

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers the background of the research, the statement of the problem, the research objective and significance, the definition of key terms, and the previous studies. This chapter mainly elaborates on reasons as justifications for conducting this research.

1.1 Background of the Research

Humans as creatures with emotions and feelings have certainly felt lonely throughout their lives. Self-alienation, emptiness, loneliness, and a sense of meaninglessness are almost inevitable for humans to feel as they live in a harsh society. Loneliness is defined as a sense of loss, disconnection, withdrawal, separation, or alienation from people and places (Mansfield et al., 2021). Loneliness is often associated with the absence of meaningful relationships or connections; feelings that make a person feel empty inside. Rokach (2004) argued that the condition of loneliness usually includes a person's unmet need for love, belonging, or intimacy. Pappano (2001) mentioned that a person who feels lonely is one who is out of touch and often does not even realize that he feels lonely. With this condition, people may not realize what makes them empty and try to search for something, whether it is identity or affection, to fill the void. Lonely people often do not recognize themselves, creating a hole within themselves. Mijuskovic (2012) perceived loneliness as the desire to be positively, mutually, and reciprocally related to another thinking being and yet being unable to relate in this desired fashion. Although abstract, loneliness can be expressed through language in the form of words or writing. One of the forms of writing that can express this sentiment of loneliness is literature.

A literary work is a creation of art of the author's creativity poured through language to please the readers. In literature, the expression of loneliness can be portrayed by the author through his ability to arrange words. Badrun (1983:16) sees literature as an imaginative art activity that uses language and other symbols as tools. The author can present something delightful through literary works with his

sharp imagination and creations through language. Literature is born from the author's imagination which is then depicted through language (Widayati, 2017). According to Boulton (in Hasim, 2011), literary works present values of beauty that can satisfy the hearts of the reader. Literary works also contain and describe various kinds of complex life problems. The content of such complex meanings and all kinds of beauty would only be realized or illustrated through the media of language, writing, and discourse structures. Therefore, the narration or language in literary works is essential in expressing those complex meanings.

Wellek and Warren (1956) see literary work as a complex whole of orders closely related to all its materials. It can be said that a literary work is an autonomous product that is born from the coherence among the elements within itself. Literary works, therefore, cannot be separated from the intrinsic elements that build them whole. Literary works consist of three types, according to Pradopo (2021), they are poetry, drama, and prose. One type of prose is novels. Elements such as theme, characters, plot, setting, and language style play an important role in building the structure of a novel. Wellek and Warren (1956) stated that a novel can narrate certain ideas or concepts in which those ideas can be conveyed through the language used by the author in such a way as to create a work of art.

Language in literature is different from the everyday language in general. According to Culler (2000), literary works have the ability to narrate something with beauty, especially the beauty of language. The beauty of literary works can be seen in the peculiar use of languages, such as in the aspect of diction and language styles. This makes literary language sound a lot different from the general language, namely because the language structure in the narrative is very different, so it has its own uniqueness. The narratives in literary works do not solely have literal meanings because, with the style of language such as poetic language, they also have non-literal or non-concrete meanings as a means to create an aesthetic end. This aesthetic form of language is often found in works of literature that are regarded as "high" which is commonly referred to as high literature.

Gans (1974) stated that people adopt two standards of value in choosing literature, namely high and popular culture. He mentioned that popular culture

readers fall into the category of *taste public*, where people tend to look out for what is currently trending and popular as they enjoy literature that is easy to understand. On the other hand, there is a group of people still praising high literature who identify themselves as part of the *taste culture* category in which they enjoy the complexity of the form in literature, which is not as simple as popular culture. Aesthetic for them is the beauty coming from the complex form of a work. High literature pays more attention to the relationship between form, substance, and the implied content of symbolism. It upholds careful discourse about feelings, moods, and self-reflection rather than action whereas philosophically it explores further basic, psychological, and social issues within the work. Most high-culture fiction touches upon the alienation of an individual and the conflict between the individual and society (Gans, 1974). This seemingly complicated nature is what makes most of the content of high literature can only be perceived or understood by highly educated people with upper and upper-middle-class status.

The complexity contained in high literature appears not only in the content but also in its language structure which is seen as unique and different from most popular works ever seen today. According to DiBattista & McDiarmid (1996), high moderns like Eliot, Joyce, Woolf, and Tolstoy are regarded as self-conscious formalists who seek the newly perceived instabilities of language and meaning. They are seen as writers who distanced themselves from or elevated the dominant lower- and middle-class culture of their time due to their moral and aesthetic “difficulties”. It is because of the “difficulties” of the substance and the new formations of the language they create in their work that the target audience of high culture work comes often from the upper level, employed mainly in academic and professional occupations according to Gans (1974). Therefore, this research aims to uncover the aesthetic of the language “difficulties” contained in high literature.

