

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the background of this research, statement of problem, research objective and research significance.

1.1 Background

... when you are a Bear of Very Little Brain, and you Think of Things, you find sometimes that a Thing which seemed very Thingish inside you is quite different when it gets out into the open and has other people looking at it.

Milne (2007, p. 99)

Winnie the Pooh is a 1926 children's book by English author A.A. Milne and English illustrator E.H. Shepard. The book is set in the fictional Hundred Acre Wood, with a collection of short stories following the adventures of an anthropomorphic teddy bear, Winnie the Pooh and his friends Christopher Robin, Piglet, Eeyore, Owl, Rabbit, Kanga, and Roo. It is the first of two story collections by Milne about Winnie the Pooh, the second being *The House at Pooh Corner* (1928). Milne and Shepard collaborated previously for English humour magazine *Punch*, and in 1924 created *When We Were Very Young*, a poetry collection. Among the characters in the poetry book was a teddy bear Shepard modelled after his son's toy. Following this, Shepard encouraged Milne to write about his son Christopher

Robin Milne's toys, and so they became the inspiration for the characters in *Winnie the Pooh*.

The book was published on October 14, 1926, and was both well received by critics and a commercial success, selling 150.000 copies before the end of the year. Critical analysis of the book has held that it represents a rural Arcadia. Separated from real world issues or problems, and is without purposeful subtext. More recently, criticism has been levelled at the lack of positive female characters.

The author of the original Winnie the Pooh stories, Alan Alexander Milne (1882–1956), served as a signalling officer for Britain's Fourth Royal Warwickshire Regiment during World War I. The horrors of the war inspired him to write positive and joyful stories of days when life was simpler (Moynihan, 1973). Many factors contributed to his creation of Winnie the Pooh, most prominent being a desire to write for the naïve wonder inside adults such as himself as a means of escape (Bright, 2010; Hornik, 2011). In his autobiography *It's Too Late Now* (1939), Milne dedicated a considerable part to his fascination with his 'own beginnings' and his need to write positive tales for adults that would enable them to break away from reality (Hunt as cited in Knudsen, 2012, p. 25).

Milne started his writing career at the University of Cambridge's magazine *Granta*, becoming assistant editor for *Punch* at the age of 24. After World War 1, he resigned and wrote children's stories. He wrote *Winnie the Pooh* in 1926 and *The House at Pooh Corner* two years later, both illustrated by E.H. Shepard (1879–1976), a co-worker at *Punch* magazine (Milne, 2014).

There are ten stories in each of the two books, taking place in a beautiful forest called the Hundred Acre Wood. His son Christopher (1920–1996), who is often regarded as the inspiration behind the character Christopher Robin, explained in his autobiography (Milne, 2014) that the family spent many holidays in the Ashdown Forest in Sussex. He suggested that the forest was a symbol of happier times to his father and thus the perfect setting and doorway for the storybooks (Milne, 2014).

The premise of the storybooks is that toys belonging to Christopher come to life in the magical and tranquil forest. Although the characters experience exciting adventures together, they are also constantly caring and nurturing one another, working towards a compassionate community (Stanger, 1987). The stories involve different characters, but without exception, they all include a character named Winnie the Pooh. Appendix A contains a summary of all twenty stories.

Winnie the Pooh books are popular children's stories which have enthralled generations of young readers. Known for their gentle humour and surprising insight into the human condition, the books have piqued the interest of scholars from various disciplines. In this study the classic books are examined from a rather modern perspective; that of the character strength classification developed by Peterson and Seligman (2004) in positive psychology. The authors proposed the model as a guideline to achieve well-being.

Pooh is astonishingly eloquent and humorous when he explains how one's existence consists of a complex system of 'Things'. It influences how humans feel about themselves and how they are perceived by others. Aristotle called it 'the four humours' (Coetzee & Viviers, 2007), Freud identified it as the 'subconscious mind' (Strumpfer, 2005), and positive psychologists termed it 'character strengths' (Strumpfer, 1995). It encompasses the search for what it takes to optimise human functioning within their theoretical frame of reference. The dissertation wishes to use the science of positive psychology as a toolbox, and children's literature, specifically Winnie the Pooh, as building blocks to illustrate these strengths.

