

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. **Background of the Study**

Every person in the world is born with his weaknesses and excesses. Generally, weaknesses as well as excesses of human beings are different to each other. Some people may have physical lacks, such as deaf, blind, and dumb. Nevertheless, the others may have mental lacks. Additionally, there are two characteristics of people when facing their future. Some people possibly will be pessimistic to face their future with their weaknesses since they assume that they cannot do anything, on the contrary the others are optimistic since they believe they can do something to change their destiny for their better future. Even, they will do extraordinary endeavours to penetrate their boundaries, particularly for a person who has more than one physical lack.

An extraordinary endeavour itself is related to psychological condition since the condition of an individual psychology may influence how the person attempts to achieve what he wants in his life. Generally, extraordinary endeavours merely can be done by optimistic persons. People will effort hard because they think that their attempts will change their condition in the future. Moreover, something can be called an extraordinary when it is becoming further than the limits of what something ordinary is. It can be concluded that an extraordinary endeavour is something which may

not be predicted by the other persons to be able to be done by people who have physical lacks. Nevertheless, the people who attempt something extraordinary as his endeavour can pierce their limits to reach his life goal.

Psychology itself is an interesting aspect to be used in the literary work because indirectly the literary work has been influenced by its author's psychology. Wellek and Warren (1956: 75) state that author's life history is an old genre of literary since it is a part of historiography of the author. It also can be viewed as the creation of art related to psychology. It means that the author's memoir which has been written is related to the psychology of its author. Moreover, it is one of the old literary works. Those can be the reasons why many authors are getting interested in writing their memoirs in their life, particularly when achieving something unexpected by using enormous efforts. One of literary works having a value about psychology aspect of the author is *The Story of My Life* by Helen Keller.

The Story of My Life is a 1903 memoir written by Helen Keller that tells about the life of an amazing deaf and blind woman. Losing her sight and hearing makes her dumb. She wrote her memoir at the early age of 22 when she was still in college. This book which was edited by John Albert Macy has 845 pages (Nalanda Digital Library). The book is in three parts. The first is Helen Keller's story of her life. This part is written originally by Helen Keller. She tells about her dreams, hopes, life problems, education, family as well as influencing people around her that can make her better day by day. The next part of this book is the extracts from Helen's letters as

supplementary story of her life. What she has written to some people in her youth will help more clearly for the readers in understanding some of the characteristics of the major character related to her personality and the nature of her work. The third part is additional explanation of Helen Keller's life and education.

The memoir written by Helen Keller is worthy of note, thus two directors, Nadia Tass and Arthur Penn are getting interested in making a movie with different title from the novel. The movie is entitled *The Miracle Worker* in 1962 and 2000. Both Nadia Tass and Arthur Penn just take the beginning of Helen's life story that shows Helen's days at late age of 7 when Anne Sullivan teaches Helen to make her aware that to express her idea, she can use a language which can be spelled on hands.

The Story of My Life itself tells in details of Helen Keller's memoir from childhood until girlhood at about 21 years old. Besides being a major character, she also becomes the author of this book. Helen Keller was born in 1880, in Tuscumbia, a little town of northern Alabama. Her full name is Helen Adams Keller. The family on her father's side is descended from Caspar Keller, a native of Switzerland, who settled in Maryland. She actually was not born blind, dumb, and deaf. It was not until she was 19 months old (not quite 2 years old) that she had a high fever which caused her to deaf and blind. Because of her deaf and blind, she could not speak anymore to express her feelings and what she wants.

Helen Keller is a person who does attempt to be able to speak with people around her. She started for learning speech in speech classes at the Horace Mann School for the Deaf in Boston in 1890. She would work hard for 25 years to learn speaking in order to the others could understand her. From 1894 through 1896, she attended the Wright-Humason School for the Deaf in New York City. She worked on improving her communication skills and studied regular academic subjects. About this time, Helen became diligent to attend a college. In 1896, she attended the Cambridge School for Young Ladies, a preparatory school for women (<http://www.biography.com/people/helen-keller>).

In 1904, Helen Keller was only 24 years old when she became the first blind and deaf person who ever graduated from Radcliffe College. She went on to become a world famous speaker, author and advocate for people with their disabilities. In 1915 she founded HKI (Helen Keller International), a non-profit organization for preventing blindness and malnutrition. As a firm believer in human rights, Helen Keller helped to found the ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union) in 1920. Much of her later life was devoted to raise funds for the American Foundation for the Blind and Overseas Blind. She eventually travelled to over 39 countries including Australia, South America, Europe, Africa and Japan to lecture and raise awareness on the rights of people with disabilities. She received many awards for her bravery and leadership. On September 14th, 1964, President Lynden B. Johnson awarded Helen Keller the Presidential Medal of

Freedom, one of the highest honours awarded to an American civilian. The following year, she was inducted into the Women's Hall of Fame. Helen Keller's amazing journey came to an end when she passed away on June 1st, 1968 (<http://gardenofpraise.com/ibdkell.htm>).

