

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents a brief explanation of some theories that support the study. The theories are related to the concept of fable, students' challenges and solutions in writing, and children's literature.

2.1. Fable

Many definitions of fable have been stated by experts. According to (Kayhan, 2017) fable is a literary genre where its animal characters aim to give a lesson or point a moral. Stableford (2009) also defined fable as a short prose fiction formulated to express and exemplify a useful truth or moral precept, often employing animals as representations of human character traits. From those definitions, it can be highlighted that fables are identical to animals as the characters behave like humans. However, Sulastris and Dewi (2019) defined fable as one genre of fiction that often uses non-human things as characters of the story. This is in line with Baldick (2009) who stated that fable as a short tale that teaches a moral lesson by giving human speech and manners to animals and natural elements. Accordingly, although fables usually use animals as the main characters, non-human things are also often used in fables as the characters. Examples of non-human or natural objects used as characters in fable include plants, the sun, the moon, etc. (Ummah, 2022). Therefore, fable is a short story that figures out the lives of animals or non-human objects that behave like humans, such as talking, acting, thinking, and it contains a moral lesson in each story.

Fable has moral lesson that is stated at the end of the story. The moral lesson conveyed is something that the readers can easily remember and relate to in real life. According to Anderson (1997), fable aims to entertain or inform the reader or listener, change attitudes or social opinions, and show moral values. It also gives the strong relationship between morality and religion (Aesop, 2003). Apart from contributing to the language skills of the learners, fables also inculcate universal values in children such as love for nature, love for animals, kindness, virtue, diligence, generosity, etc. (Ummah, 2022). Thus, fable aims to instill good values

or lessons and virtuous traits in the minds of readers and listeners through a simple, entertaining, and easy to remember story.

Like the story texts in general, fables also have generic structures and language features used in its writing. Ummah (2022) drew the generic structure of the fable as follows:

Table 2.1 Generic Structure of Fable

No.	Generic Structure	Description
1.	Orientation	The opening paragraph where the characters of the story are introduced. This part consists of what, where, when, and how the story happens.
2.	Complication	Where the problem in the story appears and develops.
3.	Resolution	When the problem in the story is solved.
4.	Coda/Re-orientation	Where the moral lesson of the story is conveyed.

In addition, Ummah (2022) also listed the language features of fable as follows:

Table 2.2 Language Features of Fable

No.	Language Features	Example
1.	Past tense	The rabbit was a good shot, a wise old Cock flew into a tree to roost.
2.	Adverb of time	Once upon a time, a long time ago, etc.
3.	Time conjunction	When, then, suddenly, etc.
4.	Having specific character	The Hare and The Tortoise, The Plane Tree.
5.	Some direct speech	The Crocodile said, "I'm the biggest crocodile in this river," "You laughed when I said I would repay you," said the Mouse.
6.	Action verb	Ran, walked, killed, went, etc.

Based on the concept of fable above, it can be summed up that fable is a type of narrative text that uses living creatures other than humans as the characters such as animals, plants and the other natural objects which are presented in an

interesting short story with a simple plot, and conveys a moral lesson at the end of the story as a message for the readers. Fable writing has been structured into orientation, complication, resolution and re-orientation. In addition, language features used in fable writing are past tense, adverbs of time, time conjunctions, specific characters, some direct speech, and action verb. All of these things need to be considered when writing a fable, so that the story can be structured properly.

2.2. Students' Challenges and Solutions in Writing

Writing is classified as a productive skill in language learning. It attempts to show the outcomes of what students are expected to be able to do with language fluently and competently (Brown, 1994). Students can figure out their ideas, opinions, and works as the result of their learning activities in the written form as an assessment that can be measured. In this context, the term writing used refers to literary writing. According to Oldcastle (2000), literary writing is essentially a personal view expressed by the writers through themes, ideas, thoughts, reminiscences, using their armory of words to try to evoke, or provoke, a response in the readers. Literary writing is more carefully structured and uses words for rhetorical effect of their flow, their sound, their emotive and descriptive qualities. Therefore, literary writing has a creative and more artistic intent.

