

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of The Research

Everybody needs some achievements to be pursued in their life. Our instinct drives us to get the achievement that we want. It is naturally represented in the form of a strong wish that is known as desire. Moreover, in order to fulfill our needs of the desire we have to pursue it through certain journey.

The pursuit of desire doesnot only occur in real life. It is also found in literary works as the illustration of the reality. The pursuit of desire becomes one of the important aspects that build the work itself as we can see in Kurt Vonnegut's most famous collection entitled *Welcome to the Monkey House*.

Kurt Vonnegut is considered as a famous science fiction writer by some critics even though he denied being one. He is one of the famous American postmodern writers. He was born in November 11, 1922 in Indianapolis. He wrote numerous plays, short stories, and novels. Some of his notable works are *Slaughterhouse-Five*, *Breakfast of Champions*, *Welcome to the Monkey House*, and *Cat's Cradle*. Most of his works are characterized by the satirical elements, the life of the future, humanist point of view and critique of modernism and politics. Vonnegut passed away in New York on April 11, 2007. After his death, a memorial library was created for remembering his works and masterpiece in Indianapolis providing museum, reading room and art gallery.

Welcome to the Monkey House is Kurt Vonnegut's best short story collection. This collection was firstly published in 1968 consists of twenty three short stories. These short stories are divided into two major genres which are science fiction and romance. The science fiction itself is the famous genre during the modern era, it mostly tells about the former technology, time travel, the future and aliens.

By the beginning of the 20th century, an array of standard science fiction "sets" had developed around certain themes, among them space travel, robots, alien beings, and time travel. The customary "theatrics" of science fiction include prophetic warnings, utopian aspirations, elaborate scenarios for entirely imaginary worlds, titanic disasters, strange voyages, and political agitation of many extremist flavours, presented in the form of sermons, meditations, satires, allegories, and parodies—exhibiting every conceivable attitude toward the process of techno-social change, from cynical despair to cosmic bliss. (Britannica: 2016)

Kurt Vonnegut's science fiction works are characterized by his critique towards modernity and advance technology that kills human's freedom to fulfill their desire. Sometimes the story is combined with his satirical joke toward humans. John Tomedi in his book *Great Writer: Kurt Vonnegut* argues that Vonnegut tries to discuss the events during post-World War II era in humorous way in the form of prose that is easy to read (2).

Susan Ferrell evaluates the characteristics of Vonnegut's romance literary works in her book entitled *Critical Companion to Kurt Vonnegut: A Literary Reference to His Life and Work*. She argues that "As in several of his novels, Vonnegut seems suspicious of conventional romantic love, suggesting that friendship and "common decency" he speaks of Slapstick might be a better basis for marriage than traditional romance" (235). This characteristic is applied in Vonnegut's "Long Walk to Forever" that was firstly printed in *Women's Journal* in August 1960.

The writer chose some of *Welcome to the Monkey House* collections, including "Harrison Bergeron", "Who am I This Time", "Report on the Barnhouse Effect", and "Long Walk to Forever" since each major character of the stories has their own power as the tool in order to fulfill their desire. Vonnegut's story of "Harrison Bergeron" and "Who Am I This Time" will be the object in analyzing science fiction short stories. Furthermore, the writer will conduct the research on Vonnegut's romance into the story of "Who Am I This Time" and "Long Walk to Forever".

"Harrison Bergeron" tells about a young man who wants to show his talent and to be a free mankind in expressing their superiority by breaking the government's rule of equality that limit human ability to think by putting chips on their head. While limiting their thoughts, the government also makes them look ugly by commands them wearing handicaps to cover their beauty. This short story has been adapted to a movie titled "2081" which published on May 29, 2009.

"Who am I This Time" was adapted into one of "PBS' American Playhouse Series" in 1982 and won the "Best Television Production Award" at the *Semana*

Internacional De Cinema de Barcelona, invitational screenings in Russia (ACT I) and Italy (Venice Film Festival), and at the San Francisco International Film Festival. This short story tells about a young girl named Helene, who stays temporarily town to town for the sake of her job at a telephone company. The narrator invites her to join a play performance. Her desires and admiration of entertainment life is discovered through the story. Moreover, she realizes her deep desire toward her partner in the play, Harry Nash.

