

CONFLICTS OF MISFIT CHILDREN IN INI KISAH ADHAM, SAYA & AWAN SHIRO BY MAZNY M. R. : A STRUGGLE FOR LOVE, COMFORT AND HAPPINESS

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Abstract

This research aims to discuss conflicts of misfit children, having struggled in their small community as illustrated in the novel *Ini Kisah Adham, Saya & Awan Shiro* ('This is the story of Adham, Awan Shiro and me'). The term 'conflict' is widely understood as collision or disagreement within oneself or involving at least two parties over one particular need. Consequently, one is battling with obstacles to achieve the need, hence gradually requires him to make the best decision or to commit the most possible action. The research outlines three objectives to achieve, (1) to identify the characters of misfit children in *Ini Kisah Adham, Saya & Awan Shiro* by Mazny M. R.; (2) to analyse the conflicts circulated around the misfit children in *Ini Kisah Adham, Saya & Awan Shiro* by Mazny M. R, and (3) to relate the conflicts of misfit children with the struggle for love, comfort and happiness *Ini Kisah Adham, Saya & Awan Shiro* by Mazny M. R. This research employs close reading method. The primary source of the research is the novel *Ini Kisah Adham, Saya & Awan Shiro* by Mazny M. R., first published by The New Straits Times Press (Malaysia) in 2019. The novel is an award winning work, having been the first prize winner of *Sayembara Novel Remaja & Kanak-kanak Berita Harian* (a novel writing contest for young adults and children organized by *Berita Harian*). The secondary sources of the research include journals, books, articles, references or other sources that enable further understanding on the issues highlighted in the primary source. To clarify further on 'conflicts' that surround the misfit characters, the research employs the theory of conflicts by Neal E. Miller. Miller outlines four types of conflicts that usually one needs to confront in his/her life: (1) approach – avoidance competition (2) avoidance – avoidance competition (3) approach – approach competition and (4) double approach – avoidance competition. The results indicate that the two misfit children found in the novel, Hiro and Adham, are psychologically and emotionally disrupted at their school and home after their parents' death/divorce. Furthermore, the conflicts also happen due to the inability of adults to comprehend conflicts from the children's perspectives. The bonding of the boys later on convince them to help each other to finally win their struggle for love, comfort and happiness.

Keywords: novel, conflicts, misfit children, love, comfort, happiness.

INTRODUCTION

In general, creative works deal with psychology of human beings. This is done, usually by the

writers manipulate fictional (or nonfictional) characters of men and women as in the real world, who are psychologically engaged with conflicts which need to be solved at the end of

the stories. The writers usually do this by committing themselves to the study psychology and creative writing, as both fields click well in the forms of short stories, novels and playscripts and these works most of the time reveal truths about life (Nik Rafidah Nik Muhammad Affendi. 2016a). In other words, to impose the psychology of human beings, the stories should be written with the writers' knowledge 'conflicts', and this would further be stitched with various writing techniques, such as description, dialogue, monologue, flashback, foreshadow and so on (Awang Azman Awang Pawi. 2016).

According to Ebenbach, David Harris (2003) the term 'conflict' itself is commonly used to indicate a serious disagreement or argument on certain issues, either in oneself or between two parties. This later would result one (character) in despair, anxiety, worry, restless, unease or restlessness due to the interaction with others (external conflict), or to one inner self alone (internal conflict) (Nik Rafidah Nik Muhammad Affendi. 2016b). Furthermore, conflicts is also important to gain attention and sympathy from readers, hence engaging them to reading the story up to the resolution stage (Kernen, Robert. 1999, Iglesias, Karl. 2005. & Weiland, K. M. 2011). It is obvious that in such stories, readers remain with the pages once they know how the writers care about the psychology of the characters they create (Ballon, Rachel, 2003). It is likely to say to the more the readers understand that those conflicts in stories is somehow related to everyday's life, the more they intend to find out how the conflicts would end.

