

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter as an overview of the study comprises of six sub-chapters related to the study. These sub-chapters are Background of The Study, Statement of The Research Problems, Purpose of The Study, Significance of The Study, Scope and Limitation of The Research, and Definition of Key Terms.

1.1. Background of The Study

Nowadays, conducting research in literature for education is not something unfamiliar. A lot of papers, journals, and articles on its different concerns of literature have been written and published throughout the years developing various branch of studies in the field. Many researchers conducted research in literature often to observe a literary work from different perspective such as analyzing the elements, the characteristics of its language, even the role of literature itself towards human life. As Wellek and Warren (1948:11) had pointed out on the nature of literature that the term of literature even though seems best to limit it to the art of literature or imaginative literature, it still hold its etymological meaning '*litera*' which is everything in print or written form. A literary work of art is not a simple object but rather a highly complex organization of a stratified character with multiple meanings and relationships (Wellek and Warren, 1948:17). It can be inferred that literature is such a complex thing to be studied.

In education, the subject of literature as a restricted discipline remained controversial due to the nature of the theories developed since its beginning.

From the history perspectives, the term of literature theory basically emerged from the products of people appreciation towards arts or criticism (Kennedy: 1989). Thus, some experts began referring the study of literature as literary criticism in which every theory emerges from the criticism of theory. The ample of dissent among each criticism in literature is probably caused by the nature of literature itself as a product of art. This concept of literature as an appreciation of art was dominating literary studies through classical era in which literature was only in the form of poets until the end of nineteenth century. Through those decades, the consent of the study was still subjective which is viewing literature as thing not just the text but also something could not be separated from the author.

Literature as a science probably began to be introduced in the middle of twentieth century by the emergence of New Criticism and along with the development of modern literature. The movement of New Criticism brought such a new approach in studying literature as separated aspects from outside the text. According to Madsen (1968), New Criticism or formalism, as it is sometimes called, made substantial contributions to the understanding of the intrinsic qualities of literature. Since it approaches literature objectively and focusing solely in the content of the text. However, even though it managed to bring literature toward its glory in the English Education, there were various critics that New Criticism still fails exploring the nature of poetry as unique verbal construction which in particular can have the external world rather than text or language as a referent.

After New Criticism the development of literary criticism shift to the structuralism approach. From the influence of Roman Jakobson one of true formalist, French structuralism began to arise in between 1950s through 1960s. Structuralist emphasis on the task of adducing the internal system or order of linguistic, cultural, and literary phenomena (Rivkin and Ryan: 2004) by the influence of Formalism. Later the tradition of French structuralism influence the emergence of one theory concerning to literary work genre of prose called Narratology.

Narratology is the study on the theory of Narrative. According to Ryan and Von Alphen (1993), Narratology is the set of general statements on narrative genres, on the systematics of narrating (telling a story) and on the structure of plot (Ryan and Von Alphen: 1993, 110). One of the focus in narratology is studying the element of narrative. Chatman (1978) as it is quoted by Amerian and Jovi (2015) pointed that "...Structuralist theory argues that each narrative has two parts: a story (*histoire*), the content or chain of events (actions, happenings), plus what may be called existents (characters, items of setting); and a discourse (*discourse*), that is, the expression, the means by which the content is communicated. In simple terms, the story is the '*what*' in a narrative that is depicted, discourse the '*how*' (Chatman, 1978: 19). In general, narrative including novel and drama as literary work genre has only two main elements, namely intrinsic and extrinsic elements. According to DiYanni (2001:44) as quoted by Mulyawan (2015:8), intrinsic elements are the basic elements or the characteristics of the story. The intrinsic elements in the narrative build the inside of the narrative structurally, they are theme, plot,

style, character and characterization, point of view and setting. Meanwhile the extrinsic elements of the narrative is anything outside the text such as the biography of the author, the culture, etc.

From the theory of the most narratologist about the structure of narrative and the concept of elements building narrative in general there is a similarity that Narrative or fiction consists of character as substantial elements of the story. A character defined by Jannidis (2012) as a text- or media-based figure in a story world, usually human or humanlike. Meanwhile, according to Ryan (2012) “character” is used to refer to participants in storyworlds created by various media. Based on the two arguments, we can draw the conclusion that a character is the one who act in the story and is commonly human but can be other entities too. Kenney (1966:34) proposed that the method in presenting the character is characterization. According to him characterization is divided into five methods; discursive method, dramatic method, character on characters method, contextual method, and mixing method.

