

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter includes an explanation of the research background, problem identification, the scope of the study, the research question, the purpose of the study, the definition of key terms, and the significance of the study.

1.1 Research Background

A great nation is identified by strong character individuals with high competencies that grow and develop by implementing moral values or goodness in life. Those moral values and goodness in life can be achieved through a good education system. The individual's characters that influence a great nation's creation cannot be developed by only developing individual characters. However, the nation's characters development can be achieved by individuals' characters development in their social and cultural environment (National Ministry of Education, 2010). Therefore, the virtuous character of individuals reflected through their thoughts, actions, personalities and attitudes can influence the creation of a peaceful environment or even a flourishing nation for all (Sholekah, 2020, as cited in Kulkarni & Karim, 2022).

However, the process of creating a flourishing nation will be hampered by social problems. Those social problems resulted from immoral attitudes and misbehaviour of people or individuals. From the recent data provided by the government of the United States of America and researchers, there are several social problems experienced by youth, such as alcohol and drugs, bullying and

cyberbullying, gangs, poverty, and teen pregnancy (Desilver, 2019). Thus, the transfer of good moral values is highly needed through the character education process, as the National Ministry of Education (2010) mentioned that education is an alternative way to prevent cultural and national character problems.

The emergence of character education teaching became popular in the 1990s in the United States of America, marked by the series of successful character education programs in this modern character education period (Watz, 2011). Lickona describes character education as an intended effort to cultivate virtuous qualities. The word “intended” has so much meaning that the character education or the virtue contained in the character education principle must constantly be taught by adults to the younger generation (Pala, 2011). Character education aims to instil virtuous qualities to create good people, good schools, and good society. As cited in Lickona (1999), Aristotle asserted that virtues are habits formed by doing virtuous actions so that students or people can obtain virtuous qualities. This thought is the core concept of teaching character education to students so they can obtain virtuous qualities and perform virtuous actions unconsciously or naturally in daily life to reduce social problems or challenges (Lickona, 1999).

Character education can also be defined as two interconnected parts: performance character and moral character (Davidson et al., 2014). Performance character is described as a “*mastery orientation*” (Davidson et al., 2014:75). Mastery orientation refers to the self-setting goals of learning and mastering the task. Performance character qualities are a strong work ethic, self-discipline, perseverance, and a positive attitude. On the other hand, moral character is described as a “relational orientation.” Relational orientation as the focus of moral

character scopes includes interpersonal relationships and ethical traits. Integrity, caring, justice, cooperation, and respect are examples of moral characters.

Character education's content can differ depending on the era, environment, country, and even the stages of children's lives. In the character education concept proposed by (Lickona, 1999), the content of character education depends on the context. For example, Christian schools will highlight the Christian virtues to be taught to the students. Christ's virtues include obedience to God's will, praying, loving all creatures, and scarification. Meanwhile, democratic virtues will likely be taught or emphasized in democratic societies or nations. Democratic virtues include fairness, tolerance, respect, and concern for the common good.

Along with the development of character education in the United States of America, Indonesia, as a democratic nation, also developed character education teaching. Early in its development, the most influential education figure, Ki Hajar Dewantara proposed character education in Indonesia. The character education system proposed by Ki Hajar Dewantara is called *Among* system. The word "Among" derives from the word "pamong", which means the teacher is a leader in the education process and must be a role model of what good character values are (Asnawan, 2020). The teacher has to be able to perform the attitude or behavior of love for peace, brotherhood, honesty, politeness in speaking, respect, and tolerance (Asnawan, 2020). The values contained in character education teaching were based on the character, morals, and culture of Indonesia as an Eastern country that upholds Eastern cultural values.

The initiation of character education teaching in Indonesia seems to face unstoppable challenges. In the following years, the research done by Sugiarto

(2010), as cited in Putry (2018), showed the demoralization phenomenon in youngsters. The survey revealed that 63% of youth in big cities in Indonesia have had premarital sex. In line with this case, another source also revealed that there are 900.000 youth who had an abortion due to free sex behaviour (Sugiarto, 2010, as cited in Putry, 2018). From these cases, the effectiveness of the education system in Indonesia was questioned by people (Putry, 2018). Thus, the stigma from people of ineffective education role in instilling good character education in students influenced the government to formulate new character education concepts.

