

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter delivers the explanation of several theories and data that will be used to analyze the problem. The writer applies the theories of phases of life which will focus on the elderhood, the phase experienced by Morrie in the novel.

In analyzing the problem, the writer uses sociological approach which will be encountered by social gerontology in which the writer will focus on the negative stereotypes of elderly and some theories of aging. Those stereotypes are mostly found in the novel in which Morrie's situations are not suitable to them. The writer only deals with the negative stereotypes because Morrie already has the the positive ones, as the old-aged person is believed to be wiser, more experienced and religious. The theories of aging are used to explain how Morrie, as an old-aged person, can possess those situations which are not suitable to the negative stereotypes labeled to him. The synopsis of the novel and the previous studies are also presented in this chapter.

2.1 Human's Phases of Life

It is important to understand about what the human's phases of life are, for it will be useful in analyzing the problem of this thesis. It is common for every human being to experience natural phases of life. The writer, therefore, will provide more detailed information on those phases of life in order to show the phase experienced by Morrie. The detailed information, consequently, will explain about the problems appear in that phase.

2.1.1 The Phases, Social Roles, and Lifecycle

Erik Erikson as cited in Cherry (2011, par.2) describes the psychosocial development that occurs throughout human's lifespan as shown in the chart below:

Table 2.1 Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development
(Source: Cherry, 2011, par.2)

Stage	Basic Conflict	Important Events	Outcome
Infancy (birth to 18 months)	Trust vs. Mistrust	Feeding	Children develop a sense of trust when caregivers provide reliability, care, and affection. A lack of this will lead to mistrust.
Early Childhood (2 to 3 years)	Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt	Toilet Training	Children need to develop a sense of personal control over physical skills and a sense of independence. Success leads to feelings of autonomy, failure results in feelings of shame and doubt.
Preschool (3 to 5 years)	Initiative vs. Guilt	Exploration	Children need to begin asserting control and power over the environment. Success in this stage leads to a sense of purpose. Children who try to exert too much power experience disapproval, resulting in a sense of guilt.
School Age (6 to 11 years)	Industry vs. Inferiority	School	Children need to cope with new social and academic demands. Success leads to a sense of competence, while failure results in feelings of inferiority.
Adolescence (12 to 18 years)	Identity vs. Role Confusion	Social Relationships	Teens need to develop a sense of self and personal identity. Success leads to an ability to stay true to yourself, while failure leads to role confusion and a weak sense of self.
Young Adulthood (19 to 40 years)	Intimacy vs. Isolation	Relationships	Young adults need to form intimate, loving relationships with other people. Success leads to strong relationships, while failure results in loneliness and isolation.
Middle Adulthood (40 to 65 years)	Generativity vs. Stagnation	Work and Parenthood	Adults need to create or nurture things that will outlast them, often by having children or creating a positive change that benefits other people. Success leads to feelings of usefulness and accomplishment, while failure results in shallow involvement in the world.
Maturity (65 to death)	Ego Integrity vs. Despair	Reflection on Life	Older adults need to look back on life and feel a sense of fulfillment. Success at this stage leads to feelings of wisdom, while failure results in regret, bitterness, and despair.

Erikson's stages of psychosocial development are generally applicable for analyzing the social status in society. Therefore, Table 2.1 is used to analyze Morrie's current phase and the problems encountered within that phase. Based on that chart of stages of psychosocial development, Morrie is on maturity stage since he is 79 years old. More detailed information about that stage will be explained in the following sub-chapters.

2.1.2 The Elder-hood

Being in elder-hood stage is a very complex and gradual process. The process of being in elder-hood presents some degree in all individuals. It is a journey to the maturity, as well as to the degeneration of the body. Since aging affects every part of the body, many different steps are involved and various types of reactions occur. According to Donion (1999, cited in Stanley and Beare, 1999, p. 12) when people are getting old, there are changes in their DNA, which can affect the functions of their body. In this phase, harmful genes are sometimes activated and the necessary ones are deactivated. A decrease in important body proteins like hormones and certain types of body cells is almost inevitable. Human being experiences some of the characteristic changes that take place in human bodies as time moves on and aging continues.

