

Chapter I

Introduction

This chapter presents the introduction of the research. It encompasses the background of the study, research questions, the aims of the study, the scope of the study, research method, data collection and data analyses, clarification of terms, and organization of the paper.

1.1 Background of the Study

There are a lot of opinions when it comes to define children's literature. Mostly, as cited in Huck, et.al. (2004), children's literature assumes as a literary work that is being read by children. In Victorian ages, some children's literatures are primarily not written for children, for examples, some novels that have an abusive issue as in 'adult's literature' like *Oliver Twist* (1838) and *Redgauntlet* (1824) are appropriate for children (Roe, cited in Banerjee, 2007). Banerjee (2007) argued that books for children are also appropriate for adult; it is not only the business side on it but also it how parents and children choose his/her children's literature. While classic children's literature mostly tells about journey of children or young people and face experiences or adventures (Barr, 1998). For example, in *Adventure of Alice in the Wonderland* written by Lewis Carroll in 1865, Alice as the main character finds new experiences and adventures to the

wonderland. In Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield*, David, as the main character finds new experiences being an orphan and has to fight to keep his life. Another cannon novel written by Charles Dickens which was published in 1838 is *Oliver Twist*. It tells about an orphan boy who escapes from workhouse then travels to London and accidentally comes into a colony of criminal. So does in Hector Malot's *Nobody's Boy* which was published in 1878. Remi, as the main character in the novel is a boy who has to fight to stay alive, to make a journey to find his real family. He gets a lot of experiences and adventures on it. Its narrative depicts real life.

A genre in children's literature, where its narrative tells about real life is called realist fiction. According to Huck, et.al. (2004) "realistic fiction may be defined as imaginative writing that accurately reflects life as it was lived in the past or could be lived today." It defines that the children's literature which has rational of actuality is classified to realistic fiction. It is a possible story that presents social and personal issues in a generally human context which is the plot, characters, setting, and stories are about real human and events that could actually happened.

As pointed by Lamarque (1996), a fiction is realistic if that fiction is depicting characters, which the topic is humanity, both as individual and society in the real life (see Nikolajeva, 2003). The main characters in realistic fiction are credible, authentic, and not stereotypical, fully developed as a multi-dimensional human being, and show changes or development during the course of the story. It is strengthened by Martin (1986) who said that characters in realistic fictions

show human being and common people as natural as possible. In line with that, it can be said that realistic fiction depicts all human life dimensions; fun, sad, humorous, sensitive, thoughtful, joyful, and painful side of life.

Huck, et.al. (2004) argued that realistic fiction has some values. The first value is realistic fiction contributes children to understand their own selves. Second, it opens reader's mind of seeing the world from other perspectives and unexpected events such as human right abuses. It can develop the humaneness and a learning of human experiences. Third, realistic fiction also gives young people or readers that they are not the only one human who face problems. For example, an experience when someone gets a feeling with the opposite sex, it builds children's or reader's mind of gender issue. In the simple way, children's literature can give the way how to be better children. Next value is the realistic fiction shows some occurrences that rarely occurred. The last but not least, the realistic fiction gives eventuality illustrations either it is good or bad as the sample of human being problems.

Concern to what Huck, et.al. argued about value in realist children's literature above, it shows that realist children's fiction offers educational function. As Bakhtin said (cited in Emerson & Holquist, 2004) that children's literature that educate and show children's character development is called *Bildungsroman*. Melanie Kinchen, Paul Major, Summer Prejean and Collins Phillips III (2006); they formulated that *Bildungsroman* novel has three criteria. They defined that "it is a story of a single individual's growth, the process of maturity is long and tough, and the protagonist is accommodated into society by the lesson he has

learned.” On how the characterization of protagonist or hero is developed in the text, there does exist some characters that help the character become a hero (Emerson & Holquist, 2004). Cody (2004) stated that the *Bildungsroman* is a novel which concern with the youthful protagonist’s development as he or she matures. In *Bildungsroman* the main characters usually experiences changes such as from beggar to rich man, from homeless tramp to nobleman, or orphan to have a complete or real family thus in shift the hero space (Bakhtin, see Emerson & Holquist, 2004 p.20).

In line with idea above, “events change his destiny, change his position in life and society, but he himself remains unchanged and adequated to himself” (Emerson & Holquist, 2004). Concerning how the character’s experiences shift from hero to zero, supporting characters in *Bildungsroman* novel has a role in building and growing the hero’s characterization. Nikolajeva (2003) said that in children’s literature there are constellation of characters, characters that around and build the characterization of the main character. These characters support the main character in becoming the hero.

Hector Malot’s *Nobody’s Boy* (1878) is a children’s literature which narrative shows how Remi as the main character developed. The study focused on the analysis of Malot’s *Nobody’s Boy* (1878). The novel discusses Remi, an orphan child who was found by Barberine in Paris when he was a baby. The plot begins how Remi is oppressed by Barberin. Remi is sold to a travelling artist, Signor Vitalis, by Barberine. With Signor Vitalis, Remi faces a lot of events. Although Remi feels uncomfortable going on a journey with Signor Vitalis but

this man teaches Remi not only how to survive in life but also gives Remi a lot of precious lessons. After Signor Vitalis passes away, Remi walks only with Signor Vitalis' pets. Remi's journey becomes more complicated until Remi finds his real family, but in the end he lives a happy life.

