

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Masculinity and femininity are the terms constructed to explain the differences between men and women. Masculine or masculinity is the socially constructed term for being a man and an ideal how men are expected to act (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children 2005). Feminine or femininity is the condition of being feminine or womanliness (Hoffman, Hattie and Borders 2005, 66-67). It proves that identity was bounded with the term 'binary'. However, as time goes by, many women and men do not consider themselves as either masculine or feminine. This thing leads to the various type of sexual identity. Sexual identity is the social label which adopted to define someone's sexual and romantic attractions (Hoffarth and Hodson 2017, 3). Sexual identities are divided into several types which are bisexual, asexual, gay, lesbian, and heterosexual.

Sexual identity is a private yet sensitive things that, mostly, people do not want to discuss. For some people, discussing about sexual identity is a taboo thing, especially if someone has a different identity to what has been formed by the society. Recently, many people try to speak up about their identity. The appearance of people who consider themselves as different or also known as LGBTQ (Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer) already exist for a long time ago, among the society and in every social class. In the 1960s, people who consider themselves different from the others try to speak up. Even until today,

they still fight for their rights to be accepted in society. In 2015 the United States Supreme Court finally declared that the government legalized the same sex marriage in nationwide (Liptak 2015). This declaration was welcomed by the LGBTQ community happily. Thus, the community started to speak up about their rights and existences more intense after this declaration. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that some of the people still cannot accept the existence of this community due to the perspective of society that heterosexual is the right identity. Even some of them show rejection towards this community by doing physical or verbal abuse.

This society was basically structured by the terms homosexual and heterosexual. Homosexual is often seen as a bad thing by the society. It is one of the reasons why people are difficult to accept differences in their environment. Heterosexual is the situation when someone is having an emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to someone with the opposite sex (The American Psychological Association 2008, 1-6). Meanwhile, homosexual is the term used when someone having a sexual orientation to a persons of the same sex (Samelius and Wagberg 2005, 11-12). Thus, in this society, especially in those who live with the LGBTQ, there are some people who still cannot find and feel confused about their own 'identity'.

There are many issues experienced by this community, especially the adolescents. It is hard for them to speak up about their identity, to develop, and also to recognize their true identity. If they speak up about their identity, there are some possibilities that their family or environment might not accept their identity. According to True Colors United (Choi, et al. 2015), based on the study from the

University of Chicago, there are many LGBTQ adolescents go through homelessness. The reason is because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. There are many adolescents forced out by their parents or choose to run away. The other reason is physical, emotional, or sexual abuse at home. The lack of knowledge about LGBTQ is also one of the reasons (Choi, et al. 2015). There is also another negativity experienced by these LGBTQ adolescents who get physical and emotional abuse, rejection by family and peers, and lack of support in society because of their sexual orientation or identity (Dempsey 1994, 161-163).

There are a lot of people who feel to be different, but it is hard for them to develop or to find the answer to their confusion due to fear. Not only do adults feel afraid of developing their homosexual identity, but the adolescents as well. Even, it is more difficult for the adolescence rather than the adults because they do not have any support from their relatives. In addition, the society which formed heterosexual as the normative sexuality, make it even more difficult for them to develop their homosexual identity. Thus, this issue also can be seen in the character of the novel. The existence of literary work that used homosexuality or LGBTQ as the theme has been existing since 1969 (Littlefield 2016, 7-8). This issue has developed and proved by the existence of several novels that use this issue as the theme of their works. One of the authors who use this theme is Adam Silvera.

The novel entitled *'They Both Die At The End'* is written by Adam Silvera. He is also the New York Times bestselling author of *'More Happy Than Not'* (2015), *'History Is All You Left Me'* (2017), and *'What if It's Us'* (2018) with

Becky Albertalli. Silvera writes mostly his entire novel with the theme about queer. Adam Silvera is also active in supporting LGBT teenagers. *'They Both Die At The End'* novel was officially published in 2017. This novel is one of the supporting forms of Silvera to the young LGBT. Further, this novel will be adapted into a TV Series published by HBO.

'They Both Die At The End' is a novel about a boy named Mateo Torrez and Rufus Emeterio who are going to die in 24 hours later. Mateo and Rufus are strangers; they do not know each other. They meet in application called Last Friend. It is an application to make a new friend on their End Day. The meeting of Mateo and Rufus leads to a new experience for both of them. Mateo, who, at first, feels scared of the outside world and always thinking about what other people might think about him, slowly, he can face his fear with the help of Rufus. Mateo, who feel confuse about his identity is either acceptable or not, finally, can find it out when he is having a journey with Rufus on their limit time.

