

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Background of the study

We are entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The key word is pursuit. We are predetermined to always be chasing after that elusive conclusion to our lives: we will one day be happy. At a certain point almost everyone realizes that happiness is not wholly attainable. Happiness comes and goes like the seasons, only not predictable. We learn to live with and without everything that goes along with it.

Human is passing every step in their stage of life. It is started from the born until the death. They are passing the childhood stage, teenager, adult and finally aging then died. The faith to be a human is always demanding more and more. In the process of the development in the stages of life, human may have several dreams, needs, or desires which are unfulfilled. The failure of catching the needs results in depression and emotional problems. In order to pursue the dream, human is doing various efforts, but before the efforts are performed, the plan comes up in his/her brain. That plan is the basic of the human's acts in her or his effort to pursue the dream. According to Ross Buck in the book entitled *Human Motivation and Emotion*, the definition of motivations traditionally has been defined as the control of behavior; that is the process by which behavior is activated and directed toward some definable goals (5). There are a lot of factors

which influence human to have a motivation, for example the disappointment of life and the failure of reaching their dream.

Motivation is everyone's reasons held for initiating and gaining the values of their life. Therefore, this issue of motivation is used in this study to examine the main character in Richard Yates's *Revolutionary Road*. In this novel, Yates portrayed the main character named April Wheeler as a woman who has a certain motivation to pursue her dream. April Wheeler is a suburban woman in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. She has no experience in the world outside her home. She gives 24 hours of her each day to be a good house wife. As an ordinary woman at that time, she just does her roles as a woman, such as, serving the breakfast, going to the market, caring for the children, picking up the children and finally cooking for dinner. She is a typical woman who has nothing to look forward to fulfill her passion of having career because her path is only to be a housewife. However, she has dissatisfaction of living in her role as a woman, yet she does nothing to cure her disappointment.

April suggests Frank, her husband, to go out from their routines by moving to Paris. Paris becomes April Wheeler's destination to go because she wants to get a better life as an actress. She also has a better hope for her husband's future job. Unfortunately, when their plan falls through, she is devastated. She gets her third pregnancy which leads her husband to cancelling their plan. She is very disappointed with this decision but she finally agrees with her husband. During her pregnancy, she keeps talking to herself that this is a wrong decision and then she decides to commit an abortion which causes her death.

April's characteristic is deeply associated with her inner motivation. By using psychological approach suggested by Abraham Maslow, *Theory of Human Motivation*, April Wheeler's behavior is defined as a motivational evolutionary.

“Theory of human motivational evolutionary proposed where in motivation is defined as purposeful behavior that is ultimately directed toward the fundamental goal” (Bernard 129)

Maslow positions a hierarchy of human needs. According to Maslow, human has five prior needs curving in stages called hierarchy. Those needs generally focused separately from the unimportant and the easiest needs until the hardest ones. Human motivation is strongly influenced by basic needs which should be accomplished. Maslow stated that to get the benefit from a stage of a need, the hierarchy of the lower order needs of physical and emotional well-being must be satisfied first to get the higher order needs. Conversely, if the things that satisfy our lower order needs are swept away, we are no longer concerned about the maintenance of our higher order needs.

In this study, the writer of the thesis will examine the main character needs in Maslow hierarchy needs that has been already fulfilled. The first is biological and physiological needs. Those include the needs to sustain life such as air, food, sleep, drink and sex. The second is safety needs to be free from anxiety and fear. It includes the protection from element of law, and stability. The third is belonging and love needs or simply said as affection. The third need is about the need to be loved, that is all about friendship and the feeling of belonging from opposite sex. The fourth is esteem needs, it is an aspect of self evaluation. Human

evaluates their ability from her achievement. The achievement can be a big booster to gain the self-esteem. Actually esteem is a vital aspect to any person's confidence. Then the top of the stage is about self-realization needs. This need is about realizing personal potential or self-fulfillment. It is the last need in Maslow's hierarchy because self-realization implies that a person can say that he has a successful life. In this stage, April fulfills whatever she wants related to her dream as portrayed in the novel.

