



**THE SEARCH FOR MEANING OF LIFE IN  
MITCH ALBOM'S *TUESDAYS WITH MORRIE***

**A THESIS**

**In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Sarjana Degree  
Majoring Literature in the English Department Faculty of Humanities  
Diponegoro University**

**Submitted by:**

**Ummu Rahmahwati**

**A2B009064**

**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES  
DIPONEGORO UNIVERSITY  
SEMARANG**

**2014**

## **PRONOUNCEMENT**

The writer honestly confirms that she compiles this thesis by herself and without taking any results from other researchers in S-1, S-2, S-3 and in diploma degree of any university. The writer ascertains also that she does not quote any material from other publications or someone's paper except from the references mentioned.

Semarang, 10 June 2014

Ummu Rahmahwati

## MOTTO AND DEDICATION

*Ultimately, man should not ask what the meaning of his life is,  
but rather must recognize that it is he who is asked. In a word, each man  
is questioned by life; and he can only answer to life by answering for  
his own life; to life he can only respond by being responsible.*

- Viktor Emil Frankl -

*A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops.*

- Henry Adams -

*This paper is dedicated to  
my Mother and my Father,  
whose life and prayer will forever bring light in my life,  
and  
to everyone who helped and supported me to accomplish this paper.*

**APPROVAL**

Approved by,

Thesis Advisor

Eta Farmacelia Nurulhady, S.S., M.Hum., M.A.

NIP. 197205292003122001

## VALIDATION

This Thesis  
Certified and Approved by  
Strata 1 Thesis Examination Committee  
Faculty of Humanities Diponegoro University

Day: Monday  
Date: 30 June 2014

Chief Examiner

Dr. Ratna Asmarani, M.Ed., M.Hum.  
NIP. 196102261987032001

First Member

Second Member

Drs. Siswo Harsono, M.Hum.  
NIP. 196404181990011001

Eta Farmacelia Nurulhady, S.S., M.Hum., M.A  
NIP. 197205292003122001

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Praise is to God Almighty, who has given strength and true spirit so this thesis on “The Search for Meaning of Life in Mitch Albom’s *Tuesdays with Morrie*” came to a completion. On this occasion, the writer would like to thank all those people who have contributed to the completion of this thesis.

The deepest gratitude and appreciation are extended to Eta Farmacelia Nurulhady, S.S., M.Hum., M.A.—the writer’s advisor—who has given her continuous guidance, helpful correction, moral support, advice, and suggestion, without which it is doubtful that this thesis came into completion.

The writer’s deepest thank also goes to the following:

1. Dr. Agus Maladi Irianto, M.A. as the Dean of Faculty of Humanities Diponegoro University;
2. Sukarni Suryaningsih, S.S., M.Hum. as the Head of the English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University;
3. Dra. Wiwiek Sundari, M.Hum. as the writer’s academic advisor;
4. All lecturers in the English Department of Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University;
5. The writer’s family, especially her mother Suparmi and her father Mujiyo Lasiyo for their patience, love, and support;
6. All of the writer’s friends who always support and cheer her up.

The writer realizes that this thesis is still far from perfect. She, therefore, will be glad to receive any constructive criticism and recommendation to make this thesis better. Finally, the writer expects that this thesis will be useful to the reader who wishes to learn something about existentialism especially the will to meaning theory from Viktor Frankl and its application to analyze a literary work.

Semarang, 10 June 2014

Ummu Rahmahwati

## TABLE OF CONTENT

TITLE.....	i
PRONOUNCEMENT .....	ii
MOTTO AND DEDICATION .....	iii
APPROVAL.....	iv
VALIDATION .....	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENT .....	viii
ABSTRACT.....	x
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION .....	1
1. 1    Background of the Study.....	1
1. 2    Research Problems .....	2
1. 3    Objectives of the Study .....	3
1. 4    Methods of the Study .....	3
1. 5    Organization of the Thesis .....	4
CHAPTER 2 MITCH ALBOM AND HIS WORKS.....	6
2. 1    Biography of Mitch Albom.....	6
2. 2    Summary of Tuesdays with Morrie.....	7
CHAPTER 3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	10
3. 1    Intrinsic Elements.....	10
3. 1. 1    Characters.....	10

3. 1. 2	Conflicts .....	11
3. 1. 3	Settings .....	13
3. 2	The Meaning in Life.....	14
3. 2. 1	Creating Work or Doing Deed .....	15
3. 2. 2	Experiencing Something or Encountering Someone .....	16
3. 2. 3	The Attitude toward Unavoidable Suffering.....	16
CHAPTER 4 THE SEARCH FOR MEANING OF LIFE IN MITCH ALBOM’S		
TUESDAYS WITH MORRIE .....		18
4. 1	Analysis of Intrinsic Elements .....	18
4. 1. 1	Analysis of Characters .....	18
4. 1. 2	Analysis of Conflicts.....	21
4. 1. 3	Analysis of Settings .....	24
4. 2	The Search for Meaning of Life in Tuesdays with Morrie .....	26
4. 2. 1	Morrie and Mitch’s Creating Work or Doing Deed.....	27
4. 2. 2	Morrie and Mitch’s Experiencing Something or Encountering People.....	31
4. 2. 3	Morrie and Mitch’s Attitude toward Unavoidable Suffering.....	34
CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION.....		42
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....		45

## ABSTRACT

People often realize that they need to search the meaning of their life. The main character in the novel Mitch Albom's *Tuesdays with Morrie*, Morrie, exemplifies the process of this searching the meaning of life. This study is designed for analyzing how Morrie searches the meaning in life and how this process also influences the supporting character, Mitch, who tries to grasp the meaning in his life. The methods used in this study are library research and psychological approach that relate to the extrinsic analysis. This study uses Viktor Frankl's existentialism that concentrates on the three pathways in discovering the meaning to analyze the extrinsic aspect of this novel. The analysis shows that Morrie and Mitch successfully find their meaning of life by creating something; experiencing something or encountering people; and taking the attitude toward unavoidable suffering. The good deed they make together is by creating their last project which gives advantages not only for both of them but also for people around them. Experiencing something or encountering people gives both of them a deep understanding about the importance of love and human's relationship rather than the importance of having materialistic things. Suffering helps both of them to accept everything in their life sincerely. Those efforts successfully change their perception of life to be a better perception that brings them into a better future of life.

Key words: meaning in life, library research, psychological approach, Viktor Frankl, existentialism

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. 1 Background of the Study

A work of fiction, especially novel, may be different from other written works because it adapts human's real life. Clara Reeve in Wellek and Warren states, "The novel is a picture of real life and manners, and of the time in which it is written" (1956: 216). A novel takes the fact that comes from reality and builds it up with imagination. In a novel, problems in human's life are reflected in the character's life.

One of those problems is psychological problem. Anxiety is one of the psychological problems that can be found in a story. The character feels anxiety when he faces many difficulties in his life that he cannot solve. The anxiety may come to the characters because they feel empty in life and lose their way of life. This condition leads to the state when the characters do not know the meaning of life. They are challenged to solve this condition by searching for the meaning of life. They have choices whether they want to do that or not. Those choices will show them the way to find the meaning of life and make their life meaningful, or otherwise meaningless.

One of the literary works that explains about discovering the meaningful life is *Tuesdays with Morrie*, a novel by Mitch Albom. This novel describes

searching the meaning of life of the main and the supporting character of *Tuesdays with Morrie*, Morrie and Mitch. Experiencing many difficulties in their own lives makes both of them try to figure out the meaning of life. Morrie has found the meaning of life within sufferings and happenings that he feels in his life. On the contrary, Mitch has not found the meaning of life. He sinks to the failure in his life as he is losing the purpose of life and his beloved person. Because of that failure, he runs after his only goal to achieve a great amount of money. He thinks that if he works hard and gets a lot of money, he can do anything with his money. He does it for paying his feeling of uselessness because he cannot do something that is useful to his uncle and his life. However, Mitch is haunted by the emptiness, which brings him to an enlightenment moment. He reunites with his beloved professor from college, Morrie, who helps him to find his orientation and meaning of life.