“Report on the Barnhouse Effect” is Kurt Vonnegut’s first short story” (Tomedi: X). It is firstly published on February 11th, 1950 in *Collier’s* magazine. The story was adapted for broadcast on NBC's *Dimension X* radio program. The first episode of it was aired on April 8, 1950. It tells about a professor who has a super power called “dynamopsychism” that he had studied for 10 years, which enables him to control over the objects by using the ability of his brain. But then the professor had to struggle for his desire of American progress in peace while the government wants his power to destroy the enemy during the World War.

“Long Walk to Forever” is firstly printed in *Ladies Home Journal* on August 1960. The story firstly entitled “Hell to Get Along With” but then edited by the editors. The story tells about a man named Newt who has gone AWOL¹ from the military program in order to prevent his next to door neighbor from marrying another man then convinces her to marry him instead. The story was adapted into a short film on October 10, 1987.

¹ AWOL (Absent Without Leave) is leaving the army forces without permission

From the facts which has mentioned before, we know that the selected short stories which are mentioned above are considered as the most famous and best short stories among others. For instance, “Harrison Bergeron” is considered as the most famous short stories among the collections and “Report of the Barnhouse Effect” is considered as Vonnegut’s best science fiction. In another hand, the selected romance short stories have ever been adapted into a movie and a journal. Furthermore, it is possible to pair them to conduct the research.

The writer notices that each main character in Vonnegut’s selected short stories in *Welcome to the Monkey House* are trying to pursue their desire even if the short stories had different genre. This reason makes these short stories become an interesting object to be analyzed. Another reason that makes the writer interested in conducting the research is because there are only few students of the English Department in Andalas University done the research using structuralism and similar work. That facts make the writer feel challenged in conducting this research.

The writer wants to conduct the research by analyzing the structure of the two genres to reveal the phase of hero’s strategy in fulfilling their desires. The writer finds out that it is possible to conduct the research by breaking down the structure of the story. Thus, the writer decides to use structural literary criticism as the tool of the analysis.

1.2 The Identification of the Problem

Vonnegut's short stories are divided into two main genres, but represents similar issue. As what's being written from his collection in *Welcome to the Monkey House*, the works are divided into science fiction and romance. The selected short stories; "Harrison Bergeron", "Report on the Barnhouse Effect", "Who am I This Time", and "Long Walk to Forever" tell about the similar issue; the pursuit of desire.

The writer assumes that each of the main characters of the selected short stories uses certain power to pursue their desire and faces different phase while chasing their desire. The writer argues that the pursuit of desires applied in the stories is presenting the characteristics of Vonnegut's science fiction and romance works. To discover that the issue of pursuit of desire is linked up to the features of the two genres, the writer uses the structural literary theory.

1.3 The Scope of the Research

The focus of the research is the pursuit of desire which occurs in the selected short stories of Vonnegut's *Welcome to the Monkey House* including; "Harrison Bergeron", "Who am I This Time", "Report on the Barnhouse Effect", and "Long Walk to Forever". The writer will use A.J Greimas's theory to analyze the work by using his theory of "actant" to reveal how each character of the story contributes in the proses of the pursuit of the desire. Then, the research will be continued by using A.J Greimas's literary theory regarding the "Canonical Narrative Schema" of the short stories to see the phase that occurs during the pursuit of the desire.

The aim of applying the actantial analysis of the story is to reveal the influence of the characters in each short story specifically so we can see how the pursuit of desire occurs in each story. The elements of A.J Greimas's theory of actants (subject – object, sender – receiver, helper – opponent) will help the writer to analyze the desires of each primary character of the short stories by analyzing character's function. The actants analysis will expose how the pursuit of desire applied to each major character.

Then the writer extends the analysis of the path which occurs seen from each phase, which are portrayed from the schema. The writer argues that Greimas's theory of the Canonical Narrative Schema is useful for portraying the main character's journey regarding the desire's fulfillment. It will bring the analysis into a specific and final conclusion about the characteristics of the two genres; romance and science fiction related to the pursuit of desire.

