

Magical Realism in Audrey Niffenegger's *The Time Traveler's Wife*

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Submitted: 05/01/2020

Revised: 10/01/2020

Accepted: 05/02/2020

E-ISSN : 2579-4574

P-ISSN : 2549-7359

Abstract. This study aims to explore the five elements of magical realism which are portrayed in the novel *The Time Traveler's Wife* by Audrey Niffenegger in order to find out whether the novel can be categorized as magical realism or not. The writer chooses this novel to be analyzed because the novel won the Exclusive Books Boeke Prize and a British Book Award and it has been adapted into a film. The data of this study are characters' utterances and author narration which contain five elements of magical realism. The data is collected by applying the intensive reading and highlighting the data. This study uses magical realism theory, especially five elements of magical realism proposed by Wendy B. Faris. The results of the study show that *The Time Traveler's Wife* contains five elements of Magical Realism. Those are Irreducible Element, Phenomenal World, Unsettling Doubt, Merging Realms, and Disruption of Time. However, the five elements described as the representation of the postcolonial context since magical realism also can be categorized as a way to reveal the authoritative colonialist attitude. Thus, this study found the cultural history of Chicago where the time traveler's lives as the result of postcolonial side of magical realism.

Keywords: *Magical Realism, Cultural History, Time Traveler.*

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INTRODUCTION

Literature is a part of human life since it is regarded as a “laboratory” to deliver the human experience (Knight, 2015). Literary work which is the product of literature can entertain or even give a certain knowledge in it. Fiction is one of the major genres of literary works. Some canon literary works of fiction which have been famous all over the world, are *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Red Badge of Courage* by Stephen Crane, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* by Ernest Hemingway, *To Kill A Mockingbird* by Harper Lee, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel García Márquez and many others. Those are the examples of the timeless literary works or the literary work which are unaffected by time even though they have been written much long time ago. Nowadays, there are so many literary works that have been produced by all sorts of human age. However, literary works become part of society since the authors or writers are regarded as the product of society itself.

There are many kinds of literary works, such as novel, drama, and poem. One of the interesting literary works that exists in society is novel. Commonly, novels tell about the stunning stories such as the imagination or the experience of the authors. They could deliver the idea well using appropriate dictions to make the readers would be able to create good imagination besides reading the text. On the other hand, there are so many genres in a novel, such as satire, adventure, romance, science, fantasy, and history. One of the newest genres is a magical realism or magic realism. Nowadays, magical realism has been popular and used in many kind of literature, art, and film. Such as the researches created by Imam Muhtarom (2004) entitled *Magical Realism in Short Stories: Case of Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Triyanto Triwikromo, dan A.S Laksana Stories* (Realisme Magis dalam Cerpen: Kasus Cerpen Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Triyanto Triwikromo, dan A.S Laksana). Dawn Tindle (2007) entitled *The Magic of Everyday Things: Magic Realism in the Work of Joanne Harris*. Jessica Islam (2009) with her work titled *Feminis Space in Magica Realims: Coexistnece of Magic and Feminist Tropes in Joanne Harris' Chocolat nad The Lollipop Shoes*. Judit Pieldner (2016), *Magic Realism, Minimalist Realism and the Figuration of the Tableau in Contemporary Hungarian and Romanian Cinema*, and Rizka Septiana, et al (2015), *Life of Pi: Emerging Magical Realism, Erasing Worlds* (Life of Pi: Pemunculan Realisme Magis dan Penghapusan Dunia-Dunia).

The term “magic realism” or “magical realism” was proposed by an art critic, Franz Roh, in 1925 to designate German post-expressionist painting (Camayd-Freixas, 1998). The term post-expressionist is generally applied to art of the twentieth century, it is the painting that tends to be emotional and sometimes mystical (Tate, 2017). It was independently applied for the first time to literature, with a diverging meaning, by Italian novelist Massimo Bontempelli in 1927 to characterize modernist fiction (Camayd-Freixas, 1998). Magical realism stands for two words that have different meaning, “Magic(al)” and “Realism”. According to Bowers (2004), “magic refers to any extraordinary occurrence and particularly to anything spiritual or unaccountable by rational science”, meanwhile realism is assumed that something *really* has happened in a real world. In general, magical realism combines two opposites things; real and fantasy. Magical realism combines

realism and the fantastic so that makes the fabulous thing seems to grow organically within the ordinary, and it blurs the difference between them (Faris, 2004). It means that magical realism combines between real and unreal thing or real and fantasy.

