

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents several subchapters which are required to be discussed in this study; namely background of the study, statements of the research problem, objectives of the study, significances of the study, and the scope and limitation of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Nothing is everlasting in this world. Just like human life, someone may be happy this time, but two minutes later someone may be sad. Today may be full of laughing but tomorrow will be filled of crying. Just like the earth which rotates, human life also experiences many changes. These kinds of things usually happen due to the interactions done by human. As well as the earth's rotation, social class also changes at anytime. Yesterday a man could be a beggar but today he is a rich person or vice versa. Another example about the changing of human life also happens in Bali. If someone is married with a person who has a higher social class, then his/her social class may increase. However, on contrary, things may happen when someone marries a person who has a lower class in the society, then his/her social class may decline.

Regarding to the explanation above, this kind of process is often portrayed in literary work. It is related to the role of literature to show the life of human in a certain period. Just like what Wellek and Warren say in *Theory of Literature*, "literature is the mirror of human life that portrays human feeling, thought,

imagination, and perception which can be viewed based on personal judgment” (1963: 30). It means literature is the human’s work in the form of the expression, inspiration and human emotion. For example, *The Great Gatsby* which is written by F. Scott Fitzgerald tells about the portrait of social condition of American society in 1920’s.

One of many literary works which describe the changing of social class is *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte. It is the first and the only Bronte’s novel. It is chosen because it is an interesting novel. It explores the themes of revenge, religion, class and prejudice. It can bring the readers feel what the characters feel because what happens in that novel may occur in daily life. *Wuthering Heights* is a novel which gives the readers the real portrayal of the life and situation of the society at that time.

Furthermore, the author, Emily Bronte, is said to be a talented and the greatest writer of the Bronte sisters; Charlotte and Anne. She is able to combine the story and the reality which happen in the society.

“Emily had a head for logic and a capability of argument, unusual in women and rare indeed in a man. Emily has stubborn persistence of will where her own wishes or her sense of right, was concerned (Gaskel, 1975: 230).

It means that Emily Bronte has a rational thinking and strong argumentation better than any other man or women in general. Emily has a strong desire and struggle to achieve what she wants. These characteristics are presented by Emily in one of the character in the novel, Heathcliff. He is described by Emily as an ambitious and stubborn man.

In *Wuthering Heights*, it is told that some characters experience the changing of social class either from the lower class to the middle class or vice versa. The changing of social class phenomenon is called social mobility. The characters experience the changing of social class in many different ways. It can be because of marriage, heredity and their struggle to get a better position in the society. The changing of their class does not only change their way of life but also their behavior and attitude. Therefore it is interesting to analyze the changing of social class experienced by the characters in the novel.

In relation to the source of the study, there have been a number of valuable studies on *Wuthering Heights* (Leni Chandra, 2005; Agus Santoso, 2006; Yessy Perdana Handoyo, 2006; Erika Karjon, 2012). All of them are presented analysis on characters and conflicts by using theory of character, conflict, Marxist and psychoanalysis. However, none of these studies focus on the changing of social class of four main characters by using social mobility theory.

1.2 Statements of Research Problem

Based on the background of the study above, this study discusses the changing of social class in Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*. Therefore, the problems are formulated into the following question:

1. How is social mobility experienced by Heathcliff, Hindley, Hareton and Catherine Linton told in the novel?

1.3 Objective of the Study

Related to the statement of research problem above, the objective of the study is:

1. To explain social mobility experienced by Heathcliff, Hindley, Hareton and Catherine Linton told in the novel.

1.4 Significances of the Study

This study is expected to be able to provide theoretical and practical benefits. Theoretically, the result of the study can strengthen and enrich the theory of social mobility and improve the reader's understanding about the social mobility. And practically, the result of the study can be used by other students to appreciate and analyze the novel from different point of view.

1.5 The Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study focuses on the changing of four characters' social class through the theory of social mobility. The limitation of this study is on the narrator's explanation and the characters' utterances which describe the changing of the characters' social class in *Wuthering Heights*.