

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### **1.1. Background of the Research**

Each country has its own literary work. Indonesia has its own literary works, as well as Britain and other countries. One form of literary work is in the form of texts such as short stories, novels, and poetry. Literary works has literary critical that can be criticised by a researcher or an expert. Literary critical has a strategy in reading the text. The reading strategy consists of two literary approaches, structuralism and post-structuralism.

Barry (2014) stated that the structuralism approach has a stable structure that has the function of forming social phenomena. Structuralism is influenced by linguistics, which means that language as a symbol can create meaning that is universally applicable. If it is related to literary works, the structuralism approach has a stable and stable structure. The meaning of literary works according to structuralism approach must follow the structure or rules that have been developed by the structuralism theory.

When discussing the structuralism approach there will be a post-structuralism approach. Post-structuralism theory is different from structuralism theory. Post-structuralism theory sees that language is unstable and does not only depend on the structure of language. The role of language does not force the reader to come along with the thinking of the creator of the literary work. The meaning of the text according to post-structuralism theory is done with thoughts

that are not bound to the structure of the text. Different contexts give words with different meanings (Barry, 2014).

One of the theories as a part of the post-structuralism approach is the deconstruction theory. Deconstruction is an approach which shows the meaning of text that supposed contradictions and internal oppositions. The meaning shows the foundation are irreducibly complex, unstable, or impossible (Derrida, 1976).

Deconstruction shows that in every text not always presents assumptions that are considered absolute. Every assumption is always contextual: the assumption is always present as a historical social construction. These assumptions do not refer to the final meaning. These assumptions are present as traces that can be traced to their formation in history. This is the reason why deconstruction is referred to as post-structuralism.

Deconstruction theory has strategies in reading texts (Derrida, 1976). The strategies of reading deconstruction reading consist of three things, namely binary opposition, blind spot, and internal contradiction of the text. Binary opposition plays an important role in shaping the stability of the text structure. Binary opposition is a form of the opposite word from one word to another. Every text has a blind spot. This is due to several reasons, one of which is the author is not careful in composing the story. The internal contradiction of the text relates to Derrida's *differance* concept. A literary text has a truth, the reader is considered successful if he has found that truth.

The application of deconstruction theory can be found in the major characters in a novel. According to Vidhya & Arjunan (2015), character is

reflected in a behaviour. Character is divided into two types, major and minor character. The major character is called as the dominant character that plays the central role of action. Meanwhile, the minor character is called as the figure character that plays the supporting role of the major character. The major character in a novel can be more than one depends on the novel. The major characters in this novel are Theodore Decker, Boris Pavlikovsky, and James Hobart (Hobie).

The Goldfinch novel is one of the literary works that can be studied with theory of deconstruction. The Goldfinch is a novel by Donna Tartt, an American author. The Goldfinch is the third novel by Donna Tartt. The novel was published on September 23, 2013 and won Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 2014 “The Pulitzer prizes” (2020). The first novel by Donna Tartt is *The Secret History* (1992) and the second is *The Little Friend* (2002). The third is *The Goldfinch* (2013). Donna Tartt was born in Greenwood, Mississippi, US, on December 23<sup>th</sup> 1963. She is a fiction writer and graduated from Bennington College.

The novel told the story of Theo Decker, a 13 years old boy who was traumatized after the bombing he and his mother at the Museum Art in New York. He met an old man, Welty, in the accident and the old man asked him to take the Goldfinch painting out or to save the painting from the museum. Theo always blamed himself for the death of his mother. Year by year he kept the painting, but in the end he lost the painting and became depressed. At the end story, Theo with his friend, Boris, they found and returned the precious painting to the museum.

Theo Decker was one of child who loved antiques. He learned a lot from Hobie, an antiques seller who really understands the aesthetic value of antiques. After learning a lot and being in this environment, finally Theo Decker became a clever antique businessman. One of his actions is to sell "fake" goods but at a price equivalent to the original goods.

**“It was the secret no one told you, the thing you had to learn for yourself: viz. that in the antiques trade there was really no such thing as a “correct” price.** Objective value—list value—was meaningless. If a customer came in clueless with money in hand (as most of them did) it didn’t matter what the books said, what the experts said, what similar items at Christie’s had recently gone for.” (Tartt, 2013, chapter vii part iii)

From the quotation above, the binary opposition is honest – dishonest seller. Theo sold product at prices that do not match their quality. He did this to make a lot of money. In other words, even though he loves antiques he cannot appreciate them. In the business world, many people think that a well-spoken seller is a seller who is good at selling because he can promote his product and know it. Meanwhile, sellers who do not talk much are considered not understanding the product and not good at selling. Through deconstruction reading especially in internal contradiction text concept, the perception between a seller who is good at talking and a seller who is not good at speaking can be dismantled. If it is seen deeper, it turns out that a well-spoken seller does not necessarily sell original product. Meanwhile, the seller who does not talk much turned out to be selling original goods. From the explanation above, it can be concluded that cannot trust people from their words.