In *Revolutionary Road*, April Wheeler has already been satisfied with the fourth stages of the hierarchy needs. The need which has not been achieved is self-actualization. She is just an ordinary actress but she can convince their dream as a famous actress. Therefore, this need motivates her to achieve her self-realization. She is trying hard to achieve the higher level of this need, so that it is called as her motivation. Motivational process of being realized, result depression and frustration because sometimes people strive for something beyond their abilities. The process affects some emotional factors which can influence the character to decide a certain decision. Based on this reason, the study will mainly discuss about motivational process in April Wheeler's character and also how motivational process influences her life.

*Revolutionary Road* is written by Richard Yates. He is an American novelist and short story writer, known for his exploration of mid-20 century life. He examines the phenomena happening in the mid-20 century and concerns it into the theme of his work. *Revolutionary Road* is his first novel successfully nominated as the finalist for the National Book Award in 1962. He joined Army

before turning into journalistic. After publishing his first novel, he continued teaching writing at Columbia University and the New School for Social Research, Boston University. Richard Yates's work include: *Revolutionary Road* (1961), *Eleven Kinds of Loneliness* (1962) (stories), *A Special Providence* (1969), *Disturbing the Peace* (1975), *The Easter Parade* (1976), *A Good School* (1978), *Liars in Love* (1981) (stories), *Young Hearts Crying* (1984), *Cold Spring Harbor* (1986), *The Collected Stories Of Richard Yates* (2001).

Every character in his novels is described strongly and thoroughly so that the readers might feel that each of which is special and not easy to forget. *Revolutionary Road* by Richard Yates has achieved a dubious fame in novel and also film. He brings the motivation issues into the main character April Wheeler's character. The comment below is based on the film which visualized the idea of the novel. There is a review of Susan Thea Posnock in her comment in *Award's Daily Oscar* about the issue in *Revolutionary Road*.

“*Revolutionary Road* is about two people who have to believe that there is more to life than what they've signed up for – the perfect house, the two kids, good looks, a decent job. What is it they want that they don't have? If you ask author Richard Yates it might be that innate, unshakable desire to live out the American dream because so many that came before us died earning their freedom to do just that. It isn't enough to be good. One has to be great.” (The Guardian)

Because of its outstanding story and strong issues of motivation to catch a dream, the writer emphasizes on the description of the main character, of April Wheeler's motivation and its influence in her sexuality, emotional and also social life. The writer believes that the theory of motivation by Abraham Maslow and the development of this theory is the most appropriate theory to be used to analyze the novel in this study.

### **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Based on the background of the study above, the writer of the thesis analyzes the value of motivation reflected in the novel with the research questions as follows:

1. How is motivation portrayed in April Wheeler's character in pursuing her dream in Richard Yates's *Revolutionary Road*?
2. How does April Wheeler's motivation influence her life?

### **1.3. Objective of the Study**

Based on the statement of the problems above, the objective of the study is:

1. To get the detail descriptions about April Wheeler's motivational process in order to pursue her dream in Richard Yates's *Revolutionary Road*.
2. To explore the influence of April Wheeler's motivation towards her life.

#### **1.4. Significance of the Study**

The study is aimed to see how motivational process is depicted in the story through April Wheeler's character. The writer expects that the readers can have a deep understanding towards April's character related to motivational values reflected in April Wheeler's decisions. This research is also purposed to give knowledge about the portrayal of woman characteristics in family during the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century in America, particularly in American Suburban society in which they still doubt their affection to achieve the dream. Indeed, there are processes of characteristic changes from her fulfilment of the basic need until the motivation comes up and finally the goal which is successfully achieved or the contrary results. The result of this analysis is expected to get the deep understanding about the autonomy and identity in process of forming the idea of motivation and also the effect related to the emotional thinking.

In addition this study is also dedicated to give some contribution into the literary work, especially for English Department Student Association. This research hopefully can be one of the means of enrichment references for the students of English Department who will study literary works using psychological approach.