1.4 Research Question

This research answers the questions below:

1. How do both genres (romance and science fiction) differ in characteristics in Vonnegut's selected short stories?
2. How does the pursuit of desire in both genres in Vonnegut's selected short stories ("Harrison Bergeron", "Long Walk to Forever", and "Research on the Barnhouse Effect", "Who am I This Time") occur?

1.5 The Objective of the Research

The writer wants to specifically reveal the pursuit of desire as the common issue, that the writer assumes as the main theme of the short stories specifically and to analyze the complex structure of the short stories which have been selected by the writer among the collection of *Welcome to the Monkey House* and find out how the structure connects the two different genres; science fiction and romance. From this analysis, readers will find out how the structure builds the phase of the pursuit of the desire even though they are different in genre.

In this research, the writer will use structural literary criticism by A.J Greimas regarding “actantial analysis” and “canonical narrative schema” particularly in order to see the main character’s desire in two different genres of Vonnegut’s short stories by looking at the pattern or structure of the stories. This research is hopefully useful to find out the characteristics of science fiction and romance literary works especially on Vonnegut’s collections related to the pursuit of desire which is applied in the stories. The writer argues that it is possible to use this research to support the future analysis of Vonnegut’s literary works’s characteristics.

1.6 The Review of Previous Studies

The related research of this work could be considered as rarely to be found in English Department of Andalas University. The writer has done the quest of data research toward the work (*Welcome to the Monkey House*) and find the only research of the same work done by an English Department student, Rizka Khairina Johar but differ in theory and theme, Johar also use some different collected short stories as her

research object. However, “Harrison Bergeron” becomes the only same object that is analyzed by the writer which is also analyzed in her research among the objects in Johar’s research by using different approach.

Johar argues that Vonnegut’s short stories are reflecting government’s law that manipulates the society by using their law, technology, and ideology. She attempts to convince the reader that the narration shows that the act that is against the government’s rule as something that sometimes could be positive, each character are showing their resistance to the rulers. This analysis is useful to support the writer’s analysis since Johar included one object related to the writer’s research; “Harrison Bergeron.”

The other source comes from Jerry Brown’s module entitled *Welcome to the Monkey House: Kurt Vonnegut’s Short Stories*. Brown firstly begins his writing by introducing the short review of each short story. Furthermore, he serves two of the collections which are “Long Walk to Forever”, and “EPICAC”, then he focused on the analysis of EPICAC and the characteristics of Vonnegut’s work.

Brown argues that Vonnegut’s work is the contradiction between science fiction and literary fiction, dark and funny, classic and counterculture, warm-blooded and very cool. That combination makes Vonnegut’s works become unique and different from other works. He argues that Vonnegut’s work is brief, wry, and humorous that makes his works become interesting to be discussed.

Kurt Vonnegut’s works are more than just entertaining but also rich in meaning. According to Brown, EPICAC tells about human who are dehumanized by machine.

He argues that human tries to makemachines that are identical to human function, but the technology makes them become a machine. The issue represents the characteristic of Vonnegut’s sci-fi that makes this source supports the writer’s analysis in revealing the characteristics of Vonnegut’s science fiction and romance stories.

Another source is a book of John Tomedi *Great Writers: Kurt Vonnegut* tells about Vonnegut’s life and some of his famous works. Tomedi in his book argue that “Report on the Barnhouse Effect” one of *Welcome to the Monkey House* collection as Vonnegut’s best fiction (24).

Tomedi argues that the government in the story is becoming a pessimist toward the human condition by choosing the power of a professor for the sake of war’s tactics rather than using the power to bring the rain to arid the land. He too argues that Vonnegut’s way of putting a narrator as the certain space keeper of the narration and also acquire the action at the final section of the story becomes his prosperous storytelling style (37). The author sees that this source is the most supporting sources for the research since the book tells about Vonnegut’s life and most of his work.

Another source is Lee Haruki’s paper titled “A Structural Study of Narrative: Two Types Narrative’s Transformation” tells about the analysis of narrative by using Todorov’s structural literary criticism. Lee also uses Aesop theory to show the analysis of narrative which he called as “Aesop fable” then he continues the analysis by using Todorovian linguistic categories.

