

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the introduction of the research. It includes background of study, statement of problems, research purposes, research significance, classification of key terms, and organization of the paper.

1.1 Background

Dystopian literature has grown as a genre and continues to evolve today. It is a way in which authors share their concerns about society and humanity. They also serve to warn members of a society to pay attention to their surroundings in which they live and to be aware of how things can go from bad to worse without anyone realizing what has happened. Syafrona in Nurizqia says “the social problems that constructed in the literary work are the respond from the author to the social reality in a society” (242). It means that impossible to find a work of literature that excludes the attitudes, morale and values of the society.

Adams explains the roots of the word dystopia—dys- and -topia—are from the Ancient Greek for “bad” and “place,” and so people use the term to describe an unfavorable society in which to live. In a dystopian story, society itself is typically the antagonist; it is society that is actively working against the protagonist’s aims and desires. This oppression frequently is enacted by a totalitarian or authoritarian government, resulting in the loss of civil liberties and untenable living conditions, caused by any number of circumstances, such as

world overpopulation, laws controlling a person's sexual or reproductive freedom, and living under constant surveillance (2011).

Literature as a reflection of the society is a fact that has been widely acknowledged. Literature indeed reflects the society, its good values and its ills. In its corrective function, literature mirrors the ills of the society with a view to making the society realize its mistakes and make amends. It also projects the virtues or good values in the society for people to emulate. Literature, as an imitation of human action, often presents a picture of what people think, say and do in the society. Duhan says:

“In literature, the readers find stories designed to portray human live and action through some characters who, by their words, action and reaction, convey certain messages for the purpose of education, information and entertainment.” (1)

Literature has a major impact on the development of society. It has shaped civilizations, changed political systems and exposed injustice. Literature gives the readers a detailed preview of human experiences, allowing them to connect on basic levels of desire and emotion. Duhan states “society is this bond of fellowship between man and man through communication that the writer seeks” (2). If literature expresses social sympathies, naturally it is bound to exercise some positive influence on the readers' mind and attitude. Society reacts to literature in a living way. An inspiring work creates general influence on society. It rouses the feelings and enthusiasm for welfare.

Literature can be classified according to whether it is fiction or non-fiction and whether it is poetry or prose; it can be further distinguished according to major forms such as novel, short story or drama; and works are often categorized according to historical periods or their adherence to certain aesthetic features or expectations (genre). The genre of literary works has encompassed an extensive range of types and styles.

Chung says that dystopian literature has been characterized as fiction that presents a negative view of the future of society and humankind. Some common themes found in dystopian fiction include mastery of nature—to the point that it becomes barren, or turns against humankind; technological advances that enslave humans or regiment their lives; the mandatory division of people into castes or groups with specialized functions; and a collective loss of memory and history making mankind easier to manipulate psychologically and ultimately leading to dehumanization. Discussions regarding personal freedom, the role of free will, the value of individual resistance to dictatorships, and the power of technology to transform people's lives are also typical characteristics of dystopian fiction (2011). Clo adds that the concept of dystopian literature is to not only entertain readers, but to let the readers understand the ideas and characteristics of a dystopian society (2015).

In the dystopian future that Neal Shusterman creates in *Unwind*, “unwinding” a child is not considered murder. Unwanted teenagers (until age eighteen) can be disassembled and their organs transplanted to people who need them. It is emphasized that one hundred percent of the child will live on, though

merely in a divided state. Connor and Risa are fighting to continue their lives in an undivided state. Connor manages to use the chaos of the freeway to his advantage and escapes into the woods. Before leaving, Connor “rescues” a human tithe, Lev, and joins forces with Risa. The three of them escape together.

