

**STRIVE TO ACHIEVE KNOWLEDGE IN MARKUS ZUSAK'S
NOVEL *THE BOOK THIEF* (2005)**

THESIS

*Submitted as Partial Fulfilment for the Requirements
to Obtain Strata I (SI Degree)*



By:

Muhamad Sabil

17385/2010

Advisor:

Dr. Kurnia Ningsih, M.A

Delvi Wahyuni, S.S., M.A

**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND ARTS
STATE UNIVERSITY OF PADANG
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HALAMAN PERSETUJUAN SKRIPSI

STRIVE TO ACHIEVE KNOWLEDGE IN MARKUS ZUSAK'S NOVEL

THE BOOK THIEF (2005)

Nama : Muhamad Sabil
Nim/BP : 17385/2010
Jurusan : Bahasa Inggris
Program Studi : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris
Fakultas : Bahasa dan Seni

Padang, 20 Januari 2016

Disetujui Oleh:

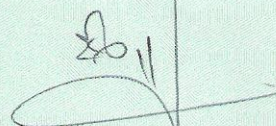
Pembimbing I



Dr. Hj. Kurnia Ningsih, M.A

NIP. 19540626 198203 2 001

Pembimbing II



Delvi Wahyuni, S.S, M.A

NIP. 19820618 200812 2 003

Diketahui Oleh:

Ketua Jurusan



Dr. Refnaldi, S.Pd, M.Litt

NIP. 19680301 199403 1 003

HALAMAN PENGESAHAN JUDUL SKRIPSI

Dinyatakan Lulus Setelah Dipertahankan di Depan Tim Penguji Skripsi

Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris

Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni

Universitas Negeri Padang

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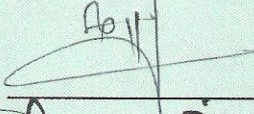
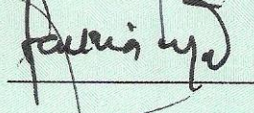


Jurusan : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris

Program Studi : Sastra Inggris

Fakultas : Bahasa dan Seni

Padang, 20 Januari 2016

Tim Penguji,

Nama	Tanda Tangan
1. Dr. Kurnia Ningsih, M.A	Ketua 
2. Delvi Wahyuni, S.S., M.A	Sekretaris 
3. Dra. An Fauzia Rozani Syafci, M.A	Anggota 
4. Dra. Yenni Rozimela, M.Ed., Ph.D.	Anggota 
5. Devy Kurnia Alamsyah, S.S., M.Hum	Anggota 



KEMENTERIAN PENDIDIKAN DAN KEBUDAYAAN RI
UNIVERSITAS NEGERI PADANG
FAKULTAS BAHASA DAN SENI
JURUSAN BAHASA DAN SASTRA INGGRIS
Kampus Selatan UNP Air Tawar Padang

SURAT KETERANGAN TIDAK PLAGIAT

Saya yang bertanda tangan di bawah ini:

Nama : Muhamad Sabil
Nim/TM : 17385/2010
Program Studi : Bahasa Inggris
Jurusan : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris
Fakultas : FBS UNP

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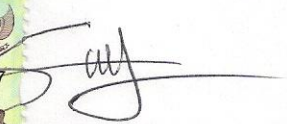
Diketahui oleh,

Ketua Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris,

Dr. Refnaldi, S.Pd, M.Litt
NIP. 19680301 199403 1 003

Saya yang menyatakan,




Muhamad Sabil
17385/ 2010

ABSTRAK

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Pembimbing: 1. Dr. Kurnia Ningsih, M.A
2. Delvi Wahyuni, S.S., M.A

Skripsi ini merupakan analisa novel *The Book Thief* oleh Markus Zusak. Masalah yang diangkat adalah sejauh mana novel ini merefleksikan konflik yang dilalui karakter utama untuk mendapatkan ilmu dan pengetahuan selama Perang Dunia ke II di Jerman. Tujuan penganalisaan ini adalah sejauh mana setting dan konflik (plot) memberikan kontribusi dalam mengungkapkan perjuangan protagonis untuk mendapatkan ilmu pengetahuan. Analisa ini juga dihubungkan dengan konsep psikologi oleh Alfred Adler dan teori pengetahuan dari Marie Browaeys. Hasil analisa ini menunjukkan bahwa protagonis berusaha keras untuk mendapatkan ilmu pengetahuan dan keterampilan yang akan membantunya untuk bisa sukses dan berhasil melalui Perang Dunia ke II, dan bagaimana dia melalui berbagai rintangan serta mencari cara-cara yang tidak biasa dilakukan orang demi tercapai tujuannya.