Lee continues the further analysis by applying the theories to Henry James’s “The Tree of Knowledge” which, according to Lee, the works of James characterized

by the revelation of the secret in the story. Lee argues that the story tells about knowledge's transformation where the hero learns something that he did not know. Lee's analysis is useful for the acknowledgment of the writer's research since the applied theory is the same.

Another source comes from the English Department lecturer and his student in Andalas University, Gindho Rizano and Rafina Nasution who conduct a research of children's literature by using Todorov's structural literary criticism. The research entitled "Transformasi Struktur Cerita dan Pergeseran Nilai dalam Sastra Anak Barat Usia Dini: Kajian Terhadap Karya – Karya Beatrix Potter dan Eric Carle" ("The Transformation of Story's Structure and the Movement on the Value of Western Children Literature: A Critique of Beatrix Potter and Eric Carle's Works").

In this research, they try to compare the structure and thematic of Potter and Carle to see how the social values and the way of storytelling in children's literature transformed specifically. As the result of the comparison, Rizano and Nasution find out that Potter's work mostly uses *contractual* pattern where the characters will end up being punished for breaking the social norm and rules, while Carle's work mostly use *performative* pattern where the characters struggling in order to achieve certain mission.

Rizano and Nasution assume that Potter's works focus on social values while Carle's works focused on the individual achievement and the process of making it. Potter prioritizes the stability of the traditional era, while Carle focused on the positive individualism of the present era. Rozano's research is considered as a

supportive source for the writer's research to see how structural literary theory applied in analyzing the works.

The writer finds that these sources are useful because they are related differently to the similarity of the research object, theories and theme that are considered to be helpful in conducting the writer's research.

Another helpful source in conducting the Writer's research is a PhD thesis of Risimati Synod Hobyane entitled "A Greimassian Semiotic Analysis of Judith". The thesis conduct a research regarding a novel entitled *Judith* by using Greimasian Actantial Analysis and the Canonical Narrative Schema. Hobyane argues that Judith as the main character portrays the role of woman in saving the Jewish religion which is the crisis condition. Judith becomes the heroine of the story of saving her religion by killing their opponent. The analysis reveals Judith's desire to maintain the Judithic community's territory and vanishes the threat of their religion.

The writer finds that the research is potentially becoming the helpful source in supporting the research since Hobyne is using the same theory and the idea is delivered in simple sentences which makes the research becomes easy to be understood.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

Structuralism is a literary theory focused on the intrinsic elements of a literary work, analyzing the pattern to discover a finding beyond what's written. Tyson in his book *Critical Theory Today* argues that structural literary criticism do not mean to be

a tool to judge whether the workplace is good or bad, but to notice how the structure demonstrate the underlying principles (209).

1.7.1 The Theory of Actants

Louis Tyson in her book *Critical Theory Today* argues that Greimas observes that human beings make meaning by structuring the universe in terms of two kinds of opposed pairs: “A is the opposite of B” and “-A (the negation of A) is the opposite of -B (the negation of B).”...He thinks that this underlying structure of binary oppositions, consisting of four components Structuralist criticism, arranged in two pairs, shapes our language, our experience, and the narratives through which we articulate our experience (Tyson: 224 – 225).

This structure applied in the form of the story’s plot, such as conflict and resolution. The structure of the plot is affected by the *actants* or the function of character. One character might perform more than one *actants* or the opposite, one *actant* might be perform more than one *actants*.

Tyson narrates the example of *actants* application in the novel of *The Great Gatsby* where the character of Nick performs more than one *actants*, as hero’s helper and as the quester. “Tom, Wolfsheim, and Gatsby’s parasitical party guests all function as a single *actant*: the embodiment of a corrupt world that finally destroys Gatsby” (225). There are six fundamental *actants* including; subject-object, sender-receiver, and helper-opponent according to Greimas (see table 1).

Table 1: Six Fundamental Actants

Actants	Plot types
Subject – Object	Stories of Quest/Desire (a subject, or hero, searches for an object: a person, thing, or state of being)
Sender – Receiver	Stories of Communication (a sender—a person, god, or institution—sends the subject in search of the object, which the receiver ultimately receives)
Helper – Opponent	Subplots of Stories of Quest/Desire or Communication (a helper aids the subject in the quest; an opponent tries to hinder the subject)

Source: Tyson, Lois. *Critical Theory Today: A User Friendly Guide, Second Edition*.

