

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains background of research that describes about absurdism in literary works, formulation of problems explains about the absurd types in the plot and imagery in Harold Pinter's Play and Putu Wijaya's short stories, research objective is to find out the problems clearly, research significance is to know the importance of absurdism in this reseach, conceptual framework is to know the planning concept in this research, and preview studies as references in creating this research.

A. Research Background

Life is absurd. Polzler (2018) highlights the absurdity of human life sharply. Here, absurdity can be interpreted as the inability of humans to reach goals and meanings for their lives, as well as the inability of humans to seek answers from God. He argues that humans must declare the death of God, so that they acknowledge their own world. Searching for answers solely to God is an act of lazy people who want to find it easy. Trust in God is the easiest escape to solve problems, but it is not right to hit the core of the problem. It is also not effective as a solution. Suffering and disappointment make this world absurd. In addition, this absurdity can also be revealed through various things, such as the fact that the world is beautiful, but human life is temporary, and still full of suffering. The value of beauty is useless, if humans who enjoy it are involved and trapped in suffering.

Absurdity can be interpreted as a condition in which humans are not able to set goals and meaning for their lives, even specifically it means that the human condition does not understand what life is and for what humans live. Humans who live in this world are absurd. most of them do not know what they are living for. So that in their lives they only spend their time on things that they do not understand what purpose. consciously or not, all humans are absurd. in fact, this world also can be called absurd with all its opposition.

Absurdism is one of the schools literature that developed after World War II which in its development could not separated by the school of existentialism.

The exponents are more known as a philosopher rather than a writer (Hassan, 1976). Need to say a name again namely Albert Camus, because Camus is the one connect the chain of absurdism with existentialism. Starting from the mythic Sisyphus story taken from Greek mythology, seeds of absurdism seemed to flourish in the work of literature, both prose and drama until theater. This is what gives rise to the emergence of many writers who write the absurd, among others, Beckett, Ionesco, and Adamov.

The world is also absurd, because it cannot explain the contradiction that exists in it. This world is meaningless, because it cannot explain the existence of misfortune, disaster, or human purpose. If traced further, in fact this world is not only absurd, but also irrational. Absurdity arises, because people question their lives, but they don't find the answers. Life seems more like a game. Life is irrational, because the various rational answers we give to fundamental questions in life tend not to be in accordance with what actually happened, but rather as what they should be. Earthquakes that suddenly come to the expense of property and the human soul cannot be explained simply as a result of a cause. For those who experience it directly the earthquake is truly absurd, and cannot be taken for granted.

Absurdity may also be a reaction to the gradual disappearance of religious life. There was a pedestal to these writers to convince the audience to think of a condition which is partially mystical. Harold Pinter's works give an indication of their influence on Anglo-American culture. Pinteresque that occupies a position as a modern classic is illustrated by his name entering the language as an adjective used to describe a particular atmosphere and environment in drama. The theme of Absurdity is not a new concept to the history of man's existence. It was used to express human fate against challenges and deeds. The analysis of the theme isn't clear and yet it shows men's fear to run away from human existence. The ancient works too contain absurdity as an aspect of existence, but it was apparent in expressing the very theme directly.

The concept of absurdity in literature and theater can be explained by comparing it with conventional literature/theater because the birth of absurdity literature/theater among them as a reaction from conventional literature/theater.

However, before comparing this literature/theater group, it should be explained that theater is a continuation of literature. For example, Ionesco writes works drama literature titled *Bald Singer*. If this work staged, then the performance was absurd theater. However, absurd theater does not always depart from literature absurd. In fact, there are clear differences between absurd theater and absurd literary works from Sartre and Camus.

According to Esslin (1961: xix-xxi), Sartre and Camus present an understanding of the human condition in the forms and reasons are clear and logical, while the theater is absurd (Beckett and Ionesco) try to express the human condition it's in a free and random way. Sartre and Camus express that new attitude in a conventional way, while the absurd theater goes further by trying to achieve unity between basic mind-piclran and from the staging. In other words, absurd theater does not discuss any longer the absurdity of the human condition, but directly presenting it in a form, namely expressionists concrete stage.

