



SNAP TO READ

THE CHICKLIT OR TEENLIT: A SYMBOL OF TEENAGERS MOVEMENT IN INDONESIA'S LITERATURE

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Abstract:

One of the genres of literature which becomes the trending topic in Indonesia is Chicklit or Teenlit. It reveals about young women and their life in many aspects. Mostly the arise of the new writers supported by the media, both electronic or printed, which become the tool to make them famous. Media's power has taken a part to create their existence, mostly they are young generations in Indonesia; they also contribute the growth of the creative industry. They just became the new public figures like actress or actors who dominate the news in media. This paper is intended to analyze the significant role of media in creating the young new writers in Indonesia, especially one outstanding name, Debbie Widjaja. She has written four novels categorized as Teenlit. The qualitative method, the media, and society's theory will be used to analyze this research. The results of this study showed the media's role give the important part in creating the new public figures in Indonesia. The media has a strong power to embody someone's dream to be true in a good and potential way. Media construct people's life from zero to be hero. By having this profession, as a young, fresh, and prospective writer, she has inspired many teenagers in Indonesia. Since there isn't any strict limitations or ideal criteria to produce Teenlit, everybody who fulfilled the publisher's criteria can publish their writings. This becomes the new movement for young generations in Indonesia to have a career in literature world.

Keywords: *Chicklit, Indonesia literature, movement, symbol, teenlit, teenagers*

A literature was named as popular because of the themes, the way of presenting the language's technique, and the writing follows a common pattern that was popular with the public audience, including in Indonesia. Teenlit does not only entertain, but also can be enjoyed as a work of art. Teenlit in the form of the novel is not only seen as a barometer of social development, culture, and economy of the people, but also for the world's society. Teenlit's phenomenon is one marker of a resurgence of popular literature in the Indonesia's literary which was dormant for a while (Riana, 2016). The presence of teenlit novels in Indonesia's literature can affect the interests and reading culture for the adolescents in Indonesia. Those who do not love reading 'the real literature' tend to choose teenlit. It is because of the language and themes used are lighter and easier to digest, so they are easier to understand what is conveyed by the author (Wahyudi, 2012).

On the development, teenlit has created its own world. Starting from the readers, publishers, printing company until spawned communities of loyal fans. With the trend of creating teenlit also trigger the emergence of young writers who are creative and energetic. Teenlit refers to the work of young writers who cater to the teens readers, since teenlit has the abbreviation of teen literature. The presentation that resembles the writing of the diary and the story and language selection are lightweight and easy to understand to make a lot of teenagers in love. In Teenlit's novel, teenagers become the central. The situation takes place in school, talks about friendships with a group or in terms of teen-called 'gang', presents luxury lifestyle and glamor, romance, until the juvenile delinquency are identical in the teenlit's novels.

The developments such as renewal of the genre can never be circumvented in Indonesia's literature. Good literary form of novels, short stories, poems and others will continue to experience renewal. Literature itself must be able to position itself in accordance with the existing situation.

Teenlit or young adult novels is one genre that was liked by many people. Teenlit novels began to bloom in Indonesia since the 2000s. Teenlit novel itself was initially just a teen novel translation of West teen novels. Teenlit which is now rampant in America, Australia, and spread in Indonesia, is actually a contemporary tales that successfully combines the two needs, the needs of the community will mirror themselves and the society needs 'dream world'. Meanwhile the serious short stories can be said meet the needs of 'emotional and intellectual recreation' as well as 'reflection' readers.

The emergence of teenlit's novels which were preferred by teenagers and written by teens has given a new color to the development of Indonesian literature. The emersion of teenlit was also accompanied with the pros and cons of various people. The contradiction that arise due to assume the style of language used in teenlit not use the Indonesian language, the content is also considered too light and weightless, and the lifestyles that tend to lead to the cultures of western's lifestyle. Apart from the rise counter to the existence of teenlit's novels, it should still be given the support to young writers who already spawned their work. Only the necessary updates to the writings of teenlit's novels to remain comfortably read by teenagers, but also in accordance with the rules of Indonesian literature.

Teenlit has evolved since in the 1970s in Indonesia, such as the first novel *Ali Topan Anak Jalanan* by Teguh Esha and *Roman Picisan* by Eddy Iskandar. Some Indonesia literature observers say that teenlit is rooted from the literary development of the West. The birth of a new genre called teenlit was pioneered by *Bridget Jone's Diary* novel written by Helen Fielding (Iriana, 2016). The presence of teenlit in the literary treasures of Indonesia cannot be separated from the polemics or controversy. Some have argued for the existence and some sued. The first party argues that teenlit is a natural development for freedom of expression which is increasingly guaranteed by the Indonesian government after the reform. Meanwhile, both parties looked at teenlit 'not literature'. The assumption that teenlitis too light and not lifting things that are crucial to the community is one form of a lawsuit against

teenlit. Additionally, teenlite is considered damaging to the slang language used in it. The existence of Indonesian was impressed unpatterned well in the teenlit. In terms of content, teenlite is accused of being a genre that consider Western culture such as kissing with the opposite sex, talking about sex, parties is a natural thing applied. The style of colorful life imitate Western styles was also applied. So the short skirts and tight clothes contributed to the trend of today.