Referring back to the intrinsic elements of literature particularly characterization, there are several studies related to this field. One of the example is the study of Rahmawati (2010). In her study she tried to analyze the role of teacher in literary work genre of movie. The movie she chose is called *The Rainbow Troops* which is based on the novel of Andrea Hirata with the same title. The main focus of the study is based on less understanding of teacher character toward his duty as an educator. There are many teachers pictured in the novel that still disturbed about salary problem rather than concerned on their responsibility as teacher. The result of Rahmawati's

research shows that teacher character in "Laskar Pelangi" movie can be divided into three types. Thus are teacher character toward his/her potential, a teacher character toward his/her students, and a teacher character toward society (Rahmawati, 2010). However, the focus of her study and this study is different because this study observe the character of teacher in the movie. While, the researcher's study concern on how the character of young adolescent learner are portrayed in the main character by the author in her novel Fish in A Tree.

Another study is from Febriasari (2007) that took its based on the phenomenon of crisis of value and character faced by Indonesian society in this era. According to the writer of this study, the complexity of this problem must be balanced with the incessant instill of religious values (Febriasari: 2007). Although her study also focused in characterization of the novel, it took different object of analysis from this research which is the character analyzed. Febriasari's used the main character as the object to be analyzed to find the Islamic religious values reflected from the character. In addition, this study more focused on educational characteristics and values in general based on the characterization instead of specified it into the religious one like Febriasari's.

Furthermore, various studies in the field of characterization have been conducted before. But, some of them mostly only repeating on the characterization of the main characters in a movie. Like a study that conducted by Muntaqif Latif (2016), that took concerns in the characterization of main characters in The Social Network movie. The study may have a relation with Naila Nur Saadah research in 2017, about the characterization of main

characters based on the Gillian Flynn “Gone Girl” movie script. And also the one that Diana Wardiana had conducted in 2015 on the characterization of Sherlock Holmes. The three of them had chosen the same subject in analyzing a movie focusing on the characterization of the main characters. They found the characterization based on the physical appearance, psychology, social status and also social relationship. While this study chose to focus more on the way the author used method and technique of characterizing the main character as young adolescent learner and its relevance toward English Foreign Language Learning. This study may also use different use of approach and technique in analyzing the method of characterization.

From the previous studies above, there are many similar studies about characterization, but it has different focus with this study. Most of them use a literary novel kind of movie. While this study chose to analyze a novel. The title of literature used by one researcher and the other researcher is also different. As far as the researcher has found, no study concerning on the characterization of main characters as young adolescent learner in Novel "Fish in A Tree" has been conducted before.

This study is chosen because the study of literature in the field of characterization and its relevance toward education is still very minim. Even though studying literature may not give a direct contribution toward education, but the experience of reading and analyzing a novel may affect how people sees and behave to anything around them. From the message of the author want to tell through the book it can change the mindset or attitude of the people who read it. It is also important that being a prospective educator

not only theoretical knowledge is needed but also having good ethos or attitude is required. Those thing can be developed through our experience observing things happen around us and by reading or watching inspirational novels or movies.

The researcher select a children novel entitled *Fish in A Tree* as the object of this study not only because the great messages the book tries to convey but also most importantly the novel itself meet the criteria of the study and contains the material that the researcher want to analyze. *Fish in A Tree* probably one of the most recent novel which is published in 2015 which brought education environment as theme that it is such a recommended book to read not only for children but also for educators or teachers. The fact that the story is told from the perspective of the main character which has disability in learning may open new perspective for teachers about their students.

Fish in A Tree follows the story of Ally Nickerson who has tried seven schools in seven years but still could not find school interesting. In her current school, she felt the same humiliation by the reality that she still could not read despite she has already in sixth grade. Because of her teacher and her friends' treatment toward her and opinion about her, she believes that she is stupid. In fact, she thinks differently from others and the new substituted teacher Mr. Daniel was the one who managed to bring her to acknowledge that. The title of the novel referred to the quotes of Einstein which having the correlation with the messages this book tried to tell that everyone is smart in their own way.

The way Hunt's present the story through every unique character in this book in enchanting way was the main reason this study is conducted. From their characterization particularly the main character as the one who take the central role in the story, reader may take an inference of it that every students has different characteristics and learning differences. After reading and studying this novel, the researcher hoped that some information related to the story of the novel through the focus of the characterization in the story could be used as a source for the reader to get more understanding in analyzing the intrinsic elements of a fiction, specifically characterization. From this research, the researcher expected that the readers will also perceive the interpretation that studying a literature is important and beneficial in foreign language learning. Based on the background above, the researcher intended to study focusing on the characterization of young adolescent learner portrayed by the main characters in Lynda Mullaly Hunt's novel *Fish in A Tree*.