Helen Keller is a productive writer. She has written a total of 12 published books and several articles. One of her earliest pieces of writing at age 11 is *The Frost King* (1891). There were claims that this story had been plagiarized from *The Frost Fairies* by Margaret Canby because of her disabilities, what had been listened to her is word in her brain. At age 22, Helen Keller published her book, *The Story of My Life* (1903), with help from Sullivan and Sullivan's husband, John Macy. It includes words that Keller wrote and the story of her life up to age 21, and was written during her time in college. She also wrote *The World I Live In* in 1908 giving readers an insight into how she felt about the world. In 1913, she published *Out of the Dark*, a series of essays on socialism.

The setting of *The Story of My Life* generally sets at United State, America in 1880s. She writes about her personality, endeavours, family, and her influencing people around her, like Anne Mansfield Sullivan, her teacher who has taught much important things for her. In every single story of this book, she always tells them, how they always support her to be better. The point of view of the book is single first person with Helen Keller as the teller of the story. Here, she is a smart and curious person and like

challenging and different things. In her book, she likes bringing the readers to imagine how she feels in the difficult condition by using words.

There are five reasons why the work is important to be studied. Firstly, the work is narrating the individual psychology within the author as the major character of this book when attempting to penetrate her own limits. Psychology itself focuses on individual thought and action. The way of Helen Keller as a blind, deaf and dumb person to be passed is not easy, there must be extraordinary endeavours as well as high motivation. Therefore, it will be interesting to observe the personality of the author as the major character in life as a unity of individual.

Secondly, the story in the book is true. It gives the readers knowledge about how a deaf, blind, and dumb person faces her life and how people around her behave towards her. In her memoir, Helen Keller tells her experience of her life up to age 21. She covers the individual problems in details. Besides, many novels telling fictitious stories written by their authors without any physical lacks have been studied, so studying the true novel written by its author with physical lacks will be more interesting and also different from the others.

The third reason is the memoir written in harmonious word groupings. Although, she is blind, deaf, and dumb, she can write her memoir with beautiful language to express her experience. With beautiful dictions in each word, she tells her memoir like a normal person writes some sentences in a book. Even, several normal persons without any physical lacks may not

be able to write their memoir in beautiful words. The fourth, the work is very motivating for the readers. It teaches how to stop giving up with all difficulties of life including personality deprivation. It can make the normal human beings aware that they must be grateful to God, the Lord of Universe by facing difficulties in life without giving themselves up.

The fifth is the teaching learning value. Besides telling the author personality, the book also tells about the teaching value which has been applied by the author's teacher. The author tells how the teacher teaches her as a person who has physics lacks. In order to teach Helen, her teacher must have different ways to educate Helen to be independent. Her teacher must use different methods in teaching because of the author's physical lacks. For that reason, the researcher also wants to know more about how Helen's teacher teaches the blind, deaf, and dumb person that can influence Helen to endeavour in her life. The readers can learn how a teacher teaches their students well, particularly for the students who have lacks of their physics, like blind, deaf, as well as dumb because of the education value inside.

The researcher uses an individual psychological theory as an approach to analyze the book because the story of the book is about extraordinary endeavours of the author as the major character which relates to self individual problems. Hence the researcher is interested to analyze the extraordinary endeavours of Helen Keller in Helen Keller's *The Story of My Life* using the individual psychological approach and constructs the title of a

research “**Extraordinary Endeavours of Helen Keller in Helen Keller’s *The Story of My Life* (1903): An Individual Psychological Approach**”.

B. Literature Review

The Story of My Life written by the deaf, blind, and dumb woman is very interesting to be analyzed. After searching for several literature reviews in Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, actually there is no research about *The Story of My Life* by Helen Keller that has been conducted before. Nevertheless, some research papers have been conducted by the other researchers by using different object which still has a relation with *The Story of My Life*. The object of the other researcher is a movie entitled *The Miracle Worker* which tells a single beginning part of the story in *The Story of My Life* novel.

The first literature review related to the research paper is “Annie Sullivan’s Motives of teaching Helen Keller in Nadia Tass’s *The Miracle Worker* Movie: a Humanistic Psychological Perspective” by Dyah Permatasari (UMS, 2011). In the research, she found that the first is based on the structural analysis. Nadia Tass as director of the movie wants to give a message that a motivation of the teacher in teaching can influence the student who is educated. Second is based on Humanistic Psychological Perspective analysis, Annie Sullivan as the centre point. The analysis based on the perspective analysis shows that there are some motives underlying the struggle of Annie Sullivan. The motives are getting safety in the job,

family, respected by others and the last motive is to actualize the potential as a teacher.