As one of the productive skills, writing is often considered one of the most challenging skills. Richards and Renandya (2002) stated that writing is the most difficult skill to be mastered by the students. Indeed, writing skill needs hard thinking to find ideas to be written, rich vocabulary, and grammatical knowledge to choose and filter the sentences that will be used. In addition, Byrne (1993) mentioned three aspects that cause challenges in writing, namely psychological aspects, linguistic aspects, and cognitive aspects.

a. Psychological Aspects

Psychological aspects refer to self-contained or internal problems such as lack of motivation, lack of confidence, condition of mood, and writing anxiety (Amelya, Samtidar & Baa, 2022). If students do not have motivation or feel lack of motivation to write, they will not be able to complete their

writing properly. On the contrary, if students have high motivation to write, they will be able to complete their writing seriously and properly. This cycle can also affect self-confidence, mood, and anxiety.

b. Linguistic Aspects

Challenges in linguistic aspects refer to difficulties in forming English sentences, for instance, the author made a mistake in choosing the structure of the sentence, so the sentence became not appropriate with the true meaning (Byrne, 1993). It is related to the ability of the author in applying language rules based on the writing standards. The most common challenges in linguistics aspects are lack of vocabulary, poor grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation (Ali & Ramana, 2018; Alisha, Safitri, & Santoso, 2019; Moses & Mohamad, 2019).

c. Cognitive Aspects

Byrne (1993) stated that challenges in cognitive aspects related to the author's understanding of their writing. This includes content problems and organization problems (Humairoh, 2021). Content problem refers to the difficulty in exploring the ideas in writing activities. Meanwhile, organization problem refers to distinguishing between main ideas and supporting ideas.

However, for every challenge, there is always a way to overcome it. Prewriting is one possible solution to solve the challenges in writing. According to Humairoh (2021), prewriting is any structural experience that influences active student participation in thinking, talking, writing, and working on the topic under focus in a writing lesson. It describes some techniques to help students think and develop a topic and get words on paper. Meyers (2015) concluded that there are three prewriting to begin organizing students' thoughts, namely brainstorming, clustering, and freewriting.

a. Brainstorming

Brainstorming is the random production of ideas based on a subject. Through brainstorming, the students must realize that the goal is to get students to generate multiple ideas, which is the first step in the writing process for any

writer, no matter their skill level. They then have the opportunity to build on those ideas later on in the writing process.

b. Clustering

Clustering can be started by writing the topic in the middle of the page and circling it. The next step is writing down some ideas in mind, putting them in boxes or circles, and then connecting them to previous words with a line. Clustering is sometimes referred to as mind mapping or concept mapping, which is an effective strategy or technique to help students generate ideas.

c. Freewriting

In freewriting, students may write the ideas without worrying about spelling, punctuation, grammar, and logic. Because the purpose of freewriting strategy is not the result but in simply putting down one's thoughts on paper. Students' freewriting may be disorganized because it is just a way to put ideas into paragraphs, which can be omitted, expanded, or changed.

Based on the understanding above, it can be concluded that from all the various challenges in writing that may students face, which in this case are categorized into three problems, namely psychological problems, language problems, and cognitive problems, students can solve those challenges in various ways such as brainstorming, clustering, and freewriting. Students can even overcome it using other ways at their disposal.

2.3. Children's Literature

2.3.1. The Concept of Children's Literature

Children's Literature consists of two words, namely Children and Literature. Children (plural noun of Child) are young humans under the age of puberty or under the legal age of majority (Oxford, 2022). Meanwhile, Literature is thought, experience, and imagination shaped into oral or written language (Stoodt et al., 1996). Therefore, children's literature is literature for children. According to Junaid (2017) children's literature is a literature, such as stories, poetry, folktales, drama, and another kind of literature that is exclusively created for children such as infants, toddlers, and young people as the target audience. Indeed, there is no

significant difference between literature created for children and for adults. Lukens (2003) stated that the difference between literature for children and literature for adults is only in degree and not in kind. Literature for children should provide the same enjoyment and understanding as literature for adults. However, since children's understanding is more limited, the expression of ideas in literature for children must be simpler, both in language and form (Junaid, 2017). Thus, the literature can be more easily accepted, understood, and enjoyed by children.

Children's literature is broadly divided into two types, namely oral literature and written literature. According to Rao (2018) oral literature refers to verbal art and is commonly known as Folklore. This oral literature exists in the oral (speaking) and aural (listening) domains, and it manifests in performance. The examples are folk tales, folk songs, myths, legends, etc. Meanwhile, written literature is what is commonly understood as literature (Rao, 2018). Examples of this kind of literature are poetry, novels, stories, and other literature that is primarily written down.