THE EXISTENCE OF INDONESIA CHICKLIT AND TEENLIT

Chiklit stands for Chick literature, which means the literature which tells the story of a young woman. Chiklit also defined as works of popular literature that tells about the daily life of the city as well as a single woman and her modern pattern thought. The light presentment, entertaining, and not formal become its trademark. Chiklit was directed at mature girls markets aged 17-35 years, while teenlit was directed at groups of younger women that is Junior and Senior High School students (Riana, 2016; Kurnia, 2016).

The burgeoning of teenlit phenomenon cannot be separated from the presence of teenagers, both the existence of the world of adolescence as setting the story nor the nature of adolescents as a reader or consumer or where the teenager as the author. Associated with the setting of the story, the novel revolves around the teenagers' world, especially teenage girls (Kusmarwanti, 2005). Thus the intended of the target audience is young women. By reading the teenlit novels, they are finding their world. Psychologically, in adolescence they began to move away from their parents and get closer to the social group, namely fellow teens (Hurlock, 1994). Accepted by the social group becomes a great hope for the youth. Through the world in the story of teenlit, teenager indirectly feel finding a social group that they are looking for. Here they establish their identity. One way to establish this identity is to find a model of those in the vicinity.

This novel's genre is also discussed so often and received overwhelming response from their fans. As the evidence of "teenlit"

phenomena could be printed in many times in Indonesia. For example, a novel entitled *Dealova* written by Dyan Nuranindya sold 10 thousand copies in just one month (Kurnia, 2016). And *Dealova* has also been made into a movie. Teenlit's novel later became Best Seller overrun Indonesian teenagers because of its light theme, characterized by a front cover of teenlit that has designed full color (mostly with pastels). The styles has vector art and titles were teenagers's favourit.

According to Denny Indra S. (2008), the editor from Gagas Media's publisher, teenlit's novels become popular because it is not burdened with many complicated missions. "There is no complex structure, profound reflection, or ideas to be conveyed". Chicklit and teenlit are more likely diary used as a novel. Another opinion is from Siska Yuanita, Gramedia's copy editor, a famous publisher name in Indonesia are known to spawn many chicklits that became Best Seller about teenlit novels. According to Siska, the success of chicklit or teenlit is not dependent on the weight or light of the ideas to be conveyed. "All is related with how the writers could deliver the message to the readers". The heavy idea written by the writer if can be delivered poppy, it will be lighter. "Whatever it is, teenlit has become a new phenomenon among teenagers in Indonesia."

The effect of the rising of many publishers that publish teenlit's novels impact on the presence of reading raises a number of young writers in Indonesia. The countless writers teenagers exist now. Both of the children or teenagers have enlivened the world of literacy. This of course becomes good news that needs to be appreciated. Their presence in the realm of literacy's world was admirable, because they contribute to society and future generations to be able to read, in order to reduce the number of illiterates. However, the emergence of teenlit's novel and the writer recognized by other authors and books' practitioners will issue a subtle competition. It can be seen from the number of writers who are more and more. Moreover, the theme is similar which is about love and intricacies of teenage promiscuity.

According to Nadia (Annida, 2007), one of the authors of young adult

novels in Indonesia, the majority of teenlit novels was describing teenage life and its problems, but only as a mere snapshot. They do not provide the educational solutions. In fact, according to Nadia, a work function should be more than just an entertaining reading. But also there are values offered as well as contribute apparent in adolescents. Nadia has not seen no strong trace of authorship which has the echo from the author themselves. The author of teenlit's novels must improve the content of their writing if they want to become a serious writer.

We should remember that a writing tends to be entertaining generally will not last long. Especially those do not have value in. No wonder if the genre teenlit and chiklit in one time will be eroded by time and replaced with another genre of writing, unlike the serious nature of literature. Therefore, teenlit or chiklit must be transformed to defend its existence. Perhaps it is time to bring other aspects, such as the substances of cultural shift to urban agrarian society. In terms of content, the novel tells the story of teen romance, friendship, hostility, or adventure. While the language used is slang or language typical of city teens. Teenlit is as part of a teen novel presenting stories of city teenagers in schools, especially for junior high to high school.

