

## CHAPTER III

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The method used in this study was descriptive analysis, which was qualitative in nature. The method described, explained, and summarized the data gained.

Narbuko and Achmadi gave a definition about this 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*)

There were various kinds of techniques of gathering the data that could further be explained, analyzed, and classified by descriptive method, such as tests, interviews, observations, etc. (Surakhmad in Taurisiani, 2005).

Since the nature of this study was within literary fields, then the descriptive or qualitative method was appropriate to be used as a tool because it provides a well-grounded, rich description, and explanations of process identified. Using this method, one could find the problem solving in a systematic and factual way (Narbuko and Achmadi, 2005)

The writer used this method as it was particularly good at answering the "why", "what", or "how" questions (Moleong, 1990), and that she sought the answer of research questions conducted, which was "What is the deconstructed identity of David Pelzer in the novel *A Child Called 'It'?*"

### **3.1 The Context**

The focus of this study was to reveal the deconstructed identity of David Pelzer that was “mantled” in the novel *A Child Called 'It'* by the way of deconstruction. It also focused on the characters of David as the abused child, the Mother, the Father, and other characters in the novel that influenced the main character’s forming of identity.

*A Child Called 'It'* was written by Dave Pelzer himself (his name when he was a child is David). He was one of survivors of a tragic child abuse. In this novel, the author narrated his own story from his own perspective as an abused child of his mean, alcoholic mother. This novel was included in autobiography rather than a pure novel that was usually a fiction.

The study, then, would be conducted with a text-oriented approach, and specifically with a deconstructive reading. The writer had excluded any “extra-textual” evidences that might apply to the story such as the author, readers, social context, history, etc. Text-oriented approach gave emphasis on the inner textual evidences to reveal or gain things searched for (Klarer, 1998).

In addition, text-oriented approach was considered appropriate to conduct a research concerning written literary works such as novels or short stories. It was because this approach primarily investigated the formal and structural features of literary works, i.e. the “materiality” of the works (Klarer, 1998).

In conducting the study, deconstruction—which was similar to semiotics—used verbal signs or signifiers as the starting point of analysis, arguing that

nothing existed outside the text..." (Klarer, 1998). Therefore, this study was conducted by referring to the textual evidences in the novel.

In deconstructing the novel, the writer focused on pairs of binary opposition and their hierarchies in order to deconstruct them. Binary opposition was a concept that saw two terms as opposing to each other and where one term was privileged over the other. This concept saw one term as more subtle, and superior; the other(s) then would be marginalized. The superior term was seen as "the only reality" or meaning, while the other came after, "derivative of or even parasitic" to the first term ([www.en.wikipedia.org](http://www.en.wikipedia.org)).

### 3.2 Clarification of the Key Terms

1. **Deconstruction:** A critique of the hierarchical oppositions that have structured Western thought: *inside/outside, mind/body, literal/metaphorical, speech/writing, presence/absence, nature/culture, form/meaning*, etc. To deconstruct a text means to show that the hierarchy is unnatural and not stable. This theory emphasizes the way(s) of uncovering the implicit hierarchy and reversing it.
2. **Identity:** A way in understanding the relationship between one's subjective experiences toward the world and cultural as well as historical situations.
3. **Binary Opposition:** A concept that sees one term of an opposition as more subtle and superior; and set the other one as the marginal. The superior term is seen as "the only reality" or transcendent meaning, while

the other comes after, “derivative of or even parasitic” to the first. These oppositions are always hierarchic, proposing a power that one term is over the other. However, the meaning of one term would never arrive, since each term depends on the other for the sake of their meaning.

### **3.3 The Data Collection**

The data were collected by way of:

- Close reading of the novel.
- Taking notes focusing on words or phrases that contained one term of binary oppositions in the novel.
- Classifying the words or phrases that represented binary oppositions and put them in tables.
- Analyzing the data found by the way of deconstruction generated by Jacques Derrida.

### **3.4 The Procedures of Analyzing Data**

The analysis was conducted by following the steps of deconstruction as follows:

1. Noticing the centrality of the central terms, then attempted to *subvert* the central terms so that the marginalized terms could become central. The marginalized terms temporarily overthrew the hierarchy. This step focused on the pairs of binary opposition presented in the text.

2. Subverting the privileged terms by revealing how the repressed, marginalized meaning could just as well be central. This phase of **reversal** was needed in order to subvert the original hierarchy of the first terms over the second. Deconstruction temporarily undid or subverted the hierarchy to make the text meant the opposite of what it originally appeared to mean.
3. Both terms of the opposition were placed in a new, non-hierarchical, non-stable meaning.

