

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter serves the basis on which the research is conducted. It covers a description of the research background, problem statement, research question, research objective, research significance, and definition of key terms in the research.

1.1 Research Background

Human unconsciousness prior to action leads to a potential for the subsequent risks. Among the cases, the unconsciousness to glorify anthropocentrism takes a part of the primary causes in environmental damages. From the numerous issues, overconsumption is one of the most concerning as the purchase and sale activities have been eased in recent times. Cho (2020) reports that human's consumption habit has driven a climate change as one of the crisis. This phenomenon occurs because they consider the purchase and sale as a pleasure rather than perceiving things themselves. Therefore, the responsibility of possession is often neglected. Things are easily replaced because human do not really consider their love in purchasing. They do not pay attention to the fact that soon the thing is unused or damage, they will automatically buy a new one. Whereas, sharing and repairing things has become easy to reduce the burden of consumption (Wiedmann et al., 2020). This shows human misbehavior in perceiving things.

Resisting the mentioned standpoint, Brown (2001) argues that a thing will be more meaningful to human when they realize the moment it stops functioning. The statement starts from the depiction of a dirty window in Byatt's *The Biographer's Tale*, where the human view will be disrupted when staring through it. Brown believes that the things have power and control over humans. In this case, literature becomes a medium in voicing the power of things, allowing their 'thingness' to be more visible (Elgamal, 2024).

In literature, things can appear to increase the dramatic sense as in the work of Woolf (Nishimura, 2015), or to voice a social reality as in the work of Andersen (Sanders, 2012). To contribute, Rowling also takes a role in raising

the story of things. Her contribution in the creation of fantasy literature has made her popular among the masses for her imaginative and entertaining fantastical stories. The most globalized of her works that became some sequels and even adapted into movies and discussed in various literary discussions, *Harry Potter*, is a phenomenon that proves Rowling's successful in delivering fantasy stories. Unfortunately, the readers are often captivated by the fantasy images that appear in fantasy novel without considering the value disguised since this kind of literary work is essentially formulated to entertain, in accordance with its purpose as an escape from reality (Cawelty, 1976). In Sarumpaet's (2010) view towards the fantasy works, things can appear with supernatural powers, including treasure such as a ring to furniture such as a pot. She argues that all the works with magical and fantastic elements are called fantasy stories. Similarly, Attebery (in Sandner, 2006b) argues that fantasy is a genre with blurred boundaries so that all works can be categorized as fantasy literature, as long as the key point is the impossibility. Inanimate things coming to life and behaving like humans are the impossibilities that commonly appear in various kind of children's literature. Nevertheless, Hunt (2005) argues that perceiving a children's literary work requires the reader to question the existence as well as the essence and to deal with biases towards it, because it has more complexity than what is imagined and considered as simply 'a children's literary work' (2005, p. 2). Moreover, the fact that the children's literature involves the role of adults in authoring this literary work makes it has more complicated layers to be unraveled. For this instance, J. K. Rowling's *The Christmas Pig* (2021) is valued to be the representative as the children fantasy literature written by adult whose a distinctive narrative in presenting the story of things.

In the study of children's literature, Hunt mentioned the three aspects that can be considered include the text, the children, and the adult critics. In the context of studying *The Christmas Pig*, the prioritized elements are the text and the adult critics. These two are the primary focus because it turns out that this novel has complex layers to be discovered. It seems that Rowling is not only enlivening her work with fantasy elements that appear as a wrap of its

surface for the children, but also has particulars that hold a deep commentary disguised through it. Overall, the novel explores the adventures of a boy named Jack who seeks to save Dur Pig (DP), his favorite doll. He took on this adventure to The Land of the Lost (LoL) with The Christmas Pig (CP), a surrogate doll, who eventually becomes his beloved buddy. In addition, Rowling fills the setting of her novel with places in the LoL that are described in a peculiar way. The portrayals are formed in the fictional world environments, which are far removed from how they exist in the real world. There are elements of fantasy that Rowling portrays in the setting of her novel so that readers will not recognize the existence of this matter as it exists in reality. Apart from the setting, she also inserts the same trait into the characters. The novel subtly uses thing, a non-human kind, as the character in the novel.