This long journey for discovering the meaning of life is a magnet for this study to obtain a deep understanding of this novel. That is the reason why this study is titled, “**The Search for Meaning of Life in Mitch Albom’s *Tuesdays with Morrie*”**.”

## **1. 2 Research Problems**

This study tries to answer the following research problems:

1. What are the factors that motivate Morrie and Mitch to search the meaning of life?
2. How do Morrie and Mitch search the meaning of life?

3. What are the results that Morrie and Mitch get from their searching the meaning of life?

### **1. 3 Objectives of the Study**

This study tries to achieve the following purposes:

1. To reveal the factors that motivate Morrie and Mitch to search the meaning of life.
2. To reveal how Morrie and Mitch search the meaning of life.
3. To reveal the results that Morrie and Mitch get from their searching the meaning of life.

### **1. 4 Methods of the Study**

In analyzing this novel, a method of the study is necessarily needed. This is the important way for achieving the purpose and understanding the object of this thesis. This study uses library research to get the information and theories that support this study. According to George, “Library research involves identifying and locating sources that provide factual information or personal/expert opinion on a research question; necessary component of every other research method at some point” (2008: 6). This study uses a novel *Tuesdays with Morrie* by Mitch Albom as the primary data. As for the secondary data, this study uses books and other information related to the analysis of this thesis.

This study also employs psychological approach to analyze the novel. Psychology is needed to know people’s attitude or personality and can help people to solve their problems in life. Psychology is also useful to analyze characters in

novel if they have psychological problem. In employing psychology to analyze literature, Wellek and Warren state:

By 'psychology of literature', we may mean the psychological study of the writer as type and as individual, or the study of creative process, or the study of the psychological types and laws present within works of literature, or, finally, the effects of literature upon its readers (audience psychology) (1973: 81).

There are four classifications for psychology of literature. The third is the appropriate one and is used in this study to analyze the characters in *Tuesdays with Morrie*. To analyze their psychological aspects, this study uses Viktor Frankl's theory in discovering the meaning of life.

## **1. 5 Organization of the Thesis**

Organization of the thesis has a function to arrange this literary research systematically. The organizations of the thesis are:

### **Chapter 1. Introduction**

This chapter consists of the background of the study that gives short explanation about the significance of the topic; the research problems describes the problems that may appear from the reading; the objectives of the study describes what the analysis of the topic is going to achieve; the methods of the study describes the method and approach which are used in analyzing the topic; and the organization of the thesis.

## **Chapter 2. Mitch Albom and His Works**

This chapter consists of the biography of Mitch Albom which includes brief explanation of his life's background and his work and the summary of *Tuesdays with Morrie* as his work which is the object of this study.

## **Chapter 3. Theoretical Framework**

This chapter consists of the explanation of the literature's theories which are used to analyze this novel. The theory of character, conflict, and setting are used in this study to analyze the intrinsic elements. The theory of existentialism from Viktor Frankl is used to analyze the extrinsic element.

## **Chapter 4. Analysis**

This chapter consists of the analysis of the research problems that has relation to the theories which are used in this study. It contains the analysis of the characters, the conflicts, and the settings in *Tuesdays with Morrie* as the intrinsic elements. The extrinsic analysis shows the existentialism analysis of the two characters in this novel who search for the meaning of their life.

## **Chapter 5. Conclusion**

This chapter describes the conclusion of the analysis.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **MITCH ALBOM AND HIS WORKS**

#### **2. 1 Biography of Mitch Albom**

Mitch Albom was born in Passaic, New Jersey, USA on May 23, 1958. He is the second child of three children of Rhoda and Ira Albom. When he was a child, he wanted to be a cartoonist and changed it to music. He learned to play piano by himself and played in bands. He attended high schools in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and then he left for college after his junior year. In 1979, he earned his bachelor's degree from Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts, majoring in sociology, and still learned music. After the graduation, he performed for several years as a musician, songwriter, and producer for the recording of a number of songs. In his early twenties, he was interested in journalism and became a volunteer to work for a local weekly paper, the Queens Tribune. He came back to school and earned a Master's degree from Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism. Soon, he also earned an MBA from Columbia University's Graduate School of Business.

He continued to work as a freelance sports journalist in New York for publications for example Sports Illustrated, GEO, and The Philadelphia Inquirer. Then, he worked as a feature writer and sports columnist for The Fort Lauderdale News and Sun Sentinel in Florida that were his full time job. In 1985, he moved to

Detroit and became a sports journalist at The Detroit Free Press that made him be the best-known media figures who worked in newspapers, television, and radio.

He married Janine Sabino in 1995. In the same year, he met again with Morrie Schwartz, his old professor who was dying of ALS (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis) or known as Lou Gehrig's disease. This reunion would guide him to the novel *Tuesdays with Morrie* that made him start his career as an author.

*Tuesdays with Morrie* is the story that narrates Morrie and Mitch's togetherness and it was published in 1997. This book spent four years on the New York Times Bestseller list and is the most successful memoir. Mitch's works is not only that. He creates other books: *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*, *For One More Day*, and *Have a Little Faith*. Those bestseller books have been made into successful TV movies. In December 1999, Oprah Winfrey produced the film version of *Tuesdays with Morrie*, starring Jack Lemmon and Hank Azaria. The film got four Emmy awards. They are best TV film, director, actor, and supporting actor. His other works that are *Five People You Meet in Heaven*, *For One More Day*, and *Have a Little Faith* also aired on ABC.

## **2. 2 Summary of *Tuesdays with Morrie***

This novel is divided into four parts which tell Morrie and Mitch's childhood time; teaching and studying time at Brandeis University; the life after Mitch's graduation day; and their reunion time. They have different life. Morrie starts to suffer when he is a child, while Mitch has many sweet memories in his childhood.

Morrie suffers from the death of his mother and getting bad treatment from his father. It differs from Mitch who never suffers from everything in his childhood.

Time goes by very quickly and they meet at Brandeis University; Morrie as a professor and Mitch as a student. It is almost four years for them to build a close relationship. Mitch gets many lessons from the classes he takes with Morrie. Moreover, Morrie is very pleased having such good student like Mitch and hopes that Mitch can learn through the lessons he gets. Unfortunately, this professor-and-student relationship ends because of the graduation day. At that time, Mitch promises that he will keep in touch with his professor though he cannot fulfil his promise.

After that graduation day, world is turned around for both of Morrie and Mitch. Morrie has to let his body get ALS (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis) that attacks its neurological system. Since the announcement of the disease, he does not teach anymore at Brandeis and stays at home due to the disease that he gets. On the other hand, Mitch has to release his dream as a musician. Besides, he has to face the death of his uncle and is separated from his younger brother. Because of those sufferings, he works as a journalist and chases a lot of money that make him busy and put aside everything else. As a result, he feels empty and unsatisfied in his life.

Sixteen years after that graduation, Morrie and Mitch reunite as they come back to their memories at Brandeis University. They learn together about what they have learned from college. It reminds Mitch of everything and makes him

realize that he chases after the wrong things during this time. He promises that he will seek the meaning of his life through this reunion. This gathering leads to their discussions that are held every Tuesday in Morrie's house discussing many problems in human's life. Besides, Mitch starts to understand the meaning of his life. These discussions become an inspiration for them to make it as their last project. The making of this last project is accompanied by Morrie's condition that worsens day by day and ends when Morrie finally passes away. Time he has with Morrie successfully changes Mitch to be a better person. After Morrie's death, the relationship between Mitch and his brother goes well as Morrie has predicted. Mitch still holds discussion with Morrie by conducting a silent dialogue even when Morrie is no longer around.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **3. 1 Intrinsic Elements**

One of the elements that builds a work of fiction is the intrinsic element. This element is the part that builds the text itself. The study takes the analysis of some intrinsic elements to support the analysis of the extrinsic element. Those intrinsic elements that are analyzed in this study are character, conflict, and setting. All of them are important in showing that intrinsic analysis will lead to the extrinsic analysis.

