

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

“Literature always anticipates life. It does not copy it, but moulds it to its purpose” (Wilde, 1891). The relation between literature and life can never be separated and that is why it is said that literature always anticipates life. Life goes on with not just about birth, growth, and death, but a long process with all the bitters and sweets, up and down experiences to give the true meaning of life. The quote allows us to consider that literature is made from human factor in life and without it, it is impossible to create amazing literary works. In every experience we go through over times, it must provide a memory of its own which is stored in human memory and every person’s memory is their private literature.

Literature is not always about books, novels, or ordinary written works by famous writers, but more than that; **literature is a world**. A world where humans can explore themselves deeper than they appear and express something that can only be written without being said. For example, a novel entitled *The Age of Grief* by Jane Smiley (1987) tells about the vicissitudes of love, friendship, and marriage with all the compassion and insight that have come to be expected. The novel which is part of the literary work can provide powerful storytelling technology that unites human across space and time. Literature chronicles and preserves the ever-evolving human story (Ann Kowal, 2019). A world that invites us to reflect on our lives in earth then in discussion with others, to add our voices to the exploration of timeless human themes. Literature teaches us about ourselves, about past, cultivates wisdom and a worldview. It has power to change the world. Everything in literature can be related to the situation in the real world, even though it is a work of fiction. The Japanese proverb says, “The first face, you show to the world. The second face, you

show to your close friends, and your family. The third face, you never show anyone. It's the truest reflection of who you are." Through literature, you can get something that only you and your own world understands how literature gives a new face to your knowledge and mindset. Conversely, we can provide an interpretation of the literature itself.

Literary criticism is an extension of this social activity of interpreting. The critic's specific purpose is to make value judgements on a literary work, to explain the interpretation of the work which can provide the readers with relevant information to the real life. The critic's general purpose is to enrich the reader's understanding of the literary work (Hale, 1997). It shows that the literary work is one of the ways to see many things in life. Research on literary work includes information of the work's content and integrates the ideas with other insights gained from research. Researching, reading, and writing works of literary will help us to make better sense of the work, form judgments about literature, study ideas from different points of view and determine on an individual level whether a literary work is worth reading especially if literary work is closely related to human life (Dickinson, 2022).

Hemingway's *The Sea Change* is a literary work that will be analyzed in this research. This story emphasizes bisexuality related to human-nature. The story follows a linear plot which is mostly concentrated in the main characters dialogue. The main character in the story is the couple, Phil (the man character) and an unnamed woman, his girlfriend. There is also James (the barman) who is a secondary character. The story takes place in Parisian bar / café, in the end of a summer. The social setting explores such themes as sexual orientation, identity, acceptance, and inner transformation. The two are at odds for a reason we do not know as the story begins, but it is slowly revealed that the woman is ending the relationship to be with another woman. It is interesting in the story that Phil is so taken aback and insulted by the woman's decision to leave him. The reality of the woman being bisexual and introducing this idea to her significant other was considered taboo and was not accepted

by society. Throughout the conversation in the story, it is also introduced to themes of conflict and pride framed to us through the issue of sexuality, which paints a larger picture of how the state of things were for LGBT individuals at this time. And literary criticism is needed in this short story that tells about bisexuality because it provides us unique and important rewards.

Authors of fiction, poetry or drama choose literature for their expression because they believe that there are at many valid sides to any major issue, not simply right and wrong (Hale, 1997). Reading and interpreting literature provides many ways of looking at life, then it nourishes us with a sense of the complexity of life's deepest mysteries such as love, hate, death, sexuality, human-nature and so on. Especially in this issue of sexuality, which is quite difficult for us to understand for sure what is the logical reason someone chooses an 'unusual' path and becomes part of the LGBT, whereas normally, human-nature is a pair of male and female.

In this case, the researcher focuses on bisexuality in the literature. As we know, bisexuality is part of LGBT. LGBT stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender and along with heterosexual they are terms used to describe people's sexual orientation or gender identity (Ireland, 2021). Bisexuality is the quality or characteristic of being sexually attracted not exclusively to people of one particular gender. To simplify, bisexuality is a condition that at the same time someone can be attracted to the same or different gender with him / her.