Magical realism is discussed in term of post-structuralist theory which defines the difference between the magical and real being dismantled (Bowers, 2004). One of 21th century novels which contains of magical realism is *The Time Traveler's Wife* written by Audrey Niffenegger. It was published in 2003 and she becomes the number one bestselling author because of this novel. It indicates that the author has been working very well so that the novel was sold in a very huge number. This novel tells about the life of the time traveler, which named Henry, during traveling the time. He suffers genetic disease that makes him becoming the time traveler. Its disease changes his life become something like magic that cannot be explained by the logical thoughts. Moreover, he has to face the interesting, yet dangerous, and pitiable things when he has to go to the past and the future time that cannot be controlled by himself. However, this study aims to explore about that mysterious things happened in Henry's life as a magical thing that combine with the real occurrences by analyzing it using the narrative structure of magical realism theory. Additionally, as the impact of magical realism element found in *The Time Traveler's Wife* novel, the researcher tried to discover the implication meaning which is related with the action of Henry as the magical object in this novel. Thus, this research also shows the postcolonial part which correlated with cultural history in Chicago where the time traveler (Henry) lives.

The novel entitled *The Time Traveler's Wife* by Audrey Niffenegger has been used by other researchers who analyzed it using different theory. The first researcher is Farid Parvanch and Fatemeh Ahmadi Azar (2018). Its work entitled *Covert Order in the 'Audrey Niffenegger Set': Chaos Theory in the Content and Structure of The Time Traveler's Wife*. This research focuses on the characteristic of chaotic systems toward the individual's identity. However, by applying chaos theory, it concludes that the perspective of human beings is affected to the way people used to see the world. The next research is conducted by Emilija Dimitrijevic (2008). Her work focuses on the affection created by Henry De Tamble, as the time traveler, and his wife, Clare Abshire by analyzing the character and characterization which related with term of love. The result shows that the romance of the main characters contributed to build the relations between social condition and individual psychology. Those research is totally different with the aim of this study even though they used the same object, *The Time Traveler's Wife* novel. However, this study is conducted to explore the magical and realism things by applying magical realism theory found in that novel and the implication meaning which is related with the cultural history in Chicago as the authoritative colonialist attitude of postcolonial part. The researcher does not found the same research which used magical realism to analyze *The Time Traveler's Wife* as the source of data.

RESEARCH METHOD

The design of this research is a descriptive qualitative because this research analyzes the existing phenomena in Audrey Niffenegger's *The Time Traveler's Wife* which is related with magical realism. The writer chooses this novel to be analyzed because the novel won the Exclusive Books Boeke Prize and a British Book Award and it has been adapted into a film. The phenomena, such as time travel issue combines with love story, show in this novel are very unique and uncommon, thus it makes the researcher was interested to analyze it. Furthermore, the time travel phenomenon in this novel is assumed to have five elements of magical realism. In order to conduct this study, the key instrument is the writer herself. The conclusion of this study was also drawn by the writer herself. While reading, documenting, and coding were used to collect the data. Reading, both intensive and comprehensive reading were used to make the writer got well understanding about the content of the novel. Then, to collect the data easily, the writer used the step of documenting which included coloring of the data that were related with the research question. After that, coding was used to classify the data that have been documenting whether they answered the research question number one or number two. Meanwhile, the collected data are analyzed by applying the textual analysis (gradamer in Selden, 1991: 122). Textual analysis is applied to interpret the collected data that related with the magical realism theory proposed by Wendy B. Faris.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Elements of Magical Realism of Wendy B. Faris' Concept

