CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, researcher discusses the Background of The Research, Scope of The Research, Problem Statement, Objective of Research, and Significance of The research.

1.1. Background of The Research

The world of literature today is increasingly spreading its wings more modernly without losing the characteristics of a literary work. Literary creation is a uniquely human activity that stems from the eternal human desire to understand, express, and ultimately share experiences Pickering & Hoeper (in Bowta, 2018). The film appears with a much more exciting presentation that makes this literary work one of the most famous literary works. According to McQuail, film is a form of electronic mass communication in the form of audio-visual media, which is used to disseminate entertainment that has become a previous habit and presents stories, events, music, drama, comedy, and other technical offerings to the general public McQuail (in Oktavianus, 2018).

In addition to being a literary work in great demand by the public, films are also used to depict human life in the present era. According to Effendi & Sujarman (1986:239), the film is one of the most critical mass communication tools to communicate a reality that occurs in everyday life; films have a substantial reality, one of which tells about the reality of society. From this statement, the film is considered a multidimensional and complex production, so the presence of cinema in literary works makes them essential in human life and equal to other literary media.

The film also features many issues, such as the construction of traditional gender roles that have influenced the understanding of feminine and masculine. This understanding seems to affect the performance of gender in the film True Spirit. True Spirit (2023) is a film directed and written by Sarah Spillane, an Australian director previously known for her film Around the Block (2013).

True Spirit tells the story of Jessica Watson, played by Teagan Croft, an Australian girl who has aspired to make a solo voyage to circumnavigate the world since she was seven. The film, with duration of 1 hour 49 minutes, features the characteristics of Jessica Watson, who subverts traditional gender roles by becoming a young sailor, with attributes of being brave, assertive, persistent in fighting, honest, and confident. All of which present masculinity in a female body that challenges traditional gender identity.

Judith Butler's gender performativity argues that stable binary oppositional categories such as man, woman, male and female can be deconstructed by revealing how "they are discursively constructed within a heterosexual matrix of power" (Butler J, 1990). In the film

True Spirit, Jessica displays another side (masculinity) of a woman who is very different from most women. This exemplifies Butler's idea that gender is constructed and performed, resulting in identity. Identity comes from performative actions that are constantly changing. In interpreting identity, it can be determined by analyzing the performativity of conversation, the performativity of appearance and physicality, and the performativity of sexual activity.

In the film, Spillane often portrays his female characters as manly and heroic men who 'take the ship solo' worldwide to dispel the traditional image of fragile, girl-like women. Such binary oppositions to gender were also challenged and criticized by Judith Butler. Applying Butler's theory of gender performativity, this thesis focuses on the gender performativity of the lead character in True Spirit and uses Judith Butler's deconstruction feminism approach.

1.2. Problem Statement

The reseacher raises interesting questions based on the context and purpose of the research. “How does the main character, Jessica Watson, show her gender identity based on performatifity’s theory in the film True Spirit?”

1.3. Objective of Research

Based on the Problem Statement, the research aims to analyze how the main characters show her gender identity based on performatifity’s theory in the Film True Spirit.

1.4. Significance of the research

The research has both theoretical and practical objectives. Theoretically, this study is expected to add additional knowledge in literary criticism, especially performativity theory. It can be varied, especially for students who like to learn performativity Gender. While practical, this study can be used as additional English literature. These results can also help develop practical work on Performatifity’s theory for students and educators.

1.5. Scope of The Research

This research focuses on Sarah Spillane's True spirit film and is limited to analyzing Jessica Watson's characterization and relating it to performatifity’s theory.