

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses some topics related to the background of the study, research questions, research objectives, significance of the research, scope, and limitation, and definition of the key terms.

A. Background of the Study

The world of literature recognizes "prose" as a literary genre. Prose is defined as a free essay that is not bound by the rules contained in poetry. Prose in literature is also called fiction. Although in the form of fiction or fantasy, works of fiction are considered the result of appreciation and contemplation, which are carried out with full awareness and responsibility.

Novel is a kind of prose that contains elements of characters, plots and fictional settings that tell human life based on the author's point of view and contains life values. With the unlimited creativity of the author, the novel can contain more than one theme, the characters are shown in full, the setting is described in detail, and it has more than one plot. This complexity exists because of the detachment from the length of the story in the novel, which gives freedom to the author. Therefore, in analyzing the novel, it is necessary to describe in detail the elements of the literary work which together form the overall meaning.

A series of related events occur logically and chronologically in a novel. Plot is defined as a series of events chronologically, interrelated, and with causality. Characters are usually described in terms of their physical attributes, personality traits, motivations, and relationships with other characters. When analyzing the plot and characters in a novel, it's important to consider their relationship and how they

interact to drive the story forward. The plot is often influenced by the actions, choices, and growth of the characters, while the characters' development is shaped by the events and conflicts of the plot. Thus, clarity about the relationship between events or characters in the story will make it easier for us to understand the meaning contained in the story.

One of the novels that has more than one plot is *Love from A to Z* Novel by S. K. Ali. It is a teenlit series novel released by Republika Publisher at the end of 2021. With the author's name, S.K. Ali is now domiciled in Toronto, Canada. The *Love from A to Z* novel is the author's second work to become a candidate for the Goodreads Choice Awards in 2019 and has been included in several lists of the best books for Young-Adult readers, including in the top ten lists of Kirkus and Entertainment Weekly. It was also the first young adult novel selected for the NBC Today Show Jenna Book Club Reads. This novel has 381 pages including the cover and all contents. There are 40 chapters in this novel.

Love from A to Z a story tells finding love in a time of Islamophobia is a novel written by S.K. Ali who is also the author of *Saints and Misfits* (Simon & Schuster, 2017), which was a finalist for the 2018 Book of the Year Award from the American Library Association. The winner of the William C. Morris Award, as well as the APALA Honor Award and the Middle East Book Honor Award; and *Love from A to Z*, a Today show Read with Jenna Book Club selection. Several publications, including Entertainment Weekly and Kirkus Reviews, named both novels as the best young adult books of the year. She also wrote *Love from Mecca to Medina* novel and *Misfit in Love* novel.

Love from A to Z novel is about a young girl, Zaenab, who has been suspended from her school for some reason, then her parents punish her to go to Doha Qatar for the spring holidays for a week where there is her aunt's house. When at the airport he met a Muslim man named Adam, and they accidentally went to the same destination, Doha Qatar. One day they were reunited at an event held by Adam's father. Where Adam's father is a co-worker of Zaenab's aunt. Adam and Zaenab are brought together in a very unexpected condition. They are like two different figures but have one thing in common, both of them have a journal written about all the events that have happened to them, the writing is made from two different perspectives, namely "Marvel" and "Oddities". They found out by accident and much to their surprise.

Love from A to Z novel is preferred as a writer's discussion because of its episodic plot. An episodic plot is a single incident or short episode that is connected to another by a common character or a defined theme. An episodic plot is used when the author wants to show an event, place, time, or idea from many different perspectives, or when he wants to explore the personalities of one or more characters or the sociocultural background of the era. In addition, the researcher views that not every novel series has an open plot and characters, as different authors employ various storytelling techniques and structures in their works.

The researcher wants to analyze the plot and characters in a novel allows researchers to gain a deeper understanding of the author's intentions, narrative structure, character development, thematic elements, and literary techniques. It helps to unravel the complexities of the story, interpret its meaning, and appreciate the artistic merit of the work. Plot and characters are important elements in a novel

as they engage readers, drive the story forward, create emotional connections, convey themes and messages, and provide entertainment and escapism. They work together to make the reading experience immersive, meaningful, and enjoyable.