In everyday's life as well, conflicts may happen to every single human being of every walk of life. Children are not excluded. The conflict arised among the children when the words uttered by them offended the listener and accusation thrown to the listener was fade (Zaitul Azma Zainon Hamzah et.al, 2008). According to Bullard, Lisa (2014) the writers, therefore, are obliged to understand that the conflicts that surround the young characters they create must be appealing enough for the young readers (children) . In other words, the stories are only readable if the writers manage

to comprehend the psychology of young characters, subconsciously the psychology of the young readers as well. Otherwise, there would be a situation that children wonder why the adults have difficulties to deal with the problems (conflicts) (Erricker, Clive, 1998).

On the contrary, as they grow up, children will develop their cognitive skills as well, and at times should be able to ponder any possible ways to deal with the problems (Bearison, David J., Magzamen, Sol & Filardo, Emily K. 1986). As a result, the difference perception of the conflicts itself will arise another problem, between the children and the adults, as they would come out with different solutions. Among themselves too, children do have to mix regularly and such conflicts might be viewed differently by children of different backgrounds. Children from a good and solid background, such as those who own happy and prosperous families, tend to establish a more understanding towards the needs to solve the conflicts comprehensively while the unfortunate ones, such as of those with parental conflict or marital distruption, might look at the same conflicts in other ways (Morrison. D. R., & Coiro, M. J. 1999). Furthermore, due to some privileges the children from urban area often have, presumably they got less conflict compared to those from rural area . In a nutshell, reading conflicts of children in stories may as well be seen as seeing conflicts in children in the real world.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The research finds out that there are a number of previous studies which focus on the aspects of conflicts in children and young adult novels. Firstly, a study by Nur Hikma (2017) titled "Aspek Psikologi Tokoh Utama dalam novel Novel Sepatu Dahlan karya Pabichara" (The Psychological Aspects Reflecting the Main Characters in the novel Sepatu Dahlan (Dahlan's Shoes) by Pabichara) employs the Abraham Maslow's Humanistic Theory to discuss the characteristics of Dahlan, a poor young protagonist who strives to achieve his needs. The study shows that despite the poor

state of wealth, this character is blessed good personalities. He is mentally strong, self-reliance, open-minded, dynamic and pragmatic person, and due to these, manages to overcome obstacles to fulfill his needs. Secondly, a study by Arie Lila Utomo, Uum Qamariyah & Sumartin (2019) titled "Konflik Tokoh Utama dalam Novel Re: karya Maman Suherman: Kajian Psikologi Sastra" (Conflicts of the Main Character in the novel Re: by Maman Suherman: A Psychology of Literature Study) finds out that there are two types of conflicts inflicting the main character of the novel, namely the 'interpersonal conflict' and 'intrapersonal conflict'. Each type indicates that she needs to deal with other people to discuss and find solution together, with hopes that this at the end would overcome the problems. To achieve the purpose, she has three choices to act accordingly, whether to approach them, to go against them or the last one, to simply ignore them. Finally, a study by Faziela Abu Bakar & Nik Rafidah Nik Muhammad Affendi (2016b) titled "Unsur Konflik dalam Novel Remaja Pilihan" (The Elements of Conflicts in Selected Young Adult Novels) employs the Abraham Maslow's Humanistic Theory to discuss the elements of conflict in selected Malaysian young adult novels. The study finds out that young adult characters in the novels usually involve in family conflicts, personal conflicts and peer conflicts. Among these, the peer conflicts is said to be the dominant one, as young adult characters are deemed to make immature judgements in various aspects of life they encounter with. Of all the previous studies mentioned, it is likely to say that children and young adult characters are also bound to conflicts. Instead of showing the adult character to come to them with solutions, the novels would always reveal that these young people to prefer solve the conflicts themselves, having had the strength and courage to do so. However, as they are still green, the approaches might always differ from adults.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research primary intention is to study the conflicts of misfit children on their struggles