There are many things we might naturally call absurd: a rude joke, an outrageous statement, or the price of a pair of designer jeans. This though is not what Camus means by "absurd." For Camus, the absurd originates from a combination of two things: *the way we want the world to be* and *the way the world actually is*. About how we *want* the world to be, it just seems to be a part of human nature that we have a sense of justice and fairness, and so we want the world to be just and fair: we want evil punished and virtue rewarded. We also want to understand why bad things happen to good people, why good things happen to bad people, why we're here, where we're going, and what it all means. Concerning how things *actually* are, however, evil goes unpunished, good deeds often are not rewarded, good things happen to bad people, bad things happen to good people, and we don't understand any of it. We just do not, and according to Camus, we *cannot* understand what we want to understand.

Camus's doctrine of the absurd then has both metaphysical and epistemological aspects. As a *metaphysical* thesis, the absurd is a confrontation between the human mind and an indifferent universe: what exists is a "mind that desires and the world that disappoints" (Camus, 1942, p. 50). As an

epistemological thesis, the absurd highlights our desire to understand and the fundamental limits of our knowledge.

Hence the intelligence, too, tells me in its way that this world is absurd. Its contrary, blind reason, may claim that all is clear; I was waiting for proof and longing for it to be right. But despite so many pretentious centuries and over the heads of so many eloquent and persuasive men, I know that is false. On this plane, at least, there is no happiness if I cannot know. That universal reason, practical or ethical, that determinism, those categories that explain everything are enough to make a decent man laugh. They have nothing to do with the mind. They negate its profound truth, which is to be enchained. In this unintelligible and limited universe, man's fate henceforth assumes its meaning. A horde of irrationals has sprung up and surrounds him until his ultimate end. In his recovered and now studied lucidity, the feeling of the absurd becomes clear and definite. I said that the world is absurd, but I was too hasty. This world in itself is not reasonable, that is all that can be said. But what is absurd is the confrontation of this irrational and the wild longing for whose clarity call echoes in the human heart. The absurd depends as much on man as on the world. For the moment it is all that links them together. It binds them one to the other as only hatred can weld two creatures together. This is all I can clearly discern this measureless universe where my adventure takes place. Let us pause here. If I hold to be true that the absurdity that determines my relationship with life, if I become thoroughly imbued with that sentiment that seizes me in the face of the world's scenes, with that lucidity imposed on me by the pursuit of a science, I must sacrifice everything to these certainties and I must see them squarely to be able to maintain them.

Absurdism is a significant post-war phenomenon and has played an important role in the formation of literature of the second half of twentieth century. Once the traumatic situation of man in this shattered world has come to discussion. It is not fair to say that Absurdism has no place and that the critics can do their job without having an eye for the absurd elements in the works of the writers, poets and the playwrights of this age. Based on this fact this study has been tried to investigate absurdism in Harold Pinter's plays, having in mind the fact that how complexities of the condition of man in such a chaos can affect the

theme, plots, and the settings of his plays and the strategies applied by him in order to portray those matters. By all that has been elaborated here one may be sure enough to repeat what Pinter has asserted in his speech at the Noble-Prize Lecture: Truth in drama is forever elusive.

Absurdist fiction uses satire, dark humor, irrationality, and agnostic or nihilistic themes to explore the human experience of incompleteness or meaninglessness. It also looks at the range of human responses to meaninglessness, including escapism, religiosity, and the conscious construction of a personal purpose. In philosophy, absurdism is a form of existentialism that views the human search for inherent meaning in the world as absurd. The absurdist view is that such a search must ultimately fail because the world is beyond our understanding.