Key words: Usaha, Pengetahuan, The Book Thief, Markus Zusak

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INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Problem

There are two ways that can be done to get knowledge. One of that is through formal education in course, school and university. Another one is through informal education in every possible place and time, such as watching educational programs and reading text on science. Formal education provides some structured contents that have been constructed by government to educate people who have teacher, student and institution for the practice. While informal education focuses more on the will and effort from the student itself.

Learning informally requires great effort and makes the person has to strive to achieve something. According to Alfred Adler (1956: 135), strive can be divided into *striving for superiority* and *striving for success*. He says striving for superiority is people who strive for personal superiority over others, while striving for success describe actions of people who are motivated by highly developed social interest. People will strive for what they want and they will do everything to get it.

According to Emmons (1999: 112), strive cannot separate from the person itself, it is called personal striving. Personal striving is consciously accessible and personally meaningful objectives that people pursue in their daily lives. Personal strivings refer to the typical goals that a person characteristically is trying to accomplish. It is asserted that every people have typical goals in their live, and it needs strive to pursue their goals and dreams.

People will strive to pursue their dreams in live, and to achieve it they need knowledge. Hunt (2003: 1 02) says that knowledge provides an orderliness to our lives which allows us to conceptualize goals, to anticipate and perceive events, and to respond in accordance with the changing needs, purposes and desires. Knowledge is very important because knowledge leads us to conceptualize goals in live and gain our awareness.

Gaining new knowledge needs more desire. Some people decide to take informal education to get more knowledge than people who only take formal education. It is related to protagonist in *the book thief's* novel who takes informal education to get more knowledge. She needs knowledge to understand her situation with all rules made by NAZI.

Disabilities and obstacles are not the reason to give up for getting knowledge. The protagonist, a girl, in *The Book Thief's* novel shows the strong will to gain knowledge. Even though she lives in a poor economic condition and in the middle of World War II she still tries to add more knowledge. The character has to strive to achieve knowledge with all risks because government limits the knowledge to maintain their power.

The protagonist shows that she has awareness to educate herself. Comparing to her, others may have distress in the condition of deprivation. However, this protagonist can take advantage of weaknesses and pooriness. In the middle of World War II when NAZI and Hitler are in charge, the protagonist still tries to gain knowledge even though it is forbidden. This rarely happens even in the real world when a young woman attempts very hard to achieve knowledge and it is certainly interesting to discuss.

1.2 Nazi

Nazi is a big party and ideology from Germany. According to Geraldine (2011 :65), Nazism was characterized by the strong and charismatic leadership of Adolf Hitler, supported by a small, powerful inner circle of people. Its ideology was built on German nationalism, anti-communism, anti-Semitism, a belief in the 'stab-in-the-back myth' (the idea that Germany was not defeated in World War I, but was betrayed by the socialists and Jews on the home front), and the idea that ethnic Germans were racially superior to all other races.

Hitler tries to gain his power in German with Nazi party. Furthermore Geraldine (2011 :66) explains that Nazi Party attempted to seize power in 1923 in Munich in an uprising known as the 'Beer Hall Putsch'. This uprising failed, and the ringleaders, including Hitler, received short prison sentences. After this incident, Hitler was determined to win power legally at the ballot box. In 1933 he was appointed Chancellor of Germany after negotiating a deal with other leaders. In November 1932, the Nazi Party had received 37.3 per cent of votes, more than any other party but not a majority.