for love, comfort and happiness in a Malay children novel, titled *Inilah Kisah Saya, Adham dan Awan Shiro* ('This is the story of Adham, Awan Shiro and me') (IKSAdAS) Mazny M. R. 2019). The novel is an award winning work, as it has been chosen as the first prize winner of Sayembara Novel Remaja & Kanak-kanak Berita Harian (Berita Harian Young Adults and Children Writing Contest) in 2017. There are three objectives in this research; (1) to identify the characters of misfit children in *Ini Kisah Adham, Saya & Awan Shiro* by Mazny M. R.; (2) to analyse the conflicts circulated around the misfit children in *Ini Kisah Adham, Saya & Awan Shiro* by Mazny M. R., and (3) to relate the conflicts of misfit children with the struggle for love, comfort and happiness *Ini Kisah Adham, Saya & Awan Shiro* by Mazny M. R. To achieve these objectives, the research thus would employ two methods, namely close reading and textual analysis methods.

First, the research would employ the close reading method to engage with the understanding of language and symbols in the text. IKSAdAS tells a story about Hiro and Adham, two primary school students who bond together to regain the love, comfort and happiness that they enjoy when their parents are still alive/married. The death/loss of the parent disrupts each boy's life in different way, causing sequential conflicts, in which he has to make judgements, decisions or actions, either alone or together with the other boy. Therefore, the research makes do with textual evidence in the novel, in the forms of language and symbols, to show the struggle of the boys for love, comfort and happiness that they seek after. There are four steps to be taken to gather and analyse the evidence, namely (1) reading versus using text, (2) data gathering, (3) text classification and (4) structural analysis versus interpretation. Once gathered and studied, these evidence consequently would allow the understanding of the types of conflicts illustrated in the novel. Furthermore, with regards to the referents (semantics) and into human purposes (pragmatics), the same evidences will indicate the difference between children and adults to perceive conflicts in everyday's life.

Second, the research would employ the textual analysis method to analyse the conflicts of the misfit children by scrutinising the theory of conflicts by Neal E. Miller. According to Miller (2008), conflict do occur in one's life due to competition between incompatible responses. In such a way, the competitions would arise tense and unrest thus lead one to make a decision concerning on the matter. Miller has outlined four types of conflicts that one might have to confront in his/her life, namely (1) an approach – avoidance competition – a conflict that one has to approach a situation to fulfill his/her needs, yet there is also an obstacle that prevent him/her to do so, (2) an avoidance – avoidance competition – a conflict that one has to deal with two situations that he/she unlikely want to approach, yet that would pave the way to solve his/her conflict, (3) an approach – approach competition – a conflict that one is unlikely to approach both, yet there is only one choice one can make and (4), a double approach – avoidance competition – a more serious conflict than the others, as one's tendency to avoid may turn a 'pure' approach - approach competition to be a complicated one, due to his/her inability to absorb the difficulties.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

As mentioned earlier, the novel tells a story of Hiro and Adham who bond together to overcome mutual problems they have as misfit children in their school. Despite still being dependent on parents, children do find solutions for the problems in the possible ways that suit them (Melati Sumari, Sarada Devi R. Subramaniam, and Norfaezah Md Khalid, 2019 & Hartup, Williard W., Laursen, Brett., & Stewart, Mark I, 1988). The inability to deal with problems, may at certain point cause difficulty for children once they are entering the adolescence stage (Megan C. Finsaas, Ellen M. Kessel, Lea R. Dougherty, Sara J. Bufferd, Allison P. Danzig, Joanne Davila, Gabrielle A. Carlson & Daniel N. Klein, 2018).

