

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is divided into some sub-chapters. Here, it consists of the research background, research questions, research purposes, research significances, and previous studies.

1.1 Research Background

For a long time, many existentialism philosophers have examined and debated the mundane aspects of human life. Albert Camus, who employs this secrecy as a detail in his writing, is one out of every other. Another well-known dramatist, Samuel Beckett, has also exploited the issue of human existence's regularity. Addiction and habit, he said, are the cancers of time. This topic can be thought of as a starting point for the discussion of absurdity.

The Absurd is the tension between the universe's meaninglessness and our desire to find meaning in it. When people discover this contradiction, they try to run away from it, according to Camus. They either commit physical suicide or intellectual suicide. Camus proposed another option: accept that life is meaningless and that we will never find meaning, but that we can achieve happiness by continuing to live our lives (*Il faut imaginer Sisyphe heureux*). Essentially, we can tell the universe to go betray itself without being bitter, jaded, or angry. Those referred to as routine or

ordinary.

One of the themes of play in *Endgame* is the character's habitual behavior. The way the characters elaborate on this theme can be seen in the play. The theme of Beckett's other work, *Waiting for Godot*, is the activity of awaiting, which has become the characters' major habit. *Waiting for Godot* depicts the characters' activities in their never-ending habit of waiting. Those characters are frustrated by the realization that they are trapped in an impossible circumstance. This state looks to be a trap for them in the guise of everyday routine.

Through his essay, *The Myth of Sisyphus*, Albert Camus stated that the absurdity of the human existence is the dilemma of man whom is full of yearning to comprehend everything in their existence and the entire universe. He must understand that there is nothing in life or the cosmos that can be explained. (Camus, 1955, p. 16).

When man becomes aware of his own condition, the absurdity emerges. At this point, he becomes aware of his own existence. This realization posed a fundamental question about the existence of man. This awareness also causes him to feel alienated from the rest of the world. Camus illustrates this situation with the example of people going about their daily lives, such as rising, taking the streetcar, working four hours, eating, sleeping, and going to work on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. This approach is usually simple to comprehend because it follows the same rhythm (Camus, 1955, p. 15).

In *The Theatre of the Absurd*, a book which somehow developed the sentence

"Theatre of the Absurd" there in realm of theatre, Martin Esslin assessed Beckett and his writings by implementing the premise of *The Quest of The Self*. *Endgame* is discussed in many ways, including symbolism, its relationship to other works by Beckett, and the author's bibliographical background. As stated in *The Theatre of the Absurd*, James Joyce has adversely affected Beckett, as he is a friend and literary master of Beckett's (Esslin, 1969, p. 46).

Endgame, like many of Beckett's works, has a bleak tone and a pathetic outlook on life. Characters are defined by their obvious disability and incapability to discover essence within their existence. Characters are defined by their obvious disability and incapability to discover essence within their existence. Nothing appears to be anything, as Beckett put it, "Nothing is more real than nothing" (http://samuel-beckett.net/godot_greg.html, accessed on July 7th 2022).

Endgame likewise depicts Beckett's reflections on the conflict with both a man's consciousness and hence the environment around him. The drama takes place in an internal chamber of a house as ordinary that is claimed to be home to the last humans remaining on Earth. There seems to be scant information regarding what happened outside the chamber. Outside the chamber, several of the characters, Hamm, goes on to say, "A death" (Beckett, 1986, p. 96). The characters' only certainty was death, the unavoidable end of their lives. This was portrayed by Esslin as a symbol of man's personality and the power outside of him. *Endgame* certainly confronts us with a devastatingly highlighted in bold of any notion of nothingness,

darkened edema, or otherwise desperation that has been undergone throughout state of anxiety: the realm somewhere else runs for such complainant among these asserts, while within his consciousness there exists a never-ending accusation around pieces of his demeanor which are fully independent enterprises, (Esslin, 1969, p. 48).

Endgame's character development culminates to Camus' concept about Absurdity. Each other's inability to engage with one another, as well as their circumstance and all of the contradictions that arise between them and the rest of the world, will lead the analysis in order to discover a manifestation of something like the concept of Absurdity. This study will examine at the characters Hamm, Clov, Nagg, and Nell's pessimism in *Endgame* through the lens of Absurdity.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the research background discussed above, the researcher concludes that two focus questions addressed in this study are:

1. How are characterization and characteristic of characters constructed in *Endgame*?
2. How is absurd condition of existence embraced through characters in *Endgame*?

1.3 Research Purposes

Based on the research questions above, the researcher is intended:

1. To find out how characterization and characteristic of characters in *Endgame* are constructed.
2. To identify how absurd condition of existence is embraced through the characters in *Endgame*.

1.4 Research Significances

The purpose of this study is for readers to be able to more easily understand and analyze absurdity and how it affects reality through the characterization of characters in an absurd play script. Because, according to the researcher, this discussion needs to be studied so that there are no misunderstandings when interpreting the play script for critics stuff or practice study in theatrical art performance, this research was created so that it can be a reference for other people who are in need.

1.5 Conceptual Framework

The researcher defines the key idea of this study, specifically Absurdity in characterization, as already mentioned in the title and further explored out in the preceding elaboration. In this study, the researcher used Albert Camus' concept of Absurdity for the dialogues and acts as well as several existentialism theories. Then comes an explanation of characterization and the main theory used, which is structuralism with the narrative theory by Gerard Genette.

Endgame will be analyzed using the theories presented in this chapter. The two theories, character theory and characterization theory, will give fundamental

assistance to interpreting the characters with in drama. Camus' idea of absurdity will be used as a basis in determining the significance of absurdity inside the characters depicted in the play.

