

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF LENA HALOWAY'S EXPERIENCE IN LAUREN OLIVER'S *DELIRIUM* NOVEL

Epifani Putri Pitaloka, M. Natsir, Nita Maya Valiantien
Department of English Literature, Faculty of Cultural Sciences
University of Mulawarman
Email: epifanipp@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This research reports a phenomenological analysis in Lena Haloway's experience following the traumatic events. Phenomenology describes the meaning of experience as the essence of a phenomenon, and explores the perspective to learn from the experience of others. It gives reflection to the issues important to the research. *Delirium* novel portrays the character of Lena Haloway who has experienced tremendous amount of loss in her life and she also has experienced the struggle living under the totalitarian government that seems to dictate her decisions. That traumatic experience affects her perspective of the world she lives in. This research uses qualitative-descriptive method and purposes to examine the phenomenological concepts of Lena Haloway's experiences and how they are affects her perspective represents in *Delirium* novel by using Husserl's Phenomenology and Heidegger's Hermeneutic theories. The result reveals that Lena experienced all five phenomenological concepts of experience; those are intentionality, noema, noesis, intersubjectivity, and intuition. It also shows that those experiences affect her perspective. All the results represent through Lena's narration, actions, and feelings as the first person narrator.

Key words: phenomenology, hermeneutic, experience, affect, perspective

ABSTRAK

*Penelitian ini melaporkan analisis fenomenologis dalam pengalaman Lena Haloway setelah mengalami peristiwa traumatis. Fenomenologi menggambarkan makna pengalaman sebagai esensi dari suatu fenomena dan menggali perspektif untuk belajar dari pengalaman orang lain. Ini memberikan gambaran pada masalah penting untuk penelitian ini. Novel *Delirium* menggambarkan karakter bernama Lena Haloway yang mengalami banyak kehilangan dalam hidupnya dan ia juga mengalami sulitnya hidup di bawah pemerintahan totaliter yang mengatur keputusannya. Pengalaman traumatis tersebut memengaruhi perspektifnya terhadap dunia yang ia tinggali. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif-deskriptif dan bertujuan untuk mengkaji konsep fenomenologi dalam pengalaman Lena Haloway dan bagaimana pengalaman tersebut memengaruhi perspektifnya tentang hidup yang tergambar*

dalam novel *Delirium* dengan menggunakan teori fenomenologi oleh Husserl dan teori hermeneutika oleh Heidegger. Hasil mengungkapkan bahwa Lena mengalami kelima konsep fenomenologi, yaitu kesengajaan, noema, noesis, intersubyektivitas, dan intuisi. Hal tersebut juga menunjukkan bahwa pengalaman tersebut telah memengaruhi perspektifnya. Data dikumpulkan melalui narasi, tindakan, dan perasaan Lena dalam sudut pandang orang pertama.

Kata kunci: fenomenologi, hermeneutika, pengalaman, pengaruh, perspektif

A. INTRODUCTION

Experience is the primary subjects of various subfields of philosophy, particularly in phenomenology. The recent interest in philosophy of experience approaches to literature has brought two linked strands of the contemporary debate that concern on the difference between engaging with real and with fictional experiences. Therefore it can be understood that literature and phenomenology share the ideas about experiences through language, literary devices, and imagery. Research involves the detailed study of direct investigation and description of phenomena as consciously experienced to describe the meaning of experience, both in terms of what was experienced and how it was experienced, to require the understanding of the experiences of others to gather new perspective about particular phenomenon. And it can have extensive implications for literary criticism because of its own hermeneutic nature. With this focus on experiences and how it is lived, the main purposes of phenomenological hermeneutic research are to seek reality from individuals' narratives of their experiences and feelings, and to produce in-depth descriptions of the phenomenon (Cilesiz 12).

One of the literary works that portrays the experience of every emotion that can surround someone who lives in a dystopian world is *Delirium* novel. It tells about a society that the totalitarian government has put up borders in efforts to keep everyone safe. Strict and safely regulated environment portrayed after the government published that love is a type of mental disorder that affects the part of the brain that allows human to make rational decisions and that is invariably fatal. The cure, or procedure, is given at the age of 18 and required for all citizens to ensure that this "disease" does not "kill" population, and turn them into unfeeling mediocrities who feel no happiness, no sadness, and no living their lives.

