

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

The mortality is never ending to discuss in the case study can be sated in literary work such as prose, poetry, movie, drama and short story. So many people have not found what the meaning of life and for what we live after death. Life is not only running our duty but also giving a meaningful for us and other people. The effect of our kindness can be enjoyed by many people. These kindnesses will be remembered by many people that life is not only giving and receiving. But more than, give a meaning to life's people. Harvard Medical School argued mortality is brain death which can be determined by the end of heartbeat and breath or by permanent damage to the whole brain. There is a reasons why doctors and policymaker focus on brain. Western Philosophy argued that there is a distinction beneath mind and body. The heart is viewed as central organ and mind as proxy.

Throughout the history of mankind, there is one thing which is an eternal mystery, which cannot be penetrated in any way and by any means. That mystery is death. Javanese people claim that the most incantation (all-round) is the matter of death. Death is appropriate for people who are babies, children, adolescents, adults, and parents. Dead deserves rich and poor people, good people and bad people, high-ranking people and low-ranking people. It cannot be denied that death is a very intimate part of

literature. Whether it's in the disclosure of the theme, as a reality in the story, events, and views of the character towards him. Thus, all literary genres talk a lot about it.

Based on the description above, it is interesting to study how your reality is displayed by Paul Kalanithi in *When breath becomes air* is the story of life in the shadow of death when all dreams about life and the future are in sight. Paul Kalanithi as a protagonist in this story as a neurosurgeon that have undergone long training become neurologist from world class universities. Less than half a year, the training will be ending and he will be a neurologist. The future looks like promising until cancer comes to changes all the life plan. This memoir is written when Kalanithi was facing with cancer. The change from a doctor who helps the patient become the patients himself. It gives contemplation for him about the meaning of life. In the first story Paul Kalanithi tells about how her life of childhood at Kingsman, a city that face to face with desert at Arizona that has been becomes himself. Literature has formed his thought and more than of that. At ten years old, 1984 his mother asked him to read more world novelist level such as Gogol, Dickens, Austen and Twain. His mother delivered him to followed SAT test. Paul Kalanithi grew up to become a men thinker and finally he was accepted at biological human and English literature Stanford University. In both of fields he has big role in searching the meaning of life beneath biology, morality and philosophy. Also, Paul Kalanithi has big curiosity toward mortality. He learns literature

and human organ simultaneously. Then appear a simple conclusion that literature gives various definitions about become human. Bill Gate is richest man in the world and founder of Microsoft Company has feeling super touched toward this author. It has many interesting layers – death and life, doctor and patient, father and son, family and work, reason and faith.

Life is also having a philosophy that human will face death at any moment. The writer argues that in the face of life's myriad difficulties, philosophy is being an offer in the most robust life-project. Suffering that will be giving a meaning of life without suffering there is no life that can live (Frankl 2015, 217). Many people interpret her live from the face of life's myriad difficulties or in her dedication in life. As a profession that are back grounding in interpreting of life such as politicians, teacher, volunteer, lawyer, entrepreneur and doctor. This study will give e new perspective from a doctor about what the meaning of life and for what we live after death. This perspective comes from a doctor suffering in face cancer.

When Breath Becomes Air as an object of this study and be analysed using new criticism approach to further elaborate the meaning of life and death implied inside. New Criticism is a literary theory which uses the text itself as the only source to interpret the meaning. According to Wellek and Warren in the book entitled *Theory of Literature*, the meaning of text cannot be defined in terms of the author's intention (Wellek and

Warren 1949, 33). Thus, New Criticism is used to examine the text by close reading the formal elements such as irony, point of view, characterization, and plot. As the connection of the formal elements are revealed, the reader will be able to find the theme of the text.

There are two studies that are related to the topic of the recent study, such as the article *Death and Dying as a Literary Device: A Reading of Selected Works by Contemporary Malaysian Writers*. This study about describe of typical of the death. Theory used in this study is used psychoanalysis approach. My finding in this study is there are 2 types of form that is describing about the death. First, the death drives the character into a supernatural form. Second, drives the character that internalized into metaphysics form. These two effects will trigger an important existence from the death into story.

The second study is entitled *A literature of Modern Suffering: Suffering in the work of Feodor Dostoevsky, Albert Camus and Milan Kundera*. This study is written by Elisabeth Powell, doctor student from University of Western Sydney in 2007. This thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. In addition, this study tries to examine of the theme of suffering by three modern author such as Feodor Dostoevsky, Albert Camus and Milan Kundera. The analysis of this study used identification of three primary conceptual foundations to depiction of suffering: the wretched, the absurd and the

banal. From these three of authors disparate toward the character of modern suffering.

1.2 Statement of Problem

In order to examine Paul's meaning of life and death perspective in *When Breath Becomes Air* (2016). The writer formulated the following question:

1. In Paul Kalanithi's *When Breath Becomes Air* (2016), how is the meaning of life and death framed the story's formal elements namely irony, point of view, characterization and plot?
2. How is the theme implied from the analysis of these formal elements?

1.3 Objective of the Study

1. To examine how the meaning of life and death perspective is framed through its formal elements namely irony, point of view, characterization and plot
2. To examine how the theme is implied from the analysis of the formal elements.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Through this study, the reader is expected to see to understand both the writer and the readers to understand more about the issue of meaning of life and death. It is still important to be discussed to give new

perspective from a doctor about mortality because the death is a certainty. Furthermore, it is important to the student, as it teach them to reflection about mortality and will give a clearer view of the mortality through the study. Mortality is one word that is so sacred to discuss by many people. Nevertheless, it is become the head topic that be delivered by Paul Kalanithi. It is about a reflection and a question what makes life worth living. It may serve as guide for their own further study of a topic related to this study.

Academics can be utilized the study, as references and a reading material of this study whenever applicable in the lecture. Academics of literary criticism definitely use this study if still relevant to other literary studies especially on studies that utilized new criticism as a critical device. This study is also become as a guide for future researchers on this literary genre.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

Death : is the discontinuance of every single natural capacity that continue a living creature

Life : is a characteristic that distinguishes objects that have signs and processes supporting themselves (living organisms) with objects that do not have them, either because these functions have died or because they do not have that function and

classified as inanimate objects (Koshland and Daniel 2009)

Organic Unity : the working together of the character, characterization, plot, symbol, point of view, setting, linguistic devices, theme, and any other formal elements (Bessler 2007, 58)

Formal Elements : the aspects used in fictional works such characters, setting, plot, point of view, theme, symbols, and language (Tyson 2015, 131)