

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is a brief introduction of this research. It covers background of this research, statement of problem, aim of study, research method, and organization of paper.

1.1. Background

Figurative language is often associated with the terms literal meaning and intended meaning. Gluckbergs (2001) states that in figurative language, there is a difference between intended meanings and literal meanings of the words. Moreover, Littel (2002: 1225) defines figurative language as “language that communicates ideas beyond the literal meanings of the words”. It means by using figurative language, a writer or speaker is able to hide the intended meanings beyond the literal meanings of a text. In literature, figurative language can help readers to stay interested in reading a literary works. Figurative language can awaken the imagination of the readers. This is perhaps, one of the ways of helping readers stay interested in reading a literary work.

There are many forms of figurative language. Robert and Kreuz (1994, cited in Katz 1998: 3) state that the most prominent and most studied forms of figurative language are metaphor, irony, and indirect request. They define metaphor as “an explicit or implicit comparison which is literally false”. For example, a man says to his wife “you are the sun that brightens my life”. The



man's statement 'wife is a sun' is literally false because his lover is not the sun but a human. In this case, the man compares his wife to the sun which can brighten the world. From this comparison, the man implicitly emphasizes how important his wife is because she is the one who can make him happy.

The next form of figurative language stated by Robert and Kreuz (1994, noted in Katz 1998) is irony. Irony is defined as statement which is contrary to intended meaning. This form can be found , for instance, when a crying girl says "what a good friend" after her friend insults her. The girl's statement is contrary to her intended meaning. Someone who insults his or her friend is not a good friend, and the girl exactly knows it which can be seen from her crying telling her friend insult has hurted her. Therefore, the girl's statement is not what she intends to tell. According to Gibbs and Colston (2007), "irony is a device of both mind and language for acknowledging the gap between what is expected and what is observed". In relation to literature, irony spices up a literary work by adding unexpected twists and allowing the readers to become more involved with the characters and plot. Moreover, irony is usually used to add a deeper level of meaning in order to make the readers think about the nature of life and the surprises it has in store for all of us (Littel, 2002: 543).

Idiom is the next forms of figurative language. Robert and Kreuz (1994, noted in Katz 1998) state that "idiom is conventionalized expression in which the intended meaning often is difficult or impossible to recover from the words making up the expression". For example, people say "kick the bucket" which literally means to die. It is a conventionalized expression which people, in

general, know the intended meaning of this expression. However, it is difficult to explain the reason why the words “kick the bucket” are interpreted as to die.

The last form of figurative language is indirect request. Robert and Kreuz (1994, noted in Katz 1998) argue that indirect request is a request phrased as a non-request. For instance, a man who intends to borrow money from his friend may say “Have you got a dollar?”. The man does not literally request his friend to lend him money, but both of them understand that this kind of question means the man intends to borrow money from his friend.

Relevant to the above discussion of figurative language, in this research the writer focused on the use of irony in a literary work. The use of irony in literature has been practiced for a long time. A famous example can be found when Jane Austen employs irony in *Emma* when she tells that Emma is so busy trying to match-make Mr. Knightley and Harriet which at the same time she realizes that she loves Mr. Knightley. After trying so long to find a match for Harriet, she hopes that this match will not take place.

The writer analysed irony applied in a novel entitled *The Messenger* by Markus Zusak which is a young adult fiction. There are more possibilities to employ irony in this genre because as stated by Cadden (2000: 1) that “novels constructed by adults to stimulate an authentic adolescent’s voice are inherently ironic because the so-called adolescent voice is never and never can be truly authentic”.

The writer assumes that irony play a crucial role in building the novel as an interesting novel. The writer is interested in finding out how irony adds a different meaning to the novel. To investigate it, the writer identified the types of irony presented in the novel and analysed the way irony helps readers to reveal the meaning intended by the author of the novel.

1.2. Statement of Problem

This research focuses on identifying irony presented in Markus Zusak's *The Messenger*. The witer believes that irony play important role in this novel. The writer assumes that the irony influences the meaning of the novel.

In line with the statements above, the writer formulates folowing research questions:

- What types of irony are presented in the novel?
- How does context help the construction of irony?
- What does the irony presented in the novel mean?

1.3. Aims of Study

Based on the problems of the research, this reseach attempts to identify irony presented in the novel *The Messenger* by Markus Zusak. Moreover, this reseach is aimed to reveal the role of irony in influencing the meaning of the novel.

In line with the research questions, this research is intended to:

- Identify the types of irony presented in the novel.
- Figure out how context helps the construction of irony.
- Reveal the meanings of the irony presented in the novel.

1.4. Research Method

Research methods discusses the method adopted in this research. Furthermore, it also explains the data collection and data analysis.

1.4.1. Research Design

The research is a qualitative research employing textual analysis. In this research, the writer found out irony presented in the novel. To find out the irony, the writer paid attention to five clues signifying irony which are proposed by Booth (1975). The writer categorized the irony into three categories proposed by Littel (2002) which are verbal irony, situational irony, and dramatical irony. After categorizing the data, the writer descriptively explained why the data is considered as irony. The writer focused on the context that help to construct certain occurence as irony by applying theory of context by Dijk (2008). Finally, the writer revealed the meanings of the irony presented in the novel which are influenced by the context.

1.5. Organization of Paper

This paper is organized into five chapters. Chapter I discusses introduction divided into five issues which are background, statement of problem, aims of

study, research method, and organization of paper. Chapter II presents some reviews of relevant theory to present study including explanation about figurative language, definition of irony, types of irony, steps in identifying and reconstructing irony, and context for irony. Chapter III deals with detail description of methodology employed in present study. Chapter IV is Finding and Discussion chapter which presents the data collected from source of research and elaborates the analysis of the collected data. Chapter V draws the conclusion of present study. Furthermore, this chapter also proposes some suggestions.

