

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Effort becomes the most important part of a human's life because without effort, human cannot reach what they want and reach a better life. Effort means that the people using their strength to reach what they want and what they dream. There are any kinds of effort, such as effort to reach a dream, effort to reach a better life, effort to make the people free from something which make them suffer, and effort to reach a better life. Making some effort will make people who did it spent their time to focus on their goal, but this effort will bring the people into a condition which better than before, but the people should face many problems during their way to reach what they want.

There are many literary works that frame effort or struggle phenomena as the topic such as in biography, auto-biography and, especially, novel, as a fiction. Fiction, according to Kennedy and Gioia, "is a name for stories not entirely factual, but at least, partially shaped, made up, imagined" (3). The readers always love reading stories about an effort to reach a better life. It can be used as a motivation for them and they are actually curious about this kind of topic because they want to know how the characters solve their problems and the efforts they make to reach a better life when they have so many limitations. The author of the novel usually focuses on the characters, especially the major character, to build the story but there are also some authors who make the setting as the focus of their works which

becomes the element influencing the characters. As an important aspect of a novel, the formal elements such as characterization of the characters, settings, point of views, and also the linguistic devices such as irony, are the elements that work together to make the story become more lively and also build the theme of the novel. Settings may be the character's reason to do something in his or her life. The author can make the setting, for example the socio-economic environment, to become the character's reason to do some efforts to have a better life. It makes the author create a character with special characterization because the character makes an effort to reach a better life. The character that does an effort to do it can be an inspiration for the readers. The readers do not mind if "Novels, however, are fictional; that is to say, they have been made up. A character in a novel cannot be compared to a real person whom he or she has been copied..." (Gill 77). Although it is a fiction, it can give the readers some motivations because everything in fiction is actually inspired by reality, too.

There are some reasons why people do an effort in their life. One of them is because of the socio-economic condition in their society. People who live in society can be influenced by the socio-economic condition around them and it can make them do something in their life. Socio-economic condition means the condition of a society such as the atmosphere, the behavior of people, and other things which are related to society and the economic condition which build the characteristics of the place itself. The economic condition can influence the social condition and the characteristics of the people. If the environment does not have a proper socio-economic condition, it can make the people living around the society

do something that can let them free from bad condition. One of the literary works which frames the issue of effort to reach a better life because of the socio-economic condition is a novel entitled *We Need New Names* written by NoViolet Bulawayo.

We Need New Names tells a story about a ten-year-old girl named Darling. She is the major character and the narrator in this novel. Darling comes from a little city named Paradise in Zimbabwe. This novel talks about Darling who has a dream to move to America and reach a better life. This novel describes her experiences and her efforts to reach those two things. Paradise is a little and undeveloped place which has improper environment. The socio-economic condition makes the people who live in Paradise suffer. This condition is described from Darling's point of view when she talks about her home and the environment around her. One day, Darling moves and lives in America with her aunt. She leaves Paradise, her family and her best friends. She expects that by moving to America, she will get a better life, but in the end of the story the writer finds that Darling's expectation is far from the reality.

We Need New Names is the first novel from NoViolet Bulawayo, but before writing this novel she wrote two short stories entitled *Hitting Budapest* that won the 2011 Caine Prize for African Writing, and *Snapshots* in 2009 which became shortlisted for the South African PEN Studzinski Award. *We Need New Names* was published in 2013 and became the finalist for The Man Booker Prize in the same year, the finalist for The Guardian First Book Award, National Book Foundation's "5 Under 35" honoree, winner of the inaugural Etisalat Prize for literature in 2013, a *New York Times* Notable Book, NPR Best Book of 2013, Amazon.com Best

Book of the Year, and *Kirkus Reviews* Best Book of 2013. Being the writer, Bulawayo has won many awards for her achievement in writing literary works. She won the 2014 PEN-Hemingway Award, the 2011 Caine Prize for African Writing and the inaugural Etisalat Prize for Literature in 2014 (Bulawayo 2013).

The writer is interested in *We Need Names* because although the novel is a fiction, it shows the real effort of a brave young girl who wants to have a better life by moving to another country and leave her friends and family. She has a dream that by moving to America she will get a better life. Although the reality is different from her expectations and her dreams, she still believes that one day her life will be better. Darling is different from the other characters. Darling lives in a simple environment with the people which have the simple thought. Her thought is different from the people in her society. Since she was child, she has already had a future thought that someday she wanted to move to America, living in a better place that makes her life be better. She also wants to be a successful person. She does not care about what people think about her dream, although her friends underestimate her dream and say that it is impossible for Darling to move and get a better life in America, she does not care. She also does not mind if she should move alone and leave her family and friends. Darling's thought leads her to make some effort to reach a better life.