Then, children's literature also has the main values contained in it. Stoodt et al., (1996) formulated some major values of literature for children:

- 1) *Enjoyment* refers to the pleasure felt by children. When enjoying literature, children are usually more expressive by showing their emotions.
- 2) *Aesthetic* refers to the beauty that children perceive in a literary work. Literature adds an aesthetic dimension to children's lives, leading them to view their personal experiences differently.
- 3) *Understanding cultures* refers to understanding and appreciating various cultures. Children who can understand and appreciate various cultures have greater potential to realize that people all over the world have the same emotions, experiences, and problems.
- 4) *Imagination* refers to the children's creative and constructive power. Many children's books inspire creative thought, and the authors created imaginary worlds that can help children understand the real world in a fun way.
- 5) *Information and knowledge* refer to increasing children's knowledge about the real world and fascinating events.

- 6) *Cognition* refers to stimulating children's thinking process. Literature has a role as a source of knowledge and a forum that can offer children diverse perspectives on familiar topics by giving them a safe medium to try on different roles, imagine new settings, and puzzle out unique solutions to problems.
- 7) *Language* refers to how literature provides language models and interactive language processes for children. Typically, children learn language from literary works when it is linked to their experiences, so that they can relate to the text and construct meaning from it. Children appreciate a writer's artistic work with language in books or other literature and will repeat phrases and sentences they like over and over.

2.3.2. Children's Literature Course

Children's Literature is an elective course offered by the Department of English Education, Faculty of Educational Sciences and Teachers' Training in a university at Tasikmalaya. This course is designed to explore a variety of children's literature through various genres. The genres include children's literature, such as historical fiction and realistic fiction, folk and fairy tales, and the others, including fable story. This course was also designed for about four months. It was set for 14 meetings where the students took the course once a week with various topics and activities as follows:

Table 2.3 Children's Literature Topics and Activities

Meetings	Topics	Activities
1	Introduction to Syllabus	Class discussion
2	History of Children's Literature	- Class discussion - Presentation - Comprehension quiz
3	World's Best Children's Book Authors	- Digital navigation - Autonomous reading - Report
4		Online presentation

5	Poetry and Verse	- Class discussion - Poetry analysis
6		Writing a Poetry
7	Haiku	- Class discussion - Poetry analysis - Haiku writing
Mid-test		
8	Fiction (Fantasy, Animal fantasy, Contemporary fiction, Historical fiction, Science fiction) in Children's Literature	- Class discussion - QnA session
9		Project: Book report
10	Traditional Literature (Myths, Fables, Folk songs, Legends, Tall tales, Fairy tale, Traditional rhymes)	Pre-Task: Story analysis
11		- Class discussion - QnA session - Comprehension quiz
12		Project: Rewrite a traditional literature
13	Biography and Autobiography	- Class discussion - QnA session
14		- Reading comprehension - Report

Final Project and Reflection

From Table 2.3, it can be seen that fable is studied at meetings 10 to 12. To be precise at meeting 12, students have to make a project in the form of writing traditional literature. In this case, students are asked to write a fable story.

In addition, this Children's Literature course has several learning objectives, such as students will become familiar with the genres of literature for

children, exploring various ideas conveyed in the literary texts, examining the ideologies embedded in the texts, discussing children's literature critically and theoretically, and at the end, students will know, understand, and practice how to use those literary works for teaching and learning.

2.3. Study of the Relevant Research

Writing fable has been studied by some previous researchers. The first, a study conducted by Dian (2018) explored how fable was used to improve students' motivation in writing narrative text in grade XI in a senior high school at Bandar Lampung. The result of this research showed that fables can increase students' motivation to write narrative text. In addition, she also found that writing fables in a collaborative setting can increase students' interest in the learning activity.

The second, a study conducted by Parida et al., (2019) examined the development of teaching material in writing fable story text with children's film assistance. Their research involved 32 students in seventh grade in a junior high school at Riau. Based on the result, developing instructional materials for creating a fable story can help students contribute their morals and emotional. Additionally, they added that the teachers can use fable to help students in forming their positive characters and prevent students from acting inappropriately.

The last, a study conducted by Ummah (2022) explored how fable was used by the teacher to teach writing skills in English intensive program. This study involved 25 students of senior high school. The result revealed that fable can help the students provide stimulus in finding ideas and increase students' creativity in writing. She also emphasized that through fable, teachers can teach the students about good behavior within the moral values contained in every fable story.

However, those previous studies only highlighted the benefits of fables in the learning process. In addition, those previous study was only conducted at high school level. Therefore, the current study focuses on what challenges students face in writing fables, and how they overcome those challenges, so they can complete them. Additionally, this study was conducted at the university level, specifically in the Children's Literature course at a university in Tasikmalaya.