One of the main challenges literature can offer, according to Toolan (2013), is the task of understanding its implicit situations. He also mentioned an example of this challenge in a poem called *This is a Photograph of Me* by Margaret Atwood, in which there is a line that goes ‘The photograph was taken the day after I drowned’. Generally speaking, this kind of situation sounds impossible. How could the

speaker say the line when it is himself that was drowned? A drowning person cannot speak nor can he share ‘photographs’ with the reader. To understand this situation, it must be reconstructed by assuming that some parts of the situation are somewhat ‘unusual’. Perhaps the photograph here is not in the usual sense, or perhaps there is no ‘drowning’ in the literal sense involved. The readers are asked to read some of the words in the poem figuratively, not literally. By considering these dictions, and speculating on what it would mean to interpret these elements in an unusual sense, the readers should be able to decide what kind of interpretation is the most convincing. This is one of the challenges in understanding the meaning of figurative language that is mostly found in high literature. In learning and understanding literature, according to Setiawati & Maryani (2018), sometimes the readers find it difficult to understand the meaning of the narrative in the work because, for the most part, the author often puts the meaning implicitly. In other words, it is not an easy task to understand the meaning implied in its rather complex language as the author uses certain diction and imagery, making what is conventionally said not always the same as what is intended to be expressed.

According to Shklovsky, language in literature can often change places and metamorphose into one another in the sense that the meaning of what is mentioned can be metamorphosed into something else (in Nurrachman, 2023). In Saussurean linguistics, language is seen as *signified* and *signifier*, where what is spoken (*signifier*) is what is thought (*signified*). However, poetic language, from a linguistic perspective, is thought to have inconsistency in meaning between the *signified* and the *signifier*. For instance, when one says “rose”, it could mean more than just a mere “rose”. In poetic language, a rose can mean passion, love, or intimacy. It is this inconsistency that causes people to struggle and lose their way of understanding the implied meaning of a language in literature. Yet this inconsistency is one of the special features of literary language in the perspective of literature. Therefore, literary language or poetic language has its own system. What some people find difficult about poetic language is actually part of the beauty of the work. As mentioned by Steiner (2016:50), the artistic form or beauty of literary language is what is deliberately complicated. Thus, in order for an object to become artistic—

in which case its beauty can be enjoyed—it must be extracted or separated from its ordinary, old-fashioned associations. In other words, the object must be made to be unusual and more complex as that is the characteristic of poetic language itself.

In this modern era where most people enjoy popular literature, not everyone actually enjoys the light reading of popular literature. Some high literature still show their existence and occupy the hearts of readers for their rather complex and unique language which contains many figurative meanings that are rarely found in today's popular literature. DiBattista & McDiarmid (1996) mentioned popular literature is an easily readable and accessible work intended for an audience that operates in a different world from the high modernist reader. Poetic language, which is figurative language in nature, is in fact, can mostly be found in high literature, making it not easy to read them in one sitting. It is therefore important to discuss the concepts of poetic language contained in high literature because of its unique structure of the language. One of, considered high literature is the novel, *Fahrenheit 451* written by Ray Bradbury. This research examines how poetic language in *Fahrenheit 451* is constructed in describing ideas such as loneliness as it gives an aesthetic effect to the reader.

In this case, poetic language is closely related to the concept of defamiliarization introduced by Viktor Shklovsky in his writing “Arts as Techniques”. Defamiliarization or estrangement, according to Shklovsky, is a poetic technique that makes ordinary things perceived as new, complicated, and unusual yet somehow refreshing (in Nurrachman, 2023:72). This technique seeks to eliminate the dullness of habits in order to bring forth a new grasp or perception outside of the automatized accustomed schemes in real life. This habitual cycle, for instance, is when people are about to leave for work, they automatically take the same path and turn every day, and without realizing it they have already arrived at their workplace. This cycle makes life feel monotonous because such patterns have been repeated so many times that there is nothing to make out of it. Shklovsky tried to eliminate such automation by defamiliarizing the repeated schemes. He stated that “if the whole complex lives of many people go on unconsciously, then such lives are as if they had never been” (in Nurrachman, 2023:72). Habitualization

makes life reckoned as nothing – it is as if people had never been truly living. Thus, Shklovsky introduced this concept of defamiliarization, and literature served specifically for that; to make life a little more refreshing and beautiful. Hence, the purpose of literature is none other than to enjoy its aesthetic beauty as Wellek & Warren (1956) mentioned that a work of art serves a specific aesthetic purpose.

