Pendidikan*, 10(1), 45–55.
- Salfia, R. (2015). Literature and society: The interplay of moral values. *Journal of Cultural Studies*, 12(1), 78–90.
- Samsudin. (2019). *Buku ajar pembelajaran kritik sastra*. Deepublish.
- Sandelowski, M. (2000). Whatever happened to qualitative description? *Research in Nursing & Health*, 23(4), 334–340. [https://doi.org/10.1002/1098-240X\(200008\)23:4<334::AID-NUR9>3.0.CO;2-G](https://doi.org/10.1002/1098-240X(200008)23:4<334::AID-NUR9>3.0.CO;2-G)
- Schwartz, S. H. (2012). An overview of the Schwartz theory of basic values. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, 2(1), Article 11. <https://doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1116>
- Sharma, A., & Charulatha, K. (2024). A decade of research on moral values: Trends and insights. *International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts*, 12(2), 101–112.
- Simaibang, B. (2017). *English language teaching in a foreign situation*. CitraBooks.
- Simbolon, M. H., Misriani, M., & Fitriani, Y. (2024). Kajian sosiologi sastra dalam novel *Keluarga Cemara* karya Arswendo Atmowiloto. *Jurnal Pembahsi (Pembelajaran Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia)*, 14(1), 14–22. <https://doi.org/10.31851/pembahsi.v14i1.12588>
- Suprayitno, A., & Wahyudi, W. (2020). *Pendidikan karakter di era milenial*. Deepublish.
- Swandari, F., & Markhamah, M. (2023). Moral values in *The Little Prince* novel as character education for junior high school students. In *Proceedings of the International Conference on Learning and Education* (pp. 52–61).
- Swirski, P. (1999). Popular and highbrow literature: A comparative view. *Journal of Comparative Literature and Culture*, 1(4), 1–14.
- Syofyan, D. (2012). Teaching English through literature. *Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching*, 8(2), 52–61.
- Tisdell, E. J., Merriam, S. B., & Struckey-Peyrot, H. L. (2025). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Ulfa, N., & Wulandari, D. F. (2019). *Analysis of anxiety and defense mechanism on the main character reflected in Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (1865) novel by Lewis Carroll* [Undergraduate thesis, Universitas Islam Sultan Agung].
- Wijayanti, Y., Wardo, W., Wasino, W., & Djono, D. (2025). Enhancing students' cultural identity through history education based on local wisdom of Kagaluhan values. *Educational Process: International Journal*, 14. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1466526>
- Yahya, Y., Yusrizal, Y., & Kurniawan, R. (2019). Technology in teaching speaking skill: A review of current literature. *Journal of Language Education and Development (JLed)*, 2(1), 242–251. <https://doi.org/10.52060/jled.v2i1.204>