Along with those biological changes, there are psychosocial changes which influence old-aged people's behavior and dynamic

relationship with their social environment. Those changes include cognitive changes and also personality and social adaptation in old age. Hooyman and Kiyak (1993, p. 166) stated that one of the most important aspects of aging studied by many critics is cognitive functioning, including intelligence, learning, and memory.

Personality development does not take place only during childhood adolescence, and in the early adulthood, but it also continues to change and evolve into old age. Personality styles influence how a person adapts to the changes of aging process. According to psychosocial stages theory proposed by Erik Erikson as cited in Hooyman and Kiyak (1993, p. 191), the individual in the last stage of life is confronted with the task of ego eternity versus despair. He or she accepts the inevitability of mortality, achieves wisdoms and perspective, or despairs because he or she has not come to grip with death and lacks ego integrity. A major task associated with this last stage is to integrate the experiences of earlier stages and to realize that one's life has a meaning. Moreover, sex-typed also affects aging behavior, as cited in Hooyman and Kiyak (1993, p. 213), Neugarten and colleagues (1968) stated that men become more accepting of their nurturant and affiliative characteristics as they age, whereas women learn to accept their egocentric and aggressive impulses. The Kansas City studies, as cited in Hooyman and Kiyak (1993, p. 213), found that in aging process, people become more

different from each other. However, some changes in personality were shared by a majority of those studied: increased preoccupation with their inner lives, less extroversion, and a movement toward less impulsiveness and more sophisticated ego defenses. These show us that being in elderhood is not easy because of those biological and psychosocial changes. Morrie is also experiencing those difficulties. He suffers Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), a disease that affects the neurological system. There is no cure for this disease. Therefore, the only good things that can be done to face that disease are the change to say goodbye, educate people on the meaning of life, and give back to what so many have given you. Morrie prefers to take advantage from those changes as many as he can. To understand more about the elderly, there is a theory called social gerontology as explained in the following sub chapter

2.2 Social Gerontology

Maryam, et al (2008, p. 1) stated that etymologically, gerontology is derived from the word *Geros* which means elderly and *Logos* which means science. Thus, gerontology is a study which concerns about the aging factors. According to Kozier (1987) as cited in Maryam, et al (2008, p.1) gerontology is a study of aging aspects. Miller (1990), as cited in Maryam, et al (2008, p. 1), further elaborates that gerontology is a study of aging processes and the problems that may be experienced by the elderly. Depkes RI (2001), as cited in Maryam, et al (2008, p.1), completes that gerontology is a scientific

approach from many aspects of aging processes namely biological, psychological, social, economy, health, environment, etc. Tibbits (1960, p. 2) defines social gerontology as follows:

Social gerontology is concerned with changes in the social characteristics, circumstances, status, and roles of individuals over the second half of the life span, with the nature and processes of adjustment, personality development, and mental health in the ageing individual; and with the biological and psychobiological processes of ageing in so far as they influence social capacity and performance in later life. Secondly, social gerontology seeks to discover the role of the environment, culture, and social change as determinants of ageing and of the behavior and position of older people in society; the behavior of older people as groups and in the aggregate; and their impact on social values and institutions and on economic, political, and social organization, structure, and function.

The analysis of this thesis will focus on how an American old-aged person acts against the bad stereotypes labeled to him. This approach, therefore, which is concerned on changes in the social characteristics, circumstances, status, and roles of individuals, will be a perfect approach to analyze the problem. From the very large scope of this approach, the analysis of this thesis will focus on social psychological aspect of aging including the status, roles, and behavior of older people as they affect and are affected by social changes. The followings are the explanation on negative stereotypes and some theories of aging used as the foundation for the analysis.

2.2.1 Negative Stereotypes against the Elderly

People of all ages commonly hold negative attitudes about aging which are based on stereotypes against elderly. Kite and Johnson describe

stereotype of the elderly as cited by Hooyman and Kiyak (1993, p. 30) as follows:

Stereotypes are generalized and simplified beliefs about a group of people as objects and they may be either positive or negative. A positive stereotype is one that attributes favorable characteristics to all objects or persons in a particular category: for example "All old people are wise". Conversely, a negative stereotype ascribes unfavorable characteristics to all objects or persons in a certain category: for example: "All older people are cognitively impaired".