Faris (2004) proposed five elements of magical realism in his book entitled *Ordinary Enchantments: Magical Realism and the Remystification of Narrative*. Faris formulated elements of magical realism into five elements, those are: Irreducible Element, Phenomenal World, Unsettling Doubts, Merging Realms, and Disruptions of Time, Space, and Identity. The five elements of magical realism exist in Audrey Niffenegger's novel entitled *The Time Traveler's Wife*, and the discussions are below:

1. Irreducible Element

The first element of magical realism is Irreducible element. Irreducible element is like a magic thing that exists in the story. The irreducible element in Audrey Niffenegger's *The Time Traveler's Wife* is the existing of Time Traveler itself. The magical object in the novel is the time traveler which cannot be explained by rational science or logical thought. According to Faris (2004), irreducible element is something that cannot be described by the law of universe or rational science as they have been formulated in Western empirically which is related to logic, familiar knowledge, or received belief. It means that something which is regarded as irreducible element is just simply accepted as a pure magic, it cannot be explained by rational science. Irreducible element of magical realism is against the Western empirically, it is because the magical realist intends to break the idea of Western people who do not believe in magic or supernatural things.

Mostly, the term irreducible elements of magical realism exist in some literary works are kind of some supernatural things. For instance, in novel *Simple*

Miracles Doa Dan Arwah written by Ayu Utama which is analyzed by Mulia (2006), its research shows that the irreducible elements in Ayu Utami's are ghost, spirit character, magic events, and myth or irrational sense displayed in that novel. Also in Andalas, Nugroho, & Mulyani (2018) that analyzed Triyanto Triwikromo's *Delirium Mangkuk Nabi*, its irreducible elements involve the spirits character, devil, and mystical events. However, it is different with *The Time Traveler's Wife* novel, the irreducible element of magical realism in this novel is the time traveler itself. It is because the only one thing in this novel that is described as the irrational thing and it cannot be explained with rational science is the character of time traveler itself who can be able to travel in the past and the future without using any tools. The evidence of time traveler which can be called as the irreducible element in Audrey Niffenegger's *The Time Traveler's Wife* is below:

"Where am I? Who are you?" His voice is small and high, and echoes a little off the cold stone.

"You're in the Field Museum. I have been sent here to show you some things you can't see during the day. My name is also Henry. Isn't that funny?" He nods (Niffenegger, 2003, pp. 28-29).

The dialogues above are the conversation between 5-year-old Henry and 24-year-old Henry. It was a very first time for Henry become a Time Traveler. He was five years old and he travelled through the time and met the older Henry, from the words, "his voice is small and high, and echoes a little off the cold stone", it proves that the older Henry describes the sound of voice of 5-year-old Henry. A small voice is the characteristic of the common 5-year-old children. However, it seems like a magic when young Henry meets with the older Henry at the same time, it can be seen from the words, "my name is also Henry. Isn't that funny?" From the quotation, it shows that the older Henry introduces himself to his younger self.

There is no logic explanation why a person can be able to meet himself at the same place and time and in the real world (not in a dream or imagination). Thus, the time traveler is regarded as the magic that happens in the real world so that it is called as magical realism and categorized as the irreducible element of magical realism. The other evidence that strengthens the time traveling as the irreducible element is below;

"But how did I get here?" He stops at the top of the stairs and looks at me with total confusion.

"Okay. Here's how it is: you time traveled. You were in your bedroom, and all of a sudden, poof! You are here, and it's a little earlier in the evening, so we have plenty of time to look at everything before you have to go home." (Niffenegger, 2003, p. 29-30)

The conversation was taken a place in Field Museum 1988. He did not know why he was there because at the time he just wanted to go to bed and suddenly he was in Field Museum without any shirt. He used no tools to be in the future time. This phenomenon happens naturally since Henry was five years old. According to Chanady (1985), "the implied author is educated according to our conventional

norms of reason and logic, and can therefore recognize the supernatural as contrary to the laws of nature" (as cited in Faris, 2004), in other words, the existence of magic in magical realism is used to break the empirical thoughts of Western people who do not believe in supernatural things implicitly. Thus, the writer intends to imply that the time traveling in the novel is as the thing to against the Western empirical thoughts.