1.2. Formulation of Research Problems

Based on the background of study above, the researcher formulated the research problems as follows:

1. What are methods of characterization used by the writer of *Fish in a Tree* for the main characters?
2. What are techniques of characterization used by the writer of *Fish in a Tree* for the main characters?
3. What are special traits owned by the main characters in *Fish in A Tree* that help them cope with problems as young adolescent learner?

1.3. Objectives of the Study

Based on the formulation of the research problems, the purpose of the research will be focused on:

1. To know methods of characterization used by the writer of Fish in a Tree for the main characters.
2. To know techniques of characterization used by the writer of Fish in a Tree for the main characters.
3. To know special traits owned by the main characters in Fish in A Tree that help them cope with problems as young adolescent learner.

1.4. Significance of the Study

The researcher expects that the result of this study contributes both theoretically and practically to English Education. Theoretically, this research is expected to provide further information to the readers about the technique to analyze literary work in the area of characterization. Furthermore, the researcher also hopes that information will provide an additional resource to the study of intrinsic element in literature. Practically, the result finding of this research is also hoped to be beneficial for the reader particularly the educator or learner to use the concept of characterization to develop skills of interaction and understanding students in the education or social environments.

1.5. Scope and Limitation of the Study

The researcher makes the scope of the study to be more focus on the problems concerned. In this study, the researcher used a literature work, to be more specific a novel. As it is generally known, novel as a part of literature has two main elements building it; extrinsic element and intrinsic element.

The one that the researcher used as the base theory of this study is intrinsic element that consists of theme, plot, setting, point of view, atmosphere, character, characterization. As the scope of this study, the researcher chose characterization to be the topic.

The researcher only examined the main character of the novel as the limitation. The main character chosen are Ally Nickerson, Keisha Almond and Albert Dubois. The researcher criteria in choosing the three of them is mainly on the grounds that the three of them brought sequence of events of the story and the most character to appear in the story.

1.6. Definitions of Key Terms

In order to avoid misunderstandings between the researcher and the reader, some terms in this study will be defined as follows:

1. Characterization

In literature, Character is usually depicted as ‘persons’ or ‘people’ included in the story. The term of character often used to refer to participants in story worlds created by various media (Ryan: 2012).

In conclusion, character can be described as an imaginary person (sometimes can be other being) who acts, appears or is referred to in literary work. On the other hand, the way of presenting or depicting the images, the minds or how the character live is called characterization.

2. Young Adolescent Learners

Young adolescent or early adolescent learners refer to those students who are on their period of development or transision from childhood

to adolescence. Although there are some different arguments on the age classification, young adolescent learner usually are those students who are in age group of ten up to fifteen years old (Barddock and McPartland, 1993).

3. Main characters

There are many kinds of character in literary work, one of them is the main character. Main character is a major character in the story that receives most attention or can be referred as the central character. In this novel, the researcher found there are three main characters who the existence matter the most in the storyline, they are Ally Nickerson, Albert Dubois and Keisha Almond. The analysis of this study focused on those three main characters.

4. Methods of Characterization

Methods of characterization refers to the way of author in presenting the characterization of the character (Kenney, 1966). In other words, it is the tool which is used or is chosen by the author in revealing the character's dispositions or characterization.

5. Techniques of Characterization

Techniques of characterization refers to approach to carry out the methods of characterization. In this case, the researcher used Lajos (1964) theory of three dimensions of character, that approaches the character from the dimension of physical, sociological and psychological.

6. Special Traits

Traits refer to stabilities of behavior and beliefs about the enduring dispositions (Matthews, Deary, & Whiteman, 2009). Meanwhile, the special traits is the unique traits possessed by the character which make her or him different from other characters.

7. Physical Appearance

Physical appearance describes what the characters in the story looks like including what physical features that can be seen in a person such as gender or sex, skin tone, hairstyles, the shape of face, the eyes color, fashion style and others outward looks of person.

8. Personality Traits

Personality often used in psychology. It is a term to describe a characteristic of person with set of traits including behaviors, cognitions and emotional patterns.

9. Social Status

Social status is a person class or his/her importance in relation to other people within a society.

10. Fish in A Tree

Fish in A Tree is a New York Times best seller novel written by a former teacher-writer, Lynda Mullaly Hunt. The title referred to Albert Einstein Quotes, “Everyone is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.” Fish in A Tree follows the journey of Ally Nickerson who has tried seven schools in seven years but still could not find school interesting other than art and math. Later on, a

substitute teacher Mr. Daniel changed her mind and classrooms that being not able to read does not equal stupidity. The book is originally published in February 5th, 2015 and has achieved a Schneider Family Book Award in 2016.