In other children's literary works, the inanimate things become to life also can be found, such as the playing cards in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, the toys in John Lasseter's *Toy Story* movie and Cathy East Dubowsky's adaptation into a novel, the clock, candle, and teapot in the popular folktale *Beauty and the Beast*, and the chimney fire in Hayao Miyazaki's animated movie *Howl and Moving Castle*. In *The Christmas Pig*, many things in the various kinds appear with the speaking ability in the LoL. Uniquely, their ability to come alive is not just an attribute of fantasy but also allows them to voice and express their feelings towards human behaviors through the narrative. For human, they are just non-living objects in life, so their presence can always be replaced. Human frequently assumes that things, as part of the world, only exist as tools to provide their necessities and do not need to be treated carefully (Aziz et al., 2024). This assumption leads human tends to underestimate the existence of things and shows their negligence.

Retrieving the definition of negligence from the Oxford Dictionary, it is "The failure to give someone or something enough care or attention." In reality, the lost and defective things are bound to be neglected by humans without considering what happens to them afterwards. In *The Christmas Pig's* narratives for the things, they reveal the negligence of humans towards them.

They convey the reasons and causes of their presence in the LoL, which are all caused by the human act as their owners. This shows the human failure to take care and pay attention on things. The magical portrayal of things voicing the mistreatment of humans toward them lends the reader a fantasy visualization of the novel, causing the imagery when reading it.

The things in *The Christmas Pig* are presented in the third point of view narrative style, commonly known as an omniscient point of view (Abrams & Harpham, 2015, p. 301) or classified by Genette (1980, p. 189) that the narrator is not one of the characters but knows all the narrative events and so called zero focalization (Genette, 1980; Prince, 1989) and heterodiegetic in the narrative level (Hoffmann, 2017; Kenan, 2002). With this style, the narrator knows everything including the appearance, the way of thoughts, and the feelings of the characters (Didipu, 2019). This allowing the reader to interpret themselves what is happening by considering these three matters. It is also aligned with the concept of imagery, where *objects* are presented to make the text perceived in the mind and sense.

Furthermore, the narrative use of the non-human point of view is closely related to the trope of personification. In *The Christmas Pig*, human negligence is voiced through the description of things instead of directly described by human. Abrams (2015, p. 135) gives a clear and brief definition that personification is a figurative device used to make inanimate or abstract objects seem to have the humanlike abilities. In addition, Dodson (2008) also explains that personification is a subtype of metaphor, as he states “Metaphor is a trope, and personification is a metaphor.” Whereas both explain something by implying it with something else, personification is concerned more with the character afforded by human action verbs.

Later on, Lakoff and Johnson (2003) state that personification is a kind of ontological metaphor, where a physical thing is specified as being human. This allows readers to understand the experiences of non-human entities through the lens of human characteristics and activities. In this case, the experiences of things in *The Christmas Pig* can be understood because they are able to express their feelings. Through personification, readers are not only

led to think about the existence of things, but also to reflect on their behavior towards them. Using personification, the things that behave as human beings become sensible as they are able to show their sorrow and anger in exposing the careless behavior of human. Hence, the existence of personification makes human views on the reality of things become fresh and distinct because the description is emotionally impactful (Adhikari, 2024). As a result, human's empathy will be questioned on how their habitual way of treating things, as nonhuman narrative is also closely related to evoke the empathy (Bernaerts et al., 2014; Crewe, 2019).

Furthermore, some previous studies were found as the references that focus on fantasy literature. The first one is Amy Stimson's (2022) *We Lose That We May Find: Fantasy and Defamiliarization in J. R. R. Tolkien and C. S. Lewis*. This thesis discusses how fantasy is applied to the works of Tolkien and Lewis. It reveals that both authors use techniques of defamiliarization through fantasy to deconstruct biblical doctrine. The second one is a similar thesis by Achmad (2024) entitled *Defamiliarization, Imaging, and Perception in Children's Fantasy Literature: A Case Study of Alice Character in Lewis Carol's Alice's Adventure in Wonderland Novel*. The study found that Lewis Carol used imagery and perception. As a result, the novel is claimed to be a representation of perceptual disorder because it blurs the reader's perception of reality and fantasy.