The narrative on *Nobody's Boy* tells how Remi's life as real as possible. Staffan Bergsten (1978), a Swedish critic, assumed normally the characters in realistic literature supplied with a past: they have parents, have had childhood, grow up and develop (see Nikolajeva, 2003). In the course of the main characters development there are always supporting characters. The writer sees that in *Nobody's Boy* there are some characters that teach and build Remi's character. The characters are circumscribed the development of Remi as the main character become a protagonist or hero in the text.

The writer would like to analyze the ways in which the main character of *Nobody's Boy* developed as the hero in the novel and to discuss the constellation of characters in the novel as children's literature realistic fiction. The analysis of the novel itself as a *Bildungsroman* is framed within Bakhtin's notion of hero formulation in a realist novel and Nikolajeva's ideas on characters in children's fiction.

1.2 Research Questions

This research is attempts to answer questions as stated below:

1. In what ways is the main character developed as the hero in the novel?
2. What constellation of characters appear in the novel as children's fiction?

1.3 Aims of the study

Related to research questions, this study tries to reveal as follows:

1. To find out how the hero character is developed in the story.
2. To establish the constellation of characters appear in the novel.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This research is focused on the formation of the hero in Hector Malot's *Nobody's Boy* as a children realist novel. It is pointed to the hero narrative in a *Bildungsroman* and the constellation of characters in the novel.

1.5 Research Method

The approach used in this study is qualitative because the research relies on an analysis of specific context in a novel. Also, descriptive method is applied in order to produce a clear analysis of the text. Maxwell (1996) stated that a qualitative research design focuses on specific situations or people and emphasizes on words rather than number.

Furthermore, Alwasilah (2002) claims that qualitative research focus on certain phenomenon which has no generality but has internal validity and contextual understanding. Therefore, a descriptive qualitative research specifically deals with various personal interest and certain values. It involves personal interpretation toward the text.

1.5.1 Data Collection

The data were collected from the novel Hector Malot's *Nobody's Boy* (1878) is in the form of words, utterances, and dialogs that are purposively selected and directed to answer the research questions.

1.5.2 Data Analysis

The collected data are then categorized into how the constellation of characters situates Remi as the main character in the novel regarding to how the hero character is developed in the text. The collected data are then analyzed using theory of character and putting some children's literature criticism. In conducting the research, the following steps are taken:

1. In order to facilitate data analysis, several steps required. The stages are:
Reading and re-reading the novel *Nobody's Boy* written by Hector Malot in order to comprehend the story.
2. Compiling and categorizing textual evidence into the generic convention of a realist fiction particularly those events related to the hero narrative in children's realist fiction and the constellation of characters on it.
3. Analyzing the data with the application of relevant theories.
4. Interpreting the data.
5. Making conclusions based on evidence of the text.

This study employs of Bakhtin's notion on *Bildungsroman* and Nikolajeva's ideas on the rhetoric of characters in children's literature.

1.6 Clarification of Terms

1. Children's Literature

There are a lot of opinions when it comes to define children's literature. Mostly, as cited in Huck, et.al. (2004), children's literature assumes as a literary works that is being read by children. Children's literature usually tells stories about manners, morals, family and social relationships and the details of everyday life (Baskin and Harris, 1977).

2. Realist Fiction

According to Huck, et.al. (2004) "realistic fiction may be defined as imaginative writing that accurately reflects life as it was lived in the past or could be lived today." As pointed by Lamarque (1996), a fiction is realistic if that fiction is depicting characters which are the topic is humanity both as individual and society in the real life.

3. *Bildungsroman* Novel

Bildungsroman is a novel of education (Bakhtin, see Emerson & Holquist, 2004). Cody (2004) stated that the *Bildungsroman* is a novel which concern to the youthful protagonist's development as he or she matures.

4. Protagonist/Hero

Protagonist usually assume in a technical term common in literary criticism. Nikolajeva (2003) Protagonist that also called as leading character in a story and hero is the one who appear brave and admirable person and as the leading character too.

5. Constellation of Characters

According to Nikolajeva (2003) constellation of characters are the characters that circumscribe the children character and affect in developing or changing the characterization of the children or main character.

1.7 Organization of the Paper

This research paper is organized into five chapters in which each chapter is divided as follow:

CHAPTER I: Introduction

It contains the background of study, research questions, aims of study, scope of study, research method, data collection and data analysis, clarification of terms, and organization of paper.

CHAPTER II: Literature Review

This section comprises the theoretical foundations that underlie the study.

CHAPTER III: Research Methodology

This chapter covers the methodology of study which explains research procedures and data presentation.

CHAPTER IV: Findings and Discussion

It will evaluate and discuss the data acquired from the study. Then, the findings will be analyzed systemically.

CHAPTER V: Conclusions and Suggestions

This section contains conclusion of the study findings, along with the comparison with the related resource.