Character theory and characterization are used to analyze the characters in *Endgame*. *Endgame* is essentially comprised of four characters: Hamm, Clov, Nagg, and Nell. When examining a character, we ought to be concerned with overall reliability, according to Abrams' *Glossary of Literary Terms*. *Endgame's* character interpretation might very well aid from this concept. The characterization concept developed by Edgar V. Robert and Henry E. Jacobs will be applied to support the identification of the characters appearing in the play. This theory will aid in the study of the character development in the play by utilizing what the characters say, what the characters act, what the other characters say about them, and what the playwright says on them.

The foundation of this thesis is Camus' concept of absurdity. The assessment will be focused primarily on Camus' idea of absurdity. The researcher would conduct a comprehensive analysis of the concept and study it through various perspectives, including contextually and from one of the philosophic systems, in order to determine how the characterization of characters in *Endgame* represents and embraces Camus' concept of absurdity.

1.6 Previous Studies

In addition to supporting this research, the researcher examines several

previous studies conducted by other researchers. The same topic has been addressed in five previous studies. The first study is an Undergraduate Thesis titled *Absurdism in Spongebob SquarePants' "Club Spongebob."* Pangestu conducted this study in 2018. He applied Albert Camus's absurd theory and made frequent references to Martin Esslin's *Theatre of the Absurd*. His research discovered that data analysis revealed that the absurdities in *Club Spongebob* are purposeless, skeptical, and illogical. On the other hand, absurdism in *Club Spongebob* is defined by story elements such as setting, plot, and characterization. Based on the data analysis findings, it is possible to conclude that *Club Spongebob* is an absurd work with features that correspond to the theory written in Esslin's book. As a result, it is understandable and unsurprising if the work gives the impression of being 'strangely funny,' as most absurdism literary works do to readers or viewers (Pangestu, 2018).

An Undergraduate Thesis titled *The Reflection of Absurdism in Harold Pinter's Play and Putu Wijaya's Short Stories* follows. Nuratinah completed this study in 2020. She analyzed plots using Camus' theory of absurdity and Freytag's theory. Her thesis examines the plot and imagery that reflect the absurdity. As a comparison, the play script for Pinter's *The Dumb Waiter* (1960) and several short stories by Putu Wijaya: *Ah* (2016), *Anjing* (2016), *Apakah Kita Sudah Merdeka* (2016), *Aut* (2016), *Bahaya* (2016), and *Tua* (2016) were chosen. Some plot data found in the seven literary works analyzed and compared reflect absurdism in exposition, rising action, climax, and falling action. Similarly, there was only one

type of imagery that reflected absurdism among the six literary works, and it was in visual imagery. Meanwhile, when plot and imagery similarities reflecting absurdism in these six literary works are compared, the plot in Putu Wijaya's short stories is more dominant (Nuratinah, 2020).

The following study is a thesis titled *Existentialism and Samuel Beckett's Two Plays: Endgame and Happy Days*. Tan wrote this study in 2007. This study looked at how Beckett viewed existentialism in his plays. The study examined two of Beckett's plays, *Endgame* and *Happy Days*. It accomplished this by investigating how the playwright's characterization, setting, and use of language in these plays demonstrate his proclivity to employ some existentialist concept such as despair, anxiety, and thrownness on the path to authenticity. According to the study, some characters in both plays represent the existentialist man seeking to become an authentic man. However, despite some differences, these plays demonstrate that Samuel Beckett's view of Existentialism is quite similar to Sartre's view (Tan, 2007).

A journal titled *Beckett's Endgame through the Lens of Absurdity* is available for further research. Mohammadi completed the paper in 2022. He intends to expose the sharp vestiges of Absurdity as an offshoot of Existentialism through the form and content of the play, for which a skull-like room devoid of any sign of life and hope has been designed. The research focused on the postwar imbroglio from which no exit door could be found, and this overwhelming bog is mostly represented by two characters known as Hamm and Clov. Furthermore, the bonding between Hamm and

Clov represents the co-dependency of the Modern Men as an absurdist notion; although Clov occasionally becomes exhausted by providing services to Hamm, he believes that if the bonding between them is torn, their existence will be jeopardized. Apart from the absurdist features of *Endgame* that have already been mentioned, there is another underlying trait of this literary movement that has been neglected, namely the failure of language to help characters communicate well and its pivotal role as a propeller towards their isolation and alienation. (A.M. Mohammadi, 2022).

There is a Master's Thesis titled *Existential Absurdity and Alienation in Samuel Beckett's Waiting for Godot and Franz Kafka's The Metamorphosis: an Existential Analysis* in the last research. Edeh completed this thesis in 2019. The study examined *Waiting for Godot* and *The Metamorphosis* by Samuel Beckett and Franz Kafka across the multifaceted perspectives of existentialist absurdity and estrangement, examining how the utilization of certain existential conceptions reflected fundamental existential dispositions required to existential speech. Moreover, the study used a comparative assessment of *Waiting for Godot* and *The Metamorphosis*, two diverse literary genres linked by the use of existentialist elements in both. The study investigated at how Samuel Beckett and Franz Kafka used existentialist absurdity and detachment in their pieces and how they differs each other. Overall, the study is a crucial encounter with the intricate data set of an absurd and isolated existence depicted in the existential crisis of Vladimir, Estragon, and Gregor Samsa. According to the study, all these authors used considerably different

writing approaches to bring forth concepts of absurdity, nihilistic, and estrangement in their pieces (Edeh, 2019).

