

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Literature is a unique product of a human creative mind which consists of their experiences. According to Pickering and Hooper (1981, p. 307) the creation of literature is "a uniquely human activity, born of man's timeless desire to understand, express, and finally, share experiences "Every human is able to create the literature work. It begins with human's creative thinking and unique experiences towards the literary work itself. The works will always find their own reader because it represents the similarity experience that other people feel too. Wellek and Warren (1956) explained literature is not only a document of facts but also the collection of real events that may happen in the real life. It concludes all literature is written work that represents many things, but some of the people are confused to make the difference of literature work.

Risdianto (2012) divided literature work into two different parts; they are informative literature and imaginative literature. Informative literature tells about the fact, explanation, history, real 'great' life figure, etc. The main purpose of informative literature is to offer knowledge. Imaginative literature has the aim to raise thoughts and feelings. It represents of author's ideas, feelings, attitudes, and conversations. The author wants to communicate not only about his feelings but also the facts and emotion which consist of information. Eagleton (1983) suspected literature is imaginative writing. Actually, literature has the characteristic which has represents itself.

Meyer (1997, p. 4) mentioned that the characteristics of literature is based on "...written texts, marked by the careful use of language, the literary genres such as poetry, prose fiction, or drama, read aesthetically, intended by

the author to be read aesthetically, contain many weak implicatures". It shows literature concern to serve the good writing and invite the reader's experience in interpreting the imaginary and knowledge which is delivered by the author. Literature is divided into some genres. They are poetry, prose fiction, and drama. All of the genres have the different characteristic. Prose uses language not in verse form as the short story, novella, novel, etc. Drama is played by actresses that act on the stage based on the script. It is classified into some genres such as comedy, tragedy, tragic-comedy, etc. Poetry is the art of verse; it relates to the ballad, epic, lyrical poetry, etc. The researcher is interested to do are search about the novella which belongs to one of those literature genres.

According to *Encyclopaedia Britannica*; Novella is short and well-structured narrative, often realistic and satiric in tone, that is influenced the development of the short story and the novel by Europe. The novella was based on local events that were humorous, political, or amorous in nature; the individual tales often were gathered into collections along with anecdotes, legends, and romantic tales.

Encyclopedia Britannica also mentioned that the novella flourished in some of the places in several periods. The works of novella writers such as Heinrich von Kleist, Gerhart Hauptmann, J.W. von Goethe, Thomas Mann, Leo Tolstoy, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, and Franz Kafka.

Franz Kafka was born in 1883. He is one of the novella authors which is influential with his work. He dedicates his work as a device to struggle. His work is divided into some genres, they are; Novels such as *Der Prozess* (1925; *The Trial*), *Das Schloss* (1926; *The Castle*), *Amerika* or *Der Verschollene* (1927; *America*). Novella such as *Die Verwandlung* (1915; *The Metamorphosis*). A short story such as *Entschlüsse* (1911; *Resolutions*), *Der Kaufmann* (1913; *The Tradesman*), *Das Urteil* (1912; *The Judgment*), etc. The writer of visionary fiction whose works—especially the story *Die*

Verwandlung (1915; *The Metamorphosis*)—express the absurdity, anxiety, and alienation felt by many in 20th century Europe and North America.

Kafka writes *The Metamorphosis* to express his experience about the absurdity of being which contains anxiety and alienation issue. It is the first written story made by Kafka and it becomes important to many authors that concern in the same issue in many centuries. In *The Metamorphosis* (1915, p. 3) told, “One morning, as Gregor Samsa was waking up from anxious dreams, he discovered that in bed he had been changed into a monstrous verminous bug”. It begins with shocking prolog, Kafka wants to invite the readers to get into an unrealistic life that is covered by the man who is transformed into a giant insect. He, Gregor Samsa, wakes up to find himself transformed into a monstrous verminous bug; he slowly dies, not only because of his family’s shame and its neglect of him but because of his own guilty despair.

It is the story of the man who transformed into an enormous creature and his life is changing. Kafka tries to tell the phenomenon of the absurdity of being. According to IMDb, Kafka later admitted to his father that, "My writing was all about you...". He believed that his father broke his will and caused an insecurity and guilt that affected his whole life. In *The Metamorphosis*, there is some issue about the absurdity of being which consists of freedom, anxiety, alienation, and hopeless.

