

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of the background of the research, the reason for choosing the topic, the research question, the aim of the research, the scope of the research, significance of the research, methodology, clarification of terms, and the organization of the paper.

1.1. Background of the Research

The relationship between parents and children is the closest relationship that people have in a group called family. Family can be defined as a group of persons who are related to each other either by blood or judicial bonds and constitute a unit of coexistence called family (Garcimartin, 2012). In family, there are two critical concepts related to family, which are structure and function. Lane (2009) (as cited in Bujor, 2014) states that an ideal family consists of three elements: father, mother, children – who are in harmony with one another. The harmony means each family member contributes something crucial to the home which seemingly cannot be contributed by any substitutes. This statement explains that an ideal family consists of father, mother, and children and their roles in the family cannot be replaced by someone else.

The relationship between parents and children is often written as a theme in literary works. The theme about parents and children can be found in a story of novel with a variety of stories that tell about family relationship. In the late Victorian age, there is a book entitled *The History of the Fairchild Family* by Mary Martha Sherwood (1775-1851) which was the first realistic tale for young people. The book tells the importance and effects of religious education, where Mr Fairchild uses some methods to bring his children into a state of grace (religious). Another story is entitled *The Poor Little Rich Girl* (1912) by Eleanor Gates that describes how the seven-year-old daughter of a busy, wealthy couple who live in a big city New York suffers at the

hands of her nurse, and misses to be with her parents. The other book is Philippa Pearce's work entitled *A Dog So Small* (1962) which is a story about young Ben who is desperate for a dog and he finally creates an invisible one. He lives surrounded by a family who are affectionate and care of him; however, his parents do not understand that he really wants a dog and only his grandfather who understands a little of the longing that he conceals. These three stories are the family stories with different issues and conflicts, yet have similar theme which is about the relationship between children and parents. Avery (1975) tells the fact that many writers portray the idea of the family story to reveal a wide range of problems that young people may face in the society (as cited in Hunt, 2004). According to this fact, there are varieties of children-parents' issues and many authors write these issues into their works to show what kind of problems that young people may face in reality. There is also a fact that even in the late Victoria era, the expectations of parents toward the child's behavior and future are written.

Those examples of books that tell the stories about parents and children are described in realistic situations or real life situation. The novel that also describes the story of parent-child relationship in a realistic situation is a novel entitled *My Life as a Stunboy* by Janet Tashjian (2011). After reading the novel, the researcher finds that the problems that occur in this parent-child relationship in the novel are the problems that often happen in real life. However, the researcher finds the interesting part on the variety of methods that the parents in this novel used to deal with the problems in their relationship with their child. For instance, the main problem in the novel is parents' expectations towards the child's behavior, but the child has his own point of view about what he wants to do, even though he knows that his parents have the right to get involved in his activity. This example of problem leads the researcher to analyze this parent-child relationship using power relations theory. Therefore, the background or the purpose of this research is to find the meaning of power relations in parent-child relationship.

Furthermore, it is difficult to find studies on parent-child relationship in literature. Most studies focus on the power relation between the protagonist and social relationship. For instance, the study entitled *Power Dynamics in Ahmad Tohari's novel: The Dancer* that is conducted by Savitri (2016), shows the power relation that focus on the protagonist and society. Another study entitled *Women's Power in Maureen Mc. Hugh's Three Short Stories: A Feminist Approach* by Gultom (2016), which shows the power in feminist perspective. The portrayal of power relation between parents and children in the novel *My Life as a Stuntboy* can be analyzed from the perspectives of parents and the child, because both the parents and the child had different ways of thinking and different ways of handling a situation that led them into conflicts and disagreements. Thus, this study focuses on the conflicts between parents and the child that show how power appears in this relationship to get the meaning of the parents-and-children power relation. In addition, this research is conducted to see the meaning from the portrayal of parents and children relationship in the novel and relates it with the society's point of view.

1.2. Research Question

This research attempts to analyze the network of power relation, specifically power relation in Janet Tashjian's *My Life as a Stuntboy* novel and answer the following question:

- What meanings can be made from the portrayal of parent – child power relation in the novel?

1.3. Aim of the Research

The aim of this research is to explore the issue of power relation that appears in *My Life as a Stuntboy* novel and to analyze the meanings that can be made from the portrayal of parents and children power relation (the main characters) in the novel.