Welcome to the Monkey House tells about the pursuit of desire which happens to the major character of the stories of two different genres. The desire presents in this story generally, makes structural literary criticism supportive toward this research.

1.7.2 The Canonical Narrative Schema

The Canonical Narrative Schema (CNS) represents the stages which are being through by the Subject in the process of pursuing a certain desired object. There are

four stages of the CNS: The manipulation, competence, performance, and sanction. “Finally, each component is an actional phase, and so each of its elements is assigned a specific semantic label (an element of manipulation, an element of sanction, etc.)” (Heber: 68).

Manipulation is the stage when the “Sender-manipulator” persuades the “Receiver-subject” to do certain contract. Martin and Ringham in their book *Dictionary of Semiotics* argues that manipulation is a persuasive doing of sender acquisition of a wanting-to-do or having-to-do (11).

The contract could be a positive contract or negative contract. The positive contract will create the state of *causing to do* which means to maintain certain condition or things either increasing it. The negative contract aims to create the state of *causing not to do* or preventing something to be happen either decreasing or vanishing certain condition or things. In the manipulation stage, the Sender-receiver might reject the contract given by the Sender-manipulator.

Competence is related to the qualifying test which require certain competence from the subject in order to make the contract. Louis Hebert in his book *Tools for Text and Image Analysis: An Introduction to Applied Semiotics* argues that competence is the component of the CNS that has to do with changes in the prerequisite elements needed for performance (71). The competence could be in the form of certain skills or material superiority. For instance, in an adventure story the hero needs certain competence to defeat his mission. Just like Super Men who had the

super power as the competence in order to accomplish his contract to save the world. The helper potentially supports the competence of the subject.

Performance is the output of the competence in the form of specific action in order to accomplish the mission. “The decisive test (or stage of performance): This represents the principal Event or action for which the subject has been prepared, where the object of the quest is at stake” (Martin and Ringham: 32) For instance, in Vonnegut’s “Report on The Barnhouse Effect” the professor has had the competence in the form of the force of the brain to control things with his brain. The performance of the professor is using the super power to stop the war by destroying the war tools in order to accomplish his mission to make the world in peace.

The last one is the sanction which is applied in the glorifying test. In the Glorifying test, the receiver-subject is receiving the result of his performance as the representation if the contract is succeeded or failed. The sender-adjudicator will gave the sanction in the form of punishment or reward according to the context. “The outcome of the event is now discovered, the decisive test has either succeeded or failed, the subject is acclaimed or punished. In other words, it is the point at which the performance of the subject is interpreted and evaluated by what is known as the sender-adjudicator (Martin and Ringham: 33).

1.8 The Method of the Literary Research

There are two types of data supporting the research, primary and secondary source. As the primary resource, the writer uses the work of Vonnegut *Welcome to*

the Monkey House. The secondary data include any books, articles, journals and another source related to structural literary criticism especially A.J. Greimas theory of Actants and Canonical Narrative Schema and any other source that helpful to support the process of data analysis of the research.

The writer will use structural literary criticism by A.J Greimas regarding Canonical Narrative Schema in particular to see how the main character's desire in two different genres of Vonnegut's short stories by looking at the pattern or structure of the story. The theory is applied to reveal the hidden theme and characteristics of the short stories.

Then, the research will be continued by using A.J Greimas theory regarding the "actants" of the short stories for further and specific analysis. The writer begins the analysis by applying Canonical Narrative Schema theory to reveal the pursuit toward a desire in each short story specifically so we can see how the pursuit of desire occurs in each story.

Ideas about cause and effect are based on insight; they are derived from either qualitative or quantitative observations and are initially expressed in words. Testing causal statements—finding out how much they explains rather than whether they seem to be plausible explanations—requires quantitative observations. But theory construction—explanation itself—is the quintessential qualitative act (Bernard: 68).

This research is a qualitative research since the research is delivered in the form of texts, paragraph, and arguments. Finally, the result of the analysis will be reported in a descriptive way.