'They Both Die At The End' is the third novel written by Silvera. From the title of the novel, it is obviously known that the main character will be died in the end of the story. Other than that, the novel, would like to tell us how the feel of loss, glimpse of hope, and time are precious. However, the novel also portrayed how someone tries to fight their fear and tries to find their 'true' identity. *'They Both Die At The End'* is one of the novels that portrays how someone is wondering about his 'identity'. From the explanation above, the writer of the study choose this novel for several reasons. First, currently, the writer has not found any previous study of this object. Second, this novel also shows the process

of someone who is trying to develop his identity. Thus, it will be used as the topic of the study. This study would like to see how the character, Mateo, finally develop his sexual identity. Hereby, this study can be analyzed by using Cass's homosexual identity formation.

Cass' homosexual identity formation is a guideline for people who undergoes through the development of homosexual identity. Thus, this study will use homosexual identity formation or also known as sexual orientation identity formation by Vivienne Cass in order to explain how the character finds out his identity. Homosexual identity formation was divided into six stages which are identity confusion, identity comparison, identity tolerance, identity acceptance, identity pride, and identity synthesis (Cass 1979, 221-235). The writer of this study aims to examine how the main character, Mateo, develops his sexual 'identity' until finally to be convinced himself. In addition, besides the six stages of development, the writer also examines the factors which could influence the development identity of the character. Through this study, the writer would like to prove that the changes of someone' sexual identity could be triggered by other person's presence.

Therefore, there are few related studies with the same issue that will be discussed in this analysis; the first is a study by Vidyastria entitled *Homosexual Identity in Alex Sanchez's Rainbow Trilogy*. This journal talked about how the three character in the novel; Jason, Kyle, and Nelson develop their homosexual identity (Vidyastria 2017, 2-20). Then, the second is a study titled *Gene Forrester's Sexual Identity Development in John Knowles's A Separate Peace* by

Febriyanti and Mustofa. On their study, Febriyanti and Mustofa discussed about the influences which finally makes the main character, Gene Forrester, to develop his identity, and at last he realized his identity as a homosexual (Febriyanti and Mustofa 2018, 4-5).

The third is a study by Saputro (2015) titled *Homosexual Identity Development as Reflected in E. M. Forster's Maurice: a Psychological Study*. This study discussed about the homosexual identity development on the character named Maurice who lived in a strict hetero-normative and homophobic society (Saputro 2015, 2-63). The study also shows the difficulties to develop homosexual identity in hetero-normative society. The last, a previous study by Yadav and Yadav entitled *Reluctant "Inner Space" and Forbidden "Outer Space": Queer Identity in Shyam Selvadurai's Funny Boy*. This study talked about the main character, Arjie, who develop his queer identity in between two cultures, Tamils and Sinhalese (Yadav and Yadav 2014, 53-62). Therefore, these journals show that development of homosexual identity is an issue discussed in literary works.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In order to analyze the issue, the writer of the study would like to state a question to elaborate the analysis. The question is:

How is Mateo's homosexual development portrayed in the novel?

1.3 Objective of the Study

According to the statement of the problems mentioned previously, this study aims: To reveal the process of how the main character, Mateo, finds out and convinces his sexual identity.

1.4 Significance of the Study

To this day, sexual identity is still become a sensitive issue among the society. It is because this issue still considered as taboo especially if someone has a different identity. In fact, there are many people who still confused about their sexual identity and feel afraid to discuss about it. Thus, this study intends to see how the main character in the novel, Mateo, finds out and convinces about his sexual identity. Through this study, the writer wishes to present how someone tries to finds out his sexual identity. Besides, the writer of the study would also hope that this study becomes a beneficial addition for those who would like to take related or similar subjects and issues in the future, especially for the students of English Department in Airlangga University.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

In order to gain more understanding on the study, there are several terms definition that used in the study which are:

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| Conviction | : Is a state of mind in which one is free from doubt. |
| Homosexuality | : Is a sexual attraction to the members of the same sex (Maryati 2012). |
| Homosexual acceptance | : Is a condition when a person accepts all forms of self as a homosexual. |
| Homosexual Identity Development | : Is a process of an individual who, at first, identified their selves as heterosexual, then later on acquire homosexual as their |

identity and as relevant aspect of self (Cass 1979).

Sexual identity

: Is a social label to define someone's sexual and romantic attractions. Sexual identity could refer to how a person thinks about oneself or how a person defines their self to the others (Hoffarth and Hodson 2017).