There have been many studies using this novel *The Goldfinch*. This was because this novel was very famous and received a Pulitzer Prize. However,

research using this novel mostly discussed about the psychology of the main character of this novel. So, based on the issues and problems above, the researcher intended to conduct text research using the deconstruction theory approach in The Goldfinch novel. This was because not much research has been analysed on the novel.

There were several references regarding deconstruction theory in the novel. One of them was an article written by Hendricks (2016) entitled “Deconstruction the end of writing: ‘Everything is a text, there is nothing outside context’”. He used deconstructive theory by Jacques Derrida. This analysis focused on deconstruction theory and its relationship to binary opposition between speaking and writing. Besides that this analysis also discussed that Derrida opposes 'signs' in structuralism. This difference in outlook gave rise to the emergence of new theories in the analysis of a literary work.

The last article that discussed the application of deconstruction theory in literature is an article written by Ahmadi, Mostaali, Piri, & Bajelani (2013) entitled “Binary Oppositions in the Structure of Masnavi Stories”. This research discussed critical between structuralism and post-structuralism which each have their perception. There were two functions based on the results of this study. The results of this study were that there are researchers conducting two forms of research, the first is examining analysing the meaning lexically then proceeded with analysis in binary opposition.

Both of the studies above discussed about Derrida's deconstruction theory. Although the researcher used the same theory and approach as the two studies, the

researcher found different problems and concepts in this analysis. The researcher intended to analyse the concept of deconstruction in a novel and applied it in the major of characters in the novel. The researcher intended to deconstruct and gave a new perspective to the reader by using deconstruction theory.

### **1.2. Identifications of the Problem**

According to the problem that has been described by researcher in the novel *The Goldfinch*, the researcher focused the problem on post-structuralism issues. In the following, the researcher identified several problems related to the post-structuralism issues contained in the *Goldfinch* novel:

1. The approaches in the strategy of reading literary works.
2. Differences in reading literary works according to structuralism and post-structuralism approach.
3. The binary opposition of major characters as deconstruction reading strategy in *The Goldfinch* Novel by Donna Tartt.
4. The internal contradiction text of major characters as result of deconstruction reading strategy in *The Goldfinch* Novel by Donna Tartt.

### **1.3. Limitation of the Problem**

According to the identifications of the problem, researcher limited the problems to be two problems in the following:

1. The binary opposition of major characters as deconstruction reading strategy in *The Goldfinch* Novel by Donna Tartt.

2. The internal contradiction text of major characters as result of deconstruction reading strategy in The Goldfinch Novel by Donna Tartt.

#### **1.4. Formulations of the Problem**

According to the limitation of the problem, the researcher formulated the problem into two questions in the following:

1. What are the binary oppositions of major characters as deconstruction reading strategy found in The Goldfinch Novel by Donna Tartt?
2. How is the internal contradiction text of major characters as result of deconstruction reading strategy found in The Goldfinch Novel by Donna Tartt?

#### **1.5. Objectives of the Problem**

These were the objectives according to objectives of the problem:

1. To find out the binary opposition of major characters as deconstruction reading strategy of in The Goldfinch Novel by Donna Tartt.
2. To describe the internal contradiction of major characters as result of deconstruction reading strategy in The Goldfinch Novel by Donna Tartt.

#### **1.6. Significances of the Research**

1. Theoretical Signification

This research is intended to be able to understand the deconstruction theory in Jacques Derrida's theory, which is about the deconstruction analysis on a novel. Besides that, this research intends to enable readers to apply the theory of

deconstruction in various elements in fiction, especially in the characters of the novel or short story. Every character in the novel experiences changes, especially in their attitudes. Reader's opinion of the character at the beginning of reading will definitely change after reading the novel. Through this change, the reader can apply the deconstruction principle to the character.

## 2. Practical Signification

This research is expected to be useful for readers, especially for English literature students who are interested in analysing the major character with deconstruction application in by Jacques Derrida's theory. Hopefully, through this research can be a reference in analysing Derrida's deconstruction theory. Finally, this research can provide more information for future researchers interested in analysing readings based on deconstruction technique on the elements of novel.

### 1.7. Definition of Key Terms

**Binary opposition** : a form of the opposite word from one word to another with the aim of opening new insights to readers.(Derrida, 1976)

**Deconstruction** : a theory that rejects the view that language has a definite and constant meaning as it does in the view of classical structuralism. (Derrida, 1976)

**Major Character** : an important figure at the centre of the story's action or theme. (Vidhya & Arjunan, 2015)