The researcher chose absurdism as the topic discussed because often found things that were absurd in his life, so absurdity became something interesting to discuss further in this study. Many people do not understand what is absurd, even they do not like the absurd things that exist in everyday life. However, if examined deeper, the validity and existing in daily life is like an art that makes life not always straight and serious. People who like absurd things usually are story lovers, both penek stories, novels, novels and soap operas and films. Because there are presented things that are absurd, so absurd and impossible, but made as if logical and real. One of the short stories, of course, must be absurd. If the real story is clear though the fabrication or fabrication of the past is exaggerated. If telling fiction is highly fabricated, not in a real story, then its absurdity is rampant uncontrollably. For a short story, the absurdity that can be developed is of course very limited. Not until childbirth as absurdity in the novel.

For this reason, there are many writers who deliberately write asburdic writings, and sometimes people who write absurdity themselves do not understand the contents and purpose of writing the work. Therefore, researchers are interested in discussing more deeply about absurdity, especially in literary works.

Literature is the imaginative work that pictures the human life in society which can be enjoyed, understandable, and used by the society also. The author will write the result of this imagination in a form of literary works. The form of

those literary work such as drama, poem, short story and also novel. The literary work has its own definition taken from each different literature expert. Literary work is the creation delivered communicatively about the writer's intention for aesthetic purposes. These works often tell a story, in the perspective of first and third person, with a plot and through the use of various literary devices related to their time. There are several types of literary works themselves such as poetry, rhymes, romances, novels, short stories, drama and many others. Everyone is free to work in accordance with their respective passions.

Many people pour their ideas into a piece of writing that can finally be called a paper. Be it fiction or non-fiction, anyone can write whatever is on their mind. Believe it or not paperwork can be valuable and lasting. Even though the writer has passed away, his work can still be enjoyed. Therefore, many people who choose to pour their ideas into writing so that it is not strange that many writers are still widely known even though it does not exist in the world. Likewise with the researcher in compiling this task, great hope researcher can pour ideas and ideas into a paper that contains research on this absurdism.

In this research, the researcher chooses the genre of fiction: short stories consisting of several works which are a form of fictional narrative prose. It has done to enrich literary research and also introduce one type of literary work that originated from anecdotes.

The several Putu Wijaya's short stories that will be analyzed are titled "*Ah, Anjing, Aut, Apakah Kita Sudah Merdeka?, Bahaya and Tua*". It was published in 2016. Putu is one of absurdism figures, his works are already known to many people as something absurd. Certainly these works belong to absurdism. Even the titles of the short story feel absurd. The reason for the title is already seen absurd. The titles consist of short words that are very difficult to understand if only read once.

I Gusti Ngurah Putu Wijaya or better known as Putu Wijaya is an Indonesian literary cultural observer from Bali, who has produced approximately 30 novels, 40 drama scripts, about one thousand short stories, various essays, freelance articles, and critical drama. Putu Wijaya also wrote film and soap opera screenplay. The typical humanist with his white pet hat was originally expected to

be a doctor by his father, I Gusti Ngurah Raka, a retired retainer who was strict in educating children. But Putu turned out to be more familiar with the world of literature, languages and earth science. Putu's first short story entitled "Etsa" was published in Suluh Indonesia daily, Bali. The first drama that Putu played was when he was in high school. The drama was Putu directed and played alone with the group he founded in Yogyakarta. After 7 years in Yogyakarta, he then moved to Jakarta and joined the Little Theater. Next to the Mandiri Theater which was founded in 1971, with the concept of "Starting from the Existing".

Putu's style of writing novels is not much different from his style of writing dramas. As in his play, in his novel he also tends to use objective styles in the center of narration and styles that are full of bits of event that are dense, intense in painting, and expressive in language. Putu is more concerned with contemplation than history. Dangdut music fans, rock, classical works by Bach or Vivaldi and jazz are total in writing, directing films and soap operas, as well as theater. Together with the theater, Putu has performed dozens of plays both at home and abroad. Even dozens of awards were won for these literary works.

On the other hands, the researcher also chose one more writer who is an absurdism figure, namely Harold Pinter. One of his works which will be analyzed is it *The Dumb Waiter*. It was published 1960. Although these two literary works are different languages but they are equally absurd.

