

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is divided into five subchapters. The first chapter is the background of the study that deals with the basic description to conduct this research. The subsequent chapters include the research questions, the objectives of the study, the scope and limitation, and the significance of the study. Each of them will be presented as follows:

1.1 Background of The Study

The twentieth century was a terrible century in human history because in this century two wars that almost involved all regions of the world took place. A war that causes many people to die easily and unpredictably creates feelings of fear and despair. Therefore, many people pray when the war occurs, hoping to be saved from death or at least given the strength to fight. But death still comes without choosing, then many people no longer believe in God because of the uncertainty.

Distrust in the existence of God leads to a rebellion in the system of society. Because many social norms and systems in society are based on religion. Anxiety over the psychological condition of society is felt by some philosophers who try to answer the meaning of human existence personally. Existentialists believe that every person must have different goals, to realize that, requires absolute freedom of choice and moral responsibility for his own choice.

This phenomenon also influences many literary works in this era. Because literature is part of work that can not be separated from the life of the society where literature was born. By understanding literature, indirectly also give some understanding of the condition at that time. Furthermore, Beata Agrell in her journal state that narrative interaction between historiography and literature is seen as imaginative logic structuring all experience. (Beata Agrell, 1997: 5).

Literature and philosophy are different in the focus of their studies. Philosophy studies human concepts and emphasizes the living human, while literature emphasized its study on the character created by the author. However, both of the studies have a close relationship as literature is often made as to the manifestation of philosophy's idea. Even using Anthony Burgess term novel are not expected to be didactic but fictional works convey a philosophy of life.

Existentialism could be defined as one of historical convenience. According to Steven Crowell (2017) in his journal, he also noted that existentialism was as much a literary phenomenon as a philosophical one. It was adopted as a self-description by Jean-Paul Sartre through his dissemination of the postwar literary and philosophical output. Jean-Paul Sartre become the most iconic and one of the most famous among the existentialist because of his contribution to the existentialist philosophy. Jonathan Webber (2009) in 'Existentialism In Two-Player' points out themes of Sartre's existentialism: existence precedes essence, absolute freedom, the responsibility of choice, anxiety, subjectivity, despair, anxiety, and abandonment or alienation.

Albert Camus is an author who was born between two world wars in the colonized country in Algeria. He was also a journalist, editor, playwright, director, novelist, and author of short stories. But he denied being called a philosopher because he not write his thought sistemically and also opposed systemic philosophy. In his novel, Camus describes absurdism to expose the realization of the meaningless of human life in literary work. Those points are compatible with the existentialism of Sartre that the researcher has cited from Webber above. Although he separated himself from existentialism, he posed one of the best-known existentialist questions in *The Myth of Sisyphus*, “there is only one really serious philosophical question, that is suicide” (Camus, 1942: 3).

The researcher decided to study Meursault character in *The Stranger* novelas the object of this research because Meursault was depicted the existentialist philosophy in social life. Meursault as the character is described as an honest man, unwilling, and anti-social person. Like during his mother's funeral, he shows socially unacceptable attitudes by smoking, taking coffee, and not seeking his mother's face. “Then I wanted a cigarette. But I wasn't sure if I should smoke, under the circumstances – in Mother's presence. I thought it over; really, it didn't seem to matter” (Camus, 1942: 7). This narration shows that Meursault aware of his situation also knows about the social norm in his society.

Many researches discussed existentialism in the novel, especially using Sartre's existentialism which has related to humanism. First is the research by Umar Wirahadi from the English Letters And Language Department of The State

Islamic University of Malang by the title “The Existentialism Studies On Daniel Defoe’s Robinson Crusoe’s Freedom of Life”. This research focuses on the way Robinson Crusoe defending his existence and find out the relationship between Existentialism and freedom of choice.

Another research is entitled “An Existentialist Analysis of J.D. Salinger’s *The Catcher In The Rye*” by Zekkour Mohammed Meriem from the Department of Letters And English Language of The Kasdi Merbah University of Ouargla. The author of this research is exploring the existential themes from an existentialist point of views such as Kierkegaard’s, Heidegger’s, and Sartre’s concept.

Then research from English Philology Faculty of Humanities, The University of Oulu by Anthony N. Edeh by the title “Existential Absurdity And Alienation In Samuel Becketts’ *Waiting For Godot* And Franz Kafka’s *The Metamorphosis*: An Existential Analysis”. This research employs a comparative analysis of *Waiting For Godot* and *The Metamorphosis* as two different genres of literature.

Later a journal by I Gusti Ayu Mita C.P. from the English Department of Udayana University by the title “Existentialism on The Novel *The Trial* By Franz Kafka”. This research was analyzing existentialism in the novel and characterization of Josef K. using Wellek and Warren's theory.

The point that makes this research different from the analysis above is the source of data. In this research, the author using the novel Albert Camus' *The Stranger* to conduct this research.

1.2 Statements of The Problems

Based on what has been explained in the background of the study above, this research is aimed to answer the question:

1. How Sartre's existentialism is reflected in Meursault's character in *The Stranger* novel by Albert Camus?
2. How Meursault experienced alienation in *The Stranger* Novel by Albert Camus?

1.3 Objective of The Study

According to the statements of the problem above, the author tries to achieve objectives as it is written as follows:

1. To describe Sartre's existentialism in Meursault character in *The Stranger* novel by Albert Camus.
2. To analyze how Meursault experienced alienation in *The Stranger* novel by Albert Camus.

1.4 Significance of The Study

This research is expected to give a theoretical and practical contribution to the development of literary study. Theoretically, the benefit of this research is to provide a description of existentialism.

Practically, this research can be an academic reference for students in the English Department, University of Trunojoyo Madura. This research is complementary to the previous study which discusses existentialism in the novel. It is also conducted to the readers in terms of increasing their knowledge about existentialist philosophy and also able to understand the part of the history of social movement in Europe.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

Related to this topic there are many areas and cases for the analysis of Albert Camus' *The Stranger*, but the author only focuses on the theme of this novel and how alienation, part of existentialism experienced Meursault as the main character in this novel.