Another study found is focused on personification as figurative language in children's literature. The study is Tanto's (2020) *Roald Dahl's Ingenious Language Play in the Use of Figurative Language*. This study discusses how Dahl plays the words in his three children's novel. The study focuses on figurative language used in the novels, including simile, metaphor, and personification. The result reveals that Dahl's peculiar wordplay in his three novels succeeded in demonstrating its charms that are suitable for children readers. The results of this study show that the strangeness of the wordplay displayed by Dahl in his three novels succeeds in showing its appeal that is suitable for children readers. More specifically, personification is able to

create a playful style that is perceived as amusing for the children when it is visualized.

The next one is a study on personification of non-living entities found in Nishimura's (2015) *Personification and Narrative: The Blurred Boundaries of the Inanimate in Hardy and Woolf*. This study discusses how personification is used in Thomas Hardy's *The Return to the Native* and Virginia Woolf's *To the Light House*. The researcher used the concept of personification to explore both authors' techniques and also applied Gerard Genette's concept of zero focalisation narrative to portray the blurring of description. This study found that both authors succeeded in blurring the boundaries between animate and inanimate entities, as Woolf succeeded in blurring the subject-object distinction between human and thing with personification and Hardy succeeded in evoking the emotions of natural elements.

The following study discussing personification is found in *Personification in Leila S. Chudori's Novel Homecoming* by Utami (Utami, 2022). This research explores the personification used to show the aesthetics of language and imaginative strength in the novel *Pulang* by Leila S. Chudori. Through analyzing the language style by giving human nature to non-living features, this study prioritizes the language style to strengthen the meaning of the story, especially the story in the novel with the background of Indonesia's political conditions after the 1965 disaster. This study highlights the emotional conditions and messages in the story with a descriptive qualitative method by focusing on words, phrases, and sentences in the dialog and narration. The study of personification is carried out by identifying data, including narratives that contain the giving of human emotions and actions. Then, the function of personification is also identified in the context of the story. This study found that personification plays an important position in building emotion and imagination in the story, by giving life to inanimate things that portray the inner character and atmosphere. Thus, it is found that personification is not only a text-enhancing feature, but also reinforces the themes of loss, struggle and longing in the historical situation along with its profound meanings.

The relevant study with the discussion of imagery is taken from Dharlie and Samanik's (2021) *Imagery Analysis in Matsuoka's Cloud of Sparrow*. It discusses how imagery appears in the narrative and dialog that allows readers to perceive the world with vivid experiences. They examined a historical novel by Takashi Matsuoka that depicts the situation in 19th century of Japan, where imagery is used as a reflection of the conditions told in the text. This research uses descriptive qualitative method with the use of imagery theory explained by Perrine and Thomas, that imagery consists of seven types, namely: visual (vision), auditory (hearing), gustatory (taste), tactile (touch), olfactory (smell), kinesthetic (movement), and organic (emotion). This research shows that imagery is not only a description of the narrative, but also a depiction of the emotions, physical conditions, and movements of the characters in the story. As the result, it is found that the seven types of imagery contained in this novel, particularly the use of visual imagery which is found as the most intense depiction. As for auditory, olfactory, and gustatory, they are found as sensory depictions that strengthen the atmosphere, while tactile and kinesthetic are found as depictions of tension such as in combat situations. Last, organic imagery provides a strong description of the protagonist's emotions. This study concludes that the imagery used in this novel is a strength feature to enrich multisensory understanding of the novel's content and message.