Both Hiro and Adham are the only child in their well-to-do families, yet unfortunate enough to lost the love and care of their parents in two different circumstances. Hiro, a mixed-blood boy of Malay and Japanese origins, becomes an orphan after the sudden death of his parents in an aviation accident. Due to this, he has to move to Malaysia and stay with his maternal grandparents. Adham, on the other hand, suffer from depression as a result of his parents' divorce. His mother receives sole custody for him but cannot fulfill her responsibility as she is working in a different town. Therefore, Adham is left to stay with her brother. Thing is not getting any better for Adham as his father, a veterinarian in the same hometown, remarried to another woman. Consequently, Adham turns to be a moody, emotional and unpredictable student, and no longer eager to get closer to anybody anymore. The task of co-parenting for divorced couple seems not easy, no matter how dynamic it would be (Barth, K. R., Brosi, M., Cox, R. R., Spencer, T. A., & Beasley, L. O., 2019 & Peterson, G. W., Leigh, G. K., & Day, R. D., 1984). The arrival of Hiro at first does not help much, although Hiro is purposely seated next to him to befriend him. However, as Hiro emerges as a more than considerate, helpful and reliable friend, he finally wins Adham's trust and confidence. Since knitting the bond, Hiro and Adham start to explore and understand each other's needs, so that they can together cope with the difficulties successfully.

Hiro's problems starts with the different lifestyle he has to endure alone in a land which is still foreign to him. The state of transition seems to be difficult as there are a number of things to be adjusted, for the sake to be recognized in the new place (David Ciptet & Jill Lindsey Harrison, 2019). When they are still alive, his parents keep instilling into Hiro the knowledge of both origins, as a Malay and a Japanese, so that in future he knows that he belongs to both cultures. The sudden death of both of them left Hiro in despair and longing for love and care, as at a tender age, he could not do anything but to depart Japan and starts a new life in Malaysia. Although Hiro's maternal grandparents later shelter and tend Hiro with

love and comfort, yet joining outside world happens to be a difficult and challenging task for him. Besides Adham, most of his new friends alienate Hiro too for the mutual belief that he resembles more as a Japanese boy rather than a Malay boy to them, as can be seen in this excerpt:

“Jaga hal kau sendiri, Hiro. Biarkan Adham dengan masalahnya. Kau pun ada masalah sendiri, bukan? Ulang kaji pelajaran Bahasa Melayu kau. Peperiksaan dah dekat,” demikian rakan-rakan menasihati saya. [Translation] “Mind you own business, Hiro. Leave Adham alone with his problems. You too have your own problems, don’t you? You better revise the lessons on Malay language. Exam is just around the corner,” that was what my friends reminded me.

As if confronting Adham alone is not enough, Hiro has been made aware that his lack of competence in using the Malay language has hindered communications with the other friends. They always see Hiro as a Japanese boy, who may have had to stay in Malaysia for a sole reason, that he does not have any other place else to go. They always feel that one day he might leave for his homeland, Japan, again. Hereby, it is clear that Hiro is coping with an avoidance – avoidance competition. Even if he wishes to ignore Adham, he just could not do so as he is seated next to him in the class and nobody would like to swap his/her seat for him. Yet at the same time, he is not permitted to join them. In other words, they keep him away by exploiting the language obstacles that Hiro is trying his best to overcome. Therefore, the only choice left for Hiro is to befriend Adham, no matter how rude he is to him.

Meanwhile, the arrival of Hiro also means that Adham is no longer the odd one out among the children. As mentioned earlier, the problem that Adham has is that he is no longer the same boy he used to be when his parents are still married. Once the parents decide to move on to two different directions, Adham is sent to his uncle’s house since they want him to stay in the same school and neighbourhood. Although the mother promises that it would be there just for a short time, the fact that he is no longer living

at his own home hurts Adham. For Adham, his uncle would just shelter him, but there would not be love and care in the same way that he has ever received from his own parents. At the same time, Adham dislikes his elder cousin, Faizal, who is a bully. Besides being rude regularly to him, most of the times Faizal has ill-treated Adham with lots of household chores which are supposed to be done together. This burdens Adham, as can be seen in this excerpt:

Seumur hidupnya, dia tidak pernah dibiasakan membuat kerja-kerja rumah sebegini. Dia selalu merungut tentang betapa sukarnya hendak melakukan semua itu apabila terpaksa tinggal dengan bapa saudaranya, Pak Long (Mazny M. R., 2019: 9). [Translation] Never in his (Adham’s) life that he was burdened with the household chores. He always complained about all those things that he was expected to do since moving in his uncle’s (Pak Long’s) house..