He is silent and quizzical. "Does that make sense?"

"But...why?"

"Well, I haven't figured that out yet. I'll let you know when I do. In the meantime, we should be moving along. Cookie?" (Niffenegger, 2003, p. 30)

A 5-year-old Henry was confused why he could travel through the time. He used to spend much time to question to his own self why he could be the time traveler and how to solve it. He thought that it was a disease so that he decided to meet the geneticist because he thought that he suffered a genetic disease, Dr. Kendrick.

"How does it work?"

"What?"

"This supposed time travel thing that you supposedly do." He sounds angry.

"You say some magic words? Climb in a machine?"

I try to explain plausibly. "No. I don't do anything. It just happens. I can't control it, I just—one minute everything is fine, the next I'm somewhere else, some other time. Like changing channels. I just suddenly find myself in another time and place." (Niffenegger, 2003, p. 316)

From the conversation above between Henry and Dr. Kendrick, when Dr. Kendrick asks to Henry "Climb in a machine?", it can be seen that he does not believe that Henry can travel the time using no machine. Dr. Kendrick still hesitates about the time traveler because commonly the time traveler uses machine to enter other realms. However, Henry, as the time traveler, tries to explain the way he travels through the time. He says, "It just happens. I can't control it", it can conclude that it happens accidentally, he cannot control what places he wants to attend and what era he wants to stay. He also cannot decide what time he wants to travel the time. The phenomenon of traveling the time that occurs to Henry is just like a magic that cannot be explained by rational science, so that this phenomenon is categorized as the irreducible element of magical realism.

2. Phenomenal World

The second element of magical realism is phenomenal world. This element is called as the realism in magical realism. According to Faris (2004), the realism that exists in magical realism make it distinguished from fantasy and allegory. The realism in phenomenal world appears in several ways, the descriptions of realistic create a fictional world which resembles with the human world. The evidence of the phenomenal world in the novel *The Time Traveler's Wife* can be found when Henry

travels through the time (the past and the future) and he cannot do anything or change anything that make the world be better. The evidence is below;

Clare shrugs. "But sometimes you tell me something and I feel like the future is already there, you know? Like my future has happened in the past and I can't do anything about it."

"That's called determinism," I tell her. "It haunts my dreams." (Niffenegger, 2003, p. 75).

Henry, the time traveler, often visits the past and the future time by his unusual ability to wander through the time without using any tools or machines. He frequently visits Clare's house when she was a child, it happens because Clare is his wife in the future so that he usually visits to see Clare's childhood. Due to the frequency visiting Clare, Henry sometimes has slips of tongue when telling her something that happens to Clare in the future. However, the existence of time traveler in the place where he has to stay during traveling through the time, he cannot make any changes, because it will bring a bad impact to the future or past event that has been determined, and it is called as determinism.

Determinism is defined as all human actions are predetermined. In case of determinism, a person in a specified situation may think that he can be able to do this or that, but in each case the stars, the laws of physics, his character, the conditioning he has received or something else makes him incapable to do any but one thing (Cowburn, 2008). Determinism has bothered Henry's mind in case of being time traveler, it can be seen from the words, "it haunts my dreams". Henry feels that life has already determined, and even though he can be able to visit the past and future time, he cannot do anything to repair some problems at that time. The evidence is below;

"Well, if you are feeling boxed in by the idea that your future is unalterable, imagine how I feel. I'm constantly running up against the fact that I can't change anything, even though I am right there, watching it" (Niffenegger, 2003, p.75).

Everyone must think that if they had a chance to enter the past time, they would fix anything in their past in order to get a better life in the future. However, it makes Henry feels guilty and Henry does not make any changes because he has already known that every changes he does in the past, it will bring worse impact in the future. When Henry says, "I'm constantly running up against the fact that I can't change anything, even though I am right there, watching it", it implies that the fact is really bitter to face. For instance, sometimes he has to be at the place where the bad event had happened, but he cannot do any change.