In response to community concerns about the current demoralization phenomenon, the Indonesian government, through the Ministry of National Education, proposed 18 character education values to be taught to children. Those 18 character education values resulted from empirical studies by the National Curriculum Center (Pusat Kurikulum Nasional). The formulation of the 18 character education values sourced from religious values, Pancasila values, Indonesian culture and national education goals (Putry, 2018).

The 18 character education values proposed by the Ministry of National Education were focused on instilling good character education values based on religious values to decrease social problems and misbehaviour of youth. Those 18 character education values include religiosity, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, independence, democracy, curiosity, nationalism, patriotism, appreciating achievement, friendliness, bibliophile, environmental care, sociality, and responsibility.

As time passed by, the world was experiencing rapid improvement. Indonesia was also preparing to face industrialization and globalization in the 21st

century. Hence, national education transformation was needed to focus on solving social problems and supporting children to have a competent quality to compete in this industrialization and globalization era. The realignment or national education system transformation was intended to provide responses and answers to various challenges, demands and new needs as a consequence of various current conditions (Kemendikbud, 2017). It means that the realignment or national education transformation is a historical task (imperative) that must be carried out seriously. The transformation of the national education system was based on three reasons. First, nations around the world are now experiencing significant progress. Second, various international and national studies on the education system in Indonesia justify how urgent the transformation of Indonesia's national education is needed. Third, various facts and evidence on the performance of national education that various parties have published emphasize the urgency of restructuring or transforming Indonesia's national education in a comprehensive and systematic manner. The realignment or transformation of Indonesia's national education can be started by placing character education as the soul or the most profound dimension of national education and the intellectuality reflected in the students' competence. Hence, students with strong character and high competence can adapt to various new needs, challenges and demands (Kemendikbud, 2017).

In the national education transformation, those 18 character education values were compressed into five core values in the Character Education Strengthening (Penguatan Pendidikan Karakter). Five core values of character education include religious, nationalist, independence, gotong royong (cooperation), and integrity (Kemendikbud, 2017). These five core values cover

important dimensions of education, including *olah raga* (kinesthetic), *olah rasa* (art), and *olah hati* (ethic and spiritual) (Effendy, 2016, as cited in Hendarman et al., 2017). To transfer those five core values in Strengthening Character Education, teachers can engage students to learn the character education values through literacy activities in the classroom. Literacy is interpreted as a medium to sharpen the ability to assess, understand, and process information critically and intelligently based on what students obtain from reading, writing, listening, and communicating activities to develop strong character themselves (Kemendikbud, 2017). Literacy activity to support students' character development needs to be done simultaneously in the scope of family, school and society. In the context of school literacy activity, the literacy activity can be integrated with the teaching and learning process in the classrooms (intracurricular), co-curricular, and extracurricular (Kemendikbud, 2017).

The teachers can facilitate literacy activities by engaging students in reading, writing, listening, and discussing a particular topic from sources like literary work. According to Suyitno (2014 as cited in Yudin et al., 2021), literature could shape an individual's skill and character, competence and personal character in the entire community because literature contains pluralism and sociocultural values that have great potential to support the development of students' characters (Imron & Nugrahani, 2019, as cited in Yudin et al., 2021). Therefore, the source of literary work, especially children's literature that contains character education values is highly needed to develop students' characters.

According to Knowles and Malmkjaer (1996), as cited in Leonardi (2020), children's literature is any written narrative published or aimed at children. In line

with this statement, according to Koswara et al. (2020), children's literature and adult literature can be distinguished based on their storylines and contents. Based on this statement, a novel as a literary work can be classified as children's literature as long as it contains a story intended to be read by children. According to Abrams (1999), a novel is defined as the extended version of a prose work. The story in the novel is usually inspired by or reflects real-life problems or the author's ideas and criticism about social issues (Fitriani et al., 2016; Saputri & Laeliah, 2020).

