

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the methodology which is used in this study by elaborating the research design, procedures, question, and the synopsis of the novel being analyzed in the study. As mentioned in Chapter Two, this study uses journey as a tool to define life purpose.

3.1 Research Design

Using a descriptive qualitative method, this study employs the content analysis approach which is framed with theories from Bodart, Barrineau, and Flamino (2011) in order to answer the research questions which are “What kinds of journey are presented in *Aleph* by Paulo Coelho?” and “How does the journey shape the main character’s life purpose in *Aleph* by Paulo Coelho?”. Content analysis of the novel focuses on the description and interpretation which leads people to have different ways of looking at reality (Hancock et al., 2007). Moreover, White and Marsh (2006) state that content analysis is a flexible method for analyzing, describing, and interpreting texts and other written artifacts of society.

Content analysis deals with making validation between the objective of the inferences and the messages on the explicit material. It is supported by Krippendorff (1980) who argues that content analysis as a research method also has function to make replicable and valid inferences from data to their context. Prasad (2008) also explains that content analysis is described as “the study of the content with reference to the meanings, contexts, and intentions contained in messages”.

Content analysis is not only used for analyzing novel. Content analysis is also useful for examining trends and patterns in document. According to Patton (2002), the common sources of data in content analysis method include interviews, observations and documents. It is supported by Prasad (2008) that content analysis

also refers to any procedure for assessing the relative extent to which specified message or document. Document analysis is a part of qualitative research in which documents are explained by the researcher to product voice and meaning around an assessment topic (“Administration methods”, 2010).

Woodrum (1984) also argues that content analysis remains an underutilized research method with great potential for studying belief, organizations, attitudes, and human relations. Furthermore, he states that content analysis has limitations to analyze the bodies of the text. The limitation is due to unfamiliarity with the method and to its historic isolation. Therefore, it is also considered as a non-reactive method of social research.

Although content analysis has limitation, it may be seen as a suitable method where the content of the message shapes to draw conclusions about the content. It is caused by the consideration of content analysis as a method of observation instead of asking people to respond the question. Moreover, content analysis deals with the essential method to decide which textual evidence in the novel can be used to answer the research questions. Therefore, the content analysis method is chosen for this research to discover the main character’s life purpose through journey.

Content analysis has some principles. Content analysis has to deal with people’s live experiences, events, or situations (Patton, 2002). He claims that these principles are often described with rich details, meaningful social and historical contexts and experiences. Furthermore, the goal is to uncover emerging themes, patterns, concepts, insights and understanding. It can be said that this principle becomes essentials to use content analysis in analyzing novel.

According to Prasad (2008) content analysis can deal with the data in form of word and paragraph. This principle of content analysis may be used in analyzing the bodies of the text. It is supported by Krippendorff (1980) who claims that the material for the content analysis can be letters, newspaper, podcast, or short stories. He also states three principles: objective, systematic and generalized. First, objectivity pursues to enable different researchers to obtain the same results from the same

documents. Second, systematization includes content to some rules which supports the research. Alternatively, this principle can be called as data elimination. Last, generalization makes the result of the research can be applied to other similar situations.

In addition, Woodrum (1984) argues content analysis offers objective guidelines in coding the data. It becomes a principle in the process of analysis in order to develop content analysis due to the unfamiliarity method which is isolated from mainstream social science because of its inherent limitation. In conclusion, the principle of content analysis becomes essential to be concerned in order to make the method beneficial for analyzing the study.

Content analysis has several steps in the process of analyzing the text. There are two steps in using content analysis according to Patton (2002). He explains this method often use an analytic framework, such as linked concept and classification based on source data to answer research questions from only interviews data collection. These steps can be followed to reach the aim of the study.

Prasad (2008) also states there are six steps in using content analysis. First, in *the formulation of the research questions or objectives*, the researcher can ensure that the analysis is focused on the aspects of content which is relevant for the research by making a clear statement of the research questions or objective. Second, the researcher locates relevant communication content to answer the research questions and to determine the time period to be revealed in *the selection of communication content and sample*. These selections are depicted as a typical description of samples in content analysis specifies a topic area and time period.