##### **3. 1. 1 Characters**

In his book *A Handbook to Literature*, Holman gives a definition of character. Holman states, "Character is a brief descriptive sketch of a personage who typifies some definite quality. The person is described not as an individualized personality but as an example of some vice or virtue or type" (1960: 79). It can be said that character is general or short information about a person who has similarity with human being and can be seen through the story. Characters in a story are the imitation of human in a real life. They have a bad or a good side as if they were real human beings.

The characters can be categorized into different types. They can be flat, round, static, or dynamic. Burroway states, "A flat character is one who has only

one distinctive characteristic, exists only to exhibit that characteristic, and is incapable of varying from that characteristic. A round character is many faceted and is capable of change” (1992: 100-101). Both flat and round characters have some similarities to static and dynamic characters. Flat character has common characteristics to static character that is single-sided and is not able to change. Round character has common ground to dynamic character that has many-sided and is able to change.

Those similarities of the characters can be seen in the following quotation.

According to Perrine:

All fictional characters may be classified as static or developing. The static character is the same sort of person at the end of the story as at the beginning. The developing (or dynamic) character undergoes a permanent change in some aspect of character, personality, or outlook. The change may be a large or a small one; it may be for better or for worse; but it is something important and basic: it is more than a change in condition or a minor change in opinion (1988: 69).

Characters in fiction may be classified into two characters, static and dynamic character. The static character does not change from the beginning to the end of the story or it can be said that the static character is changeless. On the other hand, the dynamic character changes in some aspects. It can also be called that the dynamic character is changeful.

### **3. 1. 2 Conflicts**

There is supporting statement about the definition of conflict. The opinion of Holman is that, “Conflict is the struggle which grows out of the interplay of the two opposing forces in a plot” (1960: 105). Conflict is something that makes the character competes with the other power or influence in a plot. The character will

survive or give up to his opponent. To stay alive, the character has to make some efforts. Because of these efforts, conflicts appear in a story. Perrine defines conflict as, “A clash of actions, ideas, desires, or wills” (1988: 42). Conflict is a disagreement of acts, thoughts, wants, or motivations the characters feel. Those disagreements lead to the conflict that happens within the characters which comes from the internal or the external factor. Conflict may influence the behaviour of the characters into the different or the same as their previous behaviour.

Conflict may be internal or external. According to Meyer, “External conflicts may place the protagonist in opposition to another individual, nature, or society” (1990:45). External conflict is conflict that happens between the characters with the outside force. Meyer also states that, “Conflict may also be internal; in such a case some moral or psychological issue must be resolved within the protagonist” (1990:45). On the other hand, internal conflict is conflict that happens within the character itself. Furthermore, conflict has four points. According to Holman, there are four types of conflict.

This person, usually the protagonist, may be involved in conflicts of four different kinds: (1) he may struggle against the forces of nature; (2) he may struggle against another person, usually the antagonist; (3) he may struggle against society as a force; or (4) two elements within him may struggle for mastery (1960: 105).

The first is the character who competes with the strength of nature, such as flood, earthquake, and the other disasters. The second is the character who competes with the other person. This conflict shows the contradiction between the protagonist and the antagonist. The third is the character that competes with society in his surroundings. The last is the character that competes with himself.

There are two parts inside him that oppose each other. Briefly, the first to the third is the external conflict and the last is the internal conflict.

### **3. 1. 3 Settings**

Generally, setting refers to the place and time that occur in a story. According to Kenney, “That element of fiction which reveals to us the where and when of events we call setting. In other words, the term “setting” refers to the point in time and spaces at which the events of the plot occur” (1966: 38). The statement shows that setting informs about the place and time when the events happen in a work of fiction. Sometimes, setting in a fiction is true and has a relation with the real situation. It also supports the existence of the other intrinsic elements in a work of literature.

In Meyer’s opinion regarding the definition and the types of setting, “Setting is the context in which the action of a story occurs. The major elements of setting are the time, place, and social environment that frame the characters” (1990: 107). In addition to time and place, social environment is another type of setting. Time is the first type of setting in which the action or event happens in a story. Place is the second type of setting where in the action or event takes place in a story, and it can be exterior or interior of a place. Social setting is the third type of setting that includes the life’s background of the characters such as social condition in which the characters live that can influence their behaviour; daily life of the characters; or lifestyle that they adopt.

Hamalian and Karl also state about the types of setting, mainly the social setting. They state:

There, the setting is not only a particular time and a particular place but the very substance of a region, down to its dust—how the people think, how they react, their prejudices, their insanities, their very life style—with all elements suggested indirectly (1967:59).

This line stresses that setting is not only about time and place. It shows that social setting is as important as the setting of time and place. Social environment will influence the characters. It will give an effect on the behaviours and the thoughts of the characters that appear in a story.

### **3. 2 The Meaning in Life**

The extrinsic elements are the elements that influence the text from the outside and may not have a direct role on that text. Extrinsic elements include social, politics, economy, ideology, religiosity, and psychology. One of those elements that is analyzed in this novel is psychological aspect.

Existentialism theory of Viktor Frankl is deemed useful to analyze the psychological aspect of the novel. According to Frankl the central theme of existentialism, “To live is to suffer, to survive is to find meaning in the suffering” (1984: 11). Existentialism is all about finding meaning in oneself. He has to find the purpose in every condition, even in the worse condition has a purpose.

In this theory, there are three important foundations which are freedom of will, will to meaning, and meaning in life. Frankl in Lewis states that, “Freedom of the will refers to freedom to choose one’s response to the conditions of life; it is not freedom from conditions in life” (2011: 9). Freedom is an important thing in

human's life. It is the mean for everyone to take what he should do in facing every situation in his life. Frankl in Evans finds that, "The will to meaning is the primary motivation and the deepest longing of every human being" (2012: 7). Freedom of will is followed by the will to meaning. Every human has desire to satisfy or complete his freedom. This desire motivates human being to find the meaning in life. If one man has freedom and will so he is able to achieve the meaning in life. Frankl in Lewis states, "Meaning in life is believed to be an objective demand characteristic of the environment" (2011: 10). The meaning of life is in one's life itself. He has to discover his meaning by himself because every human has his own meaning in life.

In Viktor Frankl's existentialism, he formulates the three pathways to meaning. He states:

According to logotherapy, we can discover this meaning in life in three different ways: (1) by creating a work or doing a deed; (2) by experiencing something or encountering someone; and (3) by the attitude we take toward unavoidable suffering (1984: 133).

The first pathway is by making or creating something. The second pathway is by experiencing something or encountering someone. The last pathway is by taking the attitude toward pain or suffering. Through those pathways, people are able to find the meaning of life.

### **3. 2. 1 Creating Work or Doing Deed**

The first pathway is by creating work or doing deed, and it also can be said as the creative value. According to Lewis, "The creative value encompasses all acts that give something to life that would not otherwise exist. The creative value may be

actualized through work, through hobbies, or through doing good deeds” (2011: 8). People are able to find the meaning of life by making or producing something that gives advantages for themselves and others. They who create an advantageous work will make a good impact to many people. It includes creativity, such as art, music, writing, and invention.

### **3. 2. 2 Experiencing Something or Encountering Someone**

The second pathway is by experiencing something or encountering someone which can be called as the experiential value. People can discover the meaning of life by encountering something or someone that affect them in some ways. They can learn and take the positive thing from what they experience whether it is good or bad. Love is the important thing in this way. According to Frankl, “Love is the only way to grasp another human being in the innermost core of his personality. No one can become fully aware of the very essence of another human being unless he loves him” (1984: 134). By accepting and giving love, people value the person who is important for them for all of his side, both the negative and the positive side. As a result, they value the meaning of life.