“Abang sepupu aku itu, budak nakal. Aku yakin memang Mak Su kenal dia,” Adham menjawab perlahan. Saya terdiam. Sekarang saya faham mengapa Adham tidak gembira berkongsi bilik dengan Abang Faizal (Mazny M. R., 2019: 10). [Translation] “My cousin is a naughty boy. I believe Mak Su (Hiro’s aunty) knows him,” Adham answered quietly. I didn’t say anything. Now I understand why Adham disliked the idea of sharing a room with Abang Faizal.

Once Adham realises that Hiro is such a friend in need, he then starts to express his feeling openly. He finds out that even though his parents are still alive, he is not as lucky as his new friends. Hiro’s life is always flourished with love and care from his grandparents, and even from his young aunty (Mak Su), while Adham’s own parents are not even by side when he badly needs them. At the same time, he dares not to tell every thing about Faizal to his uncle, knowing very well that they might be roommates for uncertain length of time. Hereby, Adham is clearly dealing with an avoidance – avoidance competition. He knows very well that his life would be in mess once his parents’ marriage legally dissolve, and would turn to a nightmare when he needs to meet Faizal

regularly days and nights. The fact that they are related is not a privilege as Adham is still bullied at school, though the act of him carrying Faizal's bag might never be a serious case.

The novel later reveals that the newly established friendship is a matter of gift to Hiro and Adham. The two misfit children gradually explore each other's background and make sure that any of them to be the first to offer helping hands whenever the other needs help. For example, Adham helps Hiro to improve his competence in Malay language, while Hiro is willing to share 'gachapons' (small Japanese toys in the size of an egg) with Adham. Adham has also visited Hiro regularly once he knows that Hiro's grandfather is one of his uncle's friends. The bond between them has resulted in an unexpected decision, when Adham expresses his willingness to spend the mid-year break at Hiro's house, as can be seen in this excerpt.

Seminggu selepas kami mengerjakan rumah hijau sekolah, cuti pertengahan tahun pun bermula. Adham diberi pilihan sama ada hendak tinggal di rumah Pak Longnya ataupun meluangkan masa bersama ayahnya. Sebenarnya Adham mahu tinggal bersama ibunya. Namun ibu Adham terpaksa bertugas di luar daerah sepanjang cuti sekolah. Pelik sungguh kerana tiba-tiba Adham memilih untuk tinggal bersama-sama keluarga kami. (Mazny M. R., 2019: 29 – 30) [Translation] The mid-year break started just a week after the hardwork at the school's greenhouse. Adham had to decide whether to stay at Pak Long's house or to spend time with his father. Actually he preferred to be by his mother's side. Unfortunately, she was working during the whole school holidays. It was so strange that Adham suddenly chose to stay with our family.

Besides the difficulties Adham experienced with Faizal, the novel also reveals that he does not enjoy good term with his father anymore after the divorce. In this case, he again has to deal with an avoidance – avoidance competition. In other words, the state of spending school holidays with his uncle's is unpleasant, so is the suggestion to be with his

father. However, Adham has already seen the love and comfort in Hiro's family. For Adham, Hiro is lucky that his grandparents are so caring and loving and will always be by his side through thick and thin. Hiro's grandfather always fetches him from school and his grandmother always prepares enough food for both of them to share during recess. With Hiro, Adham experienced a much better life as they play games, revise school lessons and recite al-Quran, such good moments that have been hindered from him for a long time.