There are some previous studies that investigated the society in dystopian fictions. Elyda in her research entitled “The Reflection of Dystopia: A Study on Cormac McCarthy’s *The Road*” analyzed the characteristics of society in the dystopian novel, *The Road*. The characteristics of the society are poverty, pessimism, and doubt (2011). Sar and Murni in their research entitled “Political Dystopia in Suzanne Collins’ *The Hunger Games*.” The study focuses on the aspects of political dystopia in Suzanne Collins’ *The Hunger Games*. Another study was conducted by Irsic in his dissertation entitled “George Orwell: 1984 Dystopian Science Fiction or Grim Reality” analyzed the dystopian society in the novel caused by the totalitarian government (2016).

The research use topics and theory that is still rarely used as research material, particularly in this university, which is dystopia. The researcher choose *Unwind* novel because it is a good example of dystopian fiction and reflects dystopian society in its story. Due to the issue adapted in the novel, the research will be focused on the characteristics of dystopian society and the survival theme in Neal Shusterman’s *Unwind*.

1.2 Statement of Problems

The purpose of dystopian literature is to not only entertain the readers, but also to let the readers understand the ideas and characteristics of a dystopian society. Dystopian literature characterized as fiction that presents a negative view of the future of society and humankind. Survival as a theme is commonly used in dystopian literature to build the storyline. Based on the statements, the research questions are formulated as follows:

1. What are the characteristics of dystopian society found in Neal Shusterman's *Unwind*?
2. How does survival theme build the dystopian formula in Neal Shusterman's *Unwind*?

1.3 Research Objectives

Refers to the research questions above, the researcher have two purposes of this research:

1. To describe the characteristics of dystopian society found in Neal Shusterman's *Unwind*.
2. To explain about survival theme build the dystopian formula in Neal Shusterman's *Unwind*.

1.4 Research Significance

The researcher appreciates literary work by analyzing it through this research entitled *Dystopian Society in Neal Shusterman's Unwind*. *Unwind* is a

good example of dystopian fiction which people in Indonesia still rarely know, it is proved by the released year and the proceeds from the novel's sale until this year. *Unwind* with Indonesian translation version released in 2013, meanwhile the English version released in 2007, and the Indonesian translation is only printed twice until now. Therefore, the significance of this research is to introduce *Unwind* novel to wider community, and for the researcher herself is to know the characteristics of dystopian society and the build of survival theme as a formula in the story by applying narrative elements of popular fiction, dystopia, and formula theories, also to enrich the researcher's knowledge regarding the subject of the research.

The researcher hopes this research can be used as a reference for the other researcher to more complete research in the future and the results of this research is expected to give some useful and positive impacts on English Departments students and larger society.

1.5 Classification of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding in the title of this research, the researcher will define some terms.

1. Dystopia

Dystopia is a futuristic, imagined universe in which oppressive societal control and the illusion of a perfect society are maintained through corporate, bureaucratic, technological, moral, or totalitarian control (Chung 2011).

2. Society

Society is a system of usages and procedures of authority and mutual aid of many groupings and divisions, of controls of human behavior and liberties (MacIver and Page 1937).

3. Neal Shusterman

Neal Shusterman is the author of *Unwind* novel.

4. Unwind

Unwind is a 2007 science fiction novel by young adult literature author Neal Shusterman. It takes place in the United States after a second civil war.

1.6 Organization of the Paper

This graduating paper consists of five chapters. Each chapter will be discussed as follow:

Chapter I : It provides a general introduction that covers the background of study, statement of problems, research purposes, research significances, classification of key terms, and organization of the paper.

Chapter II : This chapter elaborates the literature reviews that are relevant to the research. This chapter also covers theories that are applied in answering research questions.

Chapter III : This chapter presents the research methodology in conducting this research. It includes the research design, source of data, population

and sample, the technique of collecting data, and ends with the technique of analyzing data.

Chapter IV : This chapter presents the findings and the discussions in an attempt to answer the research questions, raising the issues of dystopian society in Neal Shusterman's *Unwind* (2007).

Chapter V : The last chapter provides the conclusions that are drawn by the researcher and the suggestions for further research.