The second literature review related to this research paper is “Proving The Disable’s Independence in Arthur Penn’s *The Miracle Worker* Movie: An Individual Psychological Approach” by Muhammad Anwari (UMS, 2009). In this research, he found that first is based on the structural analysis; Arthur Penn as director of the movie makes the movie to give a message that the individual disability has to be overcome by being independent. Second is based on the psychological analysis, Annie Sullivan as the centre point has to prove that the theme is true. The analysis based on the psychological analysis shows that the personality of Annie Sullivan is influenced by her inferiority feeling to prove her independence and her striving for superiority to be a good teacher and independent person.

In this research, the researcher actually uses the object which is different from the first and the second literature review to be studied. The difference is the genre of the object. Both researchers above use a movie to be studied, but the researcher uses a memoir that can be called a historical novel written by the author. Additionally, the story of the movie which is directed by both the director is recycled by William Gibson in 1962 and Monte Merrick in 2000 and just contains a single beginning part of the whole story of the novel. They also write some additional elements which often cannot be found in the book written by Helen Keller herself.

Then, the similarity of the objects between the other researchers above and the researcher is both objects still have a relation. The movie which is used by the other researchers above tells one single beginning part of the story from the whole story of *The Story of My Life* that is used by the researcher to be studied.

Therefore, the researcher will analyze *The Story of My Life* novel focusing on the extraordinary endeavours of Helen Keller as the major character in Helen Keller's *The Story of My Life* by using the individual psychological approach.

C. Problem Statement

Based on the background of the study above, the researcher formulates the problem statement in this study. The problem statement is "How are the extraordinary endeavours of Helen Keller reflected in Helen Keller's *The Story of My Life*?"

D. Limitation of the Study

In this research, the researcher formulates a limitation to make the research appropriate to the objectives of the study. This study is limited to the extraordinary endeavours that Helen does in reaching her ambitions to be able to speak with her own mouth and to take degrees at a college. This study uses an Individual Psychological Approach by Alfred Adler.

E. Objectives of the Study

Based on the problem statement above, the researcher constructs some objectives of the study as follows.

1. To analyze the novel based on its structural elements of the novel in order to identify the unity of the novel.
2. To analyze the personality of Helen Keller as the major character in Helen Keller's *The Story of My Life* based on an Individual Psychological approach.

F. Benefits of the Study

By conducting this research, the researcher hopes that the research has some benefits. The benefits expected from the research are as follows.

1. Theoretical Benefit

- a. Hopefully this research can give a contribution in understanding literary knowledge.
- b. By conducting this research, the researcher hopes this research can give a contribution in criticizing a literary work and producing criticism as objective as possible.

2. Practical Benefit

- a. This research can be used to know how extraordinary endeavours of Helen Keller are to reach life goals.

- b. This research can be used by the next researcher to do research related to individual psychological approach, especially on *The Story of My Life* by Helen Keller.

G. Research Method

In conducting a research, a researcher should apply a method so that the research can be done systematically. In this part, the researcher presents five points of research method that can be clearly explained as follows:

1. Type of the Study

In analyzing the literary work, the researcher applies descriptive qualitative method. Creswell (1998: 15) states that qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on the instinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher explores the problems in the novel by analyzing the words and conducts the study in natural setting.

2. Object of the Study

The object of the study is about Helen Keller's *The Story of My Life*. It is analyzed by using an individual psychological approach.

3. Type of the Data and the Data Source

In this study, there are two sources of data namely primary and secondary data sources.

a. Primary Data Sources

The primary data are taken from a novel, entitled *The Story of My Life* (1903) written by Helen Keller.

b. Secondary Data Sources

The researcher takes the secondary data sources from other sources which are related to the primary data supporting the analysis. They are books, articles, author's biography, comments of this literary work, and other relevant references.

4. Technique of the Data Collection

The method of data collecting is library research, released document to be observed. Meanwhile, the techniques are:

- a. Reading the novel repeatedly.
- b. Taking notes of the influence information both primary and secondary data.
- c. Determining the major character that will be analyzed.
- d. Reading some related books to find out the theory, data, and information required.
- e. Arranging the data into several groups based on its classifications.
- f. Selecting particular parts considered important and relevant for analysis.

5. Technique of the Data Analysis

The steps of the data analysis of this research are by analyzing the structural elements of the work and analyzing the individual psychological perspectives of the work. Analyzing the data of this research is trying to clarify the obtained data by selecting the necessary ones.

H. Research Paper Organization

This research is classified into five chapters. In order to make this research paper easy to be followed, the writer gives some order for the paper organization. Chapter I is introduction which covers background of the study, literature review, problem statement, limitation of the study, objectives of the study, benefits of the study, research method, and research paper organization. Chapter II is underlying theory which covers theory about notion of individual psychology, basic assumption of individual psychology and structural elements of the novel. Chapter III is structural analysis of the novel. This chapter deals with two parts. The first is the structural elements of the novel including character and characterization, setting, plot, point of view, style, and theme. The second part is discussion. Chapter IV discusses about the individual psychological analysis of the novel deals with the analysis of the problems inside which is related to the theory. Chapter V will be conclusion and suggestion.