1.4. Scope of the Research

The analysis of this research will be focused on the main characters which are parents and the child in Janet Tashjian's novel *My Life as a Stuntboy*. The analysis will be supported by including briefly several characters in the novel that have influence towards the construction of power relation.

1.5. Significance of the Research

This analysis is expected to create useful contribution to critical analysis of prose and adolescent fiction, and as the new finding of study in issue of power relations. Specifically, this study will explore more adolescent literature and issue of power relation in parents and children relationship seen from the conflicts that appear in the story. This study will also discover Janet Tashjian's perspective of the meaning in the parents and children's power relation.

1.6. Research Methods

This research applies the descriptive qualitative method which is conducted by collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the data to draw conclusion about the meanings of the portrayal of parent – child power relation. In conducting qualitative descriptive method, Saledowski (2000) explains that the qualitative descriptive method is employed by collecting the data from the novel as the text, conducting the analysis through the words and events that are presented, and revealing the results of the analysis. The qualitative descriptive method is chosen to identify the conflicts that occur in parents and children relationship and to reveal power that appears through the conflicts. Furthermore, the data are taken from a novel entitled *My Life as a Stuntboy* which is written by Janet Tashjian and published in 2011. This novel is the second book of "The My Life Series" by Janet Tashjian, and *My Life as a Stuntboy* is chosen as the object of the research.

1.6.1. Data Collection

The first step in collecting the data is doing intensive close reading. Then the researcher identifies the conflicts that appear in the novel and the reaction towards the conflicts. For instance, conflict between parents and the child about studying, the conflict between parents and the child about adopted animal, and the conflict between parents and the child about the child's wish of hobby, and identify the main characters' reactions toward those conflicts. The context of conflicts are found in forms of dialogue (verbal interactions), the characters' reactions (including physical reaction), and narration in the text seen from both parents and the child's point of view.

Afterwards, the researcher classifies the types of conflicts by finding the sources of those conflicts. For instance, the source of conflict about studying that results the child's reaction towards parents' certain commands and the parents' reaction toward the child's wish. The, discover the resolution about each conflict.

After labeling the categories of the conflicts, it can be seen the expectations that parents have toward every conflicts. The parents' expectations are related to the child's future as part of a civil society that demands the child to be responsible, and the child's future that is affected by the society. The meaning appears because of the conflicts, and the conflicts are the exercise of the power so that the meaning and power relations can be seen from the conflicts between parents and the child.

1.6.2. Data Analysis

The collected data on the conflicts were found from the novel are analyzed by focusing on the point of views of parents and the child that triggered the conflicts. Then, the conflicts are analyzed as the process of how power relations in parents and children work in the novel. Parents' power is proven based on the three conflict resolutions from research conducted by Gracia-Ruiz et al. in 2012. The three conflict

resolutions consist of three methods which are negotiation, dominance, and withdrawal. However, the resolution of the conflicts between parents and the child in this novel is done by the parents' dominance (power) through a negotiation, so that negotiation and dominance methods are implemented in data analysis. Then, the power is associated with Foucault's (1973/1974) sovereign power and discipline power (1977), which explained that power that occurred in family were sovereignty and discipline. Later on, this analysis of conflict can produce the meaning from the parents and children power relations.

1.7. Clarification of Key Terms

1. Adolescent Literature

As a body of literature, Coats (2010) states that adolescent literature involves the sort of tensions between the physical bodies and emotional lives of its intended audience; adolescents or young adult (as cited in Coats, Ensico, Jenkins, & Wolf, 2010).

2. Conflict

Bell (2004) states that a form of an action is dialogue, conflict is there as part of dialogue to deliver the information of the character's thoughts or words and as the tension that can affect the reader's reaction.

3. Power Relations

According to Foucault (1982) the term "power" designates relationship between partners, what defines a relationship of power is that there is an action which does not act directly and immediately on others.

1.8. Organization of Paper

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Chapter II: Theoretical Framework

This chapter discusses the theories used to analyze the research and to answer the research question.

Chapter III: Research Methodology

This chapter discusses the research method, research procedures, research context, and techniques of the data collection and data analysis.

Chapter IV: Findings and Discussion

This chapter discusses the analysis and interpretation of the data collected.

Chapter V: Conclusion

This chapter consists of the final conclusion and suggestion which are related to the research.