

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the research context, statement of research problem, research objectives, significances of the research, scope and limitation, and definition of key terms.

A. Research Context

Language is an inseparable part of humans, can be in written form or spoken. Nurhayati (2016) stated that language is used to create a meaningful communication among human. In other words, communication is the main function of language. Language is not only means of communication, but also a method used by humans to communicate each other (Nurhayati, 2022). Literature is a creative and productive form of producing a text which has an aesthetic sense of value and reflects the social reality of society. Literature is a form of personal expression of a person in the form of experiences, feelings, ideas, thoughts, the spirit of belief in a form of concrete images that evoke charm with language tools (Sumardjo and Saini in Rokhmansyah, 2014: 2). Saryono (2009) argued that literature has the ability to record empirical-natural experiences as well as non-empirical-supernatural experiences, which means that literature is a witness to human life. Through literature, an author conveys his/her views on the life around him/her. Literature as a product of human culture contains the values of life prevailing in society. Literary background itself can reflect how people's life of a region in general. From there, humans can also learn

about cultures, life, and values are upheld by the community in the background condition.

Novel is the most popular form of literature in the world. Novel is a fiction work that is built by elements, namely intrinsic elements and extrinsic elements. Novel is also defined as an essay in the form of prose that contains a series of stories of a person's life with other people around by highlighting the character and nature of the actor (Nurgiyantoro, 2010:10). Novel is able to present the character development, complicated social situations, relationships involving many or few characters, and various complicated events that occurred some time ago in more detail (Stanton, 2012: 90). Therefore, in the novel the process of the journey and development of the character can be seen in more detail so the reader knows how the character solves the problem at hand. Various themes are raised in the novel such as family, friendship, romance and so on. The author conveys values and messages through writing that is processed as attractive as possible.

Happiness is something that everyone wants to achieve. Even, it can be said that happiness is the purpose of human life. Plato (2000) stated that happiness is the ultimate goal of humans which must be pursued through true knowledge. Happiness is the fulfillment of desires. According to Aristotle (1999), happiness is when persons achieve their goals. The purpose of human life is usually what humans do for something good, for the sake of a value, then that value is the goal. Humans make various efforts to obtain the peak of happiness. Problems in life will not stop someone from

looking for the happiness. Nurhayati (2020) stated that every novel has theme that is either declared or more frequently revealed along with the story. The theme of happiness can't be separated from the scope of literature. Many writers chose the theme of happiness in their writings as a form of human's expression and reflection of reality wrapped in more attractive style through language as the media. By studying these literary works, readers can take experiences and lessons from the writer's view about the happiness.

Study on novel is often become the subject of study because it describes about human life in the real world. However, the study often raises the negative side of human such as the study conducted by Hariadi (2004) on the psychological problems of the characters in Iwan Simatupang's novel which discusses a lot about pain, fear, loneliness, alienation and other things that are synonymous with suffering. While research with positive psychology that sees humans from the good point of view is still not widely done. There are several literary studies that examine happiness, such as the study of Nani Indrajani Tiono (2010) who examines the search for true happiness through the meaning of nature for Santiago's character in Paulo Coelho's novel *The Alchemis*; (Nelson, 2013) examines the themes of Life, Freedom, and Happiness in American life in novel *Free* by Jonathan Franzen; (Mujawazah & Pujiharto, 2015) examines Islamic morals and the nature of happiness in the novel *Ayahku (bukan) Pembohong* through a study of denotation and connotation by Roland Barthes.

Although similar studies have been conducted, but the number is not so large that researchers are interested in researching this topic, especially research that looks at humans from the positive side. In addition, the object studied is different from previous research where researchers analyze the interpretation of happiness by the main character from a novel that is newer than previous research, namely *The Midnight Library*, which was published in 2020. Not only that, the novel entitled *The Midnight Library* specifically discusses the journey to reach happiness and find the true meaning of happiness. This research is also conducted on the advice of previous researchers to further investigate about happiness represented in a novel.

To find the happiness value from the main character, researcher using positive psychology to analyze. But before that, researchers dissected this work with the study of structuralism to find out the intrinsic elements in the novel. Intrinsic elements are needed to find the background of the novel, the characters and characterizations, and the plot that the researcher uses to see the interrelationships between the elements.

The Midnight Library by Matt Haig was chosen to be studied because this is a bestseller novel where many people read this novel. In addition, this novel has received various awards such as being a winner at the Goodreads Choice Award for Best Fiction 2020 category, being a best seller book by The New York Times, being number 1 on the Sunday Times Bestseller, and being number 2 in Amazon Charts. The novel depicts a person who is filled with negativity and full of hopelessness but tries to start a new life and looking for the happiness she wants.

