

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

I choose the novel written by Paulo Coelho, The Alchemist, because I am fascinated by how the author portrays the main character with his unique characteristics that are mostly found in a man such as curiosity and bravery but are seldom developed, about the greatness that a person can obtain, especially, if one is willing to change to be a better person. Coelho's writing is simple and easy to understand. The main idea of most of his novel is to encourage people to change, that there are always other options to become better if one is looking for it. This is why I choose Coelho's book, because the novel implicitly gives me guidance on how to live my life without trying to teach me how.

Coelho is considered to be one of the most influential writers in the world today who holds the Guinness Book of Record for 53 translations of a single title, The Alchemist. The book was sitting on the #94 of The BBC Most Read Top 100 and also listed on a survey conducted by BBC in April 2003. These facts about The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho make me wonder why this book becomes so famous, and after reading it I am overwhelmed and I decide to

conduct a further research on it especially on its main character, through a thesis on characteristic portrayal of the protagonist named Santiago. “Protagonist is the principal character in a literary work and is often referred to as the story’s main character. Often the story is told from the protagonist’s point of view; even when not in first-person narrative, the protagonist’s attitudes and actions are made clear to the reader or listener to a large extent than for any other character” (Webster’s Online Dictionary).

Another reason why I choose The Alchemist is that I am interested in how Coelho explores his thoughts about people through Santiago as the protagonist, which is to explore the roundness of his character towards various obstacles in his life and how it is explained in a simple but meaningful choice of words. Simple vocabularies, I believe, is one of the keys in revealing the true nature of Santiago and also in providing the reader who might come from different environments to have the feeling of becoming the protagonist himself.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

1. How is the protagonist portrayed in the novel?
2. How do the characteristics of the protagonist develop throughout the novel?

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1. To show how the protagonist’s life is portrayed in the novel.
2. To show how the characteristics of the protagonist developed throughout the novel.

METHOD OF RESEARCH

The approach that I use is formalism approach, focusing on the portrayal of the protagonist. I will analyze the protagonist's development in the novel. Firstly, I read The Alchemist, a novel by Paulo Coelho, and secondly, I conduct a library research and also browse through the internet to find the necessary information about the author and the book. Then I analyze the protagonist and draw a conclusion from my analysis.

ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

This thesis is divided into three chapters. The first chapter is The Introduction which includes The Background of the Study, The Methods of Research, and The Organization of the Thesis. Chapter Two is the Analysis of The Portrayal of The Protagonist in The Alchemist, Chapter Three is The Conclusion. The thesis ends with a list of references in the bibliography and Appendices, which contain Synopsis of the Novel, The Alchemist and the biography of the author, Paulo Coelho.