Harold Pinter was born on 10 October 1930 in the London borough of Hackney, son of a Jewish dressmaker. Growing up, Pinter was met with the expressions of anti-Semitism, and has indicated its importance for his becoming a dramatist. At the outbreak of the Second World War, he was evacuated from London at the age of nine, returning when twelve. He has said that the experience of wartime bombing has never lost its hold on him. Back in London, he attended Hackney Grammar School where he played Macbeth and Romeo among other characters in productions directed by Joseph Brearley. This prompted him to choose a career in acting. In 1948 he was accepted at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. In 1950, he published his first poems. In 1951 he was accepted at the Central School of Speech and Drama. That same year, he won a place in Anew McMaster's famous Irish repertory company, renowned for its performances of

Shakespeare. Pinter toured again between 1954 and 1957, using the stage name of David Baron. Between 1956 and 1980 he was married to actor Vivien Merchant. In 1980 he married the author and historian Lady Antonia Fraser.

Harold Pinter is generally seen as the foremost representative of British drama in the second half of the 20th century. That he occupies a position as a modern classic is illustrated by his name entering the language as an adjective used to describe a particular atmosphere and environment in drama: “Pinteresque”. Pinter restored theatre to its basic elements: an enclosed space and unpredictable dialogue, where people are at the mercy of each other and pretence crumbles. With a minimum of plot, drama emerges from the power struggle and hide-and-seek of interlocation. Pinter’s drama was first perceived as a variation of absurd theatre, but has later more aptly been characterised as “comedy of menace”, a genre where the writer allows us to eavesdrop on the play of domination and submission hidden in the most mundane of conversations. In a typical Pinter play, we meet people defending themselves against intrusion or their own impulses by entrenching themselves in a reduced and controlled existence. Another principal theme is the volatility and elusiveness of the past.

The researcher chooses the title *The Reflection of Absurdism Through Plot and Imagery in Harold Pinter’s Play and Putu Wijaya’s Short Stories* certainly based on understanding the absurd itself. The discussion in this study is based on the theories used in reflecting absurdism on Harold Pinter's play and Putu Wijaya's short stories through plot and imagery. Therefore the writer raises the title that can inform the reader that the discussion in this study is in accordance with what is written in the title.

The objects chosen in this study are absurd literary works, taken from the work of two absurdism figures who are known for their validity. then the researcher will analyze the absurd points in the short stories and drama by applying the theory of Camus (1955) the theory of plot and imagery.

B. Formulation of Problem

With the background described above, the researcher intends to conduct research on two literary works of different language, namely *The Dumb Waiter*

and Putu's stories; *Ah, Anjing, Aut, Apakah Kita Sudah Merdeka?, Bahaya, Tua*. The problem that can be raised in this study is how is absurdism be inferred through plot and imagery forms. To be more details, the questions that can be identified in this study are as follows:

1. How do the plot in Harold Pinter's play and PutuWijaya's short stories reflect absurdism?
2. How do imagery forms in Harold Pinter's play and PutuWijaya's short stories reflect absurdism?

C. Research Objective

This research was conducted with the following objectives:

1. To find out reflection of absurdism in Harold Pinter's play and PutuWijaya's short stories through plot.
2. To find out reflect of absurdism in Harold Pinter's play and PutuWijaya's short stories through imagery.

D. Research Significance

The researcher hopes the result of this research will be read by people to develop information about absurdism in short story. Life is not always flat and absurdism appears to fill the color of life. That is why the researcher choose absurdism.

Unconsciously, flat lifesfeel like zombies's life. Every day we only connects life, ironically it is not far from a cat that only lives for the sake of living. It seems it knows the purpose of life but they never know clearly. Everything flutters. Means, I already know what to do, but there is never a definite plan, let alone one that is carried out. That's the need for absurd presence in human life. That life is not always flat, because the colorful ones are beautiful.

