

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Characterization explores the portrayal of fictional characters personality through several ways, in which the most used ones are dramatic method and analytic method. Dramatic method examines a character based on what they say, how their environment influences them, and the relation between their real self and other characters' opinion about them. In addition to the dramatic method, analytic method concerns the intention behind actions or motives done by the characters and whether their personality matches their external appearances or otherwise (Jones, 1968 : 84). In order to thoroughly describe the characterization, selected clauses containing experience, thoughts, and decisions based on certain topics can be explored through the concept of transitivity system. Transitivity system encompasses six processes which can reveal the meaning and categorize a series of events and activities done by the characters into its fitting process.

The purpose behind examining the hypermasculinity traits of the two main characters in Jim Uhl's *Fight Club* (1999) is due to the film's detailed representation of hypermasculinity including the cause of it through what they convey either in their inner thoughts, ideas, or spoken verbal activities. This thesis intends to analyze such topics because the conveyance of Jack and Tyler's hypermasculinity traits are suitable to be explained using the transitivity system

since the two main characters, Jack and Tyler, constantly showcase their hypermasculine tendencies through actions, feelings, and thoughts.

Recent studies shows that there are numerous researchers interested in analyzing characterization related to specific topics through transitivity system such as Kang and Wu (2015), Afrianto, Indrayani, and Seomantri (2014), Hajar (2018), Elsa (2019), Nugraha and Mahdi (2020) and Putri (2020). Many topics are raised by these researchers, including feminism, role in society, and racial issues. Correspondingly, hypermasculinity issues have been associated with films discussing similar topics, that is *Fight Club* (1999) to be precise, for more than two decades. For the past 10 years, several researchers namely Jackson (2014), Locke (2014), John and Viswamohan (2015) and Dodge (2015) specifically deliver scientific cultural study about masculinity in the characters of *Fight Club*. In spite of that, none of the articles mentions particularly discuss hypermasculinity through any linguistics approach since most hypermasculinity studies use a cultural approach. Therefore, this research is aimed to provide the latest perspective of hypermasculinity analysis by incorporating one of linguistics theory, transitivity systems.

1.2 Research Problems

In order to conduct the study, the writer establishes two research questions as follows:

1.2.1 What kinds of hypermasculinity traits are conveyed by the two main characters in *Fight Club* (1999)?

1.2.2 How do the two main characters represent hypermasculinity through the transitivity system processes?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The writer aims to discover hypermasculine representation in the characterization of Jack and Tyler in the film *Fight Club* (1999). In order to correlate the objectives, a transitivity system is applied to construct the descriptive explanation and gain contextual meaning behind the main characters' clauses.

1.4 Previous Studies

This thesis is conducted using 10 references from journal articles and thesis to show the novelty and the gap between this thesis and other previous studies. The previous studies comprises two categories: (1) transitivity system and its application to establish characterization in a literary text based on certain topics, (2) scientific popular culture analysis regarding hypermasculinity issues arised from *Fight Club* (1999).

The first study is from Afrianto, Indrayani, and Seomantri (2014) in which their article utilizes the transitivity system to observe which process is the most dominant in three Shakespeare's sonnets. The results state two main findings: material process as the most used process and constant appearances of archaic words in the sonnets. Furthermore, Chuanmei Kang and Xianyou Wu (2015) employ the transitivity system to explore feminist themes in the novel *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Their research indicates how the transitivity system could

prove prominent gender roles and chauvinistic ideas from the author and his characters through several processes, especially material processes dealing with sexual life. Through her article, Oktawati Utami Hajar (2018) applies a transitivity system to find which elements of the process that is dominantly used to characterize Monsieur Poopoo in the short story *The Little Frenchman and His Water Lots*. The result discloses that material process as the most dominant process often shows Monsieur Poopoo as an Actor. Aside from the process, location circumstance is dominant as well, suggesting that the author wants the readers to understand the character's surroundings. Elsa (2019) in her thesis constructs characterization of Beatrice, the main character of *Divergent*, based on two roles dissection: active participant and passive participant. The results indicate that material process occurs a lot in Beatrice's clauses, signaling that Beatrice appears mostly as an active participant as she often does physical activities.

Another article emphasizing the study of transitivity to obtain characterization comes from Nugraha and Mahdi (2020) in their analysis aims to convey the characterization of Mr. Summers in the novel *The Lottery* through the transitivity system. The data infers that verbal process is the most frequent process to characterize Mr. Summers as it contains more than a half of verbiage in his clauses. Similar to the previous thesis, Putri (2020) in her thesis intends to obtain characterization and discover the personalities of Aesop's Fables characters, the Lion and the Fox, using the transitivity system as well. Putri discovers that the

dominant use of material and verbal process are believed to ease children in understanding the story as they still have limited comprehension skills.

In regards to the previous studies concerning transitivity system application, there are four previous studies discussing masculinity issues specifically from *Fight Club*. The first one is from Jackie Jacqueline Jackson (2014) through her thesis manages to prove how rigorous the definition of being a 'real man' according to hypermasculinity is to the extent of establishing instability and constant anger to the impacted men. Second, Brian Locke (2014) in his article proves the origin of white masculinity is strongly derived from their stereotypical principles towards black men who are perceived as sexual 'weapons' and have 'manlier' figures. Besides that, fights in *Fight Club* have strong homoerotic tendencies since they are urged to see each others' sweat and tears. This proves their ironic side towards gay community which they despise.

Third, Vimal Mohan John and Aysha Iqbal Viswamohan (2015) study the exploration of masculinity portrayal in two films: *Fight Club* and *The Wrestler* which share common similarities which is performative masculinity. The findings of this article indicate that exhibiting pain endurance through fights are perceived as the only way to feel alive according to hypermasculine men. The fourth study is from Jason J. Dodge (2015) who proceeds to disclose how the existence of cancer survivor groups in *Fight Club* symbolizes Jack's heterotopia due to the groups taking place in real life but somehow it is his manifestation, a place where men could express their emotion without judgmental gazes.

After gathering the previous studies, it can be concluded that this research is different compared to them based on several points. As seen from the previous studies above, there is no research regarding *Fight Club* which discusses the transitivity system for the past decade. In addition, this research is the only one which applies the transitivity system to construct characterization of both main character and its alter ego. Despite having similar personalities, the transitivity system in this study helps the writer to recognize the contrasting personality of Jack and Tyler that makes each of them different. Therefore, this study shows more novelty as it attempts to bring new aspects for *Fight Club* research. This study aims to reveal the correlation between hypermasculinity traits and how the utilization of the transitivity system could construct the main characters' thinking and action processes related to hypermasculine personality.

1.5 Scope of the Study

The elements of this analysis research focus on the utterances between Jack and Tyler in *Fight Club*. The writer highlights the lexicogrammar representing hypermasculinity traits and nuance. The analysis is conducted using transitivity system of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) approach.

1.6 Writing Organization

CHAPTER I :INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of Background of the Study, Research Problems, Objectives of the Study, Previous Studies, Scope of the Study, and Writing Organization.

CHAPTER II :THEORY AND METHOD

This chapter encompasses the theoretical framework and research method that are utilized to establish this research.

CHAPTER III :RESULT & DISCUSSION

This chapter elaborates the result derived from the research problem using the theoretical framework in the previous chapter.

CHAPTER IV :CONCLUSION

This chapter demonstrates the closure of the research result.

REFERENCES

APPENDICES