### **3. 2. 3 The Attitude toward Unavoidable Suffering**

The third pathway is by choosing the attitude toward unavoidable suffering or it can be said as attitudinal value. Frankl in Wong states that, “If there is a meaning in life at all, then there must be a meaning in suffering. Suffering is an ineradicable part of life, even as fate and death” (2011: 625). People can discover the meaning of life by the way of thinking or behaving that they take to face the

pain that is very difficult to prevent. Suffering is an example. It makes people take an action to face everything in his life wholeheartedly. It also causes somebody to realize that life is not only offering the goodness but also the badness. Thus, they have to accept those two parts of life. Suffering brings people to their sense, to be grateful with all of occurrences that they experience in life. Besides, they can take the positive effect of the suffering and improve their understanding about life and the meaning of life.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE SEARCH FOR MEANING OF LIFE IN MITCH ALBOM'S *TUESDAYS WITH MORRIE*

#### 4.1 Analysis of Intrinsic Elements

Intrinsic elements that are analyzed in this study are characters, conflicts, and settings of the novel, Mitch Albom's *Tuesdays with Morrie*.

##### 4.1.1 Analysis of Characters

Morrie is a round and dynamic character as he has many characteristics and experiences changes. Morrie is a loving person and is passionate for knowledge.

He cares about people which is described in the following quotation:

“Ahhhh, it’s my buddy,” he would say when he saw me, in that foggy, high-pitched voice. And it didn’t stop with the greeting. When Morrie was with you, he was really with you. He looked you straight in the eye, and he listened as if you were the only person in the world (1997: 135).

His love is an attention that he gives to many people around him. He will only focus on people whom he talks to. He also loves knowledge which is proved by the next quotation, “But his passion for books is real and contagious” (1997: 39).

It shows that he is having a liking for knowledge and giving more attention to education than anything else.

Little Morrie, however, is an introvert, as can be seen in the following statement, “Mitch, you remind me of someone I knew who also liked to keep

things to himself when he was younger. *Who? Me?* (1997: 54). Morrie becomes introvert because of the influence that comes from his family and his surroundings. He is pushed by his father to keep his mother's death for himself, and his father also forces him not to share his sorrow growing up as a motherless child. It causes him to keep everything that he feels inside. In a condition where he should share this grief to the related people in his life, Morrie cannot do it. In addition, it is possible for Morrie to be introvert because his father is also an introvert person who does not like to communicate with people, even to his own son.

As an adult, Morrie has changed to be extrovert, as shown in the following line, "They went to Washington for protest marches, and Morrie often rode the busses with his students" (1997: 112). As a lecturer, Morrie is really close to his students. He likes to be with his students. He even rides in the same bus with his students instead of driving his own car. His closeness to his students can also be seen in the classes he teaches. He is open not only to his students but also to many people by inviting them to come to his discussion. When he knows that he has mortal illness, "He made some calls. He chose a date. And on a cold Sunday afternoon, he was joined in his home by a small group of friends and family for a 'living funeral'" (1997: 12). It is one of his ways that shows his openness to many people. He makes a plan for sharing about what he feels to them.

Mitch is nearly forty years old and works as a journalist who tends to be more effective and busier at that age. Mitch has passion in working but he does not have passion in his personal life. His passion in working is proved in the

following line, “I worked at a pace that knew no hours, no limits. I would wake up in the morning, brush my teeth, and sit down at the typewriter in the same clothes I had slept in” (1997: 16). It explains that he really likes his job or maybe he is really obsessed with his job until he does not take care of himself by ignoring the time and the beloved person he has. He works really hard to meet his deadline. On the other hand, he seems to have no interest in his personal matter. One of his personal matters is his relationship with his wife as described in the next quotation, “I was back to work a week after the wedding. I told her—and myself—that we would one day start a family, something she wanted very much. But that day never came” (1997: 17). It illustrates that he really gives attention to his work better than his personal life, especially about his marriage life. Those characteristics show that Mitch is a round character that has many-sided characteristics.

Mitch is used to being a hard worker who has interest only on working. It can be seen in the following statement:

“I did four or five media jobs in England, juggling them like a clown. I spent eight hours a day on a computer, feeding my stories back to the States. Then I did TV pieces, travelling with a crew throughout parts of London. I also phoned in radio reports every morning and afternoon” (1997: 43).

Those activities are a routine for Mitch as a journalist. It seems that he spends his 24-hour only for his job and he does not have time to enjoy his own life.

Things change when Mitch reunites with his professor, Morrie. He starts to focus on his personal life by taking care of his own matter. One of his matters is repairing his relationship with Morrie, as shown in the following quotation:

“I got you something,” I announced, holding up a brown paper bag. I had stopped on my way from the airport at a nearby supermarket and purchased some turkey, potato salad, macaroni salad, and bagels. I knew there was plenty of food at the house, but I wanted to contribute something. I was so powerless to help Morrie otherwise. And I remembered his fondness for eating (1997: 48).

It is one of Mitch’s affections that he can give to Morrie in his last days. He brings many kind of food to make Morrie happy because he knows that Morrie likes eating. This change that happens to Mitch shows that he is a dynamic character who is able to change.

#### **4. 1. 2 Analysis of Conflicts**

Morrie experiences internal conflict when he is in contradiction of his feeling for keeping a secret of his mother’s death. In his young age, he is burdened with the announcement of his mother’s death through a telegram that he gets from the hospital. His father tells him not to bring it out, especially to his brother, David, who is still very young. Since his father gets married to Eva in the following year, he puts pressures on Morrie to keep his mother’s death as a secret and make David assume that Eva, their new stepmother, is his natural mother. It is explained in the following passage:

And in the mornings he would go to synagogue to say Kaddish—the memorial prayer for the dead—for his mother. He did this to keep her memory alive. Incredibly, Morrie had been told by his father never to talk about her. Charlie wanted young David to think Eva was his natural mother.

It was a terrible burden to Morrie. For years, the only evidence Morrie had of his mother was the telegram announcing her death. He had hidden it the day it arrived.

He would keep it the rest of his life (1997: 77).

It hurts Morrie very much. He has to carry this secret by himself. It is a deep responsibility for him because he wants to share this feeling to the world. He wants to share his sadness to people. He wants it but his father does not allow it. He has to keep it in his heart alone. As a child, it is not good for his psyche. It makes him miserable because his father ignores his feeling. He wants to be loved by his father, as his father is the only person in his family that he has, excluding his younger brother who is still young and not knowing anything.

The internal conflict is experienced by Mitch as well. He has to let go his desire to be a professional musician. This conflict happens after his graduation from his college, Brandeis University. He believes that the world will offer him what he needs to be a musician. However, his dream does not come true for him.

Many things are not right and unlike what he wants. Mitch states:

The world, I discovered, was not all that interested. I wandered around my early twenties, paying rent and reading classifieds and wondering why the lights were not turning green for me. My dream was to be a famous musician (I played the piano), but after several years of dark, empty nightclubs, broken promises, bands that kept breaking up and producers who seemed excited about everyone but me, the dream soured. I was failing for the first time in my life (1997: 14).

Mitch leaves his dream behind because everything that he knows is not like what he imagines before. He thinks that everything will be okay; everything will turn to the right and proper place as he wants. On the contrary, it does not seem all right in his eyes. There are many difficulties that he encounters in chasing his dream to

be true. There are unfilled places for playing his music: his music group that is not solid, and producers who are not paying attention to him. He feels so frustrated and depressed with this condition. He is unsuccessful to keep his dream.