Absurdity is one of the colors in life. With color, life will be more beautiful. Absurdity is something that is not clear, and there's many people who do not understand the meaning of absurd itself. But somehow absurditywill always colorize a flat life. It is not surprising that many people express their opinions in an absurd form, not to mention making their work more colorful. with

the necessity of being absurd in literature and life, the author feels important to discuss the topic of absurdity and analyze it through a comparison of fictional literary works by Harold Pinter and Putu Wijaya.

E. Conceptual Framework

This research begins by describing absurdism in each object. Then the researcher will compare absurdity in each work of two different authors. There are *The Dumb Waiter* (1960), *Ah* (2016), *Anjing* (2016), *Aut* (2016), *Apakah Kita Sudah Merdeka?*, (2016), *Bahaya* (2016) and *Tua* (2016).

Literary works that are used as research objects belong to be genre of fiction in the form of short stories. The theory that associated with genres can be seen in the following quotes :

“The term fiction in this sense means a fictional story (abbreviated: short story) or delusion. Abrams in Nurgiyantoro (1998) says that fiction is a narrative work whose contents do not suggest historical truth” (Burhan. 1998. P.2).

The statement argues that fiction as a imaginative story, besides that Abrams also mentions in Nurgiyantoro that fiction is one of narrative works whose contents do not suggest historical truth. As well as in the short stories by Harold Pinter and Putu Wijaya which were used as objects in this research, they were fictional stories from each title raised.

The genre of fiction that the researcher chooses is a short story. Where short stories are one of the literary works that until now there are still many people who want to write short stories. Beside short, short stories are one of the works of fiction that are not always based on facts. Meaning that short stories can be written based on imagination and personal experience. Therefore many people till write this one fiction genre. It can be seen in the following quote:

“Compared to the novel, the short story has had remarkably little criticism devoted to it, and what theory exists reveals few definitive statements about nature” (Allan. 1991. P. 407).

The statement revealed that in short stories only had a few criticisms, meaning that this literary work could be written easily and could be supported by

several theories which revealed nature. It happens because based on anything even about nature.

According to Camus (1955) absurdism refers to the conflict between the human tendency to seek inherent value and meaning in life and the human inability to find any. In this context absurdism does not mean logically impossible but rather humanly impossible. “Sartre’s overall feeling is disgust; Camus’s in contrast is absurdity (1955:44)” Therefore, the absurd is a definite situation, an end-point for Sartre. But for Camus (1955) absurd is not final point of life.

Then the researcher choses the topic of Absurdism to compare all the objects raised in this research. According to Albert Camus (1955) who is one of the figures of absurdism that absurdity is a belief that is based on life as irrational and meaningless, then often interpreted that absurd is something that is not clear and abstract. The explanation of the absurd will be supported by the following quote :

“Jakob Sumardjo in Sutjiati (2015), absurd means irrational absurd, deviate from general logic. Rationale absurd is the notion that the world is entirely neutral. And also Mohammad is Sutjiati (2015) argued that the sensation of the absurd is a sense or feeling that comes from mind and deed. All are metaphysics or mental attitude that seems vague but clearly, far but near” (Sutjiati. 2015. P. 102).

Many people argue that the absurd is something that is difficult to understand, especially absurd can also make people confused if they do not learn more. As in the quote above is stated that is deviant. Then in this study the researcher will try to analyze the absurd things contained in fictional literature in the form of short stories.

After determining the topic, the researcher also prepare several theories that support the development of the topic. Where this theory relates to the topic of research. The purposes is the researcher will be easier in the process of comparing between objects. Then the researcher prepares several theories relating the topic.

Absurdity is a part of absurdism existence. That this theory is important because it can help in the development of topics and clarify the absurd meaning itself. The explanation of this theory is also supported by the following quote :

“Absurd existence is a human state that makes no sense based on the lens of the existence of consciousness and thoughts of the element of freedom” (Yulistio. 2015. P.39).