During the school holidays and both start to understand the values of love in everyone's life, Hiro and Adham are destined to adopt a family of cats as their pets. They find out that the garage contains a female cat (Tompok) with her three kittens, and gladly choose a kitten each to take care of. Hiro adopts Awan Shiro (the kitten in white fur), Adham prefers Jalur (the kitten with stripes) and Hiro's young aunty kindly elects Abu (the kitten in grey fur). However, Hiro grandfather quickly reminds them that if they want keep the cats at their pets, they still need to send them to a veterinarian first for some health inspections. The novel later indicates that the only veterinarian at the nearest town they can find is Dr Sulaiman, and Adham has shown his reluctance as he is not eager to meet his father at all, as can be seen in this excerpt:

Setelah mendengar nasihat tentang penjagaan kucing, kami pun meminta diri untuk pulang. Kami tidak dikenakan apa-apa bayaran. Sewaktu kami tiba di kereta, Adham sudah menanti sambil duduk membaca di tepi jalan. Datuk membisikkan sesuatu kepada saya, "Jangan ganggu Adham dengan bertanya hal ayahnya. Mungkin dia masih sedih kerana tak dapat tinggal bersama-sama ibu bapanya lagi. Hiro faham, bukan?" (Mazny M. R., 2019: 46 – 47)

[Translation] After getting some advices on how to look after the cats, we asked permission to leave the clinic. Dr Sulaiman charged us nothing. Adham was waiting by the car, quietly reading a book by the roadside. Datuk (grandfather) whispered to me. "Don't bother Adham with questions about his father. Perhaps

he is still feeling sad since he cannot stay with any of his parents anymore. You do understand this, don't you, Hiro?"

At this stage of the story, it is clear that Adham is dealing with an approach - avoidance competition. The urge to adopt the cats at one point has led Adham to meet his father, since he knows that they originally are wild animals, and thus may have diseases that prevent them to be kept in Hiro's house. The decision however is still discouraging that as he is frustrated with the ongoing problems with his parents, Adham does not even say a word to Dr Sulaiman. Hiro just gets to know about their relationship from his grandfather who introduces Dr Sulaiman to him as Adham's father.

Although a thorough inspection by a veterinarian has proven that the cats are healthy enough to be kept in the house, Hiro and Adham later realise that there is still another obstacle they have to overcome. The novel imposes that Hiro's grandmother is suffering from asthma as she is allergic to animals' fur and has to be admitted to hospital. Due to this, Hiro and Adham reluctantly agree to send the cats temporarily to Pak Daud's (the school gardener whose wife, Mak Cik Yam, is an animal lover, particularly cats) residence. It seems to be the only fair solution to ensure that the cats would be well taken care of, as can be seen in the excerpt below:

Saya sangat sayangkan Nenek. Sejak ibu bapa saya meninggal, Neneklah tempat saya menumpang kasih. Namun, saya juga sayangkan Awan Shiro. Saya tidak boleh memilih antara mereka berdua kerana mereka sangat penting dalam hidup saya. Aaargh... mengapalah saya diduga begini! (Mazny M. R., 2019: 86) [Translation] I did love Nenek (grandmother). Since my parents passed away, she was the one who tended me with love. I, however, did love Awan Shiro as well. I could not choose any as they were equally important in my life. Aaargh... I didn't deserved to be teased like this.

The fact that both Hiro and Adham have fallen in love with the cats really distracts them. This

has put Hiro into a conflict who does not really want to consider, but he equally loves Awan Shiro (his kitten) and his grandmother, yet he has to make a decision. In other words, he is dealing with an approach - avoidance competition. The decision to let Pak Daud and his wife keep the cats may ease his grandmother's pain, yet this too will part him with Awan Shiro. Furthermore, Hiro agrees with Adham that sooner or later Pak Daud's wife may change her mind and would want to keep Tompok, Awan Shiro, Jalur and Abu permanently.