External conflict also occurs in *Tuesdays with Morrie*. This conflict happens between Morrie and his father, Charlie. He is a Russian immigrant who is not a good father for both of his sons, Morrie and David. When they need affection, his father ignores them. When they want his father to talk to them, he keeps silent and goes out to read newspaper. Mitch tells that, “Morrie and his brother, David, would look out the window and see him leaning against the lamppost, and Morrie wished he would come inside and talk to them, but he rarely did. Nor did he tuck them in, nor kiss them good-night” (1997: 138). Charlie is an indifferent person. He does not care about his children who extremely need his affection and love. He must raise and protect his children after their mother died, but he does not do it. He cares about himself. This makes Morrie declare that one day if he has children, he wants to raise them with full of affection and love that is different from his father who does not care about his children.

Mitch has an external conflict as well. It occurs between Mitch and Peter as illustrated in the following quotation, “The bad news was, my brother did not want me around—not me, nor anyone in the family” (1997: 96). This contradiction starts when Peter gets sick and wants to manage his matter all alone. It hurts Mitch as his brother and continues without any contact between both of them.

#### 4. 1. 3 Analysis of Settings

The setting of time in *Tuesdays with Morrie* occurs in the twentieth century. The stretches of time include Morrie's childhood, his teaching time at Brandeis, and his reunion time with Mitch. It also takes account of Mitch's childhood, his studying time at Brandeis, and his reunion with Morrie. The setting of time starts from 1920s as described in the next statement, "This was during the Depression" (1997: 77). The Great Depression occurs around 1920s-1930s. It happens when Morrie was a child. The setting of time in this novel ends around 1990s as expressed in the following line, "In March of 1995, a limousine carrying Ted Koppel, the host of ABC-TV's "Nightline" pulled up to the snow-covered curb outside Morrie's house in West Newton, Massachusetts" (1997: 18). The show with Morrie is a sign of the final story of *Tuesdays with Morrie* because it brings Morrie and Mitch into their final discussion and several months after this show is Morrie's final life.

The setting of place mostly happens in Brandeis University and in Morrie's house. Brandeis University is one of the places that is mentioned many times in this novel as illustrated in the next quotation, "When the ceremony is over, we throw our caps in the air, and we are officially graduated from college, the senior class of Brandeis University in the city of Waltham, Massachusetts" (1997: 3). It shows that graduation day is one of many activities in Brandeis University involving Morrie and Mitch as the members of that college. Morrie's house also becomes the ultimate place in this novel as stated in the following statement, "The last class of my old professor's life took place once a week in his

house, by a window in the study where he could watch a small hibiscus plant shed its pink leaves” (1997: 1). It becomes clear that Morrie’s house is the main place because Morrie and Mitch’s final project happens in this place.

The social setting also appears in this novel and influences people around that environment as expressed in the next quote, “Someplace not as selfish as America” (1997: 156). That quote reveals that Morrie and Mitch live in United States of America that has many cultures. One of those cultures is modern culture that teaches individualism and materialism which grow rapidly in America as a modern country. These cultures successfully penetrate Mitch as well, as stated in the next line, “I had become too wrapped up in the siren song of my own life. I was busy” (1997: 33). Mitch lives as an individualist. He only thinks of himself. He only listens to how he has to achieve his own necessity. Individualism teaches people to be more independent and irresponsible to others. Another modern culture which is in Mitch’s mind is materialism as described in the following statement:

“We’ve got a form of brainwashing going on in our country,” Morrie sighed. “Do you know how they brainwash people? They repeat something over and over. And that’s what we do in this country. Owning things is good. More money is good. More property is good. More commercialism is good. More is good. More is good. We repeat it—and have it repeated to us—over and over until nobody bothers to even think otherwise (1997: 124).

It explains that America is already covered by materialism, a culture that makes money as a god. Everything must relate to materialistic things. Mitch has to be drawn by this thing over the years. He is tantalized by the enjoyment of having some properties. Materialism successfully brings him to work for getting more

and more money. Those cultures that he applies in his life cause him to be a person who only focuses on his own life without thinking about others.

It has been explained that the main characters spend their time together mostly in Brandeis University. It is clear that they have good educational background. Having the highest level in education also influences people's way of thinking and behaving. It is proved by Morrie's decision in choosing his way of life as shown in the following statement:

“Well, for one thing, the culture we have does not make people feel good about themselves. We're teaching the wrong things. And you have to be strong enough to say if the culture doesn't work, don't buy it. Create your own. Most people can't do it. They're more unhappy than me—even in my current condition” (1997: 35-36).

It illustrates that Morrie comes from educated environment. He really knows that the culture which already exists is not suitable for human being as the member of the community who should be connecting to others and not thinking of their own lives. Due to the culture which is not suitable in Morrie's view, he develops his own culture that is certainly useful for him and others. In short, he is able to choose whether it is good or bad for his life.

#### **4. 2 The Search for Meaning of Life in *Tuesdays with Morrie***

Morrie and Mitch are the main and the supporting characters of *Tuesdays with Morrie* who search for the meaning of life by going through many problems in their life. Those processes that happen in their life motivate them to get the meaning and purpose. They go through many stages to discover the meaning of

life by creating works or deeds, encountering something or someone, and having the attitude that they take toward unavoidable suffering.

#### **4. 2. 1 Morrie and Mitch's Creating Work or Doing Deed**

To attain the meaning of life, Morrie and Mitch try to accomplish the first way which is by creating work or doing deed in their own way.

Morrie attains his meaning of life by becoming a researcher at a mental hospital. At this moment, he starts to understand the meaning of life as expressed in the following lines:

Morrie observed that most of the patients there had been rejected and ignored in their lives, made to feel that they didn't exist. They also missed compassion—something the staff ran out of quickly. And many of these patients were well-off, from rich families, so their wealth did not buy them happiness or contentment. It was a lesson he never forgot (1997: 110-111).

There are two central things he gets from this observation which are the importance of human's relationship and love in that circle. The observation shows the reason why the patients have mental problems: because they live without love and affection that they should get like any other people. People either normal or abnormal need acknowledgment of their existence; they need love and respect from others. There is no list of material thing in human's relationship. There are only love and affection that bring happiness in human's relationship.

Besides devoting his life as a researcher at a mental hospital; Morrie also dedicates his life as a teacher in Brandeis University. At this stage, he really understands the meaning of life and wants to share it to many people. Brandeis is one of places where he can share and spread what he gets from his search for the

meaning of life to his students and people in this college. In one of the classes, he puts a lesson about human's relationship and uses a different method which is a trust test that emphasizes the importance of trustworthiness from one to another, as described in the next line:

'You see,' he says to the girl, 'you closed your eyes. That was the difference. Sometimes you cannot believe what you see, you have to believe what you feel. And if you are ever going to have other people trust you, you must feel that you can trust them, too—even when you're in the dark. Even when you're falling'" (1997: 61).

As a professor, he really gives the important lesson to his students. He lays emphasis on love and relationship as the influential thing over everything in this world. An example of the lessons he gives to his students is the importance of trustworthiness. Trust is one of influential things that has role in human's relationship because having no trust in a society will make an unhealthy society that brings to the lack of consideration for others. There will be no peace if there is no trust in a society. It has essential point for having faith in others which is needed in every society that will bring harmony in that society. It is not an easy task for trusting others because there are many inhibiting factors which can ruin a relationship of human being. Therefore, Morrie emphasizes that a man has to believe another man if he wants to be trusted. He puts this matter so that his students can learn how to give their trust to others in order to get trust from other people as well.

Another work that Morrie creates as the first accomplishment is by doing interviews. He completes three interviews with Ted Koppel, a famous presenter of Nightline show. He uses ALS as a bridge between him and people out there in

order to share his experiences of life and help people to find the meaning of their life. The following statement explains Morrie who uses these interviews as the means to send his message to many people, “Mitch, maybe they are using me for a little drama. That’s okay. Maybe I’m using them, too. They help me get my message to millions of people. I couldn’t do that without them, right? So it’s a compromise” (1997: 132). He uses this opportunity to share his dying condition to people in order that they can find their meaning and purpose through the death that comes closer to him. He wants to show that he can manage this condition and not get frightened even though death is approaching. He wants people to learn how to live and die peacefully through his current condition.

