

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the introduction of this research. The introduction includes the background of the study, research questions, research objectives, limitations of the problems, and significances of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

A literary work is almost confined to the quality of language, feelings, image relationships, or experiences, and a socio-cultural phenomenon that involves human creativity. As stated by Aminudin (1990:57), a literary work is born from the expression of the deposits of experience that have existed deeply in the soul of the author through the process of imagination. Therefore, A literary work most often refers to a work of creative imagination or a creative work. Literature refers to written works, including novels, short stories, poetry, plays, and more. Literature encompasses a wide range of works that reflect the human experience, enrich cultures, and convey profound messages. According to Bonnef (1998: 7), comics are also included in literary works, namely illustrated literature.

Comics are a type of visual storytelling that is typically presented in a sequential format, with panels containing illustrations and captions that tell a story. According to McCloud (2008: 9), comics are considered a form of art that combines text and images to convey a story and message. This is because comics utilize a combination of text and images to create the story and enable readers to form mental images. However, Cohn (2005: 2) defined comics are

images that are positioned next to other images that are deliberately arranged to convey information and generate an aesthetic response from readers. Therefore, the implementation of the story and images from a comic has a close relationship with illustrations. In this definition, illustrations play an important role in conveying the story and characters, as well as creating an atmosphere that is appropriate with the content of the story, thus the reading experience should be enjoyable for its readers.

There are several types of media used in displaying or publishing comics. Bonnef (1998: 9), says that comics consist of two categories, namely the comic strips and comic books. Comic strips is a short comic consisting of several panels and usually appears in newspapers. Comic books is a collection of comic pages that are neatly bound and published periodically. Besides in the form of strips and books (Maharsi, 2011: 18-19), also said that comics can be found in the form of novels, namely graphic novels, a comic that has a narrative and more complex story style. Since its emergence in the early to late 20th century, these types of comics have become one of the most influential narrative art forms in popular culture. The process of making these comics is organized in a book or magazine format and then traded in bookstores, specialty comic shops, or through newspaper subscriptions.

Due to the development of various industries, comics have adopted a new style as a reading medium. Because of this advancement also gave rise to a new term for comic readers, namely digital comics. It differs from traditional print comics that are published in the form of books or magazines. Digital comic is a form of comic that is created and published through digital media,

such as the internet and mobile applications. As stated by Aggleton (2018: 4), digital comics are comics that are published digitally and consist of single images or several parts that have a consistent reading flow, visible frames, symbols such as speech balloons, and a writing style that has visual meaning. Digital comics simplify the publication process, as writers and illustrators can publish their comics themselves without having to go through traditional printing and distribution processes. Some digital comic applications also add features such as comments, discussion, and text search to help readers find and access the comics they want. Nowadays, one of the most popular and influential platforms for digital comics, particularly in the format optimized for mobile reading is Webtoon.

Webtoon is a portmanteau of the words "web" and "cartoon" and it is known well as digital comics platform that publishes both serial stories and one-shots. Webtoons could be read on mobile devices via a website or an app. Webtoon have several advantages over traditional comics that are published in print form and read in books. Firstly, webtoons could easily be read through websites or applications on mobile devices, making it convenient for readers to access comics anytime and anywhere. Secondly, webtoons typically have a horizontal format, making it easier to read on mobile screens.

In this study, the writer chooses a webtoon or webcomic by Seopass and Raze entitled "Weak Hero", one of the well-known and widely read webcomics or digital comics. Weak Hero first published on September 19, 2019 and it updates every Saturday on Line Webtoon. Based on various considerations, this webtoon is quite appealing to be evaluated as the object of

study. Weak Hero is a webtoon written and illustrated by Seopass and Razen with an action and drama story centered on school life, strength, and fighting. In particular, “Weak Hero” explores themes such as courage, friendship, justice, and sacrifice. While the main genres are action, drama, and school, the story can also contain other elements such as comedy, suspense, and deep character building. The combination of these genres creates a complex and engaging narrative for readers. On the other hand, Seopass and Razen have created a character and plot that is extremely captivating, adding to the story an increasing sense of mystery with each episode.

The characters created by Seopas and Razen form a complex dynamic in the story “Weak Hero”. They face various conflicts, challenges, and battles that test their courage, friendship, and determination to fight injustice and create change in their school. As the interactions and conflicts between the characters form a complex dynamic in the story, their growth and development enrich the plot and gives depth to the characters. By analyzing a characterization of a character, we could find out how the character really is. Characterization could characterize a person and distinguish the nature of one person from another because each human person has different characteristics. The characteristics possessed by every character in the Weak Hero Webtoon attracted the attention of researchers to discuss more about how the characterization in the comic actually is.

The writer uses an intrinsic approach to facilitate the interpretation of the text that describes the true character and analyzes the characterization of the main character. The intrinsic approach is a literary approach that examines

the building blocks of the literary work itself, which means the intrinsic elements in the literary work, because to understand the overall meaning of a literary work, its forming structure must be analyzed as a solid unit. On the other hand, the intrinsic approach is a type of approach that analyzes literary works based on the text and the intrinsic points of literary works. Discusses the characters, characterization, plot, setting, style, theme, and other elements contained in the literary work. Starting from explaining and classifying it into an intrinsic approach, to describing what traits are found in the characterization.

Characterization, as explained by Wellek and Warren's (1949) theory, could be conducted through two methods. There are direct (telling) and indirect (showing). Direct characterization explicitly describes traits, while indirect characterization allows readers to infer them traits. The writer is focused on analyzing not only those two characterization methods, but also the writer will be further enriched by Geoffrey Leech's framework of denotative and connotative meaning. This concept will help the writer identify how the characterization of the main character is portrayed in the Weak Hero Webtoon. Therefore, this research is "Characterization Analysis of the Main Character in 'Weak Hero' Webtoon by Seopass and Razen".

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the preliminary description above, thus the researcher formulated a question:

1. How is the characterization portrayed in the main character of the webtoon "Weak Hero" by Seopass and Razen?
2. What are the forms of expression and denotative or connotative meanings in the characterization of the main character used in the webtoon "Weak Hero" by Seopass and Razen?

1.3 Research Objectives

The objectives of this research are

1. To evaluate and identify the characterization of the main characters portrayed in the webtoon "Weak Hero" through the intrinsic approach and Wellek & Warren's theory of characterization.
2. To analyze and describe the forms of expression and denotative or connotative meanings in the characterization of the main character used in the webtoon "Weak Hero".

1.4 Limitation of the Problems

In this research, there are problem limitations that must be considered. This research will use intrinsic approach as a basis for evaluating characterization. This will ensure that the results of the analysis provided have a valid and tested theoretical basis. Every character who appears in the webtoon "Weak Hero" especially protagonist and antagonist will be the main focus of this research. This ensures that the analysis conducted will focus on

characterization and produce a deep understanding of their characters. This research will also only focus on the publication period of the webtoon "Weak Hero" published by Seopass and Razen. This ensures that the analysis conducted only focuses on that period and does not cover character development over a longer period of time.

1.5 Significances of the Study

1.5.1 Theoretically

The writer hopes that through this research, the readers will have further information about how the intrinsic approach are applied to the character in webtoons, the relevant concepts, and elements of literature theory.

1.5.2 Practically

The writer hopes that this research will help the readers and the writers improve their ability to analyze characters in literary studies. Furthermore, this research could be used by content creators, especially in the world of comics or webtoons, as reference material in content creation and character development of the main character. In addition, the writer also hopes that this research could be used by readers to conduct similar research related to the intrinsic approach in literary works.