Traditional literature is an genre of children's literature. Traditional literature is believed to have very important values that can influence the direction and goals of children's personality development in the process of maturing. Traditional literature that exists in a society is believed to have crystallized wisdom values in it which can be used as a medium for education and learning that is effective enough to foster and develop children's personal values. Traditional literature is usually conveyed orally because in ancient times there were not too many books in print. Traditional literature is a variety of stories and habits in the form of expressions of society in the past which are generally conveyed orally to other people and between generations. (Nurgiyantoro, 2005:165)

Traditional literature refers to a life that is correlated with the world understood by children, adults and everyone else. The language used is language that can be understood by children in accordance with the child's intellectual and

emotional development. Not only other literary genres, traditional literature is also a reflection of the ideology of a culture on social phenomena in the surrounding environment where and when traditional literature was made. So far, traditional literature has been used as a tool to educate (didactic purpose) children so that they are disciplined to behave well based on the values and norms that apply in a society, therefore in traditional literature there are assumptions about behaving well for children. Traditional literature has direct or indirect benefits, functions, or contributions to children. These contributions range from support for value growth (taste, emotion and language), personal (cognitive, social, ethical and spiritual). (Huck, 1987:36)

One form of traditional literature is fable. Reading fiction in the form of fables makes children feel happy when reading it because what is presented are stories of funny animals that can talk or behave like humans, in the book there are pictures, poetry and songs that children can sing and imitate so that children enjoy reading. In addition to feeling happy, children will unconsciously imitate the good things that are told in the fable so that it helps to shape children's good behavior from an early age. Fable places children's eyes as the main observer and as the focus because children's literature is literature that reflects children's feelings and experiences in their daily lives which can be seen and understood through children's feelings and visions. (Tarigan, 1995: 5)

Children's literature theory is the introduction in this study, as a guide for the writer to understand children's literary characters which are different from literature in general. Structuralism analysis is carried out first as a first step in

every initial research on literary works, so in this study the writer will use the structuralism analysis approach which is the initial stage in a study of literary works. The emphasis of the study of structuralism in literary works is the economic structure that is interrelated. This means that the study of structuralism means a study that only discusses literary works autonomously, literary work must be interpreted as detaching itself from its external aspects by analyzing each element in its relation to other elements. (Kurniawan, 2009 : 69)

Traditional literature can be understood as a type of literature that has a common set of characteristics, or a category of grouping literary works which is usually based on style, form, or content. Lukens classifies the genre of children's literature into six types, namely realism, formula fiction, fantasy, traditional literature, poetry, and non-fiction. This difference will be seen with adult literary genres, children's literature looks more detailed, but there are overlaps here and there because a story can be included in more than subgenres with different criteria. (Lukens, 1999 : 14)

Although genre is not so important to children, this is not the case for literary observers and people who are obliged to choose good reading for children. With the existence of traditional literary genres, it will be easier to get to know more about the characteristics of the literary genre because in a literary genre there are a number of elements that have the same characteristics, and these elements show differences with elements in other genres. Writer have determined the object to be studied using the Lukens theory in this study, namely Winnie the Pooh by Alan Alexander Milne. In Winnie the Pooh by A.A. Milne, there are several sub-

genres with different criteria, namely folktales, fables, bible, myths, epic and legendary heroes, and the fables which will be discussed in more detail in this study.

Every literary work must have the important element so that it is easily digested by the reader. The elements contained in traditional literary works are certainly different from other literary works. The big problem discussed in this research is what is traditional in A.A.Milne's Winnie the Pooh. Then what are the characteristics of a Fable that build meaning and beauty in the Winnie the Pooh story so that the story is very popular.

1.2 Statements of Problem

Traditional literature is a part of literature that is still popular until now such as fable. Therefore, there is no longer any bargaining, as a writer it cannot be separated from the use of the reader's imagination, so that children as readers can understand the work. The development of literature will be seen from the writer himself, how the story writer understands his work by finding beauty in a work and how readers can feel the writer's imagination. *“The trajectory of a book is the route chosen by the author through his material. It is the action of a book, considered not as the movement of paraphrasable events in that book but as the movement of the author's exposition and the reader's experience of it.”* (Nodelman, 1990:247)

In response to this problem, writer proposes study to investigate the focused on looking for the elements of traditional literature specifically fable. The

writer formulates the problem into two questions as follows:

1. What elements of traditional literature are found in A. A. Milne's Winnie the Pooh?
2. What are the features of fable contained in A.A.Milne's Winnie the Pooh?

1.3 Research Objectives

Based on the formulation of the problem above, the purpose of this study is as follows:

1. To identify elements of traditional literature story in A.A.Milne's Winnie the Pooh.
2. To identify the feature of fable in A.A. Milne's Winnie the Pooh.

1.4 Research Significances

This research is expected be able to provide benefits to the readers, both theoretically and practically.

Theoretically, the results of this study are expected to contribute to the development of literature knowledge, especially on the understanding of children's literature and traditional literature.

Practically, for the readers, this research can increase interest in appreciating literary works. For writer, this research can enrich knowledge related with literary analysis studies.