Another previous study that is found to discuss the relation between things and humans in literature is Piqueras' (2016) *Material Culture and Antihuman Subjectivities in Postmodernist Literature*. This study discusses postmodernist' works that concentrate on the shifting relationship between humans and things. The objects of this study are the novels *White Noise* and *Underworld* by Don DeLillo, *The Crying of Lot 49* by Thomas Pynchon, and *Neuromancer* by William Gibson. Piqueras highlights the shift in human existence that is trapped in the system of fabricated meanings on things that symbolize status and identity in the work of postmodern literature. The theories referred to in this research are postmodernist and poststructuralist views, specifically the theory of hyperreality espoused by Jean Baudrillard,

antihumanism conceptualized by Michael Foucault, and the concept of the aura of things as conceived by Walter Benjamin. Piqueras emphasizes the exploration of how things are represented and produce meanings that reflect contemporary cultural conditions in the narrative. As a result, this study claims that things occupy a position as the mediator of reality that makes the boundary between subject and object blurred. Things are no longer seen as neutral objects, but refer to subjectivity as a system of symbols and material culture. Piqueras concluded that the vision of materialism in postmodern literary works succeeded in changing the view of things and the things that managed to shift the ground of human existences.

The further study is conducted by Elgamal (2024) entitled *Identity and Resistance in Bassem Khandakji's A Mask That is the Color of the Sky: A Thing Theory Perspective*. This study explores how things portray the resistance, identity, and Palestinian culture. The object of the study is *A Mask That is the Color of the Sky*, in which things such as a mask, artifacts, and other archaeological relics become symbols in the story. Elgamal examined the novel by referring to Bill Brown's idea of Thing Theory and found that the things depicted in the novel symbolize the identity transformation and history of Palestine as a representation of the Palestinians' experience. This study concludes that by appraising Khandakji's novel through the lens of Thing Theory, the things in the novel create considerations for readers to reflect on the relationship between things and meanings that shape human consciousness.

Several relevant previous studies have been found as the evidence that this research has not been conducted before. In total, there are five studies that have analyzed *The Christmas Pig* with various topics so far. The first study is from Pravitha and friends (2023) entitled *Procedures Used in Translating Proper Names in J. K. Rowling's Christmas Pig into Indonesian*. This article journal discusses how the five procedures proposed by Newmark are used in translating *The Christmas Pig*. As a result, the author found that all five procedures were applied in the translated novel. However, the most used procedure is the cultural equivalent. Another study is from Bahadi's (2023)

Analisis Strategi Penerjemahan Teks Tuturan Berima pada Novel The Christmas Pig Karya J.K. Rowling. Similar to the first study, this thesis focuses on the translation of *The Christmas Pig*. What differentiates the two is that this study uses Cartford's translation strategy and shows that there are modulation, calque, transposition, descriptive equivalence, generic word usage, and translation by addition and subtraction in the translation of *The Christmas Pig*.

The next one is from Faqih's (2022) *Hero's Journey as Portrayed by Jack in J. K. Rowling's The Christmas Pig*. It discusses about the stages and obstacles that the protagonist passed to be a hero by applying Campbell's theory of hero's journey and Allison and Goethals' theory of obstacles in the journey. The result of the study is there are seventeen stages that passed by the protagonist, while the obstacles are complicated but completely passed. A further study is from Watsiqoh's (2023) *Moral Value of Responsibility Portrayed in J.K. Rowling's The Christmas Pig*. This thesis examines the novel with a structuralism approach that focuses on the moral value of responsibility and how it develops in the characters. Linda and Eyre's concept of responsibility is used in the analysis. It is found that there are three types of responsibility depicted in the novel such as responsibility to parents, responsibility to society, and responsibility to self. As for the development of the characters, it is analyzed through characterization and found that it occurs in Jack and Holly. Jack is able to change his misbehaving towards the CP to be better and Holly is able to change her selfishness to be more responsible.

The last study is from Haidanka and Hoban (2024) entitled *Rendering Linguocultural and Pragmatic Potential of Author Neologisms in Children's Literature (the Case Study of J. K. Rowling's "Christmas Pig" and T. Fletcher's "Christmasaurus")*. This study discusses how neologisms strengthen the linguistic information and pragmatic function in children's literature. By examining the lexicography and translation analysis of calque and foreignization in both novels, it is found that both of them successfully preserve the linguocultural and pragmatic aspects. Also, the neologisms in both novels equally reflect the value of family, love, and unity of the novels.