Morrie also uses discussions as the means to narrate his story of life to others; in this case he holds discussions with his old student, Mitch. They conduct this discussion every Tuesday in his house, as shown in the following quotation:

The last class of my old professor’s life took place once a week in his house, by a window in the study where he could watch a small hibiscus plant shed its pink leaves. The class met on Tuesdays. It began after breakfast. The subject was The Meaning of Life. It was taught from experience (1997: 1).

From that quotation, the discussion they hold becomes the last discussion because Morrie suffers a mortal illness and it is possible to be his last year. This discussion is Morrie’s way to dedicate what he experiences during this hard time and gives the right direction in life, especially for Mitch who is still searching for the meaning of life. Morrie probably sees that Mitch is in the wrong track in his life. Mitch is busy and chases the wrong thing which is materialistic things that brings him to the emptiness and unsatisfied life. Mitch wants to escape from life that is

full of anxiety and worry. He needs someone who can give him the true direction for getting back as the full human being, and that person is his old professor. Through their last project, Mitch can find and understand the meaning of life because it really helps him to achieve his meaning of life. He learns more about life through Morrie's experiences.

Mitch also tries to attain the meaning of life by participating in making the last project. The following line shows Mitch's desire to keep his memory of Morrie that leads to their last project:

The next Tuesday, I arrived with the normal bags of food—pasta with corn, potato salad, apple cobbler—and something else: a Sony tape recorder... I want to remember what we talk about, I told Morrie. I want to have your voice so I can listen to it... later (1997: 62-63).

The idea of the last project comes when they plan to hold discussion every Tuesdays. The last project helps and motivates Mitch to search for the meaning of life. The quotation explains that Mitch wants to memorize what he gets in these discussions, so he brings the tape recorder. Making of the last project has a purpose to help people especially Mitch to search for meaning of life as people tend to get lost in the world that full of selfishness.

What Morrie does to achieve the purpose and the meaning is harder and bigger than what Mitch does because Morrie has a lot more experience than Mitch. Besides, Morrie has already had a deeper understanding about the meaning of life than Mitch.

#### **4. 2. 2 Morrie and Mitch's Experiencing Something or Encountering People**

Morrie and Mitch also take the other accomplishment by encountering people or experiencing something. Taking and giving love become the main point for this part.

Although Morrie does not get love from his father, he can get love from his relatives and his new stepmother who are ready by his side in lessening his pain after his own mother's death. The relatives bring Morrie and David to somewhere else outside their home and do this in order to recover Morrie and David's condition after their mother's death as illustrated in the next quotation:

After their mother's death, the two boys were sent off to a small hotel in the Connecticut woods where several families shared a large cabin and a communal kitchen. The fresh air might be good for the children, the relatives thought. Morrie and David had never seen so much greenery, and they ran and played in the fields (1997: 74).

Because his mother's death causes the deep sorrow for Morrie and David, the relatives take them to a new atmosphere in order to forget and diminish their sadness, since they are still young and do not know how to encounter this heavy condition by themselves. They hope that the new place will help to heal their condition and bring the new atmosphere for their souls. Besides, they can look after them properly. In fact, this way of bringing them to the fresher place can bring the joy and happiness for both of them. It can be one of problem solving in bringing the misery out from the children.

A newcomer in Morrie's life can heal his broken heart due to his father who treats him inappropriately. She is Eva, his new stepmother, who can replace the role of mother and father in his life as shown in the next statement:

She had a glow that warmed the otherwise murky atmosphere his father created. She talked when her new husband was silent, she sang songs to the children at night. Morrie took comfort in her soothing voice, her school lessons, her strong character... Eva would kiss them good-night. Morrie waited on those kisses like a puppy waits on milk, and he felt, deep down, that he had a mother again (1997: 75-76).

Her presence helps him out from the sorrow of his mother's death and his father's way of treating him. Eva takes the part of two roles which are as a mother and a father for Morrie. She gives her love and affection for both of them and considers them as her own children. Morrie does not feel lonely anymore because there is a person who can keep and love him. It is such a normal situation because every child needs figure that can raise, teach, and give a safe feeling in his life. Therefore, Eva succeeds in pulling him out of the misery he feels over these years.

As an adult, Morrie has learned through love he gets when he was young and wants to do the same thing to others by giving something that he has to others, which are his time and attention, as stated in the next quotation:

“The truth is, you don't get satisfaction from those things. You know what really gives you satisfaction?”What?“Offering others what you have to give.”You sound like a Boy Scout.“I don't mean money, Mitch. I mean your time. Your concern. Your storytelling...”Why do you think it's so important for me to hear other people's problems? Don't I have enough pain and suffering of my own? “Of course I do. But giving to other people is what makes me feel alive. Not my car or my house. Not what I look like in the mirror. When I give my time, when I can make someone smile after they were feeling sad, it's as close to healthy as I ever feel (1997: 126-128).

It shows that materialistic things do not give satisfaction to people. They can get satisfaction by giving what they have to others; in this situation, they are time and attention. Morrie always gives love and attention to people, either in his healthy condition or in his dying condition. After contracting ALS, he is more concerned about people. He will give everything that he has as long as he is able to give all out to them. From that quotation, he does not care about his condition due to the ALS that controls his whole body. When he gives love to others, he feels that he is full of life and has a meaningful life. People can bring him to the brightest life and there is no word for the materialistic things in his list.

Mitch can also get love from Morrie when he studies in Brandeis University. He gets good lessons about life and he also has a good relationship with Morrie. Through four-year relationship, Mitch learns about human's relationship, a relationship that needs sincerity from both parties. Their closeness can be seen in the following line, "The discussions give me an excuse to talk to him, fatherly conversations I cannot have with my own father, who would like me to be a lawyer" (1997: 47). It shows that they build a relationship that is more like son and father than student and teacher. Mitch meets with the right teacher who gives him the direction and useful lesson to go through many stages of life. For nearly four years, they build their friendship that has full of meaning and full of life's lesson. This friendship brings good viewpoint of life to Mitch who starts to learn about life and the meaning although he has not really applied what he gets from these conversations during this study.

After learning about love that he gets from Morrie, Mitch wants to pay for everything that Morrie has done to him. He gives love and affection to Morrie in the end of his life as his accomplishment in attaining the meaning of life, as stated in the next citation, “We held hands regularly now” (1997: 154). Holding hands is one of his affections that he gives to him. This action that he takes are based on love that he wants to share to Morrie because it is one of things that he can do for now. Giving affection is one of the positive effects that have spread in Mitch’s heart because he learns that love is the important thing in human’s relationship. He also sees that Morrie always gives out love to people around him and Morrie is surrounded by love that he gets from his family, friends, colleagues, and people who visit him. He wants to give love to his brother even though he cannot give it since his brother does not want to accept any help from his family. For the substitution, he gives love to Morrie where he can give the place to do that.

Morrie values love he gets in his life because he knows the feeling of life without love. He feels sad and empty without having the loved ones by his side. Morrie is different from Mitch who gets love since he is young; he is surrounded by the loved ones, especially his younger brother who plays with him in the childhood.

#### **4. 2. 3 Morrie and Mitch’s Attitude toward Unavoidable Suffering**

Morrie and Mitch experience many sufferings and have to use those sufferings as the mean for attaining the meaning of life.

Morrie has to face serious pain in his early age, which is the death of his mother. It is proved by the following quotation describing the death of his mother that brings him to the deep sorrow:

He was eight years old. A telegram came from the hospital, and since his father, a Russian immigrant, could not read English, Morrie had to break the news, reading his mother's death notice like a student in front of the class. "We regret to inform you ..." he began" (1997: 73).

