

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Background of The Research

Man is a social animal by nature; intentionally or unintentionally, an unsocial individual is either beneath our notice or more than human. Society precedes the individual. Anyone who cannot lead everyday life or is so self-sufficient that they do not need to, and thus do not partake in society, is either a beast or a god (Aristotle 9). Humans are social creatures who cannot live alone; instead, they group with other humans to fulfill each other's needs.

One study found that “The family has a significant role in shaping a child's social identity” (Faizah 5). The role of the family can influence how children perceive themselves, interact with others, and understand social norms and values in society. Social identity shapes how individuals are perceived and accepted in their community. Family and community have a crucial connection in human life. The family is a place for humans to prepare themselves before entering the community. Members must communicate with one another to establish feelings of belonging, which is a subjective sense of worth and reverence that results in mutually beneficial connections formed by similar experiences, views, or traits (Mahar et al. 35). Community is an association of individuals with similar backgrounds or interests who work together to benefit everyone. Humans who do not belong to the community will experience difficulties such as identity crises, loneliness, and inability to seek help from others.

*Brooklyn* by Colm Tóibín tells the story of Eilis, a girl in a small town with no prospects in Ireland who ultimately has to accept her family's decision to seek better opportunities alone in the USA. This novel tells the story of Eilis' journey as a migrant in the USA, experiencing the twists and turns of life as she chooses between her role as a daughter to her mother or her opportunities as an independent woman in the new world. This novel highlights issues in family and community. Eilis experienced homesickness when she first came to Brooklyn because she longed for her family in Ireland. She felt strange and lonely in Brooklyn because she had no friends to share her feelings. As time passes, Eilis adapts to her new surroundings, gets new friends, and participates in a community where she feels at home. However, when things got better, Eilis had to face a situation that she did not expect, which caused her to have to return to Ireland. She has to start to adapt again to her old life and is faced with more struggle to fit in with her family and community in Ireland.

To explore the issues of family and community in the novel, the writer must focus only on the text. Researchers often apply new criticism as a tool to analyze intrinsic elements in literary work. In this case, the writer uses New Criticism to explore the irony that Colm Tóibín uses to present the family and community issues in *Brooklyn*. Irony is the use of logic to state the claims of a notion or behavior that we believe is false based on everyday logic (Brooks 211). The writer examines how Tóibín uses irony as the prominent formal element to convey the role of family and community, which later shape the main character's journey throughout the novel.

The writer is interested in analyzing how Tóibín employs irony to portray the struggle faced by Eilis in the family and community.

### **1.2. Identification of The Problem**

In this research, the writer analyzes Tóibín's novel *Brooklyn*. The writer thinks that Tóibín uses irony in his novel to present the issue of family and community to the readers. The writer confines her attention to the work's intrinsic elements and focuses on the use of formal elements, namely irony in the text. Based on Cleanth Brook's perspective, the writer finds that irony is the highest technique in conducting literary works. The writer assumes that there are several irony, such as situational, dramatic, and verbal irony exist in the text. In this case, the writer strongly believes that it can be used to depict the issue of family and community in the novel.

### **1.3. Review of Related Literature**

The first is from a journal by Raghinaru (2018), she observed the idea of the decisions taken by Eilis as an immigrant from Ireland who was initially still bound by cultural values, which caused her to be naive and lack sophistication. In this journal, Raghinaru presents the decision-making that Eilis faced, which led her to recessive action. Eilis's parochialism leads her to the pressures of a fortunate job and the prospect of marriage. Through this journal, Raghinaru opens up understanding to readers about how every decision taken has causes and consequences that are interrelated and have an impact on the results that will occur.

Raghinaru raises a topic rarely handled in the novel *Brooklyn* in this journal. Raghinaru takes readers to look more deeply at the central character and storyline with implied meanings worth paying attention to. Eilis is a naive and innocent character at the beginning of the story. Ultimately, this trait leads her to difficulties in her host land as an immigrant. Eilis begins to get rid of her naivety and develops a firm and independent character as she matures into an adult woman.

This journal contributes to this research by helping the author understand the characters of the main character in dealing with the conflicts that occur throughout the storyline. This journal provides the author with an understanding of the internal conflicts faced by the main characters in their search for identity. What differentiates Raghinaru's journal from this research is the different approaches used in identification. Raghinaru agrees with the psychological approach, which focuses on the main character's actions and emotions.

The second study is a journal by Thiruvengadam (2018), who critically analyses Eilis's struggle as a female immigrant with two choices that will change her life. As a child and free human being, Eilis must choose between her childhood obligations and living in the USA as she wishes. Thiruvengadam creates a new perspective from the *Brooklyn* novel: cultural identity will always be tied to an individual, even when they move to a new place with their own culture. In this journal, Thiruvengadam shows that everyone who gathers with a group with the same culture as them, such as Eilis, will still need support from other Irish immigrants to ease the struggle in the host land.