The writer thinks that the issue about Darling's effort to reach a better life is worth to discuss because the writer knows that there are so many people in the novel, or in other words, the other characters, which still live in the bad socio-economic condition around them, still suffer but they do not do anything. It is

different from Darling. She knows that the socio-economic condition around her is bad but she still believes herself that one day she will move to America and it will make her life better. To prove her dream, she makes some efforts to make it become real.

Before deciding the topic of this study, the writer tried to find the previous studies of the same novel which is *We Need New Names*. The first study is a journal article written by Theresia Mdlongwa from Department of Curriculum Studies, James Hlongwana from Department of History and Development Studies and Thamsanga Moyo from Department of English and Media Studies. All of the authors are from Great Zimbabwe University. The study conducted by those writers is entitled *Look East or Look Least? The Zimbabwean Experience of Chinese Economic Investment in Selected Texts and Examples*. This is a research article discussing about the relationship between Zimbabwe and China after the decision made by Robert Mugabe, the president of Zimbabwe.

The second study is a journal article entitled *New Names, Translational Subjectivities: (Dis)location and (Re)naming in NoViolet Bulawayo's We Need New Names* written by Polo Belina Moji from Department of Modern European Languages, University of Pretoria, South Africa. The author states that Darling's journey from Zimbabwe to America "As a linear progression from an original (located) to a translated (dislocated) subjectivity" (Moji). She also argues that *We Need New Names* brings an idea about 'transparent translation'.

Those journal articles are different from the writer's study. The differences appear from the approach which is used by the journal's author. The first study talks about the relationship between Zimbabwe and China in selected texts. Moji used linguistic approach which is translational subjectivities to analyses the novel.

After reading the whole chapter of the novel frequently, the writer finds the theme of the novel by analyzing the characterizations, point of views and irony. The writer is focusing on the characterization of the main character, Darling, point of view and irony, because those elements are the strongest elements that build the theme of the novel. Those elements describe and reveal that people should make an effort in their life to reach their dreams although they know that it is hard and sometimes what people expect is different from the reality. In order to find the theme, the writer uses New Criticism theory which is appropriate with this study. *We Need New Names* is suitable to be discussed, it is because in this novel, the major character Darling make some effort to reach a better life. Analyzing the effort using New Criticism makes the effort which do by the character is more appear. In order to find the theme of the novel, the writer focuses on the socio-economic condition in Paradise to analyze Darling's effort. Socio-economic condition is the reason why Darling makes an effort in her life. This socio-economic condition leads the writer into Darling's characterization and the point of view which use. *We Need New Names* uses the first person point of view and it comes from Darling. Through the point of view it can reveal the explanation about socio-economic condition in Zimbabwe. Besides the formal elements, the writer also analyzes the linguistic device which is irony.

It is because New Criticism only focuses on the text itself and makes the writer read the story closely (Parker 13). Some theorists say that analyzing the text using New Criticism approach is too common, but the writer thinks that analyzing the text using New Criticism is still worth to do. It is because New Criticism can make the researchers focus only on the text itself and make them be more understanding about the text. Better understanding can help the researchers find the theme or the meaning of the works. The technique used by New Criticism also makes this theory still worth to be used in analyzing the text. Close reading technique makes the researchers know the sense of the story. Besides because New Criticism only focuses on the text itself, it makes the meaning of literary work become more visible and the people who read this thesis will get a deeper understanding about the literary work that is analyzed. The other reason that makes this approach is still worth to do is because the rule from the New Criticism itself which says that the researcher should not include the background of the author and the background of the work. When New Criticism is used, the analysis is based on the researcher's understanding when they read the text and supported by the other knowledge.

Based on New Criticism, the elements such as point of views, characterizations, and irony can be used to find the meaning of the story. By analyzing those elements this study can find the reasons why the character has a dream which is moving to America to get a better life, and how the character makes an effort to reach it. Point of views and irony can be used to reveal that the effort is worth to do, although what the character expects and the reality are different.

Those elements can reveal the organic unity which then makes the theme of the story.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Based on the background of the study above, the writer tries to analyze the problem related to the issue as follow: How is Darling's effort to reach a better life depicted in the novel?

1.3. Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is:

To reveal Darling's effort to reach a better life through characterization, point of view and irony.

1.4. Scope and Limitation

The object of this study is a novel entitled *We Need New Names* written by NoViolet Bulawayo and was published in 2013. In this story there are many characters, and to analyze the novel, the writer focuses on Darling as the main character. The writer analyzes her characterization and her effort toward her dream to reach a better life by moving to America. Beside characterization, the writer focuses on the socio-economic condition of Paradise, Zimbabwe, through the point of view of the major character because they play important part in developing the story, especially the main character's characterization. Those elements build Darling's characterization, because with the socio economic condition and point

of views, the writer can know Darling's effort when she tries to reach a better life. The writer also analyzes the irony which appears in the novel. This irony comes from Darling's dream of America. She expects that her dream, which is moving from Paradise to America, will lead her into a better life.