Behind the controversy of teenlite, its content concerned with adolescent directly which caused it continues to grow. Then it was followed with the other teenlit with different styles. Everything becomes a representation of life today's teenagers. The adolescents are being the main readers of this genre as representative of teenage life in the present era naturally. The main discussion was written by many writers of teenlite is about teenage life in the real world and in the author's world. Some models tell how teenagers dress that tends luxurious and follow the latest trends, both of shirts, pants, shoes, bags, and even all the accessories, those considered contrary to the values espoused by adults. For example: young people who are wearing shorts, tank tops or miniskirts. Those style were contrary to the values of decency prevailing in Indonesia which are Moslem as the majority and also cling to the East culture.

DEBBIE WIDJAJA: A YOUNG POTENTIAL INDONESIAN WRITER

One of the famous teenlit novelists in Indonesia which has many fans is Debbie Widjaja. She was born in Jakarta, May 15, 1989. Her first debut began in 2005 until now. Some of her novels are categorized Teenlit already produced, they are *Not Just a Fairy Tale* (2005), *Honey Money* (2010), *Follow @MerryRyana* (2013), and *Meters per Second* (2013). Debbie's teenlit novels as the object of the discussion of this paper are fulfilled the criteria of teenlit's novel in some aspects. Those are the teenagers' lifestyle, the language is simple and light, the theme is not complicated and entertaining the readers in the level of teenagers. Among the four novels of Widjaja, *Honey Money* is taken as the object of the discussion to make the analysis is focussed on one novel.

The actors behind Widjaja's motivation to choose a profession as a writer is due to her passion for writing since she was 6 years old. Later, after she was studying in Psychology, Widjaja knows the term of Catharsis. Catharsis means pouring hidden emotion, so she could decide the storyline by her own style. Some of the stories she wrote came from her own experience when she broken heart or had happy moment in her life. One interesting thing when Widjaja did not intend to make the profession of writing as the sole job is because she "feel going to run out of ideas and inspiration if the whole day she had to write continuously. I would rather choose a normal job, to met a lot of people and meet the conflict in the office. Then she starts to write at night" (Widjaja, 2015).

Like other writers, Widjaja (2015) also gets a lot of inspirations when hanging with friends, waiting for the bus, and looking at the man who is being admired. While the biggest challenge being a writer for her is self-defeating laziness. Writing is related to self-management, which requires the person who decided to become a writer for the discipline and challenge themselves to write on. The spirit to keep developing her talent in writing by keep producing the new novels are really good to influence many other young generations in

Indonesia. As we know that teenagers are easily contaminated by bad impacts especially the lifestyle, way of thinking and also the concept of life, so the need the public figure who can inspire them to do the good things. And the teenagers could have the good roles models especially from the potential young writers which are really needed to form teenagers's idea and dreams.

The story in Money Honey Widjaja's work is about a girl named Prity Diana who was called by Dee. She wanted to get a rich lover because she was tired of dating with a regular teenage boy. Dee is interested in his friend's cousin named Rendy Alexander at a birthday party because she saw Rendy's appearance is like a rich man, graduating from famous high school, studying in great university, and having a luxurious car. However it turns out when she finally knew that Rendy is a materialistic man who just likes to take advantage of his lover. At the end of the story, Dee is then back on Stefan, an ordinary man who has long put her heart. The conflict which is built inside this teenlit is very typical teenager, revolves around the theme of romance, teenagers' dreams with all the joys and sorrows. It is of course when compared with the literary works of serious or very smelly literature, will not be able to meet that category.

MEDIA'S ROLE IN FORMING THE TEENLIT'S WRITER IN INDONESIA

The media and society's theory from McQuail (2010) describes the power of the media to bring the opinions, tastes, and choices of society. One of them relates to the power of large publishers who have full power to produce millions of copies of the teenlit's novels as the works of young Indonesia writers, and then conduct a campaign on a large scale even in the early appearance of many observers literature to assess the work of the teenlit's author not have the high value of literature. But, it is because these large publishers have large capital, so that they can carry out widespread publicity.

Some aspects of the power of the mass media is to provide information

quickly and widely. The presence of the author of Teenlit novels which in the beginning was nobody, but with the power of large publishers such as Gramedia Asri Media in Indonesia of course be easily promote the novelist of teenlit incorporated in its production. Gramedia Asri Media is a subsidiary of Kompas Gramedia bookstore providing a link with the name of Gramedia Bookstore in several cities in Indonesia and Malaysia. The company was founded on February 2, 1970 with preceded by a small bookstore measuring 25 square meters in area of West Jakarta, and now has grown to more than 50 bookstores scattered throughout Indonesia. The company is working with book publishers both at home and abroad. From the group of its own business, a supplier to them is Gramedia Bookstore Gramedia Pustaka Utama, Elex Media Komputindo, Gramedia Widya Means, Bhuana Popular Science, and Gramedia Magazine, while overseas eg Prentice Hall, McGraw Hill, Addison Wasley and many others.

