CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This introductory chapter presents a general overview of the research. The subsections included are the background of the research, statement of problems, research objectives, research significance, and definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Research

In literature, postmodernism came after the era of modernism. According to Lubis (2014 as cited in Asma, 2019) modernism focused on seeking a single truth through trying out different styles and using structured forms. In contrast, postmodernism rejected this idea, offering a more perspective on singular truth and highlighting the diversity, uncertainty, and complexity of human experiences (Nurhidayah & Setiawan, 2019). It is commonly sees as a response towards modernist movement, explores themes such as non-linear narratives, metafiction, and elements of popular culture (Kusnir, 2007). Brennan (2021) expands on this by noting three main features: non-linear storytelling, metafiction, and the incorporation of popular culture. *First*, non-linear storytelling, where the narrative jumps around in time, rather than following a strict chronological order. *Second*, the use of metafiction, which refers to authors acknowledging the fictional nature of their work, blurring the boundaries between the fictional world and reality. *Third*, the incorporation of elements from popular culture such as, references to films, music, advertisements, and other cultural elements are used to enrich the story and provide context into literary works (Brennan et al., 2021). Previously, stories were created in a neat and orderly manner, aiming to find a single, definite truth. However, postmodern stories now show multiple truths at once, reflecting the surprises and complexities of real life. These stories often jump around in time, remind the audience that they are fictional, and incorporate elements from technology, TV, movies, songs, and art to make them more engaging.

According to Lyotard (1984 as cited in Sarup, 2007), in the context of art, postmodernism has several central aspects that describe its nature, namely: (1) The lines between art and everyday life become unclear, (2) There is no separation between popular and high art culture, (3) Exclusivism, (4) Parody, (5) Pastiche, (6) Irony, (7) Playful spirit in texts, (8) Kitsch, (9) Camp, (10) Transformation of reality into image, and (11) Fragmentation of time. These are aspects that characterize the diverse and creative approach of postmodern art, which often mixes, borrows and combines elements from different sources and periods in artworks. This aspect helps create diverse and creative works that challenge traditional ideas and offer new ways of seeing and understanding art and literature.

One of the defining features of postmodernism which have already told above is irony. The use of irony is a defining feature of postmodernism, serving as a powerful tool to explore uncertainty, contradictions, and paradoxes in literary works. It highlights the difference between reality and expectations, questioning the truth conveyed by the narrative (Kadwa & Alshenqeeti, 2020). In his book, Landy (1972) classifies irony into three main types: verbal irony, dramatic irony, and situational irony. Verbal irony, where statements convey the opposite of their literal meaning; dramatic irony, arising from the audience's awareness of events unknown to the characters; and situational irony, where actions produce outcomes contrary to expectations. Therefore, irony plays a significant role in the postmodern exploration of truth, reality, and cultural narratives (Allo, 2017). In this context, irony is used to investigate and stimulate thinking about what is really going on behind what we believe to be truth or reality. In other words, irony is used to make a distinction between what is expected or thought and what actually happens.

The exploration of irony naturally leads to the discussion of parody, another key aspect of postmodernism. According to Bakhtin (1981 as cited in Piliang, 2003) parody often contains elements of irony, satire, and allegory, resulting in a combination of humour and sharp criticism. Bakhtin also states that parody is a form of textual dialogism, which means two or more texts meet and interact in the form of a dialogue or narrative that results a diverse exchange of meanings. Bakhtin

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(1981 as cited in Tohari, 2016) explains the dialogue or narrative within the text can take the form of satire, criticism, dissatisfaction, humour, or expressions of discomfort depending on the context. Parody is commonly found in works of art, including literature, film, and visual arts, where it allows authors and creators to engage in dialogue with existing texts, offering their own interpretations and critiques.

One of the works of art that can be analysed is novel. Lubis (2014 as cited in Asma, 2019) states that according to the female novelist, Virginia Wolf, novels often capture various problems and challenges in society through stories, enriched with ideology and the author's unique worldview. Among these, one of the interesting and relevant novels to be analysed using the postmodernism analysis is *They Both Die at the End* by Adam Silvera. The novel is considered a postmodernist novel due to its use of various postmodern features. The novel follows a postmodernism approach by telling its story in a non-linear way, meaning that it does not follow a straight timeline, adding to its sense of unpredictability. Even the title itself, hinting at the tragic ending fate of the protagonists, contributes to this sense of irony. Additionally, the novel employs metafiction, prompting readers to contemplate the boundary between reality and fiction, while also includes parts of modern culture, referencing to technology and social media into the story. Overall, *They Both Die at the End* reflects the spirit of postmodernist fiction through its non-linear storytelling, metafictional qualities, and incorporation of cultural references. These characteristics collectively contribute the categorization as a postmodernist work.

Adam Silvera's *They Both Die at the End* is a story set in an alternate world where people receive a call from the Death-Cast Company on the day they are going to die. In this story, the two main characters, Mateo and Rufus, receive the call on the morning which take place on the same day. Mateo and Rufus are two young people with different backgrounds and personalities. Mateo is a young man who tends to be cautious and often avoids risks, while Rufus is a boy who has experienced many tragedies in his life and tends to live boldly and without regrets.

After receiving a call from Death-Cast, the two decide to live their last day together. They go on a life-changing adventure, exploring the city, meeting new people, and searching for the meaning of their lives that will end in no time. Although the title of the novel implies a tragic ending, the story is more about how we live than about how we die.