"When are you coming from?"

"December, 2006. What's the date here?"

Ingrid looks at her watch. "It was New Year's Day, but now it's January 2. 1994." Oh, no. Please no. "What's wrong?" Ingrid says.

"Nothing." Today is the day Ingrid will commit suicide. What can I say to her? Can I stop her? What if I call someone? "Listen, Ing, I just want to say...." I hesitate. What can I tell her without spooking her? Does it matter now? Now that she's dead? Even though she's sitting right here? (Niffenegger, 2003, p. 491).

The evidence above shows that Henry meets Ingrid in 1994, and he comes from 2006. In the narrative text above, Henry looks like worried about Ingrid because he has already known that Ingrid died at that date (January 2, 1994). However, Henry does not say the truth that Ingrid will commit suicide at the time, because if he says the fact, it will change the future and destroy what has been determined in the future. Determinism in the novel become the realism in magical realism and it is called as phenomenal world. Even though Henry is the time traveler (magical thing) who can visit the past and the future, he is unable to change anything at that time (the realism). Every actions of human has a limitation to actualize and they cannot always do anything based on their willing. They have to know that the world has been determined by God and it cannot be done by human being, and it is called as determinism.

3. Unsettling Doubts

The next element of magical realism is unsettling doubts. This element is such a hesitation that comes from the readers. It is because the readers have their own beliefs on something that make it become a hesitation while reading a literary work of magical realism. The readers may experience the two contradictory of understanding magical and realism of event and due to that experience it creates unsettling doubts (Faris, 2004). According to Faris (2004), the existence of hesitation may confuse another element, such Irreducible Element, because in unsettling doubts, the magic thing can be explained logically. However, it depends on the reader how they can be able to interpret the magic thing based on their beliefs.

In the beginning, Henry thinks that being a time traveler is such a thing that cannot be explained and he even does not know why he becomes a time traveler. However, in the middle of the story, Henry realizes that being a time traveler is caused by a disease.

"I have a condition which I'm told will become known as Chrono-Impairment. I have difficulty staying in the present."

"I time travel. Involuntarily."

"But why do you need a geneticist? Or are you consulting me as a philosopher?"

"It's a genetic disease. Although it will be pleasant to have someone to chat with about the larger implications of the problem."

"Mr. DeTamble. You are obviously an intelligent man...I've never heard of this disease. I can't do anything for you."

"You don't believe me" (Niffenegger, 2003, p. 312).

The event above is the evidence which brings a hesitation from the readers whether being a time traveler is purely magic or it is a disease. That event is taken place in hospital where Dr. Kendrick works. Henry intends to meet him because he wants Dr. Kendrick solve the disease that makes Henry being a time traveler. Henry has explained his disease, however, Dr. Kendrick does not believe in it. It can be seen from Dr. Kendrick's utterances, "I've never heard of this disease. I can't do anything for you", whereas Dr. Kendrick doubts about the disease. He, as the geneticist, has experienced a lot about the genetic problem, and said that he does not know about that disease at all. Hence, the readers may hesitate about that because the readers has different knowledge, culture and experiences and beliefs. According to Faris (2004), the existence of hesitation and different opinions from the readers because the author of the literary work does not naturalize the supernatural event in the story, and it creates a space for magical thing to exist in the story.

4. Merging Realms

The fourth element is Merging Realms. This element discussed about the world where magical and real, as two aspect of magical realism, are merged. According to Faris (2004), Merging realms is the merging of two worlds (magical and realism), and it combines together. The first merging realms object is Field Museum. It is because that place become the first place where Henry wanders through the time for the first time. The existence of Henry as time traveler is a magical aspect, meanwhile the place and the people in Field Museum is the real aspect. The real aspect of Field Museum shows from author's narration and characters' utterances as follows;

Where was I, when I saw me? I close my eyes and fatigue takes me bodily, caressing me with her sleepy fingers. I am almost out on my feet, but I catch myself and it comes to me: a man in silhouette walking toward me backlit by the museum's front doors. I need to get back to the Great Hall (Niffenegger, 2003, pp. 27-28)