It is such a shocking announcement that is absolutely breaking his mental down as a child who loses an important figure in his life. He is shocked toward his mother's death because she is the only one where he can be dependent on. He does not know anything about death and how to encounter this suffering because it happens when he is still young and as a child he still needs full of affection and love from his parents. Because of his ignorance, he must face this suffering alone which is very impossible for such a child in understanding the meaning of suffering. In order to help him out from the sorrow of losing a mother, he needs support and assistance from someone else. He should get the support and the assistance from his father who is the only one parent that he has but in this case his father does not make him strong to stand in front of this suffering.

Another sorrow Morrie feels when he is a child is not getting love and affection from his father. His father does not treat him as a father who should treat his son lovingly, as stated in the following quotation:

And in the afternoons, he stood at the bottom of the subway steps and hawked magazines, turning whatever money he made over to his family to buy food. In the evenings, he watched his father eat in silence, hoping for—but never getting—a show of affection, communication, warmth" (1997: 75).

A father is a man who has responsibility as a breadwinner and a protector of his family but Charlie is not a father like that. He works but he does not work harder to fulfil the needs of his family. He never thinks of how to make his family pleased by completing their needs, mainly for his children. Being unknowledgeable is not a proper reason for him to excuse for his duty as a father. Because they are poor, Morrie tries to be a responsible child by helping his father to make some money. Besides, his father does not fulfil the needs of the children; he also does not give love and affection to them. As the only one parent who is still alive, Charlie should give him affection. However, Charlie does not do the things that he should do as a father.

It is not only about love that his father does not give to him but also he asks him not to remember his mother anymore, as shown in the next statement, “Incredibly, Morrie had been told by his father never to talk about her. Charlie wanted young David to think Eva was his natural mother” (1997: 77). Charlie really makes Morrie’s heart broken by asking him to throw away his memory of his mother. It is not good for his mental because a figure of mother is always kept in a child’s heart, a figure that cannot be replaced by anyone or anything.

Another suffering in his childhood that he must feel is the pressure that comes from his father who commands him to work. The following explanation states Charlie who forces Morrie to get a job and how Morrie feels worry about what will happen to him if he really works there:

He entered the factory, and immediately felt as if the walls had closed in around him. The room was dark and hot, the windows covered with filth,

and the machines were packed tightly together, churning like train wheels. The fur hairs were flying, creating a thickened air, and the workers, sewing the pelts together, were bent over their needles as the boss marched up and down the rows, screaming for them to go faster. Morrie could barely breathe. He stood next to his father, frozen with fear, hoping the boss wouldn't scream at him, too (1997: 77-78).

By getting the pressure from his father and the condition of the factory that is not appropriate for children make Morrie feel suppressed. Truthfully, asking under-aged children to work is not right. Moreover, they have to work as labourers in a factory which need much more of brute force. Working in a factory that has such condition is really not good for children's health physically and mentally as they should enjoy their time and get freedom for playing and learning. Children need to be given an opportunity to grow and develop according to their talent, interest, and desire. The children who always get the pressure from the cradle will grow to be a closed child that is always suppressed during his life because of fear he feels or to be a rebellious child that tries to release every pressure and emotion he gets to his surroundings. A child needs someone to be his side that can protect not only his body but also his feeling. If Morrie's father were a good man, he must give him space and time to enjoy his time to be whatever he wants. However, this does not appear in Charlie's mind just for a second.

Morrie's suffering is not over yet. In his old age, he must face the fact that he is diagnosed of having a brutal illness which is ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis) that is stated in the next quotation, "Morrie had amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), Lou Gehrig's disease, a brutal, unforgiving illness of the neurological system" (1997: 7). This illness ravages Morrie's body because this disease attacks neurological system. He cannot do anything that he can do in his

healthy condition. This illness will make him paralyzed sooner. The development of this illness will take his independence. He can no longer walk, swallow solid food, move the part of his body, speak, or urinate. At last, there has to be someone who helps him to do those things. However, he has a different and positive perspective in looking at this disease and death. He takes pleasure in it as he becomes a baby for once again. ALS makes him stronger to stand this disease, as illustrated in the next quotation:

He would not wither. He would not be ashamed of dying. Instead, he would make death his final project, the center point of his days. Since everyone was going to die, he could be of great value, right? He could be research. A human textbook. *Study me in my slow and patient demise. Watch what happens to me. Learn with me* (1997: 10).

The quotation indicates that ALS or dying that Morrie meets is not something that he worries about. He takes it as a lesson for his life and accepts it with all of his heart and soul. He uses his upcoming death to be his ultimate assignment in the end of his life that will be a precious legacy for many people. He sees himself as the means for people to understand truthfully what they have to do to face the death. They should learn how to encounter the death through Morrie's state because someday they will feel this condition as well. If they understand about this point, they will accept death as part of their lives not as a burden of their lives. Besides, they will see the positive side of death that makes people more sincere to the essentials of life. Thus, they will live a better life.

Mitch's suffering appears after his graduation day. It is the darkness moment in his life because he is lost. It happens because he faces many failures in this time that bring him to the sufferings. These sufferings turn out to be the

factors that motivate Mitch to search the meaning of life. One of those sufferings happens when he fails to make his dream come true, as described in the following line:

My dream was to be a famous musician (I played the piano), but after several years of dark, empty nightclubs, broken promises, bands that kept breaking up and producers who seemed excited about everyone but me, the dream soured. I was failing for the first time in my life (1997: 14).

It seems that there are some people who can keep and make their dream come true and some cannot. One of those who cannot do this thing is Mitch. He has a dream to be a pianist but he is not ready to face many problems. He gives up into the conditions that can make him down in attaining his dream. Seeing the real world, he realizes that it is not easy to make his dream to come true. He is shaky to hold his dream because the world that he faces is different from what he imagines before.

Another suffering occurs when his uncle died. The death of his uncle becomes a heavy condition after he cannot bring his dream into reality, as stated in the following quotation:

At the same time, I had my first serious encounter with death. My favorite uncle, my mother's brother, the man who had taught me music, taught me to drive, teased me about girls, thrown me a football—that one adult whom I targeted as a child and said, "That's who I want to be when I grow up"—died of pancreatic cancer at the age of forty-four (1997: 14-15).

Mitch lives through one suffering after another suffering; he loses his uncle after he loses his dream. He has to feel the suffering for two times. He is in depth sorrow because losing one of the closest relatives and his uncle is a figure who

becomes his role model. Besides, it is his first time to encounter the sadness due to the death.

A further suffering that he experiences is the relationship with his brother who is in the distance, as expressed in the quotation below:

The bad news was, my brother did not want me around—not me, nor anyone in the family. Much as we tried to call and visit, he held us at bay, insisting this fight was something he needed to do by himself. Months would pass without a word from him. Messages on his answering machine would go without reply. I was ripped with guilt for what I felt I should be doing for him and fueled with anger for his denying us the right to do it (1997: 96-97).

The broken relationship among the family members is one of big burden that appears in a family. It also happens to Mitch who is separated from his brother. There is one reason why Peter decides to do this; he wants to have his space taking care of his own business. He does not want to share his own sorrow to people, especially his family. This decision hurts Mitch's heart not only as one of the family members but also as an older brother who has desire to take care and protect his younger brother in every condition. Moreover, Mitch wants to keep his brother by his side and recall every sweet memory with him as in the past. Therefore, he cannot accept Peter's decision yet.

An additional suffering comes when Mitch loses his job due to the strike that goes on his workplace, as stated in the following quotation:

I felt confused and depressed. Although the TV and radio work were nice supplements, the newspaper had been my lifeline, my oxygen; when I saw my stories in print in each morning, I knew that, in at least one way, I was alive. Now it was gone (1997: 44).

Losing a job becomes a hard blow for Mitch because his job means everything for him. He considers his work as a god that can give him some air to live. He is shaken since it is his only way to complete his ambition in achieving everything related to the materialistic things, especially having a lot of money. He assumes that money is the only means to get happiness.