This study attempts to reveal the theme of the novel by analyzing how socio-economic condition in Paradise, Zimbabwe, influencing Darling's effort and how it blended into a story and it can reveals Darling's characterization and the irony between Darling's dream and reality. The analysis which blended is an organic unity and it can reveal the theme.

1.5. Significance of the Study

This study is expected to give the readers understanding that when living in another country, the people should adapt the environment especially the culture and they should enrich their ability. This ability becomes the key to reach a better life after moving to the new country, with the new culture and people.

By analyzing *We Need New Names* using the New Criticism, the writer expects the readers to understand the operation of formal elements as an organic unity to build the theme of a story. The writer hopes that this study will help the other researchers, especially for students in English Department of Universitas Airlangga who are going to analyze texts using the New Criticism theory.

The writer also hopes that this study will help other researchers who are going to analyze this novel by using other theories to get better understanding

about how a person could strike for a better life by moving to the established country. Better understanding about the text itself will help the other researchers to get a deep analysis about what they are going to do.

1.6. Theoretical Background

This study applies New Criticism theory in order to analyze *We Need New Names*. The writer believes that New Criticism is a relevant theory for analyzing the novel because the writer is able to formulate the theme of the novel by analyzing the characterizations, point of views and irony based on the text itself, which in this study is *We Need New Names*. According to Bressler, “This approach to literary analysis provides readers with a formula for arriving with the correct interpretation of a text using, for the most part, only the text itself” (55).

New criticism is a theory which uses the text itself as the primary source and suggests closed reading as the method (Tyson 136). New criticism has formal elements used to analyze the text and those formal elements are combined into an organic unity to create the theme of the literary work. The examples of formal elements are tension, irony, ambiguity, characterization, plot, setting, point of view, etc (Tyson 137). In this study, the writer focuses on characterization of Darling as the main character. Character is one of the important aspects in literary works. The writers create the characters to help the reader following the story. Characters are the imaginary people created by the writers, and sometimes the writers judge them and sometimes identify them (DiYanni 55). Characterization is the part of the character itself. It is how the writer shows the character’s appearance and their habit or behavior, also their attitudes toward other characters.

Not only the character and characterization, but the writer also focuses on the point of view and irony because they have an important part and build the story of *We Need New Names*. Point of view is “An author’s decisions about who is telling the story and how it is to be told are among the most important he or she makes” (DiYanni 73). Irony, which is a part of linguistic devices, is a condition or a statement which is different from the reality. It is similar to what Tyson says in his book that irony is “A statement or event undermined by the context in which it occurs” (Tyson 139).

From characterization, point of view and irony, the writer can know how hard Darling, as the major character, make some effort in her life in order to reach her dream and a better life. Those elements can shows that Darling should work hard and make more effort because the irony is Darling’s problem. From the characterization, point of view and irony, the writer can know the socio-economic condition in Paradise, Darling’s point of view toward America and the problems that Darling should face and the effort that Darling should do.

1.7. Method of the Study

The subject of this study is a novel entitled *We Need New Names* written by NoViolet Bulawayo and the writer analyzes this study based on the New Criticism theory. To make a good analysis, the writer needs to collect some data and find related studies which support and strengthen the whole analysis. The writer uses qualitative research and the first step of this study is close reading, as suggested by the New Criticism theory. In order to make a good work, the writer uses many

sources to support the analysis such as books, thesis and journals. The data that has been collected will be close-read, then selected and analyzed using the New Criticism theory.

To analyze this study, the writer begins with the analysis of the socio-economic condition in Paradise, Zimbabwe, through Darling's point of view and analyze Darling's characterization. In addition, based on the characterization and the point of view which come from the main character, this study reveals the dream and effort done by Darling. The last step is the writer analyzing the irony which becomes the part of Darling's experience to reach a better life. All those formal elements which analyzed by the writer blended in the issue. In the end of the analysis, this study analyzes the formal elements to get an organic unity and that builds the theme of the novel.

1.8. Definition of Key Terms

- **Better Life** : The condition when the people can reach a standard condition life which is higher than their condition before. Better life indicator is that when the people do not feel suffer in their life.

- **Dream** : "A wish to have or be something, especially one that seems difficult to

achieve” (Oxford Learner’s Dictionary

7:465)

- **Effort** : What people do by using their physical and mental strength and energy in order to reach their goal
- **Irony** : A complex form and cannot be defined in short sentences. In general, irony is the statement which occurs in the text containing an opposite meaning between appearance and reality (Griffith 73).
- **Socio-economic condition** : The condition of the people’s society and also the people’s economic condition such as poverty and high inflation.
- **Reality** : “Is the true situation and the problems that actually exist in life, in contrast to how you would like life to be; thing that is actually experienced or seen, in contrast to what people might imagine” (Oxford Learner’s Dictionary 7:1256)