Fahrenheit 451 is a dystopian novel that tells a story about a world where authorities use technology to rule society, while in contrast, books and literature are on the verge of death. Books are banned from society and there are firemen whose job is to burn every book found, along with the houses in which the books are hidden. The loss of books leads people to become numb and lack empathy as they are consumed by television and technology. People are left being cut off from the deep and meaningful conversations and connections that books and literature can provide. Guy Montag, the protagonist, is a fireman himself whose daily job is burning books. However, his meeting with Clarisse sparks him to question his life as he longs for the absence of something significant to fill the void within him. He then starts hiding books out of curiosity, which is contradictory to what he has been doing as a fireman.

Fahrenheit 451 contains narratives illustrating a world in which people are occupied by entertainment from technology, leading to a lack of genuine intimacy, human connections, meaningful conversations, and relationships. This condition causes a few individuals to feel estranged and lonely, and Montag is one of them. In portraying the feeling of loneliness, emptiness, and isolation from society, the narratives in the novel are organized in such a way using poetic language, making it have its own uniqueness and beauty in terms of language. This certainly prolongs the reader's perception process in capturing the message within the text. The complexity of narrative construction such as this can be analyzed and broken down using Shklovsky's defamiliarization concept, precisely in grasping the way such poetic language forms represent the loneliness in Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the explanation above, it can be seen that the problem that arises in this research is the forms of poetic language related to the representation of loneliness found in Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*. Poetic language is part of the defamiliarization technique that makes ordinary things strange and unusual in the language structure of literature. In this case, many complicated and strange language uses are found in Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*, with some of them representing the theme of loneliness. Therefore, using Shklovsky's defamiliarization theory, the researcher will identify the forms of the poetic language presented in Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* and analyze how the poetic language of loneliness is represented therein.

After knowing the background description of the problem above, the researcher can move to investigate the problem so that this research will be formulated with the following questions:

1. What forms of poetic language are found in Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*?
2. How do those poetic languages represent the loneliness in Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*?

1.3 Research Objective

This research aims to find the forms of poetic language and how they represent loneliness in Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* using Shklovsky's theory of defamiliarization. The following are the research objectives:

1. To find out the forms of poetic language in Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*.
2. To discover how those poetic languages represent the loneliness in Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*.

1.4 Research Significance

The results of this research are expected to contribute theoretically and practically to the use of language in literature. Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich the knowledge of how language in literature can make something

ordinary be perceived as unusual and odd yet refreshing through the use of poetic language, and how these can create new perceptions of mundane things in everyday life to the reader.

Practically, this research is expected to help students, especially literature students, in understanding how poetic language is used in literature as it also creates a new sense of perception in reading and how it produces meaning implicitly. Hopefully, this analysis of poetic language forms and how they represent loneliness in Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* can set a case for analyzing the unique, complicated language of literature to uncover the meaning behind it.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

The definitions of these key terms are presented to avoid misunderstanding of the terms used in this research.

Novel: A fictitious prose narrative that is typically long and complex and specifically deals with the human experience through a series of interconnected events.

Poetic Language: A type of language in literature that usually uses images to convey something to the reader, which is often figurative, making it hard to understand.

Defamiliarization: A theory and technique of literature, originating in the early 20th century, that presents familiar objects or situations in unusual ways, thus extending the perceptive process and allowing for new perspectives.

Figures of Speech: Forms of expression used to convey meaning by implying something different from the usual meaning, usually by comparing or identifying an object with another object that has a comparable connotation.

Imagery: A literary device used in poetry, novels, and other writings that uses vivid descriptions that appeal to readers' senses to create images or ideas in their minds so that the sensational and emotional experience of a text is brought to life.

Loneliness: The unhappiness felt by one due to not having companionship or someone to talk to, resulting in a state of bleakness or desolation.

Fahrenheit 451: A futuristic dystopian novel in which firemen are appointed to burn books in an attempt to censor information and knowledge from citizens to create an ignorant and less violent society. Amidst these conditions, themes of loneliness and desolation emerge as people become numb and lose empathy for one another. One character who exemplifies this loneliness is the main character, Montag, who is portrayed as lonely due to the lack of warmth from real human relationships. Furthermore, the meaning of the phrase “Fahrenheit 451” refers to the temperature at which paper ignites and burns.

Dystopian: a genre of literature that portrays an imagined world that is dark, unhappy, and corrupt, in which people live in fear and despair. It is the opposite of a Utopian or the idealist set of a world.

The parlor walls (the TV parlor): A wall-sized TV screen that plays interactive drama segments where the owner can participate in a role. This is a kind of entertainment center in the world of *Fahrenheit 451* that the authorities use to distract people from thinking and contemplating.

