**THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT OF AGEING TOWARDS THE MAIN CHARACTERS IN ‘HAPPY BIRTHDAY’ NOVEL BY DANIELLE STEEL**

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BANDUNG  
2011**

**1. Background to the study**

Everything in this world has its age so does the human. Our life starts when we were a baby then we grew up as a kids, teenager, adults, and elders. The human will develop and face the process where the final stage of the development is when we called as an elder. According Stuart Hamilton in the book “The Psychology of Ageing”:

“Ageing is the final stage of development that every healthy and accident-free individual experience”

The statement above shows an ageing from the point of view of medical. As we know that ageing relates with a physical changes, for example when someone get old there will be a limitation to the body. It is not the only indicator to assume someone either he is old or not. There is no the exact theory about this because every country has their own opinion about when someone called old. In this case, the writer sees the same problem in the novel by Danielle Steel ‘Happy Birthday’. This novel talks about the main characters who do not like their birthday because it means that they get older.

There are some reasons why people do not like being old such as the physical changes which limit someone in doing their job. Ageing relates with physical changes, as stated by Jack M. Gorman M.D. professor of psychiatry at Columbia University “The ageing process is of course a biological reality which has its own dynamic, largely beyond human control”. The statement shows that human can not avoid ageing. When someone can not accept the process of ageing, there will be the effects to his mental such as anxiety disorder, insomnia, depression, or suicide. There is also the statement from American Psychological Association “Physical and mental health affect each other”. From this statement, it shows that the physical changes have the effect on psychological.The writer sees that those matters are interesting enough, so the writer will try to focus on the psychological effect of ageing which shows in the Happy Birthday novel by Danielle Steele.

**2. Research questions**

1. Howis ageing influence the main characters?
2. What is the effect of ageing towards the psychology of the main characters?

**3. Objectives**

In this research there are three objectives, as follows:

1. To find the influence of ageing to the main characters in Happy Birthday novel.
2. To find the psychology effect of ageing on main characters in Happy Birthday novel.

**4. Significant to Knowledge**

This research is entitled “The psychological effect towards the main characters in Happy Birthday novel by Danielle Steel”. This research will focus on the influence of ageing to the main characters in Happy Birthday novel. The writer will do the research by using a psychological approach. This writer hopethat this research will give a new knowledge for the student of literature about the effect of psychology when someone is getting old.

The writer hopes that this research also will give a new knowledge to the reader. The writer hopes that after the reader read this research, the reader will know about themselves who also get the effect of ageing.

**5. The Frame Work Theory**

This research will be analyzed by use the psychology approach. “Rene Wellekdan Austin (1962:81-82) menunjukanempat model pendekatanpsikologis yang dikaitkandenganpengarang, proses kreatif, karyasastra, danpembaca.” (Teori, Metode, danTeknikPenelitian Sastra:61). From the statement above, the writer choose to be more focus on explain this research by use the psychology approach from the work itself. Then from the work itself, the writer sees that the main characters in ‘Happy birthday’ novel has some problem when they are getting old or ageing.

When someone gets older, it is always followed by the changes of the physical appearance. The changes bring effects on the psychological side, in this case the writer assumes that ageing has influence towards main character’s psychological side. According Stuart Hamilton in the book ‘The Psychology of Ageing’:

“Ageing is the final stage of development that every healthy and accident-free individual experience”

The statement above shows that ageing is a final of development to every human which also has an effect towards the psychological side. In this case, the writer will try to explain about the ageing that main the character in this novel has. There are some conflict appear when the three main character in this novel can not accept the reality when they are getting older. The biological changes have an effect to their psychological side.

**6. Research Method**

In this research, the writer will use descriptive analysis method. The writer will describe the conflict from the novel ‘Happy Birthday’ then analyze the conflict uses the psychology approach.

**6.1 Data Collection**

In collecting the data, the writer reads the novel first and understands each word in the novel. Then find the data which have a relation with the theory. After that, the writer collects the data which representative with the theory of Stuart Hamilton in The Psychological of Ageing. This writer also collects the data by uses the book from library and internet.

**6.2 Data Analysis**

The data was taken from ‘Happy Birthday’ novel by Danielle Steel. The setting of this novel is a big city in America, New York. This novel tells about three main characters; Valerie, April, and Jack. They have a good carrier, live in a great city and it seems like their live is completely perfect. The three of them have the same birthday and similar problems; they hate their birthday so much because it reminds them that they get older each year. For some people, birthday is a happy day and a good time to celebrate it with friends or family. However it different with the three main character of this novel, they do not like it. For example, one of the main characters is Valerie. She is a popular TV personality, presenter to her own show, and writer.

*She was a beautiful woman, had a fabulous career, and lived a golden life. (Danielle Steel,13)*

The statement above tells us about how is Valerie’s life. She is a successful woman because she loves her job however the golden life that she get is not that easy. She did many efforts in maintaining her job such as keep on the good work also the good appearance. Valerie is a public figure so that the appearance is an important thing. Therefore she does everything to keep her appearance such as do the surgery.

*She had had her eyes done for the first time when she turned forty and then again fifteen years later. (Danielle Steele, 11)*

There is an implicit meaning behind this statement, the purpose of the surgery is to make her younger and remove the wrinkled skin on her face. As we know that the statement tells us about Valerie who is in ageing. She is sixty years old and she can not accept the physical changes that she gets. Human can not avoid ageing so if someone does the surgery in order to look younger, the writer assumes that this is not only how she maintain her beauty but also about her psychological side. As stated in American Psychological Association “Physical and mental health affect each other”. Since her physical changes, Valerie gets the effect on her psychological side that she tries to avoid ageing and do the surgery as the way to make her look younger. Everything she does has a reasons, she does not only want to stay young and beauty to keep her job in entertainment field but also to make her life complete. In this story, Valerie divorce and her perfect job does not give her everything she needs. She still does not satisfy. She needs someone to share her love.

*She had been divorced for twenty-three years, and had devoted more time and energy to her career than romance. But she missed being involved with someone.(Danielle Steele, 19)*

Since her divorce, she work tirelessly and get everything except her personal life. This is a reason why she hates her birthday and avoids ageing. When she gets older, her appearance is also influenced by the ageing. When most of people normally feel happy on their birthday, Valerie is the one who hates it most. She can not accept the changes and try to find a way in order to avoid ageing. In this case, the writer assumes that she get a few of psychological disorder such as adjustment to the stressors of late life, Anxiety disorders, and Depression.

**Reference**

Stuart, Hamilton. 2012. The Psychology of Ageing : An Introduction- 5 th edition. London

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