They Both Die at the End is more about celebrating life, happiness, and meaning in the limited time available. Thus, the researcher is interested in the title ***Irony Leading to Parody on Main Characters in Postmodernism Fiction Novel They Both Die at the End.*** In the novel, elements of irony that can build can be identified in various aspects of the story, such as parody. The research employs structural analysis method and postmodernism analysis to identify the characteristics of postmodernism, with the specific focus on one aspect in the context of postmodernism: irony, which then creates a parody. This research explores how irony can form a parody used in literary works to create a certain effect in the narrative.

In purpose of conducting this research, the researcher looked through several sources and some previous studies that were similar to the topic being discussed, including thesis and journals. The research "*Postmodernism Analysis in Laurent Mauvignier's Novel Autour du Monde*" by Yanti (2016), which explored postmodernism in Laurent Mauvignier's novel *Autour du Monde*. The research adopted a postmodernism approach to analyze the novel's characteristics and manifestations of postmodern elements. Additionally, another research was "*Postmodernism Study the Romance Chanson Douce by Leïla Slimani*" by Asma (2019), which highlighted the characteristics of postmodernism in the novel *Chanson Douce* by Leïla Slimani. The aim was to explain the form of intrinsic elements in the novel, such as plot, characterization, setting, and theme, and to describe how postmodernism is reflected in the novel by using the theory of postmodernism. While these analyses provided valuable insights into postmodernist characteristics, the researchers did not specifically explore the role of irony in

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shaping postmodern narratives or its potential to create parody within the context of postmodernism.

Furthermore, other relevant previous studies examined irony in literature. For instance, the research "*Irony in Jonathan Stroud's The Amulet of Samarkand*" by Latifah (2022), focused on analyzing irony in Jonathan Stroud's novel *The Amulet of Samarkand* through New Criticism and Kennedy's theory of irony. It identified five types of irony in the novel; verbal, dramatic, cosmic, situational, and ironic point of view, and discussed how they were employed in the novel to advance the plot and emphasize key points. Similarly, the research "*The adaptation of Ironic humour from novel to film Diary of a Wimpy Kid Rodrick Rules*" by Rachmadina (2022), applied Petrie and Boggs' theory of irony, Salvatore Attardo's techniques of humour, and Pamusuk Eneste's theory of adaptation. This research focusing on how the film adapted ironic humour to maintain a similar comedic atmosphere to the novel. While previous studies have significantly contributed to the understanding of literary analysis, the researchers left a research gap in understanding how irony interacts with postmodernism to create parody in literary works. Latifah's research primarily examined irony's role in narrative structure, overlooking its connection to broader literary movements like postmodernism, and Rachmadina's research focused on adaptation but did not explore irony's deeper implications within postmodernist contexts

In contrast, this research focused on how irony, within the framework of postmodernism, could lead to parody in literary works. By using structural and postmodernism analyses, this research aimed to uncover the intricate connections between irony, postmodernist elements, and parody, thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of the complex interplay between these literary devices. Through this exploration, the research aimed to illustrate the unique ways in which irony operates within postmodern narratives, enriching the comprehension of the multifaceted nature of literary expression.

1.2 Statement of the Problems

Based on the background that the researcher puts forward above, the research problem can be formulated as follows:

1. What are the types of irony leading to parody found in postmodernism fiction novel *They Both Die at the End*?
2. How does the types of irony contribute leading to parody in postmodernism fiction novel *They Both Die at the End*?

1.3 Research Objectives

Based on the formulation of the research question above, the objectives of this research are:

1. To describe the types of irony leading to parody found in postmodernism fiction novel *They Both Die at the End*.
2. To analyze how the types of the irony present contribute leading to parody in postmodernism fiction novel *They Both Die at the End*.

1.4 Research Significances

This research is expected to be useful practically and theoretically. The theoretical benefits provide insights into literary studies, particularly regarding postmodernism, while the practical benefits help readers engage with significant themes presented in the novel. Specifically, the significances are:

1. Theoretical benefits: This research is expected to make a theoretical contribution to literary studies, especially in understanding the concept of postmodernism. It helps deepen the understanding of how elements of postmodernism are reflected in literary works, which can serve as a foundation for further research and theoretical thinking.
2. Practical benefits: The novel raises existential issues such as life, death, and the meaning of life. This research is expected to help readers reflect on these issues practically in the context of everyday life.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

a) Postmodernism: commonly sees as a response towards modernist movement, explores themes such as non-linear narratives, metafiction, and elements of popular culture (Kusnir, 2007).

b) Irony: one of the defining features of postmodernism, serving as a powerful tool to explore uncertainty, contradictions, and paradoxes in literary works. It highlights the difference between reality and expectations, questioning the truth conveyed by the narrative (Kadwa & Alshenqeeti, 2020).

c) Parody: a form of textual dialogism, which means two or more texts meet and interact in the form of a dialogue or narrative that results a diverse exchange of meanings. The dialogue or narrative within the text can take the form of satire, criticism, dissatisfaction, humour, or expressions of discomfort depending on the context (Tohari, 2016).

d) Novel: the center of attention in the world of art, in the world of novels, various problems and challenges that exist in society can be described and presented through stories, with a touch of ideology and the author's unique worldview (Asma, 2019).