These generalizations are not always true, because they do not take into account the many variations within a group and because they indiscriminately had attributed the same characteristics to all the members. There are many stereotypes or myth-conceptions surround older people and the aging process. According to Sheiera Saul (1974) as cited in Maryam, et al (2008, p. 35) the stereotypes labeled to elderly are as follows:

1) Peaceful and Calm

Old-aged people are believed to have peaceful lives and to enjoy their hard work in their young age as if the difficulties had been passed.

2) Conservative and Retrogressive

Old-aged people are believed as not creative, anti-innovation, past oriented, childish, stubborn, and fussy.

3) Sick

Elderhood is seen as biological degenerative period when many diseases are easy to be suffered.

4) Senile

Old-aged people are believed that they are senile.

5) Lonely and Asexual

Old-aged people are believed to stop falling in love and feeling attracted to opposite sex anymore. So, they are regarded as lonely people and are assumed to be not sexually active anymore.

6) Unproductive

Old-aged people are believed to be no longer productive in economics aspects.

From those stereotypes explained before, there are some stereotypes which Morrie as an old-aged person has nothing close to those attitudes. They will be explained and discussed further in Chapter III.

2.2.2 Social Theories of Aging

In explaining Morrie's life situations against the negative stereotypes labeled to old-aged people, the writer refers to some theories of aging. These theories discuss how the process of aging works on old-aged people in giving them the power to struggle. Actually there are role, activity, continuity, disengagement, age stratification theory, etc. In this thesis, the writer only focuses to role, activity, and continuity theory since those theories are applicable to analyze the novel.

2.2.2.1 Role Theory

Neugarten and Havighurst (1985) as cited by Hooyman and Kiyak (1993, p.65) define role theory as follows: Individuals hold appropriateness norms of their own behavior at any particular age, so that “social clocks become internalized and age norms operate to keep people on the time track”. This theory shows that every human being has their own role based on his social clock. Those roles are not only the roles expected of people, but also the manner in which they are expected to play them. For example, a family’s expectations of a 32 years old mother are quite different from their expectation of her at age 62. Hooyman and Kiyak (1993, p. 65), states that how well individuals adjust to aging is assumed to depend on how well they accept the role changes typical of the later years. Morrie’s role has changed from his role since he was young. He was a professional teacher and then he is retired so he cannot continue his role as professional teacher anymore. However, he still follows the age norm to have role as a teacher of life to Mitch after his retirement from being a professional teacher. This theory is also in line with activity theory which explains how Morrie can be still active in his old age.

2.2.2.2 Activity Theory

Kart and Manart (1981) state that activity theory is related to role theory and has appeared implicitly in much gerontological research. The cornerstone of activity theory is a positive relationship between activity and life satisfaction; conversely, the greater the social role loss, the lower the satisfaction. The most successful aging, (adjustment) occurs for those persons who stay active and resist the consequences of changes that equate with losses (Howe, 1987, p. 2). Hooyman and Kiyak (1993, p. 67) further describe activity theory as a dominant theoretical perspective in social gerontology; to large extent, it is a common sense theory. It assumes that older people who are active will be more satisfied and better adjusted than less active elderly. This theory can explain why Morrie can struggle against the bad stereotypes labeled to old aged people, therefore, as we know, he is still socially and cognitively active, so he is satisfied and well adjusted. There is a supporting theory named continuity theory which explains the relation between the role and activity Morrie had in the young age and in the old age, as follows.

2.2.2.2 Continuity Theory

Neugarten, Havighurst, and Tobin (1968) define continuity theory as follows:

The aging person substitutes similar types of roles for lost ones, and continues to maintain typical ways of adapting to the environment in order to maintain inner psychological continuity as well as the outward continuity of social behavior and circumstances, (Hooyman and Kiyak, 1993, p. 71).

Further, Matcha (1997, p. 58) explains that this continuity theory addresses aging as an evolutionary, and dynamic process in which change is inevitable and necessary. This theory argues that people use internal and external continuity to maintain stability as a result of their ongoing experiences.