In the next step, *developing content (subject) categories*, the researcher states the boundaries of the units into content that will be coded for analysis. In other words, the research is based on the research questions and should be attached in a review of relevant literature and related studies. Firstly, the researcher examines a small-scale unit to result the possible identification of content categories into material that can be coded. Chadwick et al. (1984) defines “categories must be mutually

exclusive so that a word, a paragraph or a theme belongs in one and only one category”.

Fourth, in *finalizing units of analysis*, the researcher categorizes the units of analysis into a single word, a symbol, a character etc. There are two kinds of unit analysis: Recording units and context units. Recording units are the specific part of content in which the events of a fact are counted or can be placed in different categories. According to Nachmias (1976), “five major recording units have been used frequently in content analysis research: words or terms, themes, characters, paragraphs, and items” (p.135). In this research, a sentence or a paragraph in *Aleph* becomes a unit. Next, context units are larger than recording units in order to characterize the recording units (Berelson, 1946). Alternatively, if the coding unit is a word, then the context unit may be the sentence or the paragraph in which the word appears

Fifth, *to prepare a coding schedule, pilot testing and checking inter coder reliabilities*, the researcher defines categories and preparing coding schedule simultaneously. Next, test coding of the material is a crucial step because it can help reveal the inconsistencies in the category. Lastly, in *analyzing the collected data*, the researcher describes the profile of the main categories and the analysis can move to conduct more complex such as comparing the data.

To sum up, the process starts from deciding method to research topic in form of question, deciding to relate the units of analysis, developing content categories, sampling the data, managing code, checking the code for the findings and analyzing the material into the result.

This study has the following six steps that proposed by Prasad (2008). These steps are chosen because this study based on the research questions “What kinds of journey are presented in *Aleph* by Paulo Coelho?” and “How does the journey shape the main character’s life purpose in *Aleph* by Paulo Coelho?” and communication content in *Aleph* novel that relates to the second step which is selection of communication content and sample. Also, the content categories developed for this

research on what kinds of journey and what kinds of meaning of life in *Aleph*. In *Aleph*, the frequency of the types of journey can be counted to reveal the meaning in order to answer the research questions. Therefore, the next steps are finalizing the units of analysis, preparing a coding schedule, and analyzing the collected data. These steps can be applied to a sentence or a paragraph in *Aleph* to be a unit and the number of unit in the same category that will be divided by the total number of the unit code to investigate the result.

In addition, the findings can be presented in the form of tables. The detail of analysis is presented in the Research Procedures part. Furthermore, this research looks for the meaning from the presence of certain words, terms, phrases, paragraphs or certain concepts within the bodies of text. This research also has a relation with literal and metaphorical journey, and the definition of literal and metaphorical journey from the previous study and journals are used as a tool to interpret the data.

3.2 Research Procedures

The procedure of this research is divided into two steps. Firstly, the data are taken from Paulo Coelho's *Aleph*. The novel is chosen because it has different ways in describing life purpose through journey and the references come from various belief, religions, and symbol of life by using first-person narrative (the main character's point of view) in delivering the story. Data collection focuses on the main character's views and other characters' views towards the main character.

After the data from the novel are collected, then they are analyzed and interpreted to define life purpose by using journey proposed by Bodart et al. (2011) as a tool for analyzing. The steps of the analysis are as follows:

1. Doing close reading of the novel and find what kinds of journey, whether it is literal or metaphorical from the main character's experience and find the views of the main character towards him about life and the views of the other characters towards the main character.

2. Selecting the categories from the thoughts, verbal and physical actions of the main character and the interaction with other characters.
3. Analyzing the textual evidence in order to define meaning of life which is based on other research and journals as a tool for this research.
4. Interpreting the results by using relevant theories to define life purpose of the main character.
5. Concluding the findings and making several suggestions.