What is more, the main heroine, Lena Haloway has deep feelings of anxiety and trauma that are the results of losses her family and friend because of the love disease, and also because of the constant fear living under the strict obligations. Over the course of this novel, Lena is exposed to a new perspective on the world she lives in which love and feelings toward others are viewed as frightening and dangerous. She is simultaneously concerned by her emotional experience until the information about her past starts to unravel and she learns to not blindly trust the government. She begins to see how her perception of love has been manipulated by society and changes her perspective that love is not destruction but rather something beautiful.

From the description above, this research aims at comprehending about more overview that can be explored from the novel with phenomenological concepts inside. Through that, the researcher beholds that experience has power to influence someone's perspective of life.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Character and Characterisation

Character is people who are appeared in a narrative prose or novel and it is interpreted by the readers as a person who has moral quality and certain tendency such as being expressed in what they say and what they do (Abrams 76). In addition, characters in particular work are generally built to explore certain aspects of human experience.

Character is defined as a verbal representation of human being; through characterisation such as action, speech, description and commentary, authors portrayed characters that worth caring about, rooting for, or even love (Eagleton 2). Through the characterisation, the readers could see the true nature of the characters. How the reflection of the characters to the other characters and how the characters act, react, or say to one another.

2. Point of View

There is an inseparable relationship between characterisation and point of view. Point of view is one of some ways to know the characterisation of a character in an indirect way. According to Griffith, point of view is the authors' relationship to their fictional world, especially to the minds of the characters. Another way putting this is to define point of view as the position from which the story is told (56). The thought and opinion that are revealed in point of view could be used to gain the information of the characters' real nature. There are some point of view according to Griffith such as first person, omniscient, limited omniscient and objective point of view (57).

3. Phenomenology

According to Husserl, an epistemology of phenomenology comes from Greek words that are *phaenomenon* and *logos*; *phaenomenon* from *phaenestai* which means appear or show, while, *logos* means words, utterance, ration, and consideration (144). Apparently Husserl chose this word due to its inherent nature which refers to the structure of human experience as they present themselves to consciousness (Dreyfus and Wrathall 16).

Husserl argues, we can be certain of how they appear to us immediately in consciousness, whether the actual thing we are experiencing is an illusion or not. Objects can be regarded not as things in themselves but as things posited, or 'intended', by consciousness. All consciousness is consciousness of something: in thinking, I am aware that my thought is 'pointing towards' some object. The act of thinking and the object of thought are internally related, mutually dependent (Eagleton 48). There are five concepts of phenomenology according to Husserl, those are explained below:

a. Intentionality

It refers to doing something deliberate. The intentional act mode of thought is the particular kind of mental event that it is, of the nature of thought to be directed toward or about objects (Husserl 34).

b. Noema

It is the meaning of an act and considered as belonging to thinking and thoughts. Noema stands for the object of experience or content, judgement regarding the object, reflections of the perceptions and feelings, and memories (Husserl 33).

c. Noesis

It is meaning giving stratum of experience. Noesis is the action of experience, such as perceiving, feelings, thinking, remembering, or judging (Husserl 35).

d. Intersubjectivity

From a first-person point of view, intersubjectivity comes in when we undergo acts of 'empathy'. It is an empathic experience; it occurs in the course of our conscious attribution of intentional acts to the other subjects (Husserl 142).

e. Intuition

It is an act that presupposes a prior act of fulfilment, a prior cognitive awareness of the world, which provides the point of the categorical act. Intuition is typically experienced as a deliberate intentional perceptual intuition that was only implicit in the straightforward perceptual intuition (Husserl 791).

4. Hermeneutic

In contemporary times, hermeneutic has also been concerned with the interpretation and understanding human action. In its broadest sense, describes the interpretation of meanings—explication, analysis, commentary (E.D. Hirsch, JR 19). Like phenomenology, Heidegger's hermeneutic is concerned with the life world or human experience as it is lived. The focus is toward illuminating details and seemingly trivial aspects within experience that must be taken for granted in our lives, with a goal of creating meaning and achieving a sense of understanding (Wilson & Hutchinson 263).