#### **1.5. Scope and Limitation**

To keep the analysis in the field, the writer of the paper limits the analysis based on the text, Richard Yates's *Revolutionary Road*, and the issue of motivation in the character of the novel. This limitation portrayed the lives of

*Revolutionary Road*'s main character (who is an American woman), who is April Wheeler. The writer uses the physiological approach to analyze her motivation in pursuit her dream and its influence toward her life. Then further analysis will be filtering April Wheeler's actions in Richard Yates's *Revolutionary Road* which suspected with her motivation, as well as the result of her motivation.

### **1.6. Theoretical Background**

The analysis is intended to analyze the desire of April Wheeler in order to pursue her dream. Since the main discussion examines about April Wheeler, the characterization of course can not be separated since the writer focuses the analysis on the main character. Characterization employ to examine about April Wheeler by quoting her speeches, action, thought, and emotion in order to know her attitude in her motivation to gain a better life. Her willingness to achieve her better future is motivated by having perception of having a better life which is also called as a motivation.

Motivation begins when a person perceives a need that must be satisfied. The perception occurs when some form of stimulus attract person's attention to the need. The need having been perceived, motive action on the part of the person to satisfy the needs... (Laird 54).

In the theory of motivation by Abraham Maslow, it is stated that Maslow's hierarchy of needs is often portrayed in the shape of a pyramid, with the largest and lowest levels of needs at the bottom, and the need for self-actualization at the



top, also the needs for people. April has already been passing every stage in the pyramid until she has to realize the top need, self-actualization. In reaching the needs, there are some factors which influence the characteristic changes of the main character and the important ones is motivational disposition. According to Ernest Hilgard and Richard Atkinson, a motivational disposition refers to a need that is put aside in more urgent and simultaneous condition, where the needs occur (Leird 58). Motivational disposition leads into motivational conflict. Motivational conflict here functioned when human still arguing herself about the decision which he is going to take. Maslow stated that if all needs are unsatisfied, the organism is dominated by psychological needs. all other needs may become simply non-existent or push into the background (412). Success and Failure depend on the characteristic of the human who done the effort. Their effort determines whether the motivation that most will fail or succeed. According to Atkinson, there are two kinds of characteristic person who wants to achieve motivation, Motive of failure and motive of success. If the motives to avoid failure is greater than the motive to succeed, it is assumed the person will select goals that minimize the chance of failure. (Franken 346).

### **1.7. Method of the Study**

In conducting the analysis, the writer applies the qualitative research methods. Qualitative research methods are complex, changing, and contested field-a site of multiple methodology and research practices. According to Punch the qualitative data can be defined as empirical information about the world, not

in the form of number (Punch 59). Qualitative is used since the research does not require numeral scale to complete the analysis. Therefore, since the study focuses on literary work particularly a novel, qualitative research is believed as the applicable theory in conducting the research.

In analyzing the novel, the novel itself will be used as the main source. Besides doing close reading on *Revolutionary Road*, the writer also collects data from other sources such as online reader responds, and book reviews. The collection of the data is done to get the information of the influences that lead to April's decision and later will be developed into analyzing the theory of motivation.

In supporting analysis, the writer also gains more materials related to the topic of the research, such as the characterization and the personal development in the influence of motivation. Therefore, information from libraries whether from books, journal, article and other related materials have been collected. In order to make the theory apply well in the analysis, the writer looks for some quotations from trusted sources in order to strengthen the analysis. The writer also tries to make an intensive reading to sharpen her understanding about the main character's characterization and her stage of life.

### **1.8. Definition of Key Term**

**Characteristic** : a feature that helps to identify a person or a thing.

**Maslow hierarchy of needs : Five levels of basic needs arranged by Abraham**

**Maslow ascending order of importance in the form of pyramid.**

**Motivation : Control of the behavior which is activated and directed toward some definable goal**

**Motivational disposition : Motivational disposition refers to a need that is put aside when a more urgent, simultaneous occurs**

**Psychological approach : Criticism of literary work dealing with personality, images and emotional experiences.**

**Pursuit : A following with a view to reach**

**Desire : The feeling that accompanies an unsatisfied state**

**Passion : A great enthusiasm for some thing**

**Behavior : A longing for something that brings satisfaction or enjoyment**

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