Authors and their works become a threat for Hitler. According to Richard (2011:67) in *Oxford Big Ideas History 10*, when Hitler came to power on January 30, 1933, he was acutely aware of the power of authors - both within Nazi Germany and internationally. At that time Germany had a number of authors who had an international reputation: Erich Maria Remarque, Thomas Mann etc. Hitler knew that they had the power to undermine Germany abroad if they were allowed to write as they wished. As early as May 1933, Hitler took the decision that literary freedom

had to be curbed at all costs and that authors only wrote in a manner that the government approved of. Those who remained would have been very aware of the consequences of writing anything that the state disapproved of.

Hitler burned all books and media that he thinks will destabilize his power. Furthermore Richard (2011 :68) explains, On the night of May 10" 1933, the German public witnessed the first mass book burning ceremony organized by Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels. They then used the torches from their torchlight parade to set alight the books. The burned books included work by Thomas Mann, Heinrich Mann, Erich Maria Remarque and Albert Einstein. Non- German written books were also burned for being 'un-German' - work by Emile Zola, Jack London, H G Wells and Upton Sinclair.

1.3 Strive to Achieve Knowledge

There are three terms in this study. They are *strive*, *achieve* and *knowledge*. Some of the terms can be found in dictionary and the rest explained by the expert. In Merriam Webster dictionary (2015), *Strive* is defined as to devote serious effort or energy while *Achieve* is to get or reach (something) by working hard, and *Knowledge* is information, understanding, or skill that you get from experience or education. According to Hunt (1983:102), knowledge provides an orderliness to our lives which allows us to conceptualize goals, to anticipate and perceive events, and to respond in accordance with the changing needs, purposes and desires.

Term *Strive* is explained by some experts in Psychology and proposed by some physicians, they are Alfred Adler and Robert Emmons. Adler (1956: 135) divides strive into *striving for superiority* and *striving for success*. He says striving

for superiority is the people who strive for personal superiority over others, while striving for success describe actions of people who are motivated by highly developed social interest. This analysis is more focus to the striving for success since the character tries to be success in her life. In other way, Emmons (1996: 112) concerns more to the personal who undertakes the strive. He states personal striving refers to the typical goals that a person characteristically is trying to accomplish.

Thus, *Strive to Achieve Knowledge* in this analysis refers to exert much effort to get information, understanding, skill and education by learning informally to accomplish the goal and become success in life.

1.4 A Brief Description of Author's Biography

Markus Zusak was born on 23 June 1975 in Sydney, Australia. His mother Lisa is originally from Germany and his father Helmut is from Austria. They emigrated to Australia in the late 1950s. Markus is the youngest of four children and has two sisters and one brother. He attended Engadine High School and briefly returned there to teach English. He studied English and History at the University of New South Wales, and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts and a Diploma of Education.

Zusak is the author of five books. His first three books, *The Underdog*, *Fighting Ruben Wolfe* and *When Dogs Cry*, released between 1999 and 2001. *The Messenger*, published in 2002. *The Book Thief* was published in 2005 and has been translated into more than 30 languages. Besides winning awards in Australia and overseas, *The Book Thief* has held the number one position at Amazon.com and on the *New York Times* bestseller list, as well as in Brazil, Ireland and Taiwan. It has

been among the top five best sellers in the UK, Spain, Israel and South Korea, and is still set to be released in many other territories. He got the idea to make *The Book Thief* based on his parents memories about WWH like what he said in interview with Heidi Stillman via email in spring 2012:

"When I started thinking seriously of writing about my parents and their childhoods in Germany and Austria during World War H, I thought, "Maybe I should put that book thief in." I guess that's how things start .. The next realization was also a bit of a fluke. I was working with some kids at a high school and got them to write about color. I did the exercise with them and realized I had written about red, white and blue-but more importantly, about three different deaths, from Death's point of view. Again, I thought, "How about just throwing that in to that book set in Nazi Germany as well?". At the end of the day, there's a whole range of answers to this question. You could say the concept of the book was always there. In so many ways, that's where the book truly began".