A decision still has to be made and the novel later reveals that Hiro and Adham finally agree to send the cats to Pak Daud's house. This has helped Hiro's grandmother to recover from the illness. This too, however, comes along with a granted permission that the boys could gradually visit the cats and at the same, they are also acknowledged as the true owners of the cats. At first, the boys would want to believe that they have made a correct decision, only to be upset once they know that Mak Cik Yam has a tendency to keep the cats as her own. Since then, Hiro and Adham feel that they might lost the cats and Adham finally exposes his plan to take back Awan Shiro and Jalur from their guardians. The shared misery and anger can be seen in the excerpts below:

Malam itu, saya tidur dengan harapan agar bermimpi berjumpa Tompok dan anak-anaknya. Sayangnya saya tidak bermimpi apa-apa. Keesokan hari, saya cuba berkongsi tentang kerinduan itu dengan Adham. Saya mahu tahu apakah dia juga merindui kucing-kucing kami. (Mazny M. R. 2019: 95) [Translation] That night, I could only close my eyes with a hope that I would dream seeing Tompok and the kittens. Unfortunately, I did not. The next day, I would like to share the suffering with Adham. I wanted to know if he too longed for the cats.

Adham menjegilkan matanya memandang saya. "Kau ni memang lembik! Kita bukan buat salah pun. Jalur dan Awan itu kucing kita!" dia memarahi saya. Memang betul Jalur dan Awan Shiro itu kucing kami tetapi sudah diserahkan kepada Pak Daud. [Translation] Adham glared

at me. “You are really a coward! We do not do anything wrong. We own Jalur and Awan!” He scolded me. He was right to say that we owned Jalur and Awan Shiro, but now they were handed over already to Pak Daud.

The shared anger and misery of Hiro and Adham are caused by the fear that the cats would no longer belong to them. For them, Awan Shiro and Jalur are the sources of love, comfort and happiness that they have gathered since knowing and helping each other. Hence, it is also clear that they are facing an approach – avoidance competition again. Both Hiro and Adham know that to make sure that the cats would be well taken care of and at the same time ensuring the Hiro’s grandmother’s health, they have to let someone to be in charge of doing so. However, they also realise that the step taken is just a loose agreement, with a possibility that Mak Cik Yam one day might overrule it. In other words, Hiro and Adham would lose all the cats that they care for. Only after the incident of Adham kidnapping Awan Shiro and Jalur, his father and his uncle (who are searching for Adham everywhere) start to understand the love and care that the boy yearns.

CONCLUSION

Based on the accumulated discussions above, it is clear that the conflicts which surround the two main characters in the novel, Hiro and Adham, are unlikely to happen if there is no sudden change happen to any of them. However, it is also apparent from the very beginning that Hiro’s problem is a result of a sudden cultural shift, while Adham’s problem is psychological, an unfortunate one since his parents finally decide to live separately after a long run of an unhappy marriage. The death of Hiro’s parents and the divorce of Adham’s parents, turn to be great turning points on their young lives. In other words, they start to seek after love, comfort and happiness that are no longer secured for them. However, it is obviously clear too that as a boy who has been alienated, neither Hiro nor Adham is able to overcome the problems alone. Once bond

together, they seem to understand that they rely on each other to deal with every problem. The research shows that before they form the bonding, most of the time Hiro and Adham deal with avoidance – avoidance competitions, as they still try to adjust themselves to the new lives. Once the bonding is established, they boys have had better lives as they start to deal with more approach – avoidance competitions, which often favor them. The research also finds out that most of times these earlier conflicts happen due to the inability of adults to comprehend conflicts from the children’s perspectives. Such situations can be seen when Adham’s father’s and mother’s decisions fail to meet the son’s needs, causing discontent in him. Hiro is a more unfortunate between them, enjoying love and care from his grandparents and his aunty, yet he still needs someone of the same age to communicate and to express his feeling. The research also reveals that love and care ease the boys pain and help them to overcome conflicts in positive ways. Furthermore, besides yearning these from adults, Hiro and Adham later establish a more understanding of the concepts of love and care after they adopted a family of cats as their pets. The boys feed the Tompok, Awan Shiro, Jalur and Abu with good food and play with them after school, but once they know that the cats’ fur would perish Hiro’s grandmother’s health, they are willing to part with the pets, as long as she could recover from the illness. In other words, in their struggle for love, comfort and happiness, Hiro and Adham start to value those who care about them as well, since this will help them to avoid conflicts.

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