Camus (1996, p. 358) begins pointing out the absurdity of being:

“This world in itself is not reasonable, that is all that can be said. But what is absurd is the confrontation with this irrational and the wild longing for clarity whose call echoes in the human heart. The absurd depend 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.” (p. 358)

The absurdity is not the universe or a man. It is their combinations that produce the absurd. If anything has been made abundantly clear about the

20th century, it could be assumed that the universe is irrational; it does not follow any rules. The universe does what it wants when it wants to do something.

Sartre in Nugroho (2013) assumed when human is feeling absurd, shy, alienation, anxiety, and nauseated, so he has to be an existentialist. Those feelings include in human self when they make the relationship with another. Being the free man is free of feeling and senses everything which is making them alive. An absurdity is one of the representatives within the existence of human being. Sartre in Wibowo (2011) believed in a universe that does not care, there are no fundamental values to guide us, hence we are absolutely free to become anything we want to become and do anything we want to do. Actually, an absurdity has related to freedom, because the freedom makes some important decision on life. Some people are trapped by their unknown things about their freedom.

According to Suseno (1987) freedom is differentiated from two parts; they are social freedom and existential freedom as defined that “existential freedom is the ability of human being to decide his act” as human, who has intellect, understands for choosing some alternatives to acting. That is the reason why human avoids the absurdity. We cannot separate the thinking of Sartre (1956, p. 441) in his work *Being and Nothingness*, “Man cannot be sometimes slave and sometimes free; he is wholly and forever free or he is not free at all”. It means freedom is one of the important characterizations which are glutinous in human’s existence. Hence, an absurdity of life has coherence with existentialism as philosophy.

In philosophy, a study of human existence is an aspect that refers to existentialism as philosophy. They are absurdity, freedom, free to choice, awareness, authenticity, etc. The term of existentialism is popular word by Jean Paul Sartre. His thinking about the existentialism raises some issue that

is related. One of the main issues is the absurdity of being as Franz Kafka arouses in his *The Metamorphosis* novella.

Looking at the reason, the objective of the study is the main character named Gregor Samsa which is felt the absurdity of being and how the relation between these issues with existentialism approaches by Sartre. The researcher sees many issues in *The Metamorphosis* novella that has already researched by another researcher. Certainly, it makes the researcher have the interest to research the novella entitled *The Metamorphosis* from the side of Existentialism proposed by Jean Paul Sartre. Particularly the researcher is interested in analyzing *The Absurdity of Being as Reflected in Franz Kafka's The Metamorphosis Novella (1915): An Existentialism Approach*.

B. Problem Statement

Based on the statement mentioned in the background of the study above, the researcher formulates some research problems as follows:

1. How is the absurdity of being reflected by Gregor Samsa in the novella?
2. Why does Gregor Samsa's existence become absurd in the novella?
3. What are the consequences on Gregor Samsa's absurdity of being reflected in the novella?

C. Objectives of the Study

Based on the research problem above, the researcher has the objective study as follows:

1. To describe the absurdity of being that reflected by Gregor Samsa in *The Metamorphosis*.
2. To analyze the causes of Gregor Samsa's existence becoming absurd in *The Metamorphosis*.
3. To find out the consequences on Gregor Samsa's absurdity of being reflected in *The Metamorphosis*.

D. Limitation of the Study

In this research, the researcher limits the problem of the analysis about the absurdity of being of Gregor Samsa in *The Metamorphosis* novella based on Existentialism approach.

E. Benefits of the Study

The benefit of the research can be divided as follows:

1. Theoretical Benefit

The research hopes that the result of this study can give additional information and contribution to enrich the knowledge and technique to analyze various novels, especially in Franz Kafka's work that represents existentialism.

2. Practical Benefit

The study hopes the result can be a reference to conducting other research, giving some comprehension in some issue that has the relation with the absurdity of being, and gives the knowledge in understanding existentialism approach by some experts that are qualified in this case.

F. Paper Organization

The research paper of *The Absurdity of Being as Reflected in Franz Kafka's The Metamorphosis Novella (1915): The Existentialism Approach*. The organization of research paper is given in order to make a reader understand the content of paper, as follows: Chapter I contains an introduction which consists of the background of the study, problem statement, objectives of the study, limitation of the study, the benefit of the study, and paper organization. Chapter II is Literature review. It consists of Previous Study and Underlying Theory which contains the notion of existentialism theory which is proposed by Jean Paul Sartre. Chapter III consists of research method. It concludes the type of the study, the object of

the study, type of data and data source, the method of collecting data, the technique of data analysis.