Kompas Gramedia Indonesia abbreviated KG is a company engaged in the mass media was established in August 17, 1963, originated from the publication of Essence magazine by P.K Ojong and Oetama. The presence of Kompas Gramedia is inseparable from the long history to achieve the lofty ideals in order to educate the nation. Today, the Kompas Gramedia already has subsidiaries or business units that varied from print and online media, bookstores, printing, publishing, radio, hotels, educational institutions, cultural heralds, the event organizer, the television station to university. In 2005, the company employs 22,000 employees spread across Indonesia.

The other aspect is the media is able to provide status and legitimacy. To measure a new author, Debbie Widjaja, certainly not as popular as the big-name writer of Indonesia's literary world, Pramoedya Ananta Tour who is known to be very productive writer with his remarkable works, even for several times nominated for the Nobel Prize winners for literature category. However, once again the power of the media is fronted by large publishers are able to create status and legitimacy to teenlit young writers as they are very brilliant writers in the works produced. Next, further aspect is when

the media defines reality.

Reality in this case is when a publisher through the works produced by authors of teenlit novels are able to influence the lifestyle and mindset of their loyal readers and then actively become a follower of the writers they admire. Next, the aspects of the power of mass media is able to influence the fans toward the authors' behavior and either intentionally or unintentionally. This is related to issues that were mentioned previously. How lifestyle and thoughts of the characters in the teenlit's novel written by Debbie Widjaja Honey Money is able to influence the mindset and behavior of loyal readers are other impacts that could arise. Lastly, the media also felt able to persuade the opinions and beliefs of the teenlit's readers most of whom are teenagers whose mindset is mostly still unstable. It was worried when they read the works of teenlit's novels and then feeling inferior and only highlight the negative side of the force lives of young people who tend to prefer instant thought or lifestyle will inevitably affect the behavior and way of thinking.

As expressed by McQuail in *Mass Communication Theory* (2010), the media is in the midst of society is seen as an important institution in society. Some of the underlying reasons is because: first, the media is rapidly changing and growing industry, which creates jobs, goods and services, as well as other related industries turn. Media is also a separate industry that has rules and norms that connect the institution with the community and other social institutions. Media is also a source of strength, a means of control, management, and innovation in the community that can be utilized in lieu of force or other resources. This is in line with the emergence of writers' Teenlit novels in Indonesia that directly open the job opportunities for the growth of young talented writers and also absorb the workers who work in the publishing business.

Media is also capable as an association that displays the events of people's lives, in both small and large scale, nationally and internationally. From these events became an idea of the Teenlit's authors as outlined in various stories in their novels. The media also plays a role in developing the

cultural values or traditions, such as ordinances, fashion, lifestyle, fashion, and norms prevailing in a region. The stories were summarized in a series of Teenlit's novels which consist of the lifestyle's tendency of teenagers today. They only want all luxury and glamorous things, or sometimes just revolve around romance in the style of a young child as a typical of a genre of popular literature, which is a kind of literature that is categorized as literary entertainment and commercial. It is often called as the category of "commercial entertainment and" it concerns with the "people's tastes a lot" or "popular taste". Pop literature in the Western tends to have the innovative new literature, experimental - not only in terms of style, the manipulation of language, and the exploration of the theme as freely as possible - even if it is possible for a commercial. As the contrary with the literature that is "the real literature" or called with "the serious literature", this serious literature can also be innovative and experimental, will not be venturing something which is already similar to the playful (Kayam in Nurgiyantoro, 2005).

The media also has become the dominant source, not only for the individual to obtain a description and image of social reality, but also for the community and the group collectively. Media also presents the values and normative judgments mixed with news and entertainment. Teenlit's novels as the work of Indonesia's young generation are considered to provide an understanding of the rise of Indonesian literature with the emergence of young writers.

CONCLUSION

Through the power of the media in this case the big publishers such as Gramedia in Indonesia could become a platform for the growth of the spirit to write for the young generation of Indonesia. The works produced Teenlit's novels are able to brighten the world of Indonesian literature. That is what to say that the emergence of talented young writers because it is caused by the power of the media who publish their works so well known by the public. They are from nobody's figure becomes somebody in the writing's world. The

media have the role that was so strong and powerful in influencing human. People sometimes are so dependent on media, mass media, electronics, and now social media in their daily lives. The media seems to be the determining factor of human life. The effects of the media are very real and obvious, so the appearance of the teenlit's writers also have a positive impact with the emergence of followers who follow in the footsteps of the senior.

The emergence of some talented young writers with their masterpiece, teenlit novels, becomes the symbol of new movement in Indonesia's literature. The young writers initiation and willingness to keep on writing their novels also contribute to the growth of literature's world. Even the pros and cons arose, but still it can't be denied their role to take a part in some aspects of other people's life such as in giving the job for many employees in publishing company. They are already becoming the new public figures like the actor or actress because of their writings.

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