The novel presents in great detail the journey or conflict of the characters, which shows the development of the characters experiencing complex social situations and the relationship among the characters in the novel (Stanton, 2012, as cited in Yudin et al., 2021). After experiencing such conflicts in the story, the ultimate goal of the characters in the novel is to find the authentic principles or values in life (Wardani, 2009, as cited in Septiadi et al., 2019). Thus, to achieve the goal, the characters in the novel need to perform or accommodate character education values through their interactions and attitudes toward other characters and conflict in the novel (Yudin et al., 2021). In conclusion, novels can be used to transfer character education values because the characters in the novel depict good character values to achieve the ultimate goal of life.

One of the famous children's novels rich in character education values is *James and The Giant Peach* by Roald Dahl (2007). Roald Dahl is the greatest children's book author, successfully selling over 250 million copies of his writings worldwide (Štursová, 2018; Timora, 2020). *James and The Giant Peach* tells the story of James Henry Trotter who escaped from his aunts and tried to find genuine happiness in life (Bokma & Barkman, 2014). During his adventure, he experienced

many problems. Although he experienced many problems during his journey, he successfully overcame them. James' characters are identical to the quality of hard work, respect, responsibility, knowledge, and never giving up on overcoming challenges in life. As a little kid, James depicts a precocious character that is beneficial to overcoming difficult situations in life (Štursová, 2018). The journey that James experienced in the novel is the same as the struggle experienced by every human being in real life (Bokma & Barkman, 2014). Thus, James's actions, thoughts, and words toward the other characters and conflicts in the novel can be implemented daily.

The portrayal of character education values through the characters of characters in the novel has been proved by some researchers. There were a variety of novels analyzed in the research conducted, from original English novels, Bahasa Indonesia novels, local novels or short stories, and even translation novels (Azmi Alwi et al., 2018; Tansliova, 2018; Septiadi et al., 2019); Koswara et al., 2020; Nandasari & Hasanah, 2020; Saputri & Laeliah, 2020; Yudin et al., 2021; Hizraini et al., 2022). The researchers utilized various approaches to identify the character education values in characters' characters. The researchers utilized character education values proposed by Thomas Lickona, 18 character education values by The Ministry of National Education of Indonesia, even local character education principles like Sundanese Etnopedagogi (Azmi Alwi et al., 2018; Tansliova, 2018; Septiadi et al., 2019); Koswara et al., 2020; Nandasari & Hasanah, 2020; Saputri & Laeliah, 2020; Yudin et al., 2021; Hizraini et al., 2022). The previous research successfully uncovered the character education values in characters' characters, such as honesty, hard work, curiosity, discipline, creativity, independence,

kindness, and tolerance portrayed in certain novels as children literature (Azmi Alwi et al., 2018; Tansliova, 2018; Septiadi et al., 2019); Koswara et al., 2020; Nandasari & Hasanah, 2020; Saputri & Laeliah, 2020; Yudin et al., 2021; Hizraini et al., 2022). For instance, novels are highly recommended to instil character education values in the students since the characters in the novel portray character education values.

Although much work has been conducted on the analysis of character and characterization in novels and the representation of five core values of character education in novels, there is very little research about how the characterization of James Henry Trotter in the novel *James and The Giant Peach* by Roald Dahl and the representation of five core values of character education in James Henry Trotter's characterization. Thus, this study aims to identify James Henry Trotter's characterization and the representation of five core values of character education in James Henry Trotter's characterization.

1.2 Problem Identification

In this 21st century era, all of the nations around the world are experiencing globalization and industrialization. Globalization and industrialization are creating rapid changes in every field of human life which influence all nations worldwide to be ready to face various challenges, needs, and demands. Therefore, national education principles in Indonesia need to be transformed. The transformation of national education principles was aimed to respond and to overcome various challenges, new needs, and demands in this globalization and industrialization era (Hendarman et al., 2017). The national education transformation was carried out

seriously for three reasons (Kemendikbud, 2017). First, nations around the world are facing impactful improvement. Second, international and national research justified the urgency of national education transformation in Indonesia. Third, various facts and evidence on the performance of national education that various parties have published mandate the urgency of restructuring or transforming Indonesia's national education in a comprehensive and systematic manner.

The national education transformation was started by putting back 'character education' as part of national education principles. Knowledge and character education teaching must be implemented simultaneously to create a better, intellectual, competent generation with strong characters.