Next, departing from the perspective of the researcher who sees that the current generation is really used to LBGT and even a lot of people agree and become part of this issue, whether it be lesbian, gay, bisexual and even transgender. Because nowadays, the LGBT world is no longer an unfamiliar issue and taboo thing for our generation in Indonesia. Meanwhile, if the researcher looks at the side of *The Sea Change* (which was written in the

1930s), it indicates that at that time, LGBT issues were something that was shunned and considered bad in society. However, after almost 100 years later, when compared to present days, LGBT issues have become commonplace. For example, in Indonesia so many people through social media are outspoken and proudly state that if they are part of the LGBT community. This condition is usually given the term “*LGBT PRIDE*” by its followers. There are pros and cons to this. There are people on the side who feel fine with LBGT without considering how those closest to them think if they become part of it, there are also those who reject it completely and think it is really a bad thing. At the same time, there is also a neutral side *aka* in the middle, neither rejects nor accepts. But in fact, while society has struggled to understand and accept the existence and normality of homosexuality, the struggle to understand and accept bisexuality has been even more difficult (Eli Coleman, 1987). Because bisexuality could really challenge our understanding of human sexuality and sexual orientation.

Based on these two things that are interconnected (between literary works and conditions in the real world; both of which are related to the issue of LGBT, specifically bisexuality), the researcher decided to further discuss bisexuality in Hemingway’s short story. After discussing the main point which is how the issue of bisexuality represented in the story, the researcher will give her response towards bisexuality, which is included in the LGBT umbrella, since this is an interesting and very controversial issue in Indonesia.

1.2 Statement of the Problems

- 1.2.1** How is the issue of bisexuality represented in the story?
- 1.2.2** What is the researcher’s attitude towards the issue of bisexuality?
- 1.2.3** How does the discussion of bisexuality in the story affect the researcher’s attitude?

Based on the questions above, hopefully the researcher can provide answers to the problems faced. In the first question, the researcher will first explain to the readers about how the situation and conversations between the characters to find out the way of how the issue of bisexuality is represented in the story. For the second question, to explain about what kind of attitude from the researcher towards the issue of bisexuality. Last one, to explain about how the discussion of bisexuality in the story affects the researcher's attitude, whether it can change the researcher's attitude to be better or not at all.

1.3 Significance of the Study

The results of this study are expected to be beneficial both theoretically and practically, therefore the significance of the study will be elaborated as follows:

- Theoretically

The results of the study are expected to support any theories dealing with human sexuality especially to contribute to the studies development of bisexuality, along with analytical studies in English literary works.

- Practically

The results of the study are expected to be useful for the researcher of this thesis because it can increase knowledge about the world of English literature, as well as sharpen researcher's critical thinking skills in analyzing the literary works and the lessons that have been taught by the lecturer can be applied properly in the thesis writing. For readers, this is useful for increasing literacy insight about various point of views of human sexual orientation. For all parties, this study can provide a broader understanding and become more open-minded people toward the issue of bisexuality.

1.4 Limitation of the Study

This thesis only be focuses in some scopes such as the discussion of how the issue of bisexuality is represented in the Hemingway's *The Sea Change*, the researcher's attitude towards the issue of bisexuality, and how does the discussion of bisexuality in the story affect the researcher's attitudes. These three statements of the problems will be the limitation of this study. which means that, the researcher will only discussed about these three main topics.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

To avoid problem of misunderstanding and misinterpreting the research finding, the researcher would like to explain and define the key terms used in this research project.

- **Bisexuality** is an attraction to more than one gender. Those who identify as bisexual feel a sexual and/or romantic attraction to people of a different gender as well as their own. (Brennan, 2020)

- **LGBT** stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender and along with heterosexual they are terms used to describe people's sexual orientation or gender identity. (Ireland, 2019)

- **Sexual Orientation** or sexuality is an aspect of self that involves how you identify the way you experience sexual or romantic desire (if you do), the gender(s) or sex(es) of the people who someone engages in sexual or romantic activity with (if any) and the gender(s) or sex(es) of the people someone is attracted to (if any). (Abrams, 2022)

- **Representation** is how media texts deal with and present gender, age, ethnicity, national and regional identity, social issues and events to an audience. (Bitesize, 2020)

- **Ideology** is a form of social or political philosophy in which practical elements are as prominent as theoretical ones. (Cranston, 2020)

• **Deconstruction** is a form of philosophical and literary analysis, derived mainly from work begun in the 1960s by the French philosopher Jacques Derrida, that questions the fundamental conceptual distinctions, or “oppositions,” in Western philosophy through a close examination of the language and logic of philosophical and literary texts. (Britannica, 2020)