Mitch's suffering is not as intense as the suffering that Morrie has experienced. However they have learned so much from their sufferings. Morrie learns through his story of life to respect a life and accept his condition of having ALS. In the end of his life, Morrie gets what he wants, which is feeling the peacefulness when he passes away. Mitch also learns through his own story and Morrie's life that suffering is the part of one's life that has to be faced wholeheartedly. After all, he feels the peacefulness and starts to accept everything that he can do and cannot do in his life. In addition, Mitch is able to restore his relationship with his brother, as shown in the next line:

Not long after Morrie's death, I reached my brother in Spain. We had a long talk. I told him I respected his distance, and that all I wanted was to be in touch—in the present, not just the past—to hold him in my life as much as he could let me (1997: 190).

It explains that Mitch has learned about the relationship of the family in which the members of the family appreciate each other's decision. He tries to respect Peter's decision that is being apart from his family and maintaining his own matter.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION**

Psychological aspect can be analyzed not only in human's real life but also in character's story of life by using Viktor Frankl's theory to analyze the character's search for the meaning of life. The analysis of the novel *Tuesdays with Morrie* shows that the main and the supporting character, Morrie and Mitch, are examples of the characters that go through many periods of life to search for meaning in life. There are many occurrences they experience that bring them in completing the task to find the meaning of life which are by creating work or doing deed; encountering people or experiencing something; and taking the attitude toward unavoidable suffering.

Morrie attains the meaning of life by working at a mental hospital, teaching at Brandeis, having interviews, and making discussions. As a researcher at a mental hospital, he observes the patients and the treatments that give him a deep understanding about the meaning of life. After becoming a researcher, he becomes a professor at Brandeis University. He does not want to waste the lesson and the time he has so he starts to share what he has got to his students. He also has interviews in order to get his message for more people around the world. Moreover, he creates Tuesday's discussions with Mitch. Mitch tries to attain the meaning of life as well by taking part of the discussion and making the last project

with his old professor, Morrie. By participating in discussion and making the last project, Mitch starts to understand the meaning of his life.

Morrie finds the meaning of life by experiencing something or encountering someone. He feels the love from the beloved people in his life. In addition, he gives out his love to people who are close to him. When he was young, he gets love and affection from his relatives. Besides, he also gets love and affection from his new stepmother who takes care of him like his real mother. As he learns from the love he gets, he tries to give the time and love for many people. Mitch tries to find the meaning of life by this way too. He gets a lot of love and lesson from Morrie when he becomes Morrie's student at Brandeis. As he learns more about Morrie's story, Mitch tries to give love for Morrie. He visits Morrie regularly and gives him a lot of affection and love like what Morrie did to him before.

There must be good thing and bad thing in human's life. It also applies to Morrie that experiences happiness and suffering in his life. As a child, he has to carry big burden by being left of his mother who died because of sick. Furthermore, he has to get bad treatment from his father who is irresponsible and is not caring. His father does not give him love. He also asks him to erase the memory of his mother. Besides, his father commands him to work when he is still young. His pain is not over yet. Morrie has to struggle to live his life on because he must fight his illness. Through these sufferings that come one by one into his life, he learns something that is to accept every condition that happens in his life, especially the illness that only attacks his body but never takes his spirit.

Additionally, Mitch suffers a lot. It starts from the dream that never come true, the death of his beloved uncle, the family member's relationship that is wide apart, to the losing job. These sufferings teach him to be sincere.

Morrie's journey and struggle can be a good model for Mitch because Morrie is able to encounter those big burdens strongly. As Mitch's suffering is not as difficult as Morrie's suffering, he should be brave to encounter the burden in order to discover the meaning of life as well as Morrie did. Moreover, Morrie and Mitch successfully become better person in having perception of life by going through the three pathways in discovering the meaning of life.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Albom, Mitch. *Tuesdays with Morrie*. New York: Anchor Books, 1997.
- Brown, Wentworth K and Sterling P. Olmsted. *Language and Literature*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1962.
- Burroway, Janet. *Writing Fiction*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1992.
- Endraswara, Suwardi. *Metode Penelitian Psikologi Sastra*. Yogyakarta: Media Pressindo, 2008.
- Hamalian, Leo and Frederick R. Karl. *The Shape of Fiction*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967.
- Holman, C. Hugh. *A Handbook to Literature*. New York: The Odyssey Press, 1960.
- Kenney, William. *How to Analyze Fiction*. New York: Monarch Press, 1966.
- Meyer, Michael. *The Bedford Introduction to Literature*. Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1990.
- Nurgiyantoro, Burhan. *Teori Pengkajian Fiksi*. Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 2009.
- Perrine, Laurence. *Literature: Structure, Sound, and Sense*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 1988.
- Wellek, Rene and Austin Warren. *Theory of Literature*. England: Penguin Books, 1973.
- Albom, Mitch. *Mitch Albom Bio*. USA: Mitch Albom, 2008. <<http://mitchalbom.com/bio>>. (16, June 2013).
- Boeree, C. George. *Personality Theories*. Shippensburg University, 2006. <<http://www.ship.edu>>. (11, October 2013).
- Chagas, Luiz Carlos Dolabela. *The "Ultimate Meaning" of Viktor Frankl*. USA: Viktor Frankl Institute of Logotherapy, 2003. <<http://www.urantia-quebec.ca/media/other/520733urantiaqc197.pdf>>. (15, July 2014).
- Evans, William Franklin. *The World Still Cries for Meaning - Are We Still Listening?* Austria: Viktor Frankl Institute, 2012.

- <http://www.univie.ac.at/wissenschaftstheorie/batthyany/keynote.pdf>. (15, July 2014).
- Frankl, Viktor E. *Man's Search for Meaning*. New York: Washington Square Press, 1984. <http://www.arvindguptatoys.com/arvindgupta/mans-search.pdf>. (16, June 2013).
- George, Mary W. *The Elements of Library Research*. UK: Princeton University Press, 2008. <http://www.en.bookfi.org>. (30, March 2014).
- Kimble, Melvin A and James W. Ellor. *Logotherapy: An Overview*. USA: The Haworth Press, Inc., 2000. <http://66.199.228.237/mofo/pdf/Logotherapy.pdf>. (15, July 2014).
- Lewis, Marshall H. *Defiant Power: An Overview of Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy and Existential Analysis*. USA: Defiant Power Solutions, 2011. [http://marshallhewis.net/papers/Logotherapy\\_Overview.pdf](http://marshallhewis.net/papers/Logotherapy_Overview.pdf). (14, July 2014).
- Marseille, Jeremias. "The Spiritual Dimension in Logotherapy: Viktor Frankl's Contribution to Transpersonal Psychology" in *The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology*, 1997, Vol. 29, No. 1. Germany: Transpersonal Institute, 1997. <http://www.atpweb.org/jtparchive/trps-29-97-01-001.pdf>. (15, July 2014).
- Marshall, Maria. *Prism of Meaning*. USA: Viktor Frankl Institute of Logotherapy, 2011. <http://www.ignaciodarnaude.com/espiritualismo/Frankl,Logotherapy,prism%20of%20meaning.pdf>. (14, July 2014).
- Pattakos, Alex. *Prisoners of Our Thoughts*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 2008. <http://www.en.bookfi.org>. (16, June 2012).
- Townsend, Ingrid H. Soudek. "Viktor E. Frankl, Logotherapy, and Moral Imagination: "Will to Meaning" in the Classroom" in *Teaching Ethics: The Journal of the Society for Ethics Across the Curriculum*. USA: Society for Ethics Across the Curriculum, 2005. <http://www.uvu.edu/ethics/seac/Viktor%20E%20Frank%20Logotherapy%20and%20Moral%20.pdf>. (14, July 2014).
- Wong, Paul T. P. *The Human Quest for Meaning*. New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2012. <http://www.drppaulwong.com/documents/HQM2-chapter28.pdf>. (14, July 2014).
- Yalom, Irvin D. *Existential Psychotherapy*. USA: Basic Books, 1980. <http://www.en.bookfi.org>. (28, September 2012).