The quotation above is the narration of 24-year-old Henry. He tries to remember the place where he meets himself at the age 5-year-old who is travelling through the time for the first time. The place as the merging realm is a museum, it can be seen from the words, "... I catch myself and it comes to me: a man in silhouette walking toward me backlit by the museum's front doors". Besides, in the museum, there is a strange phenomenon that occurs in that place. The evidence is below;

"Where am I? Who are you?" His voice is small and high, and echoes a little off the cold stone.
"You're in the Field Museum. I have been sent here to show you some things you can't see during the day. My name is also Henry. Isn't that funny?"
He nods (Niffenegger, 2003, p. 28-29).

The conversation above involves 5-year-old and 24-year-old Henry, and it takes place in Field Museum as the real place that exist in human world, it can be seen from the words, “you’re in the Field Museum”. That museum becomes the place where the magical thing happened. The time traveler wandered the museum with his other self in different age. However, there are no reasons why he could be there at that place because it is a kind of a magic that cannot be explained, and it still maintains the realism because the magical thing occurs in the real world.

Besides Field Museum, another realm in magical realism that merges the magical and real in the novel is the place where Henry always wandering to the place where he is able to see the accident that makes his mother died.

“But—Henry, you were—you said you don’t remember. And how could you know this anyway? Ten minutes and forty-seven seconds? Exactly?”

“You know about gravity, pulls smaller things to it, and they orbit around and around?”

“Yes....”

“My mother dying...it’s the pivotal thing...everything else goes around and around it...I dream about it, and I also—time travel to it. Over and over. If you could be there, and could hover over the scene of the accident, and you could see every detail of it, all the people, cars, trees, snowdrifts—if you had enough time to really look at everything, you would see me. I am in cars, behind bushes, on the bridge, in a tree. I have seen it from every angle, I am even a participant in the aftermath... ” (Niffenegger, 2003, p. 114).

Henry tells Clare about the accident that had afflicted him and his mother long time ago. He always thinks about it and perhaps that makes him often time travel to that place. The place where Henry always travels through the time and sees his mother died is categorized as real aspect, meanwhile, from the word, “I dream about it, and I also time travel to it. Over and over” it emphasizes that Henry continuously watches that accident while traveling, is called as the magical aspect. The magical aspect and real aspect are merged together in the story and it is called as merging realm of magical realism.

From all of the evidences above, it can conclude that all of the magical aspect or magical thing happen in real world which is called as the real aspect. The magical aspect is the existence of the time traveler, Henry, who travels through the time in some places in the world. The magical thing are merged together with the real aspect because the magic thing happen in real world, and it is called as merging realms.

5. Disruption of Time, Space, and Identity

The last element of magical realism is disruptions of time, space, and identity. Actually, in novel *The Time Traveler’s Wife*, there are no disruptions of space and identity, so that this element only discusses about the disruption of time. The disruption of time in *The Time Traveler’s Wife* is found when Henry is wandering to the past time and the future time. That events makes the people that see Henry is confused because Henry sometimes comes from the future and it makes them

see the different face of Henry in the present. Not only about the face, but people sometimes hesitates the existences of Henry in some particular time. The evidence is below;

"I spent last night with your friend Henry."

"So did I."

"Yeah. What did you do?"

"Went to Facets, saw a Peter Greenaway film, ate Moroccan, went to his place."

"And you just left."

"That's right." (Niffenegger, 2003, p. 147)

From conversation above, it can be concluded that both characters spend their night, at the same time, with Henry. However, there is only one Henry who does not live in the present, but he comes from the past or the future.

Sunday, December 15, 1991 (Clare is 20)

"Well, he's so fucking nonchalant. I could tell that he absolutely knew me, through and through. He had my number, and he didn't care. And then he—vanished, and I was standing there, and I just.. .had to. Believe."

I nod, sympathetically. "The disappearing is pretty impressive. I remember that from the very first time I saw him, when I was little. He was shaking my hand, and poof! he was gone. Hey, when was he coming from?"