C. RESEARCH METHOD

1. Research Design

In this research, the researcher conducts a qualitative research by using library research. Qualitative research is a research method that uses verbal data and there are no numeric data as the basic analysis in solving the research problem (Alasuutari 13). The act of interpreting which turns out to be the main key of doing qualitative research is based on the idea that the view of the world varied according to its eyes (Kielmann 7). In collecting the data, the researcher uses library research to obtain the data and information through some books, theses, and journals. This research deals with descriptive ways to analyse the data. Descriptive method aims on examine a phenomenon that occurs at the specific place and time (Lans 1).

2. Data and Data Source

This research uses *Delirium* novel written by Lauren Oliver as the main source of data. The secondary data of this research are review of previous studies,

journals, articles, and theories from experts that support this research. Furthermore, the data in this research consist of narration, dialogue, action are represented through words, sentences, paragraphs, and dialogues throughout the novel that contain the description of the experience of Lena Haloway.

3. Data Collection

There are some steps to provide the data needed in this study. First, the researcher reads *Delirium* novel repeatedly to gain deep understanding about the plot, the characters, and the problem of the story. After that, the researcher writes notes to gain clear description about Lena Haloway's experience, as the object of analysis. Then, the researcher classified the text that has correlation with the purposes of the research. The last step is collecting some related articles, journals, and books for analysing the data and also some previous research studies for references.

4. Data Analysis

According to Sugiyono, there are three activities to analyse data in descriptive qualitative research, those are data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (245). Data reduction means the process of selecting, identifying, classifying, and coding the data that are considered important. Data display refers to show data that have been reduced in the form of pattern. For the last process is, the researcher makes conclusion that can be evidence by validity and consistency from the data display. As with all data, analysis, and interpretation are required to bring order and understanding (Ellen and Marcus 1).

5. Triangulation

In order to verify the research result, the researcher applies theoretical and data triangulation to get the trustworthiness of the research. The theoretical triangulation in this research denotes in order to analyse Lena Haloway's experience in *Delirium* novel by Lauren Oliver, the researcher uses the theory of Phenomenology by Edmund Husserl and the theory of Hermeneutic by Martin Heidegger as the supporting theory, meanwhile the data triangulation are primary and secondary data.

D. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Findings

a. Intentionality

Intentional experience has the essential characteristic of consciousness whereby it is conscious of something. In the novel portrays that the president declares love as a disease (*amor deliria nervosa*). The rule says when people turn to eighteen; they undergo operations which destroy the virus. Lena is ninety five days away from being cured, and she thinks she will be safe once she is freed from the feeling of love. Through Lena's thought, intentionality represents when she counts down to the days she has the procedure scheduled, that she cannot wait for it, and she is not afraid of it as quoted below:

I don't like to think that I'm still walking around with the disease running through my blood. **Sometimes I swear I can feel it** writhing in my veins like something spoiled, like sour milk. **It makes me feel**

dirty. It reminds me of children throwing tantrums. **It reminds me** of resistance, of diseased girls dragging their nails on the pavement, tearing out their hair, their mouths dripping spit. **And of course it reminds me of my mother** (2).

The quotation above portrays Lena's intentional experience toward the love disease. She surely thinks that one of the reasons love is so dangerous, because it affects people's minds so that they cannot think clearly. She has seen countless uncured, especially her mother, so rack and ravage by love that they would kill themselves than be without love.

b. Noema

Noematic experiences have the essential characteristic of the intended object. Lena tells Alex the story about her late mother who used to bring her to the beach when she was little. Through Lena utterance, noema represents when she tells Alex about her childhood.

“Except in our games they weren't diseased at all, or destroyed, or horrible. **They were beautiful and peaceful, and built of glass and light and things**” (184).

The quotation above represents noema when she consciously reminisce her childhood. Consciousness is always awareness of something. It could be seen through Lena's thought of her memories. Those memories are the intended object and have meaning of beautiful, peaceful, and joyful which is given to her experience of a happy childhood.

c. Noesis

Noetic experience gives a particular sense in thinking, in judging or perceiving, loving or hating, accepting or rejecting, etc. In the novel portrays that Lena always considers being very careful not to let herself give in to any feelings to Alex because it is dangerous. But after they get along really well, she had the courage to opens up. And that is when Alex confessed that he feels something toward her. Noesis portrays through Lena's feeling when she is thinking about Alex confession.