In the quotation, Yulistio explains that absurd existence is an unreasonable human condition. It was applied in short stories by Harold Pinter and Putu Wijaya, where the contents of his works were very absurd. Especially if you see Putu's work, it clearly seems absurd when we first read the title. No wonder if Putu is one of the absurdism figures that is still known today. Then this theory will be applied to help analysing the validity and contained in the object of research.

In his conception of absurd, Camus mention an irreparable gap which depend on human beings and the world:

“What is absurd is the confrontation of this irrational (world) and the wild longing for clarity whose call echoes in human heart. The absurd depends as much on man as on the world”. (Camus, 1955:3)

In the quote above, Camus said that something absurd is indeed irrational and does not make sense. This theory will be applied in analyzing literary works which are the object of research, where short stories by Putu and Pinter are also absurd literary works.

“In brief, all the ways that lead to general literary understanding—studies in relations and analogies, movements and trends, genres and forms, themes and motifs.” (Jost, 1974:24)

In this research that absurdity can be categorized as literary understanding in the study of genres and forms. Because the object of the short stories that the researcher chooses is related to genre and forms, especially in the genre and forms of absurdity. This proposal will map the similarity of genre and forms absurdity in each short story.

F. Previous Study

The researcher found several references that related with this study. The previous studies are the key to make the research easier to be done. The researcher

connected the previous studies with this research to make the study easily to solve the problem. Here, the list of previous studies is as follows:

The First, *The Dumb Waiter* has been investigated by Pi Binyan in titled *Absurdity Underneath Realistic Elements in Pinter's The Dumb Waiter*. His research shows that in analyzing this play, the author finds that beneath the surface reality of his works, Pinter conveys the basic themes of the Theater or the Absurd. "The absurdity of the human condition, which is demonstrated in the universal menace human beings facing, uncertainty about the world and oneself, and the alienation of the human relationship" (Binyan, 20017: 39).

The Second, The researcher also found one study on the PutuWijaya's works. Written by EngkinSuwandana titled *Existentialism and Absurdism in Drama by Putu Wijaya*. This study was chosen because it was related to the object of research and also the theory used. Suwandana's research aims to analyze literary works from Putu Wijaya using the theory of existence and absurdism.

In other hand, the researcher collect several literary works of short stories and drama which are absurd, both in terms of plot and imagery. The short stories entitle *The Black Cat* by Edgar Allan Poe, *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County* by Mark Twain, *Crying of a lot 49* by Thomas Pynchon, and the play entitle *Waiting ForGodot*by Samuel Beckett and *The Zoo Story* by Edward Albee. The contents of the literary works is absurd both seen from the plot, character or imagery.

The third, Research examining images has been done before, namely research conducted by Ahmad (2013) and Wahyuni (2013). Research by Ahmad (2013) titled *Diksi dan Citraan dalam Kumpulan Cerpen Manusia Setengah Salmon Karya Raditya Dika: Kajian Stilistika dan Implementasinya sebagai Bahan Pelajaran Bahasa Indonesia di SMA*. Then, research by Wahyuni (2013) titled *Aspek Citraan dalam Novel Pengantin Kecilku Karya Maria A. Sardjono:Kajian Stilistika*. The difference between previous research and this research is in focusresearch. Research conducted by Ahmad (2013) focuses on diction and images on a collection of short stories *Manusia Setengah Salmon* and its implications as Indonesian learning material in high school. Research conducted by Wahyuni (2013) focuses on the structure and image of the novel

Pengantin Kecil by Maria A. Sardjono, whereas this research focuses on types images and imaging functions.

Therefore, the researcher make it as reference to more easily understand absurd plot changes, so that it can be easier to analyze the object of this research. By looking at two the previous studies, the researcher can see that each study has provided an overview of the short stories *The Dumb Waiter* and Putu's stories; *Ah, Anjing, Aut, Apakah Kita Sudah Merdeka?, Bahaya, Tua*. Even though the methods and approaches used are different from each other. Therefore, the researcher is interested in making a comparative study on how the absurd equations of two literary works of different languages.