From the previous studies of J. K. Rowling's *The Christmas Pig*, it is clear that this research has a different topic. Although Watsiqoh's study on responsibility is still relevant to human negligence, this research has a different way of examining it. This is different because her study was focused on moral values, while this research is concerned on human negligence with the focus on the voice of the inanimate things, so the discussion is completely different. The same goes for the other three studies which discuss the translation of novels and another study which discusses the character's journey of becoming a hero. If compared with these studies, the topic of this research is also much disparate. By exploring *The Christmas Pig*, this research is attempted to contribute for increasing the study of literary technique and personification as a trope, specifically in perceiving the non-human narrative that is used for disguising human negligence of things.

1.2 Problem Statement

In response to the issue already described, then this research is a way to speak out that the existence of fantasy novel as popular literary work is not just functioned as an escape, but also may content a deep value to be explored. This includes depicting human unconsciousness of their behavior in such entertaining way. Consequently, the layers of the narrative must be scrutinized. Through this research, it will be verified that *The Christmas Pig* are more complicated than what it seems as a fantasy literary work which entertains for the children. By exploring further, it will be revealed that this novel is not simply built on the artistry elements. Rather, it is made up of the story ideas and narrative ways to disguise the human negligence concept as the meaningful value through the personification trope to engage human's empathy and re-questioning their behavior and perception of things.

1.3 Research Question

In the research development, the following are some of the questions that are formulated to justify the claims that have been described:

1. How is personification used to describe things in J. K. Rowling's *The Christmas Pig*?
2. How is human negligence voiced by the personified things in J. K. Rowling's *The Christmas Pig*?

1.4 Research Objective

This research aims to explore the personification used in *The Christmas Pig*. In addition, it will also explore the technique in disguising the human negligence of things through narrative of the novel. Referring to the formulation that has been focused on previously, the research objectives are:

1. To analyze how personification is used to describe things in J. K. Rowling's *The Christmas Pig*.
2. To analyze how human negligence is voiced by the personified things in J. K. Rowling's *The Christmas Pig*.

1.5 Research Significance

This research is projected to be valuable in developing the insights on children's fantasy literature study by providing the significance, both theoretically and practically. In the theoretical view, this research will be beneficial in the realm of literary study, particularly the personification and non-human narratives. Moreover, this research will combine the purpose of personification and imagery in the analysis. With the combination, this research will contribute to increase the new perspective of literary studies.

In the practical view, this research is supposed to be beneficial for general readers, literary text and human behavior researchers, as well as the students who are interested in the study of non-human narratives in the novel. Therefore, the findings of this research are expected to be expanded by those who will work on the future research.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

To avoid any misconceptions of the terms used in this research, the following definition of key terms is provided. This section is important to ensure the relevance of the terms to the research concept, so that the ambiguity of the intended definitions and terms does not occur. As Neha and Chetty (2021) argue, the purpose of this section is: 1) to complete the research background; 2) to deepen the research concept; 3) to distinguish the terms in question from other unrelated terms; and 4) to preserve the credibility of the research. By providing these definitions, it is expected to lead the readers and reviewers to get the appropriate information in accordance with the research purpose, most importantly for the terms ‘thing’ and ‘negligence’ which are included as the primary terms in this research.

1. Personification

A type of figurative language that gives a human attribute to an object, both in behavior and character or feeling (Abrams, 2015).

2. Thing

The term refers to another term of ‘object’ to avoid perceiving it just from its functional side. This aims to show that the object can serve as a *subject* and is not only seen and recognized as an *object* for humans (Brown, 2001).

3. Voice

An expression or perspective in the form of a narrative that comes from the narrator or character of the novel in terms of meaning (Aczel, 1998). Regarding to this research, it refers to express the view on human negligence which comes from the narratives and thing’s dialogue.

4. Human Negligence

Negligence is a condition in which a person fails to comply with the standard of awareness, which is when a person does not consider and see the risks of their unjustified careless actions (Brady, 1996). This refers to someone’s behavior that fails to show responsibility due to a lack of care and concern. In the context of this research, it is shown by human neglect and abandonment of the things owned.