For me, the idea—the fact of it, the fact that he even noticed and thought about me for more than one second—is **huge and overwhelming, makes my legs go tingly and my hands feel numb** (169).

The quotation above represents noetic experience when she knows that long before they get closer, Alex notices her for a while. One time, Alex leaves a note in Lena's favourite place. It only says hi and a smiley face, and his name but then Lena stops coming to that place. Noesis shows through the overwhelming feeling when she keeps repeating in her mind that Alex notices her and leaves a note for her.

d. Intersubjectivity

Intersubjective experience comes in the course of which we put ourselves into the other one's shoes. After Lena finds out that her mother is still alive, it is impossible to contemplate going on with her life. She cannot see her aunt, her sister, and the other cures the way before. Intersubjectivity portrays when she feels the numbness, the feeling of separation like every cured had experienced all the time.

They say the cure is about happiness, but **I understand now that it isn't, and it never was**. It's about fear: fear of pain, fear of hurt, fear, fear, fear—a blind animal existence, bumping between walls, shuffling between ever-narrowing hallways, terrified and dull and stupid (453).

After Lena knows that her mother is alive out there, she starts to understand from her mother side. After all of this time, her mother always tries to make Lena see that the whole point of living is to find the thing that matter, and hold on to them, and fight for them, and refuse to let them go. The cure will only destroy that desire. She understands now, when she looks at the cures that the cure does not heal them but turn them into unfeeling human being.

e. **Intuition**

Intuitive experience refers to cases where it resembles sense expresses one's immediate cognitive relationship to the object of knowledge. Back then Lena thinks that was the beauty of the cure, and all of the rules are for the greater good. But after she experienced the feeling of affection, she knows the truth. Intuition portrays through Lena's narration about her past experience.

Take it from me: If you hear the past speaking to you, feel it tugging at your back and running its fingers up your spine, **the best thing to do—the only thing—is run** (210).

Quotation above represents intuitive experience when Lena remembers her traumatic experience in the past. Before, she was so lost and after that she forgets what she has lost. To think that the past has something to tell; that she should listen, stoop down low to hear its voice breathed up from the ground, from the dead places, to think there is something in it for her, something to understand or make sense of. Her senses tell her that the past is nothing but a weight, and the best thing she could do is let it behind her.

f. **Experience that Affects Lena Haloway**

Personal experience plays a key role in affective processing, as affective responses are essentially formed through learning and experience. In the novel portrays when the whole Lena's world changes, she wishes she could go back to how things were before. If only she never meets Alex, she could never feel this kind of pain. She wonders what they learned about the uncureds is accurate. She always has been afraid, too scared to take any chances, but the feeling of frightened living in a world without Alex has affected her. It is portrayed through her thought.

Love, the deadliest of all deadly things: It kills you both when you have it and when you don't. But that isn't it exactly. The condemner and the condemned. The executioner; the blade; the last-minute reprieve; the gasping breath and the rolling sky above you and the *thank you, thank you, thank you, God. Love: It will kill you and save you, both* (467).

Lena has always been taught that love is a disease. They say that in the old days, love drove people to madness, and also tells stories of those who died because of love lost or never found one. Being with Alex has affected her perspective about love, she would not want to not experience it because in the end love is an experience that defines them and makes them stronger. She eventually sees the cure in sickness and sacrifice.

E. CONCLUSION

After analysing the phenomenology concepts of experience and how they are represented, it can be concluded that there is phenomenological discourse in *Delirium* novel. Lena Haloway experienced all five phenomenological concepts of experience such as intentionality, noema, noesis, intersubjectivity, and intuition. Those experiences have affected Lena's perspective of the world. As living under the totalitarian government with solid rules and constant fear of everything makes Lena trusts in the laws. But then, she is able to see clearly that her perception has been manipulated by society. At the end, she opens her mind, no longer strives for conformity, and starts to pursue her freedom. Acceptance and recognise the necessity of endings, and by then she can feels liberated and her perspective changes and renewal.

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