CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Literature is a writing which expresses and communicates through feelings and attitude towards life (Rees 9). Literature is closely related to life because it is the work of human creativity, which represents some aspects of life, such as experience, problem, and the others. By studying literature, somebody will obtain not only pleasure but also knowledge. There are many kinds of literary works, such as drama, poetry, short story and novel. According to Kennedy (203) novel is a book-length story in prose, whose author try to create sense while we read, we experience actual life. The novel describe of real life and manners and of the time in which it was written.

Flowers for Algernon is a 1966 novel that was written by Daniel Keyes. At the first time, Keyes conceived *Flowers for Algernon* as a short story in 1959 and was expanded into a full-length novel in 1966. This novel is very popular, interesting and famous in that era. Because of that, *Flowers for Algernon* sold out more than 5 million copies and reach "*Hugo Awards*" and "*Nebula Awards*". This novel was also adopted as a film version was released in 1968 with title "*Charly*" and TV series version in 2000 with same title.

(http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0072794)

This novel tells about idiot man named Charlie Gordon. Born with an unusually low IQ and has job at a bakery, he has been chosen as the perfect

subject for an experimental surgery that researchers hope will increase his intelligence. A procedure has been successful when tested on a lab mouse named Algernon. Researcher – Professor Nemur- command to Charlie to write everything that happens to him before and after surgery. Charlie's writing is very bad. Many error-spelling can be found in his diary. It shows that he has Language Deficit and can be categorized as symptom of disabilities mental, but he does not surrender until becomes super-genius. In the process to be super-genius, Charlie remembered many memories when he was a child. Many times Charlie being scolded by his mother and his sister because of his inability. Whereas, Charlie never revenge their treatment even it makes Charlie get more spirit to improve his ability. In the end of the story, Charlie becomes stupid again. It have been predicted by the researchers that the surgery is not immortal. Although, Charlie receive it with happiness because he never feels it when he is in super-genius level. This study use *Flowers for Algernon* because many interested parts contain in the novel. One of them is part when Charlie attempt to change his destiny. Charlie does not surrender until his desire reached.

In this research, this study will analyze the main character of *Flowers for Algernon*, Charlie Gordon, by development theory proposed by Eric Erikson and explains about his psychological problem. This novel will be analyzed by using Psychoanalysis theory. Psychoanalysis is a method of studying the mind and treating mental and emotional disorders based on revealing and investigating the role of the unconscious mind (http://www.thefreedictionary.com/psychoanalysis).

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This thesis focuses on the psychology of Charlie Gordon and what he does to reach his super-genius ability.

There are some related previous studies which are relevant to the study. The first one is Desy Eka Fatmawati. She wrote a Journal entitled *Revealing Charlie Gordon's Trauma in Daniel Keyes's Flowers for Algernon* (2014). The second is from Yuliana, Student of Binus University. She wrote a thesis entitled *Structural Analysis of Flowers for Algernon by Daniel Keyes: Signifying the Needs of Main Character* (2008). The third is from Rini Agustina. She wrote a thesis entitled *A Short Happy Moment of Charlie's Life in Flowers for Algernon by Daniel Keyes* (2012). Based on the explanation above, this study takes the title: **"Charlie Gordon's Struggle against Mental Disabilities as Reflected in Daniel Keyes's Flowers for Algernon"**

1.2 Statement of Problems

Based on the background of study above, the problems will be formulated as follows:

- 1.2.1 How is Charlie Gordon characterized in *Flowers for Algernon*?
- 1.2.2 How does Charlie Gordon reach his desire to be a genius man?

1.3 Objective of Study

According to the problem statements above, the main objectives in this research as follows:

- 1.3.1 To describe the characterization of Charlie Gordon in *Flowers for Algernon*.
- 1.3.2 To describe Charlie Gordon's desire to be a genius man.

1.4 Scope and Limitation

In order to prevent non-relevant problems, the study will be limited to the novel that is written by Daniel Keyes entitled *Flowers for Algernon*. The study will focuses on the characters and their characterizations represented in the novel. To answer statement of problem stated above, Charlie Gordon character and his characterization becomes the most important point to analyze. Scope of study from this research focuses on the part of novel where Charlie Gordon doing his daily life as an idiot before and after to be subject of experimental surgery. To avoid the discussion out of the topic, this study will limit discussion in Charlie Gordon's process going to be Super-Genius man.

1.5 Significance of Study

Actually, this research has several significances. Theoretically, it is hoped that this research can be used as helpful reference in order to understand the content of this novel and how the psychoanalysis theory applies in this research.

This research is also hoped to be studied by students, lecturers, or other people who are interested to the novel or psychoanalysis theory.

Practically, it is hoped that the research can be used as reference for the students who are analyzed in this novel or other novel. It can be used by teacher or lecturer who uses the research as a supporting source for teaching. Also, it will be useful to improve the knowledge and can be additional reference for English Department students or other student in this world who are studying literature.

1.6 Method of Study

1.6.1 Types of Research

This is library research. Library research works through many books and other references like articles, journals, and websites in doing research to support the topic. Here, this research takes the novel as the object. So, this research also works using some material like books concerning the topic, some literature books, journals and website. These aims use to support the idea of the topic.

1.6.2 Sources of Data

There are two sources of data, primary data and secondary data. In this research, the source of primary data is the novel itself that is written by Daniel Keyes. Whereas the secondary data is taken from some critical works and some books that concern with the novel and the explanation psychoanalysis theory.

1.6.3 Method of Collecting Data

This research uses the documentation method. First step is looking for the novel, other references to get data that related with this research and the psychoanalysis theory by Sigmund Freud. Then, this study focuses to the main source of data *Flowers for Algernon* that will be read repeatedly and comprehended deeply. In this case, this research does not use original novel only, but use translation of the novel in Indonesian language and watching movie related with this novel also. In addition, this study also search more data to get the understanding of novel and the theory by web surfing.

1.6.4 Method of Analyzing Data

In analyzing data, the research uses the list of data to select the necessary data that can be analyzed in this research. The next step is collecting and classifying the data concerning the cases of the research. In this step, the research will apply theory that is connected with the problem of the research to be described and to analyze the data with the theory. After that, the research concludes the discussion of the data into the conclusion that is important to be read.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

To help the reader understanding some definition of key terms used in this study, it is essential to give a little explanation for it.

Here are the key terms explained:

1.7.1 Mental Disabilities	: Mental disorder; a mental or bodily condition
	marked primarily by sufficient disorganization of
	personality, mind, and emotions to seriously impair
	the normal psychological functioning of the
	individual—called also mental illness
	(Encyclopedia Britannica).

1.7.2 Struggle : An act of make forceful or violent effort to get free of constriction; big spirit to reach something.
(Oxford Dictionary 548)

: An extremely smart person; ability without practice; brilliant; extraordinary intelligence (Patricia Polacco 3)

1.7.3 Super-Genius