3.3 Sample of Data Analysis

The data is presented in the form of table 3.1 that involved step two and three from the research procedure:

No.	Incidents in the Novel	Kinds of journey	Kinds the meaning of life	Page
1.	'I'm going to tell you what I once felt," J. adds. "When I was young, I was dazzled by all the things life could offer me. I thought I was capable of achieving all of them. When I got married, I had to choose just one path, because I needed to support the woman I love and my children. When I was forty-five and a highly successful executive, I saw my children grow up and leave home, and I thought that, from then on, everything would be a mere repetition of what I had already experienced. That was when my spiritual search began. I'm a disciplined man and I put all my energies into that. I went through periods of enthusiasm and unbelief, until I reached the stage you are at now.'	Metaphorical <i>(Master J. tells his journey of life)</i>	Religion/spirituality <i>(A lesson from Master J. about his experience in life)</i>	6
2.	My life has changed a lot since the far-off year of 1986, when my pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela brought me face to face with my destiny, or 'God's plan'. Three years later, I followed the so-called Road to Rome, in the area where we were now; it was a painful, tedious process lasting seventy days, and which involved me enacting, each morning, all the absurd things I had dreamed about	Literal	Achievement/work	10

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JOURNEY AND LIFE PUROPOSE IN ALEPH BY PAULO COELHO

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the night before (I remember standing at a bus stop for four hours, during which nothing of any importance happened). Since then, I have done everything that my work demanded of me. After all, it was my choice and my blessing. I started travelling like a mad thing.

In this table, the events within the novel are analyzed by relating them to the context of the incidents, and the way of portraying those incidents is also described along with the pages and the kinds of journey and meaning of life.

3.4 Synopsis of the Novel

Aleph is a novel which was written by Paulo Coelho and first published in 2011. Coelho is a Brazilian author who was born in 1947. In 1986, he did the pilgrimage to Saint James of Compostela in Santiago and later documented in *The Pilgrimage* novel. Coelho has also written fifteen novels, including *The Alchemist* which became one of the best selling Brazilian books of all time. Other novels entitled *Brida*, *Eleven Minutes*, and his last books after *Aleph*, *Manuscript Found in Accra*. During March until June 2006, Coelho traveled to celebrate the 20th anniversary of his pilgrimage around the globe and took the famous Trans-Siberian train. During the journey, he launched his blog “Walking the Path” that becomes a pioneer of idea of *Aleph*. *Aleph* was written in Coelho’s native language which is Portuguese.

Aleph is already translated into more than forty languages. This novel also became a bestselling novel in Brazil. This research uses the second edition of *Aleph* published in 2012 by Harper Collins Publisher. The novel is translated into English by Margaret Jull Costa in 2011.

This novel tells about the main character “I”, the writer who traveled around Trans-Siberian train to answer his doubt about faith. The journey started from Africa, and then crossing Europe and Asia. In 1986, the main character “I” was enjoyed with his work that he can travel around the globe until there was a day when he said

enough to do the monotonous routine. After that, his doubt and his dissatisfaction in life started from this way. He started to ask what he is doing now and asked to his master J.

Master J. advises the main character to become the “King of [his] Kingdom” which means the main character needs to do is to re-conquer his kingdom. If he can understand what is going on in the world, he can understand what is going on inside himself. After that, the main character “I” sets off onto a journey. The story and lesson about the search of life are mostly involved his publisher and a girl whom he meets in the journey (Hilal is a girl whom he loved in a different incarnation). The main character experiences *The Aleph* for the first time in the train looking into the eyes of Hilal and discovers the details about the past life even though at the first time, the existence of Hilal is not appreciated by the publisher. Another character that takes a role in this novel is Yao, the translator in the journey.

This novel tells in length about love and forgiveness. Lesson in life such as reincarnation and related theories are presented in this novel. It also involves deep and thought-provoking spiritual elements. Besides, Coelho also puts love and debatable subject such as the reincarnation and the affairs between the main character and Hilal. However, the meeting with Hilal changes the equation of his life.

There is a part when the clairvoyant declares the prediction towards the main character that causes the plot of the story. Then, the main character “I” embarks on a journey as an author which means he is in the book’s signing sessions, has conversations with his readers, etc. In the end, he finds out the rituals, history, revenge, and redemption in order to answer his question about life. In addition, the main character also warns that any process in life can have dramatic and disastrous consequences.