CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Depression is an emotional disorder that interferes and disturbs a person's life, whether it's on social environment i.e. workplace, or within their own families. WHO (World Health Organization) stated that depression is a common form of mental disorder, which characterized by feelings of guilt, sadness, low self-esteem, lost of interest and passion, lost of appetite and even sleep disturbances.

Depression traits are divided into two categories. The first is reactive (neurotic), which is formed due to stressful, shocking events that caused by chemical elements within brain's nervous system. The second is endogenous (melancholic) that relates with biological condition, either within body or mind. Melancholic, as Freud (1917) stated, is the byproduct of the act of lamenting and mourning towards 'objective loss', like loss of precious interpersonal relationships either due to break-up or death. Like chain reaction, these losses in turn caused the so-called 'subjective loss' like for example, antisocial behavior and withdrawal from public. Also, the depressed person will develop a condition called *libidinal cathexis*, where the depressed people will identify and treat their object of affection with an unconscious, narcisstic behavior. Feelings of depression are varied, for it depends on the personality of the afflicted person. Many people describes the feeling of depression in several different ways, but the

most prominent three are either they feel something akin to "the end is coming" feeling, feeling nihilistically empty and devoid of hope, or feeling a restless anger.

Several researches regarding written literature's descriptive analytical research have been conducted by many researchers in the world. The first research is conducted by Fitri Iryanti (2010) with the title "*A Figurative Language Analysis on Sylvia Plath Poems*". This research intends to examine the meanings of figurative languages on each stanzas of Sylvia Plath's short poems using Roland Barthes' semiotic theory. The poems that used as data are *Morning Song* and *Mirror*. Result from this research indicate that even within stanzas from short poems, there a various kinds of figurative languages and meaning hidden in there, telling the lyric writer's feeling and state of mind to the audience.

The second research is conducted by Angga Pradipta (2009) from State University of Semarang. His research is entitled as "*Hyperbolic Expressions as Revealing Sense of Depression In Song Lyrics of Evanescences Album Fallen*". He analyzed each songs from the *Fallen* album and found out that some songs' meaning are similar to each other. They are similar in terms of themes, which revealed the sense of depression through hyperbolic expressions to deepen the impact of the song. In this research, the writer states that depression is one of the common psychological problems, which can lead its victim to the even worse psychological problems, such as frustration or insanity.

The third research is conducted by Rendy Aditya Putra (2016) from State University of Jakarta with the title "*The Portrayal of Depression in Metallica's*

Song Lyrics." He analyzed each song lyrics from Metallica and found out that the elements of depression are apparent in each songs' words, phrases, clauses, and sentences, which represents the singer's viewpoint towards war, drug abuse, and childhood problems. This research shows that even songs can be a media for people to convey their inner feelings towards the audience through lyrics.

Based on discussion above, this study will analyze the depression on Edgar Allan Poe's poems consists of *The Raven, Annabel Lee,* and *Alone*. The writer choose these three poems because they are most likely based from the major events within Poe's life: *The Raven* is inspired from the combination of the bird's part in various myth, the death of his foster parents, and his struggle on finances. *Annabel Lee* is inspired from Poe's late wife, Virginia Eliza Clemm Poe, who died due to TBC. Poe loved her since he was a child and so does she, in which this trait is subtly reflected on the said poem. And then, *Alone* is inspired from the death of his foster mother, Frances Allan. She informally adopted Poe as her own son back then when Poe is left alone, due to his real parents were already gone. They get along pretty quickly and Poe spent a fairly normal childhood with her. But due to Poe's conflict with his husband, Poe choose to parted ways with her. This poem is written as Poe's expression towards his story of life, where he regrets that he didn't spent more time with her.