Seashell Radio (Thimble Radios): A small radio device that fits into the ear like a hearing aid or earbuds, worn by almost everyone in the society of *Fahrenheit 451* to receive constant broadcasts of information and entertainment. This is another type of distraction that the authorities use to keep people from thinking critically and expressing sadness.

UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI
SUNAN GUNUNG DJATI
BANDUNG

1.6 Previous Studies

Several previous studies with similar cases related to analyzing literary works using Shklovsky’s defamiliarization are found. One of which, is a journal article entitled “Passing the Same Streets with Running Leopards: Reading Bijan Najdi’s Short Fiction in the Light of Shklovsky’s Defamiliarization” (2012b) written by Fatemeh Pourjafari. In the article, Pourjafari applied Shklovsky’s defamiliarization to the short stories of the modern Iranian writer Bijan Najdi. The article attempts to advocate the idea that Najdi has deviated from the conventional usage of language, both at semantic and lexical levels. This is a way to challenge the reader’s thought and imagination when faced with a text that contains infinite possibilities of

interpretation. Pourjafari divides the concept of defamiliarization into three discourses, namely Foregrounding, Defamiliarization in Narrative Mode, and Defamiliarization of Ideas. In the Foregrounding discourse, she examined defamiliarization techniques related to forms such as Synesthesia, Paradox, and Ambiguity. Then, in the discourse of Defamiliarization in Narrative Mode, Pourjafari discusses defamiliarization related to the shift in point of view, non-human narrator, and self-conscious narrator. Lastly, the Defamiliarization of Ideas contains a discourse of defamiliarization related to the ideas or content of literary works. Pourjafari stated that although defamiliarization showed little interest in the content of literary works, their insistence on going against the inherited conventions of the language system, inevitably led to looking inside the texts to see the ideology contained therein. That is how defamiliarization helps the reader see into the depth of things and consequently overcome false ideas and visions. Pourjafari gave an example of how Najdi describes the concept of “death” in his poem as a natural phenomenon that can be defined according to life principles rather than connotes it with gloominess, horror, and darkness which is traditionally known. This is the kind of defamiliarization in ideas that talks about the content of a literary work.

Another relevant case is still with the same author, Fatemeh Pourjafari with the title of her article “Defamiliarization in Sohrab Sepehri’s Poetry” (2012a). Pourjafari found that most of the methods of defamiliarizing techniques include the creative use of everyday language and common concepts. The article shows how Sohrab Sepehri, the Iranian modern poet, made use of various methods of defamiliarization in his poems and indicates the ways that these techniques serve the aim of changing the reader’s mode of perception back from the trite, automatic patterns of everyday life. It is explained that Sepehri uses several defamiliarization techniques such as personification, paradox, and symbolism and sometimes he deviates from the generally accepted rules of the language of poetry by omitting a keyword or hiding an important idea intentionally. Not only that, Sepehri also defamiliarizes the familiar concepts and ideas. Pourjafari explained that Sepehri goes to the heart of facts – such as death, life, and love – and penetrates them to see

the kind of things as they really are. In this way, he invites the readers to overcome their false ideas and imaginations.

A similar case is also found in a journal article entitled “Defamiliarization: A Formalism Study on How Words Can Create Compelling Narrative in Edgar Allan Poe's *The Tell-Tale Heart*” (2022) written by Zamtrio Purbo, Nur Hidayat, and Sri Wahyuni. This article explained how defamiliarization components such as parallelism, imagery, simile, irony/paradox, and metaphor can build a nuanced and suspenseful atmosphere in the storytelling of *The Tell-Tale Heart*, leading readers into a deep experience of feeling the narrative more lively.

In addition, an article entitled “Defamiliarisation in Chaudhuri's *Freedom Song*” (2019) written by Prarthana Vardhan also discussed similar issues related to defamiliarization. Vardhan mentioned defamiliarization techniques that make Chaudhuri's novel *Freedom Song*, in which the story revolves around the daily lives of two Bengali family heads, more interesting and enjoyable to read. Among the defamiliarization techniques used in his novel are simile, irony, metaphor, and imagery, which consists of visual imagery, auditory imagery (sound), and olfactory imagery (smell). It is mentioned that the story of the novel is not about something grand with big events happening, but because of the defamiliarization techniques used in the narrative which merely talks about daily activities, it succeeded to make the readers bewitched and entertained reading it with close attention.

This research will be different and novel from previous studies because rather than poetry, the technique of defamiliarization in this research is used to explore the unique phenomenon of language in novels, precisely in Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*.