This novel tells the story of a girl named Nora. On one night, she wanted to end her life, suddenly she was in "*The Midnight Library*", the library between life and death, with millions of books containing the story of her life if she was able to make a different decision. In this library, Nora tried to find a new life that she hoped and loved the most. Nora felt that her life was so bad. She had no reason to live anymore. Nothing she did run well. Every step she took was a mistake, every decision was a disaster. Nora felt that she had disappointed many people, including herself. But everything will change. Nora gets the chance to be able to live her own version of life, and gets the happiness that Nora has wanted all along. This book raises family problems that often occur in the real life. Therefore, this novel deserves to be studied.

This research aims to examine interpretation of happiness by the main character and also examine the indicators represent the main character happiness in the novel *The Midnight Library* by Matt Haig. The methodology used in this research is descriptive qualitative method. The data in this research are units of lingual, words, phrases, clauses, and sentences in narrative form. The data of this research is collected by analyzing documents (library research). The results of this study are expected to find the interpretation of happiness by the main character and also find the indicators represent the main character's happiness in the novel. By understanding the meaning presented by the writer in his novel, whether it is present implicitly or explicitly, it will help readers or literary

connoisseurs more easily understand the meaning of happiness which is the goal of everyone's life.

B. Statement of the Research Problems

Based on the context of the research above, the research questions that formulated by the researcher are as follow:

1. How does the main character interpret happiness in the novel *The Midnight Library* by Matt Haig?
2. What indicators do represent the main character happiness in the novel *The Midnight Library* by Matt Haig?

C. Objectives of the Research

Based on the statement of research problems, the purpose of this study are:

1. Finding the main character interpretation of happiness in the novel *The Midnight Library* by Matt Haig.
2. Finding indicators represent the main character's happiness in the novel *The Midnight Library* by Matt Haig.

D. Significance of the Research

Research conducted should have clear objectives and broad benefits. As a result of the effort, this research needs to be explained in terms of benefits.

These benefits are in the form of theoretical significances and practical significances. The significances of the study are:

1. Theoretical Significance

This research is expected to contribute ideas about the analysis of happiness in terms of positive psychology. Therefore, this research is expected to be a reference and consideration for similar studies. At the same time it can be used as a reference source for studies that take almost the same objects and data sources.

2. Practical significance

a. For the researcher

For the researcher, this research can add the knowledge of the researcher about the novel especially about interpretation of happiness.

b. For educator and student

For educator and student, this research can increase knowledge about the concept of happiness in the novel as a form of the author's overview of the real world.

c. For general public

For general public, this research can increase knowledge of literature, especially novels. In addition, this research can also provide an overview of the interpretation of happiness.

E. Scope and Limitation of the Research

To prevent the discussion from being too broad and deviating from the research objectives, this research only focuses on a novel entitled *The Midnight Library* by Matt Haig which has a story context regarding the search for the value of happiness by the main character so this study only focuses on the structural context as well as literature psychology. The limitation of this research is the lack of secondary data sources from previous studies that discuss related topics that can be used as references.

F. Definition of Key Terms

The definition of key terms is needed to avoid misinterpretation and misunderstanding, some terms used in this study are defined as follows:

1. Interpretation of Happiness

The interpretation of happiness is the way a person understands, interprets, and responds to feelings of happiness in his life. The interpretation of happiness in this context is the meaning of happiness according to the point of view of the main character, namely Nora Seed in the novel *The Midnight Library*.

2. Novel

Novels are the most popular form of literature in the world. This form of literature is the most widely printed and the most widely circulated, because of its broad community power in society. In this study, the definition of novel is an imaginative literary work that tells about the problems of the character's lives which there is a value to be conveyed.

3. The Midnight Library

The Midnight Library is a fantasy novel by Matt Haig, a well-known British author. The novel *The Midnight Library* was first published on August 13, 2020 by Canongate Books. This novel tells of Nora Seed who explores the Midnight Library to find answers to what really makes life worth living. After a life filled with regrets and failures, she seeks the happiness she really wants in life.

4. Main Character

The main character referred to in this study is the character that appears most often in *The Midnight Library* novel, in which the point of view of this character is analyzed by the researcher. In the novel *The Midnight Library* by Matt Haig, the main character is a character named Nora Seed whose life is full of regrets and failures.