"2000. He looked a lot older." (Niffenegger, 2003, p. 148).

The conversation between Clare and Gomez above occurs in 1991, but Gomez met Henry who came from 2000 in a night before he met Clare. Gomez also says that he finds an older Henry, it can be seen from the words, "2000. He looked older". It means that the disruption of time that happens in the novel bring the impact to the other characters in order to find another face or situation of the time traveler.

Socio-cultural Context which Underlies the Emergence of Magical Realism in *The Time Traveler's Wife* Novel (Cultural History in Chicago)

Five elements of magical realism found in *The Time Traveler's Wife* novel also can be analyzed by another term which is related with context of magical realism. It is the postcolonial magical realism. According to Bowers (2004), the majority of magical realist works can be categorized as postcolonial which sets in assumptions of an authoritative colonialist attitude. In term of this research, cultural history in Chicago in the novel *The Time Traveler's Wife* is considered as a postcolonial context that underlies the emergence of magical realism in this novel. Chicago was chosen because almost the setting of the place in the novel is in Chicago. Cultural history is also a part of magical realism, because magical realism cannot be separated with the history that related with postcolonial. Slemon Stephen (1988) argued that magical realism also can be defined as the weapon of a "silenced, marginalized, dispossessed voices" in the battle against "inherited notions of imperial history" (as cited in Mzali, 2003, p. 5). In the other word, cultural history in magical realism is

used as a thing that can be able to reveal the history whichever happened in a certain place and it describes in magical way.

According to James Quillin stated, "Cultural History as the attempt to analyze in all their specificity the cultural expressions and discourse of a particular locality and moment" (as cited in Ober, 2002, p. 129). It means that cultural history is a tool to analyze a local culture that has been instilled by people in their region. Cultural history indeed related with culture in which according to Tylor (1871), "Culture... is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man a member of society" (p. 50). However, in this novel which tells about time traveling is also can be categorized as a thing which beyond the belief system of Western empirically.

Belief system itself refers to "structure of norms that are interrelated and that vary mainly in the degree in which they are systemic (interrelation between several system)" (Domenech & Selva, 2016, p. 1). For instance, most of the Western people believe in science, so that they do not believe in magic. It is related with the concept of time traveling in this novel. Western people, including Chicago people, believe that time traveling can only be achieved by using time machine or spaceship. As stated by Martin (2017), the only way to do time traveling which enter the future will be travelling at the speed of light in space as what has been proposed by Albert Einstein.

The activity of time traveled which is able to visit the future is believed as the activity that need any machine to achieve it and the time traveler only can travel in space. However, the context of time traveling in this novel is totally different with the idea of the related theory of time traveling such as Albert Einstein's theory. The time traveler in this novel is not only able to visit the future, but also the past, and he is not traveling in space but he stays in real world. Albert Einstein proposed a theory which is known as theory of Relativity.

So I explain. I explain about being a time traveler, the practical and genetic aspects of it. I explain about how the whole thing is really a sort of disease, and I can't control it. I explain about Kendrick, and about how Clare and I met, and met again. I explain about causal loops, and quantum mechanics and photons and the speed of light. I explain about how it feels to be living outside of the time constraints most humans are subject to. I explain about the lying, and the stealing, and the fear. I explain about trying to have a normal life. "And part of having a normal life is having a normal job," I conclude (Niffenegger, 2003, pp. 462-463).

Henry tries to explain about being time traveler and the possible reasons why he can travel through he time, it can be seen from the words, "I explain about causal loops, and quantum mechanics and photons and the speed of light". It is true that time traveling may related with causal loops, and quantum mechanics and photons and the speed of light as what have been explained in Einstein's theory. However, if human believe and understand about the concept of time traveling according to Einstein's theory, it strengthens that time traveler only can be able to visit the future. As stated by Howell (2017) "approaching the speed of light, a

person inside a spaceship would age much slower than his twin at home" (para. 4). It also strengthens the ideas of Martin (2017) in which the only way to do time traveling is using spaceship and the person who does time traveling will look younger when he comes back to the Earth. In other words, it can be concluded that a person who is inside a spaceship is called as time traveler, and they are the astronauts. They may travel to the space and spend one year over there, then he comes back to the Earth, he will look younger because actually he has been traveled so many years based on the time in the Earth, that is the explanation of time traveler based on Einstein's theory who can only travel in the future time.