The interview shows that Zusak gets an inspiration to write *The Book Thief* from his parents' story. Most of Zusak's works told us about ability to change our life, do not give up, keep struggle and find the purpose of our life. It is illustrated from his books, *The Wolf Brother* trilogy, *The Messenger* and *The Book Thief*

Sara Naved (2014:2), one of his fans of *The Book Thief's* novel said Markus Zusak has really written a compelling yet unique story. With every turning page, the book unfolds a new story. As a reader, she said "I was glued to this book and couldn't help reading the entire of it within a week. For me, this is a wonderful book; therefore I am not reluctant to give it straight 5 stars". Briefly, it tells us that Zusak has a unique story and ways to tell it to the reader.

1.5 The Book Thief

Novel *The Book Thief* (2006), written by Markus Zusak shows strive to achieve knowledge. *Strive to Achieve Knowledge* in this analysis refers to exert much effort to get information, understanding, skill and education by learning informally to accomplish the goal and become success in life. In this novel it is represented by character Liesel, a German girl who lives in World War II period. She is a daughter of a communist who is hunted by German government, and she entrusted to foster parents for her safety and education. She struggles to survive by gaining knowledge and awareness from any sources that would open her mind and get out of government's shackles, and she does not want to be a victim. The efforts that she does are stealing the books, learning informally, discussing with friends secretly.

Stealing the books, the woman protagonist does not have money to buy a book. She steals a book that is banned by Nazi in mass book burning. She steals from mayor wife's library which is not selling in a bookstore. She steals a drop book from graveyard digger to gain her reading skill.

Learning informally, formal schools only provide knowledge that is deemed necessary by the government. She learns with her foster father in basement. She wakes up every night to read books. She learns to write her own book in the basement alone. She also learns to be a storyteller. Moreover, discussing with friends secretly, not all information are allowed to be known. She discusses forbidden topic about Hitler with Jew in basement. She discusses about how to struggle and survive in the middle of World War II with some thieves under the bridge. She discusses with her father about communist in a dark alley.

1.6 Problem of the Study

Strive to achieve knowledge emerged as an important issue in Markus Zusaks novel, *The Book Thief* (2006). Thus, there are some research questions used to analyse strive to achieve knowledge which are formulated as follow:

1. How far does the character strive to achieve knowledge exposed in the novel *The Book Thief*?
2. To what extend do setting and plot in novel *The Book Thief* contribute in revealing strive to achieve knowledge?

1.7 Purpose of Study

This study is aimed to seek how far *The Book Thief* exposed strive to achieve knowledge. Furthermore, it is conducted to figure out the role of characters, setting and plot in revealing strive to achieve knowledge.

1.8 Previous Study

There are two studies about novel *The Book Thief* (2005) by Markus Zusak. The first is from Zuzana Burakova that focuses on trauma and while Jenni Adams on crossover text. These two studies have given contribution and inspiration in analyzing this novel. However, the studies that discuss about *Strive to achieve knowledge* have not been found yet.

Zuzana analysis about the novel *The Book Thief*(2006) in SKASE journal of literary studies entitled *Haunted by Humans Traumatic reading of The Book Thief by Markus Zusak*. The analysis is about perspective of trauma, focusing mainly on the perpetrator's trauma. In trauma studies there are two points of view between

victim and perpetrator. Her analysis related to the concept of trauma from Fuller (2011) that shows the perpetrator also experience trauma. The result of her analysis is the main character as German also gets traumatic from the World War II and many German people also become the Victim. Death becomes the same trauma from Perpetrator and victim's side.

The other analysis is from Jenni Adams in *Children's Literature in Education* (2010) entitled ' *Into Eternity's Certain Breadth ": Ambivalent Escapes in Markus Zusak's The Book Thief* In this analysis she gives more attention to crossover text. The Readers which are children or young adult will have different perspective and mindset when they read the novel. Jenni attempts to reveal the confrontation why this novel can be crossover novel between children and young adult. Her analysis is based on the concept from Kokkola (2003) that shows holocaust material as a subject matter for young people's literature. The result from her analysis tells that the complexity inside the novel and consists of trauma makes the novel become young adult Holocaust fiction.

Both of the studies above give contribution and inspiration to the topic: *strive to achieve knowledge*. The studies use the same novel but different topic and theory, first is focus on trauma while the others on crossover text. Unlike the previous study, this study focuses on how the character strives to achieve knowledge.