Strong characteristics of 21st century students are critical thinking, problem-solving, communication skills, creativity, collaboration, innovation, digital literacy, flexibility and adaptability (Chalkiadaki, 2018; Khasanah & Herina, 2019; Stehle & Peters-Burton, 2019). Critical thinking and problem-solving manifest through the initiative in solving problems, optimism and never giving up. Communication and collaboration reflect the ability to build connections with people, lead a community, and be responsible (Stehle & Peters-Burton, 2019). Innovative, flexible, and adaptive are reflected through the ability to adapt to current situations, manage complexity and consider any risks behind every decision (Chalkiadaki, 2018).

However, Indonesian students showed several misbehaviors, immoral actions and learning incompetence which are opposite to the characteristics of 21st century students. For example, learning loss experienced by elementary students in

Serang Regency caused the disability to follow the teaching and learning process at school based on their grade or class (Faturhman & Gunawan, 2021). Other than that, elementary students in Cot Keu Eung school also showed immoral actions and academic dishonesty like cheating, talking about unnecessary things with friends during classes, bothering other friends during class and coming late to school (Akmaluddin & Haqqi, 2019). The most surprising finding from an interview was that the students chose to cheat because it is easier than studying or learning by themselves (Akmaluddin & Haqqi, 2019)

The researchers also found massive academic dishonesty in Indonesia from elementary school until college or university grades. Various forms of academic dishonesty are found in schools until universities grade: cheating, plagiarism, and collaborative cheating (Ampuni et al., 2020; Herdian et al., 2021). The research conducted by Herdian et al. (2021) from 150 participants from private universities found that 31.3% of students have done plagiarism, 31.6% of students have done cheating, and 37.1% of students have done collaborative cheating. In line with this research, another study by Ampuni et al. (2020) revealed that of 574 college students, 98.78% admitted dishonest behaviour like plagiarism and cheating during their college years.

All of the immoral actions above result from moral disengagement, even more, the phenomenon of academic dishonesty (Ampuni et al., 2020). Therefore, moral or character education values must be nurtured from a very young age to create a high competence and strong character generation.

1.3 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study was focused on describing the characterization of James in *James and The Giant Peach* (2007). The study was limited to describing the characters of James as the main protagonist character in *James and The Giant Peach* (2007) and to describing the representation of five core values of character education in the characterization of James Henry Trotter.

1.4 Research Question

In this study, the researcher carried out two research problems. The research problems were formulated as follows:

1. What are the characterizations of James Henry Trotter as the main character in *James and The Giant Peach* by Roald Dahl?
2. What are the five core character education values represented in the characterization of James Henry Trotter in *James and The Giant Peach* by Roald Dahl?

1.5 Purpose of the Study

Based on the research questions above, the purposes of this study are:

1. To identify the characterization of James Henry Trotter as the main character in Roald Dahl's *James and The Giant Peach* (2007)
2. To identify the representation of five core values of character education proposed by the Ministry of Education and Culture (2017) in the characterization of James Henry Trotter in Roald Dahl's *James and the Giant Peach* (2007).

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

In this sub-chapter, there will be the definition of key terms used in this study to provide a clear understanding.

1.6.1 Character as Fictional Person in Narrative

Character is the literary term of a person in a literary work (Gill, 1995). Characters are given a sort of identity in the form of the way they communicate, the way they act upon something, the way they look, and the way they think (Gill, 1995).

1.6.2 Characterization

Characterization is a method of creating a character by giving feelings or emotions, values, aims or goals of the character (Gill, 1995). In literature, characterization is said to have been portrayed when the author replicates or describes how the character moves, makes gestures or speaks.

1.6.3 Character as Traits

A character is defined as a person's response to a moral situation through action that depicts good behaviour, honesty, respect for others, responsibility and other noble characteristics (Lickona, 1992). Character as traits is an aspect that distinguishes one from another person. Lickona (2004) emphasizes that being a human or becoming fully human when an individual acts virtuously. When an individual continuously behaves in a good way, he becomes a virtuous person who distinguishes himself from others.

