

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

In the first chapter, the writer explains this study in general. This chapter consists of the background of the study, research questions, objectives, and the scope and limitations of the study.

1.1 Background of The Study

Women oppression has always occurred in society as a gender inequality phenomenon that feminists challenge to show their existence. According to Beauvoir (2016, p. 8), one of the reasons is that most men consider women as objects, such as making women as sex objects. The next reason why women are always oppressed is because women are less recognized and are not absolute subjects like men. These situations bring women to a bad condition. Additionally, issues regarding women who experience oppression and fight for their rights to be equal to men to show their existence are not only found in the real world but can also be found in literary works. One of them is in the novel *Matilda* (1988) by Roald Dahl. The form of oppression is the restriction of opportunity to access new things and activities that are common for men.

The existence of women is one form as well as an internal strategy of the feminist movement that began in the second wave. In the book entitled *The Second Sex*, Beauvoir (2016, p. 96) states that women throughout history have always been oppressed by men. In other words, women, in their existence in this world, are only other to men. Women are the objects and men are the subjects. Furthermore, it is written that a woman's existence is when women ceases to be an object and becomes a subject. Women should know their freedom, decide their path freely, and, most importantly, they should, be able to refuse to be objectified. The picture of the woman who performs her resistance against her oppression is also elaborated in the novel entitled *Matilda* (1988) by Roald Dahl.

Roald Dahl (1916–1990) is one of the most well-known British authors of the 20th century, renowned for his distinct writing style and satirical topics, many of which have a propensity to be very cruel in character Pearson in Tanusy

(2018, p. 159). This novel was chosen by writer because Roald Dahl's first novel to be ranked 30th in the School Library Journal's survey of all-time children's novels and won the children's Book Award in 1988, and one of Roald Dahl's children's novels that contains feminist aspects, namely the oppression of women is a mirror reflection of human life in society.

Roald Dahl's *Matilda* (1988) is a story about a little girl named Matilda who is oppressed by her parents and headmaster, this novel was made into a movie in 1996 with the same title. Matilda was a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Wormwood. She has an older brother named Michael. His older brother Michael's day-to-day activities are not very clear, other than school and watching TV. But he is still cared for by his mom and dad, his parents made him the subject because he is a man, and they think that men are more capable of doing everything. Different from Matilda, her father didn't like her very much. He made Matilda an object and almost thought she didn't exist. To him, Matilda was just a stupid and useless daughter. A daughter shouldn't be smart, he thought.

Matilda loves reading so much every day, she would go to the library when her parents go away. However, one day, her father finds out about Matilda's habit of reading books, he eventually tearing all of Matilda's books and told her to watch TV instead. It is because her parents were afraid that she would be cleverer. However, Matilda, who has a very broad knowledge through the books she reads, does not accept how her parents treat her. Therefore, she refuse by annoying her father every time he hurt her feelings. Because she thinks that her father should be punished for his mistakes.

There are many previous studies that relate to this study. Those are needed to support this analysis. After searching for some information about the novel entitled *Matilda*, it is known some writers have already analyzed the novel. This shows that the issues in the novel is very interesting to analyze as study objectives. One of which is a bachelor thesis from Erisa Anggraeni (2016) entitled *Patriarchal Practices and Resistance in Roald Dahl's Matilda* that aims to explain and analyze the representation of patriarchal ideology in *Matilda* novel. The next study is from Ni Komang Arie Suwastini, et. al (2021) entitled *The Representation of Feminist*

Ideologies in Roald Dahl Matilda. This study aims to analyze feminist ideologies represented in the novel's intrinsic element. The third is the study from Rizka Rahmania Putri and Pratiwi Retananingdiyah (2018) entitled *Matilda's Literacy Practices in Roald Dahl's "Matilda"*. This study aims to reveal Matilda's literacy practice in Roald Dahl's *Matilda*. The fourth is from Chitra Yunia Mahmudah (2018) entitled *The Construction of The Main Child Character's Identities in Matilda (1996)*. This study examines the construction of Matilda's identities in the movie based on the novel entitled *Matilda*. The last is the study from Lusiana Fortunata (2023) entitled *Conflict Analysis of The Main Character The Novel of Matilda by Roald Dahl*. This study aims to analyze the conflict experienced by a female main character named Matilda Wormwood in the novel *Matilda*.

The previous studies discuss about patriarchy, feminist ideology, literary practice, identity, and conflict experienced by the female main character in the novel. However, none of the previous studies uses existentialist feminism by Simone de Beauvoir reflected in the novel *Matilda* using this theory because it provides an in-depth perspective on the concepts of freedom, autonomy, and gender roles. The theory emphasizes the importance of individual women taking control of their lives, which can open up insights into Matilda's character and power dynamics in the novel. Hence, the novelty is made in this study by analyzing Matilda's experience of oppression and her resistance against oppression to show her existence in *Matilda* by Roald Dahl.

1.2 Research Questions

In composing this study, the writer defines two questions related to the topic to be answered later in the discussion

1. What are the woman oppression experienced by woman characters in *Matilda* by Roald Dahl (1988)?
2. How is the woman resistance against oppression performed by woman characters to show their existence in *Matilda* by Roald Dahl (1988)?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Regarding the study issue above, the writer tries to re-describe the problems in this study to get answers.

1. To describe the woman oppression experienced by woman characters in *Matilda* by Roal Dahl
2. To elaborate the woman resistance performed by woman characters against the oppression they experience in *Matilda* (1988) by Roald Dahl to show their existence.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is theoretically expected to have several benefits. It is expected to give a clear elaboration on Existentialist Feminism. It can also be a source of knowledge in understanding, expected to provide an understanding of how books are analyzed using Existentialist Feminism Theory. This study can be a source of knowledge in understanding how to analyze *Matilda* by Roald Dahl to help readers in general understand how women's oppression and women's resistance happen in society.

This study is practically significant for readers. It can be a basis for a reference in the academic field, especially for literature students who want to discuss a topic on gender issues. This study also helps society to know if women's oppression must be stopped. This study is expected to increase public awareness of women's existence.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of this study is feminism, in particular Simone de Beauvoir's theory in her book *The Second Sex*. The limitation of this study will focus on monologue, dialog, and author narration in *Matilda* by Roald Dahl to show the issues of the study.