Thiruvengadam points out that Colm Tóibín succeeded in conveying the difficulties Eilis faced in an implied but concise manner with the actions that Eilis carries out in the novel. Tóibín arranges words beautifully and confidentially, the meaning of which can still be understood clearly by the reader. Thiruvengadam also presents the idea of feelings of loneliness experienced by immigrants, being far from home, and separation in a new place full of differences. The alienation Eilis experiences represents the feeling immigrants face. Through his journal, Thiruvengadam provides readers with an understanding of the struggles faced by immigrants to survive in the host land and not follow their fear of returning to their homeland.

This journal contributes to the author's understanding of the role of the main character in the community, which focuses on the main character's journey as a social creature in society. This journal gives the writer an understanding of the role of society's main characters. Thiruvengadam summarises well the conditions of the community where the main character migrates. There are conflicts present in the novel related to the main character's status as an immigrant. Through this journal, the author can better understand the novel's plot.

The third is a journal written by Carregal-Romero (2018), who represents an understanding of the home that is part of the feeling of distance. Carregal-Romero believes that feelings about home and the desire to return home are caused by the space between individuals and those closest to them, namely family. According to this journal, a house is filled with the closest people who create a

comfortable and peaceful atmosphere. Carregal-Romero explains that the feelings that arise when individuals migrate to a new, unfamiliar place will arise feelings that are reminiscent of a familiar home. According to Carregal-Romero, feelings about home are not just about the building, interior, and equipment but more about the people inside, the memories passed, and the familiarity of the environment.

Carregal-Romero decided to highlight the novel *Brooklyn* by Colm Tóibín because its plot represents the situation that Carregal-Romero is trying to convey. When she comes to the USA, Eilis faces deep homesickness caused by feelings of foreignness. She must choose between returning to Ireland with her family and close friends and continuing to pursue her dreams and desires in the USA.

This journal contributes to the author's understanding of the main character's position as a girl in the family. Through this journal, the author can conclude that Eilis has a character that never gives up and is free-spirited. This journal also reveals Eilis' conflict and dilemma in carrying out responsibilities towards her family or her dreams. This journal raises the same issue as this research, but the author focuses on identifying formal aspects contained in *Brooklyn*, while Carregal focuses on sociological aspects. The author was helped to understand the condition of the main character's family in *Brooklyn*.

The fourth is a thesis by Hudáková (2017), which explores the lives of Irish immigrants who settled in the USA to get a better life in their new country. Hudáková focuses on the reasons why people choose to migrate to various countries in the world. Hudáková highlighted how the Irish faced many difficulties, such as

cultural differences and homesickness, where these difficulties became more obtainable as they achieved their dreams. In this thesis, Hudáková presents a point of view about the challenges faced in constructing a new identity in the host land. He explains the Irish's struggles in finding the meaning of life in a new country and the strong sense of purpose to survive the unfamiliarity.

From this thesis, Hudáková wants to explore the idea of Irish immigration and what impacts it creates. Ireland is a strong country in its norms and culture, deeply rooted in the Irish. Even though they have migrated for years, the cultural identity ingrained from birth cannot be taken away from a person and will continue to be a link between oneself and one's place of origin. Homesickness and identity crisis are some of the struggles experienced by immigrants when they are adjusting to unfamiliar environments. Sometimes, immigrants feel they are not trying hard enough amidst the onslaught of competition with other locals—the feeling of wanting to give up often results in homesickness and loss of life goals.

Of the four recent journals above that identify the *Brooklyn* novel by Colm Tóibín, all of these journals discuss immigrant, family, and sociology issues of the main character's journey. Almost all research on *Brooklyn* focuses on external aspects such as sociology, history, and psychological problems, which differs from this research that uses New Criticism and focuses on text. Unlike the previous study, this research explores aspects of the text, which focuses on the external aspect.

The fifth related study is a thesis by Sonitha (2022), exploring the irony in parenthood and friendship found in Roald Dahl's novel. Sonitha explains the irony

and intrinsic elements contained in the story. Sonitha explains the ironies through the New Criticism approach by Cleanth Brooks in identifying texts. Sonitha raised two critical issues in children's books: friendship and parentship. In this thesis, Sonitha reveals the real message of the books through irony and intrinsic analysis. This thesis helps the author understand how to evaluate the book's intrinsic elements. The author understands how to interpret the irony of this thesis. The similarity in using New Criticism in analyzing this research also helps the author explore the irony in a text.

#### **1.4. Research Questions**

This research is conducted by concentrating on the following questions:

1. How does Tóibín utilize situational, dramatic, and verbal irony in the story?
2. How does irony depict family and community issues in the story?
3. How does the novel show organic unity between the story's form and content (irony in family and community)?

#### **1.5. Scope of The Research**

This thesis examines the use of irony as one of the most prominent formal elements in the novel to present the issue of family and community. The writer also analyzes the role of “irony in family and community” and finds out how organic unity is formed between the content and the theme (meaning).

#### **1.6. The Objective of The Research**

The main objective of this research is to elaborate on how Tóibín uses irony as the most salient formal element to present the issues in the family and community in the novel. The second objective is to elaborate on how the book shows organic



unity between the form and the content of the story. This study applies new criticism to discover how irony creates a unified whole called organic unity.