"How does it work?"

"What?"

"This supposed time travel thing that you supposedly do." He sounds angry.

"You say some magic words? Climb in a machine?"

I try to explain plausibly. "No. I don't do anything. It just happens. I can't control it, I just—one minute everything is fine, the next I'm somewhere else, some other time. Like changing channels. I just suddenly find myself in another time and place" (Niffenegger, 2003, p. 316).

The conversations above involve Dr. Kendrick and Henry. Dr. Kendrick is really curious about how Henry can move between different points in time. He wonders if Henry uses any tools to make it happen. However, Henry explains that he travels using no tools or machines, it can be seen from words "No, I don't do anything. It just happens". It proves that a time traveler in this novel does not need to use spaceship to enter other points of time and it is different with the belief system of Western people that a time traveler must use spaceship to travel through the time.

Furthermore, the time traveler in this novel is also shaped to reveal a history that the author of this novel describes implicitly. The novel contains of cultural history in Chicago, such as the action of the time traveler which shows some activities to revolt against the evil boss organization in post war era. However, the writer of the novel does not describe clearly about the post war era that is portrayed in the novel. The first activity of time traveler which is regarded as an action against the evil boss in post era is the criminal behavior that Henry does during traveling through the time.

You are throwing up on some suburban geraniums, or your father's tennis shoes, or your very own bathroom floor three days ago, or a wooden sidewalk in Oak Park, Illinois, circa 1903, or a tennis court on a fine autumn day in the 1950s, or your own naked feet in a wide variety of times and places.

When I am out there, in time, I am inverted, changed into a desperate version of myself. I become a thief, a vagrant, an animal who runs and hides. I startle old women and amaze children. I am a trick, an illusion of the highest order, so incredible that I am actually true (Niffenegger, 2003, p. IX).

The data shows that when Henry travels to some places in unspecified time, he can be able to be a thief, a vagrant, and many others, it can be seen from words,

“When I am out there, in time, I am inverted, changed into a desperate version of myself. I become a thief, a vagrant, an animal who runs and hides”. It tells that Henry does a criminal activity when he travels through the time. That evidence makes the reader believe that what Henry does as the activity to go against the cruel boss in post era. That evidence makes the reader believes that what Henry does as the activity to go against the cruel boss in post era. According to History of Chicago (2017), between 1950 until late 1970 Chicago's populations decreased for the first time in its history, as factory jobs leveled off so that made many people had to move to the suburbs and it makes poor neighborhood at that time were razed and replaced with massive public housing that solved few of the problems of poverty and violence. Thus, a violence that Henry does can be connected with the violences that occur during post era in Chicago. It is because the year when Henry travels through the time is the same with the year of post war era in Chicago.

CONCLUSION

Novel *The Time Traveler's Wife* is regarded as magical realist. It is because the five elements of magical realism that proposed by Wendy B. Faris exist in the novel. Those are Irreducible Element, Phenomenal World, Unsettling Doubts, Merging Realms, and Disruption of Time. However, the novel does not contain the disruptions of identity and space. Each elements of magical realism do not work individually but they are related each other. Besides the five elements of magical realism, there is also cultural history in Chicago which is considered as the socio-culture context that underlies the emergence of magical realism in this novel. This term is chosen because in magical realism, the story will not separate with the history that emerges as the weapon of the discourse of postcolonial. Cultural history makes the magical thing still in magical realism frame though the history is based on the reality. Hence, the story can be related to the real life. The last, the novel *The Time traveler's Wife*, especially the character of time traveler, can be concluded as the symbol of poor person who revolts against the wickedness in postwar era in Chicago. Magical realism also intends to break the Western empirically which does not believe in magic or supernatural so that the reason why the novel *The Time Traveler's Wife* is written.

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