

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of seven sections including background, formulation of problems, aims of the study, significance of the study, research methodology, and organization of the paper.

1.1 Background

In part of our daily experiences, we often find some discourses like “The Whites are superior to their opponents, the Blacks”, or “Such things are prior to men than to women.” Some realities like these are often taken for granted because they have been the part of our culture and history. For example, the parents hold control over their children and children’s acts are determined by them. Those realities have been formed in our societies and considered as general facts.

These oppositions are constructed in the society. Derrida (1991) calls them as the binary oppositions; especially those differ quite greatly from their opponents, philosophically or historically. Take the example of *speech over writing, presence over absence, fullness over emptiness, meaningful over meaningless, mastery over submission, life over death* or other oppositions. For Derrida, these kinds of oppositions have emerged some image that the first terms are somehow represented as primary, more original, authentic, and

superior, while the second are thought as secondary, derivative, or even "parasitic" to the first terms.

However, these kinds of oppositions do not need to take such great difference in meaning. For Derrida, who generates the *deconstruction theory*, the oppositions must be inverted, and then the traditionally subordinate terms must be privileged (Wikipedia Online). However, he also argues that these oppositions cannot simply be transcended. It is because they have been constructed for thousands of years in the culture. It would be, as Derrida argues, difficult to destroy these distinctions.

Deconstruction seeks to highlight on these distinctions and find a way in which both oppositions can be seen to be equal in meaning. This theory is needed to compensate the power imbalance that is contained in one term of the oppositions. Culler (1997: 126) suggests:***

...to deconstruct an opposition means to show that it is not natural and inevitable but a construction, produced by discourses that rely upon it, this study is conducted in attempt to dismantle it and reinscribe it—that is, not destroy it but give it a different structure and functioning.

First of all, it is necessary to give a brief information regarding the novel that is going to be observed. In brief, David as the main character in the novel is an abused child of his mother. His childhood was perfect before he reached eight years old. It happened before his mother turned to be an abusive mother, who was once a very loving mother. In an increasing hatred to David, she took control over David's life. She determined whether David deserved a dine or not. At the most tragic of all, she determined whether he deserved his name and identity as

one of the darling children in the family. His identity had been taken away as he was considered as “meaningless” or as “something” because he was called an “it”.

Culler argues that the identity of a *self* should be regarded as “something inner and unique, something that is prior to the acts it performs” (1997: 108). Given the treat like this, the self should has control over him/her self, not that other people who do so. Kierkegaard once argues that the meaning of a full life can only be reached by the turning to the subjectivity, and by giving attention to what our heart says. His thinking can be formulated as, “I choose, therefore I exist” (Tjaya, 2004). It shows that to be an authentic self one should choose (means that s/he takes control over her/him self).

The theory of deconstruction, therefore, is used in this study to reverse the binary opposition presented in the text that mantle the identity of David Pelzer, and to replace or compensate a system that does not assume a posture of superiority. Therefore, at the end of the study, the new identity of the main character in *A Child Called 'It'* can be found through deconstruction.

1.2 Formulation of Problems

This study is conducted in answering the following question:

- What is the deconstructed identity of David Pelzer in the novel *A Child Called 'It'*?

The following questions are used to guide the main question above:

1. What are the binary oppositions presented in the text?
2. How these binary oppositions are deconstructed?

1.3 Scope of the Problems

The study will be limited in deconstructing the identity of David Pelzer that has been constructed in the novel entitled *A Child Called "It"* by analyzing the binary oppositions found in the text.

1.4 Aims of the Study

The study is expected to figure out the deconstructed identity of David Pelzer in the novel *A Child Called 'It'*. In order to answer the question of the study, the binary oppositions are investigated and examined through deconstruction.

1.5 Significance of the Study

There are many researchers who have conducted the research concerning the theory of Deconstruction. There are also many journals and articles concerning both deconstruction theory and the issue on identity. This study is expected to be the part of them that especially examines about the deconstruction theory and identity.

1.6 Research Methodology

This research will use the methodology as follows.

1. Research Design
2. Research Data
3. Data Analysis

The explanations of those above are presented below.

1.6.1 Research Design

This research will be conducted using a descriptive method. Narbuko and Achmadi have given the definition of descriptive method as follows:

A descriptive research is a research that tries to narrate the solving for problems existed according to the data. It thus carries out the data, analyze and interpret it. It can be comparative or correlative. (2005: 44. *Author's translation*)

1.6.2 Research Data

The data of the study would come from a close reading of the novel. The writer will need to have some relevant information to be analyzed, namely: kinds of binary oppositions and how they are deconstructed. Various kinds of literature concerning this matter are of assistance to this research.

1.6.3 Data Analysis

Once the data is collected, it will be analyzed with the theory of deconstruction generated by Jacques Derrida and the focus will be given to the binary oppositions presented in the text to find the answer for the research

question. Since the data is in the form of text, the researcher believes that this method would be appropriate.

1.6.3.1 Application of the Derridanean Deconstructionist Theory

The analysis is conducted by way of deconstruction, i.e. by following the steps below:

- Noticing the centrality of the central terms of the binary oppositions, then attempted to *subvert* the central terms so that the marginalized terms could become central.
- Subverting the privileged terms by revealing how the repressed, marginalized terms be the central as well.
- Placing both terms of the opposition in a new, non-hierarchical, non-stable meaning.

1.7 Organization of the Paper

This research will be organized as follows.

CHAPTER I

This chapter consists of Introduction, which discusses Background, Formulation of Problems, Scope of the Study, Aims of the Study, Significance of the Study, Research Methodology, and Organization of the Paper.

CHAPTER II

This chapter elaborates the theoretical foundations, which serve as the basis for investigation of the research problems.

CHAPTER III

This chapter consists of the methodology used in the study, and further it will talk about the steps and procedures used in the research, the instruments and the reason for choosing the methodology.

CHAPTER IV

This chapter contains the writer's report of the study conducted.

CHAPTER V

This chapter reports the writer's analysis of the problems in the form of conclusion and implication or suggestions in respect with the result of the research.