1.6.4 Character Revelation

Character revelation is the method the author uses to reveal the characters to make well-rounded and three-dimensional characters (Meredith, 1993). According to Meredith (1993), direct characterization includes narration, author's exposition, description, and the characters' confession. Meanwhile, the indirect characterization includes the characters' actions (Meredith, 1993).

1.6.5 Character Education Values

Character education can be defined as the concerted effort made by schools, families, and communities (Ethical Learning Community) to teach and instill in young people or children the knowledge, understanding, and application of ethical concepts in order for them to live a life that is prosperous and peaceful in the future (Lickona, 1996). There are five core values of character education proposed by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia (2017), namely: religious, nationalist, independent, gotong royong (cooperation) and integrity.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This sub-chapter merely describes the contribution of the present study. This sub-chapter explains the theoretical and practical aspects of this study.

1.7.1 Theoretical Significance

This study is expected to enrich the literature sources in English as a Foreign Language. The researcher hopes that EFL students and teachers can fully consider using the novel in teaching and learning. Using the novel helps teachers and students understand the English language and culture. This research is also conducted with a concentration on the five core values of character education,

which hopefully can benefit other researchers who want to conduct the same research topic or concentration.

The present research hopefully can enrich literature analysis studies that focus on prose fiction, especially Dahlian work. The researcher hopes this study can broaden the insight of English literature analysis of Roald Dahl's works.

1.7.2 Practical Significance

By conducting this study, the researcher hopes that this research can be beneficial for:

a. Teachers

This study is expected to persuade English teachers to use novels as a teaching medium to teach English as a Foreign Language and character education. Choosing a novel as teaching media is proven to be effective since novel provides model of language use that is very authentic (Littlewood, 2000, as cited in Muthmainnah et al., 2020; Pardede, 2011, as cited in Muthmainnah et al., 2020) The authentic model of language use improves students' vocabulary and grammar in learning English (Khdhir, 2016, as cited in Muthmainnah et al., 2020).

Pardede (2011, as cited in Muthmainnah et al., 2020) also states that literary work contains three important points: personal growth, authenticity, and cultural and social values. Thus, literary work such as novels can enhance students' intercultural and critical cultural awareness (Byram, 2014, cited in Bloemert et al., 2017).

b. Students

This research is anticipated to benefit EFL students in their pursuit of language learning. Literary work attracts students' attention and focuses on reading (Arravani, 2012, as cited in Ningrum, 2018). In accordance with this statement, Grabe (2009, as cited in Bloemert et al., 2017) also states that literary work is a learning source that can improve reading accuracy and reading rate. So, it helps the students to enrich their vocabulary and grammar (Khdhir, 2016, as cited in Muthmainnah et al., 2020). Using literature also influences students' speaking, listening, and writing skills because it provides a variety of dialects and specific communication goals and is rich in inspiration (McKay, 2001, as cited in Khan & Alasmari, 2018; Stern, 2001, as cited in Khan & Alasmari, 2018). Therefore, teaching English using literature like a novel is essential to sharpen students' integrated skills (Carter & Long, 1991, as cited in Muthmainnah et al., 2020).

c. Society

This research is expected to benefit society as a component of the Ethical Learning Community. Literary works as human creations often made different from students' surroundings. It influences students to learn about historical, social, and cultural elements worldwide through the story and message contained in the literary works. The knowledge of historical, social, and cultural aspects of life enhances the awareness of intercultural and critical culture (Byram, 2014, as cited in Muthmainnah et al., 2020).

Thus, literary works can encourage the spirit of tolerance, creativity, and imagination of students (Fyre, 1964, as cited in Khan & Alasmari, 2018). It is also supported by Moon (2000, as cited in Khan & Alasmari, 2018) that literature supports students' interest and involvement, critical thinking and learning processing. The affective intelligence of learning literature can help the student be a good person who is expected to spread goodness in the society where they live. Therefore, a flourishing society can be achieved.

d. Future Research

This research is expected to give ideas to other researchers interested in studying the same field. This study is expected to build an understanding of how to conduct literature analysis, especially novel. Hopefully, This study can provide basic knowledge about the novel, the elements in the novel, characters and characterization, and character education values references.