This theory is suitable to analyze Morrie's attitudes, as he lost his role as a professional teacher but still he continues being a teacher even it in informal context.

2.3 Synopsis

Tuesdays with Morrie is a fascinating description of an old man's battle with death. This book generates exceptionally deep thoughts about life and death. Throughout *Tuesdays with Morrie*, it can be seen the true value of life through Morrie Schwartz's lessons and philosophy of life.

The book presents us a true story of Morrie Schwartz, a Sociology professor at Brandeis University, and one of Morrie's favorite pupils, Mitch Albom. Mitch Albom is a sports news writer in Detroit. He finds himself without a job when the Detroit Free Press goes on strike. All of a sudden, Mitch catches an episode of Nightline showing his ex-professor, Morrie

Schwartz. Through this episode, Mitch discovers that Morrie is dying of ALS, or Lou Gehrig's Disease.

Knowing that Morrie is dying and because of his love and admiration for Morrie, Mitch comes to visit Morrie. That visit happens 16 years after Mitch's graduation from Brandeis University. Actually he promised to keep in touch with Morrie at the graduation ceremony, but he had not fulfilled that promise until the day he sees Morrie on television. At the first visit they talk about life in general and Morrie concludes that Mitch is unhappy with the way he has been living his life. Morrie says, Dying is only one thing to be sad over, living unhappily is something else.

On the first visit, Morrie has already shown his attitude which is not the same as any other old aged people. While other people think that old aged are not preferable, Morrie believes that in his old aged, he becomes an interesting person. Surely he will die, but through the dying process, he prefers to live happily. He also does not feel lonely at all, because he passes through that process surrounded by loving and caring soul.

After Mitch's first visit, Mitch flies to England to report Wimbledon. At that journey, he keeps on thinking about Morrie. This encourages him to call Morrie and schedule another visit. Morrie is very pleased that Mitch calls him. He invites Mitch to visit him the following Tuesday.

That is how the start to have a class on Tuesdays. Meeting on Tuesdays was a tradition since Mitch was a student of Brandeis University and

Morrie was his teacher. That tradition continues as regular Tuesdays visits to Morrie. They call it final classes.

On their final classes, they discuss several topics. The topics they discuss are the world, feeling sorry for your-self, regrets, death, family, emotions, the fear of aging, money, marriage, culture, forgiveness, and a perfect day. During the classes Morrie often shows his attitudes which are in contrast with the stereotypes labeled to old people, for example he is not lonely at all because he is surrounded by the family, relatives, and friends, he is not role less because he still teach Mitch like when he was younger, he is not senile since he can tell story and give explanation in details.

2.4 Previous Study

There are some studies related to this research, they are as follows:

- 1) Santiago's Success in Gaining Self Actualization in Ernest Hemingway *The Old Man and the Sea*

In his research, Kholis (2009) attempts to reveal how the old man can be self actualized as the result of the determination of his self concept. His research focuses on the tendency of the main character to fulfill one of their basic needs to be self actualized person based on his self concept as a fisherman. He uses multidisciplinary approaches which combine sociology and psychology. The difference between his research and my research is he focuses on the main character's success in gaining self actualization while my thesis focuses on how the main character's struggle against bad stereotypes labeled to him. Both

of our researches use social gerontology and the theories of aging which studied on the negative stereotypes of elderly.

2) The Different Attitude of the Main Characters toward Senility Depicted in the *Old Man and the Sea* and *Pak Tua yang Membaca Kisah Cinta*

In her research, Aini (2011) wants to reveal the different attitudes of the old man's characters in Ernest Hemingway's novella *The Old Man and the Sea* and Luis Sepulveda's novel *Pak Tua yang Membaca Kisah Cinta* have toward their senility. This thesis is different with my thesis, because it uses comparative literature since it compares the two different attitudes from the main characters of both novellas. However, one of the approaches she uses to analyze the novellas is the same as the approach in this thesis. Both theses use Social Gerontology. While this thesis focuses on the theories of aging, Aini's thesis uses Erik Erikson's stage of psychological development: Ego Eternity versus Despair.