1.9 Theoretical Framework

The analysis of this novel deals with the concept of individual psychology about striving for success by Alfred Adler and Epistemology about the knowledge by

Marie-Joelle Browaeys. Adler (1956: 138) says striving for success describes action of people who are motivated by highly developed social interest. Adler suggested that we strive for superiority in an effort to perfect ourselves, to make ourselves complete. Furthermore Adler (1956: 140) adds in striving for their final goal, people create and pursue many preliminary goals. These sub goals are often conscious, but the connection between them and the final goal usually remains unknown.

The term strive itself can be seen in Encyclopedia Britannica (2010) which means a circumstance where people devote effort or energy to struggle for dominance or superiority. Emmon (1999: 112) also discusses about striving, he calls it personal striving because it refers to the typical goals that a person characteristically is trying to accomplish. It needs strive to pursue the goals, like the protagonist that do everything to accomplish her goals to gain knowledge.

Another concept that used in this study is Epistemology that focuses on knowledge. Marie-Joelle Browaeys (2004:3) says knowledge is an act of someone who makes an effort to capture an object by thoughts and to form a proper representation of this object and the understanding resulting from this action. Foucault (1969:59) adds knowledge is what we can speak about in a discursive practice and which is specified there: the domain established by the various objects which may acquire or not a scientific status. Knowledge, according to him, is always part of a cultural matrix of power relations. Foucault analyses them as integral components of power and domination.

Another definition about knowledge in Encyclopedia Britannica (2015) is the fact or condition of knowing, something with a considerable degree of

familiarity gained through experience of or contact or association with the individual or thing so known.

Thus, *strive to achieve knowledge* in this analysis refers to exert much effort to get information, understanding, skill and education by learning informally to accomplish the goal and become success in life. The protagonist shows she has to take action to get knowledge, skill and understanding by learning hard and do it with her own ways.

The analysis of this novel is supported by text and context based interpretation. Context based interpretation means that the analysis of this novel is not only focused on the text itself, but also involved the phenomenon that really happens in the real world. Meanwhile, text based interpretation is done by exposing the fictional devices of the text itself. Guerin (2005:64) says that this approach focuses on the analysis and the interpretation of the text itself. It focuses on character, plot (conflict), and setting.

Character is an important element to reveal the meaning of this novel. Comer (2009:79) says that a character may be defined as a verbal representation of human being. In literary works, the characters help reader to understand and catch the meaning of the works. The way to analyze the character is taking a focus into character's action, thoughts, conversations, and the reaction toward conflicts and circumstances. In this novel the character shows strong will to strive in achieving knowledge. She takes informal learning and does it with her own methods and steals some banned and rare books to get the information from it.

Another fictional device in order to analyze this novel is plot (conflict). There is conflict as important part to make up the plot. Bokesch (2008:54), conflict

can be identified into four kinds; man versus self, man versus man, man versus nature, and man versus society. In order to analyze this novel, the identification to plot and conflict give contribution to find character actions to face physical disability. In this analysis the conflict happened through one character with other characters. The external conflict from her family, school, and foster parents that make the character strive to achieve knowledge.

Setting is also give contribution in order to reveal the meaning of this novel. It relates to the circumstances, location, and atmosphere of the characters in the story. Endriga (2003:85) says that setting has a way of drawing the reader into a piece of literature while facilitating understanding of the characters and their actions. It means characters and settings in a story are influenced by setting. The story takes place in German where the World War II still happen. The character shows how she can oppress by the setting and condition but she can pass that difficult situation. \

1.10 Methodology

The analysis of novel *The Book Thief* is done through text and context-based interpretation. It is done by analyze some part of fictional devices, such as; characters, plot (conflicts) and setting. Characters and conflicts are used to evoke the way to face physical disability by analyzing character's reactions toward the conflict. Then, the setting deals with the circumstances and atmosphere. It gives contribution in process of analysis by giving help in revealing the meaning. Plot and conflicts in this novel give important role to reveal the meaning. These elements are analyzed based on the concept of Striving by Alfred Adler.