Plot and characters are essential elements in storytelling across various mediums. The plot encompasses the sequence of events that drive the narrative forward, including the introduction of characters and setting, the development of conflicts and complications, the turning point or climax, the events that follow, and the ultimate resolution. The plot creates suspense, engages the audience, and conveys the overall message or theme of the story. On the other hand, characters are the individuals, animals, or entities represented in the story. They drive the events and actions within the plot, exhibiting specific traits, personalities, and behaviors. Characters can be major or minor, protagonists or antagonists, and they often have distinct roles, motivations, and conflicts that shape their interactions and contribute to the overall narrative. Well-developed characters add depth, relatability, and emotional resonance to the story, allowing the audience to connect with their journeys. The writer believes that *Love from A to Z* Novel by S.K. Ali has an interesting plot and character structure that provides tension and satisfaction to the reader, particularly the writer in this matter.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested in conducting a study using *Love from A to Z* novel as a research object. This is because the *Love from A to Z* novel is the best young adult book of the year. In addition, *Love from A to Z* novel has never been studied, especially in the IAIN Kediri. Therefore, the researcher is interested in analyzing the plot and characters contained in *Love from A to Z* novel by limiting the focus of the problem to the analysis of plot and

characters. The study of plots and characters is important because they provide avenues for exploring the human experience, understanding narrative structures, delving into symbolism and themes, creating emotional connections, examining character development, and analyzing cultural and historical contexts. By studying these elements, we can gain a richer appreciation of literature, film, and storytelling as a whole.

Analysis in a literary work is related to the teaching of literature and education. Teaching literature can help education as a whole if its scope includes four benefits, namely helping language skills, increasing cultural knowledge, developing creativity and taste, and supporting character formation. Therefore, plot analysis can be a means to understand the meaning of the story in depth so that it can become positive knowledge or experience needed by students and can realize education as a whole through teaching literature.

Learning about analyzing the content and language of novels is in class XII SMA. Throughout their studies, students are typically assigned readings from a variety of literary works, including novels, short stories, plays, and poems. They are encouraged to actively engage with the text, discuss their interpretations, and support their analysis with evidence from the text. Additionally, students may be required to write essays, participate in class discussions, and complete projects that demonstrate their understanding of plot and characters in literature. From the explanation above, the researcher is interested in doing the research entitled **An Analysis of Plot and Characters in *Love From A to Z* by S.K Ali.**

B. Research Questions

Based on the background above, the research questions of this study were formulated as follows:

1. What are the contributions of main characters' conflict to the plot story in *Love from A to Z* novel?
2. How is the structure of plot built in the story of *Love from A to Z* novel?

C. Objectives of the Study

Based on the research question above, the research problem is:

1. To analyze the contribution main characters' conflict to the plot story of *Love from A to Z* novel.
2. To identify the structure of plot built in the story of *Love from A to Z* novel.

D. Scope and Limitation

This research focused on examining plot and character development in the specific *Love from A to Z* Novel. The research delved into the various elements of the plot, including the overall structure, conflicts, and resolution. It also analyzed the characterization in the novel, exploring the main character's traits, motivations, and relationships. The scope involved a detailed examination of how the plot and characters contributed to the overall themes and message of the novel. While the research aimed to provide a comprehensive analysis of the plot and characters in *Love from A to Z* Novel, the researcher used Henry James' theory to analyze this research.

E. Significance of the Study

This research is expected to be helpful for the following:

1. For English Teacher:

This thesis can be guidance to enhance English teacher in understanding of plot and character at the novel. The teacher can also use “*Love from A to Z*” novel as a media to learn and teach English.

2. For Students:

Students can clearly understand plot and characters, and they can apply it at their school and also by this novel, the students can improve their English skills and increase the knowledge.

3. Further Researchers:

It is hoped that the findings of this study will serve as a reference when conducting research.

F. Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstandings about the terms used in this study, the following definitions will be provided:

1. **Novel** : a story that includes more than one event, a plot with characters, a setting, a theme, a point of view, and the character's world view.
2. **Plot** : the significance of action sequences for the definition of narrative. A plot is understood as a sequence of events that has a beginning, a middle, and an end. Normally, a plot creates suspense as a result of complications in the middle part that are cleared up

when these conflicts are resolved at the end of the work.

3. **Character** : a fictional or imaginary person, animal, or creature that plays a role in a narrative
4. **Main Character** : the central figure or protagonist in a story, book, movie, or any other form of narrative.