To analyze the elements of depression from these poems, the writer will use Aaron Beck's theory of depression. Beck (1978: 11) stated that the primary cause of depression is the negative thoughts that born from the so-called "dysfunctional beliefs". Later, this concept is widely known as "negative

cognitive triad" or "cognitive triad of depression." This triad consists of *negative view towards self, negative view towards experiences of the surrounding environment,* and *negative view towards future*. Also, Beck states that there are five symptoms of depression and two types of depression. The said symptoms are *affective symptom, cognitive symptom, behavioral symptom, physical symptom,* and *motivational symptom*. And the said types are *sociotropic depression* and *autonomous depression*.

To find the lines and stanzas that indicates the element of depression, the writer will use Roland Barthes' semiotic theory. This theory consists of two meaning forms, which are denotative meaning and connotative meaning. The orders of signification are consist of denotation; where a sign is constructed by signifier and signified; and connotation, which uses denotative sign as the signifier, which in turn also attached by a signified, creating a chain of connotations. Shortly, denotation refers to the literal meaning of a sign, while connotation refers to the figurative meaning of a sign. Barthes also introduced *Myth* as a part of second-order meaning of signifier and signified, which contains more cultural meanings. *Myth* is only applicable when the connotative meaning contains the elements of ideology within it. Summarily, the writer will use Roland Barthes theory to find the connotative meaning of a word/phrase/clause, then relate its meaning with Aaron Beck's negative cognitive triad of depression and categorized it. After that, the said meaning will also be classified in its respective symptoms and types of depression.

According to Poets.org, Edgar Allan Poe was born in Boston, Massachusetts on January 19th, 1809. His father abandoned his family and his mother died when he was still three years old. He was raised as foster child by John and Frances Allan from Richmod, Virginia. He was sent to the best boarding schools and later, University of Virginia because he excels in every academic aspects. However, he was forced to leave the university due to gambling debts. In later years, he released his first collection of poems named as *"Tamerlane, and Other Poems"* in 1827 and *"Al-Aaraaf, Tamerlane, and Other Poems"* in 1829. Both of them were not received much attention from public. And so, in 1835, he admitted himself to become the editor of a magazine called *"Southern Literary Messenger"* and began to sell his short stories. Throughout the next ten years, Poe would alter various literary journals including the Burton's *Gentleman's Magazine* and *Graham's Magazine* in Philadelphia and the *Broadway Journal* in New York City. It was amid these years that he set up himself as a poet and short story author. Some of his well-known poems are *"The Raven"*, *"The Bells"*, *"A Dream Within A Dream"*, *"Alone"*, and *"Annabel Lee"*. And for short stories, some of the well-known stories are *"The Fall of House of The Usher"*, *"The Cask of Amontillado"*, *"The Tell-Tale Heart"*, and *"The Murders in the Rue Morgue."* Amongst other famous poets, Edgar Allan Poe stands out as one of the best American poets all time. He demonstrated a brilliant command of language and technique as an inspired and original imaginations. He is also the forerunner for the movement "Art for art's sake", a revolutionary movement of European

literature in 19th century. Because of that, Edgar Allan Poe is one of the major figure in the literature world that influences many other poets and artists.

This study will analyze the portrayal of depression within Edgar Allan Poe's poems using Aaron Beck's depression theory and Roland Barthes' semiotic approach. Semiotic is the study of sign, which further elaborated as a way of thinking for visual and text meaning The poems that will be analyzed are *The Raven*", "*Annabel Lee*", and "*Alone*".

1.2 Research Question

Based on the background above, the research question of this study is "How is depression being portrayed in Edgar Allan Poe's poems?"

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to find the portrayal of depression in *The Raven*, *Annabel Lee,* and *Alone* poems by Edgar Allan Poe.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study will focus on analyzing words, sentences, lines and stanzas that contains the portrayal of depression in *The Raven*, *Annabel Lee,* and *Alone.*

1.5 Significance of the Study

The writer hopes that this study is helpful for those who want to study about how depression is being portrayed within poems. Moreover, the writer intends to enrich the references and knowledges for the reader of this research,

especially for English Department's students who want to take the further issues related to poems.