

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses about background of the study, statement of the research problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, and limitation of the study.

1.1 Background of the study

Novel is a literary work which is written by the author through written media. The novel is a prose of fiction that reveals aspects of humanity or experience presented using language as the medium. Novel also has creative arts that use humans and environments in everyday life, which they represent the social picture and the moral message indirectly that the writer wants to convey in it. Literary works in the form of novels in their making and completion are closely related to real life. Some works in a novel are the creators of the social impressions that happen around us and experience it every day. Novel is normally a prose work of quite some length and complexity which attempts to reflect and express something of the equality or value of human experience or conduct (Taylor, 1981:46). Based on that statement that's why novel is considered to be the most dominant in displaying social elements in any literary works. This is due to several reasons, including: the novel displays the most complete elements of the story, has the most extensive media, presents the most extensive social problems, and the novel language is the most common everyday language used in society (Taylor, 1981: 122). For this reason, the novel is often used as a tool to

convey dissatisfied messages or aspirations towards a condition that is considered to be incorrect in a social life. Even so, the story in the novel is certainly not entirely original, it is because novel is fictional in which there are elements of imagination and creative process along with them.

One of an interesting novel that involves the author's experiences is *To Kill A Mockingbird* by Harper Lee which is used as a data source by researcher. 'To Kill A Mockingbird' is narrated from the young girl point of view, named Scout. She lives with her older brother, Jem, and her father who is a great lawyer, Atticus Finch. They lived in Maycomb Country, Alabama. One day, Atticus Finch was asked to become defense lawyer of Tom Robinson, he is a black people that accused of raping one of a white girl in the country. Atticus Finch defends Tom Robinson regardless of race differences between them, so many various criticisms came, that makes Scout and Jem felt sudden change of this situation. In addition, the novel illustrates the level of respect for the dignity of a person in the environment, from the Finch families who are considered to be respectable and educated family until blacks are always slaves and are considered inferior. Atticus's family is disagreeing with his decision because it will risk not only family's name but also his career as a lawyer. However, in some parts, Harper Lee reminded her readers of the misperception through Atticus Finch's glasses who always saw that everyone should be treated in the same way. In this novel that caught researcher's attention is how the writer chose the point of view from the main character of a young girl. Harper Lee expresses Scout's language to show someone's purity and clarity in looking at other people and some issue that happen

at that time. Young children do not play in presumption, they meet and play with anyone intended for whoever they are and whatever they race or skin are. It is adults who bother themselves with preconceived notions.

Many people argue that the characters in her novel are about Harper Lee's life experiences. The character of Scout in the novel was Miss Lee in real life; who was a tomboy, active girl and in that year of the novel has the same age as Scout. Harper Lee grows up in a small town Monroeville, Alabama which was the illustration of Maycomb Country in the story. Harper Lee's father was a lawyer; like Atticus Finch and her playmate during the summer season, who became a famous writer from Monroeville Alabama; Truman Capote who was portrayed by Dill in the story.

The Great Depression is still going during the years (1933-1935), and it became a memorable tragedy as the worldwide crisis especially in America, it was an unforgettable part of life for both of them Harper Lee and Scout as the character in the novel. *To Kill A Mockingbird* by Harper Lee, takes place in a small city in Alabama united states of America. In the story Atticus Finch, as a lawyer gets a multiple ways as his payments because they can't afford to pay him with money. They prefer pay Atticus with the harvest or some items left in their house. This is because the Maycomb country is a farm city and farmers didn't get pay that much during the great depression era because no one had money to save, they only have rice fields' product. Another possible explanation for the Great Depression setting may have to do with the trial of the Scottsboro boys, which took place in 1931, two years after the beginning of the Great Depression. As

known as the case of Tom Robinson, a black man accused of raping a white woman could be very well have been inspired by the case of the Scottsboro boys during the era of Great Depression.

‘To Kill Mockingbird’ was written by Harper Lee as a weapon to attack legal inequality in the southern American states during the great depression. She repeatedly wrote how schools, churches, courts, and government departments around Atticus Finch were operated by white supremacists. Harper Lee was born in 1926 in Monroeville, Alabama, United States; she also grew up there. Maycomb County, an imaginary city in To Kill A Mockingbird that is central to the whole story, agreed upon by many people created by Harper Lee based on her own birthplace.

Harper Lee tries to express her disapproval / opposition to all forms of discrimination, especially racial discrimination against black people. This is based on every word, sentence, language that composes the text. Not only that, Lee's view against racism was influenced by people in her environment, especially her father and the situation of political, social and economic conditions of the United States at the time of making this novel.

Therefore, the researcher applies biographical criticism as an approach to find out how her life was reflected in her novel through understanding in Harper Lee's biography because according to the explanation above can be concluded that there is relationship between Harper Lee's novel To Kill A Mockingbird with her background of life.

Early researches on the novel have focused on many aspects, ranging from Racial Prejudice and Discrimination (Siti Faizah 2012; Wening Tyas Rah Utami 2014; Wahyu Anngraheni 2016; Aistiyani 2016; Susilawati 2014), Intrinsic Elements (Riswan Ramadhan Hidayat 2017; Glorifi Fatima Merciana Bau 2016; Rudi Hartono 2011; Made Jaya Kusuma 2014; Siwi Roel Miyatun 2015; Andri Kurniawan 2010), Feminisme (Nurbudhiati Yoan 2015), Psycological Analysis (Bekti Winarni 2013; Melissa Tiolemba 2014; Katrinn Hoffman 2011) and Romanticism analysis (Glenn D. Turner 1979). However none of them analyze the biography of the author. Therefore this study will concerns on the background and experiences toward the author's life and the idea of making this novel.

Biographical criticism focuses on the detail about an author's personal life to analyze the author's works. The researcher's analysis carefully look over some parts in the lives of authors and try to identify incidents, setting, plot, language, people and etc, that found in the novels then researcher do an engagement with historical sources, biography sources, journal, news, magazine and many more. The dominating focus of biographical study is on the author as the important instrument who writes and on deconstructing the text that she produced.

In this research, the researcher is using biographical criticism as an approach. The biographical approach stresses the convention of the poet experiences of their own life that influence them to explain the meaning of imaginations and words used in their literary works (Wellek, 1989:88). It means that, researcher when using this theory; they must understand the biography of the

author first and then seek the connection and relation between the contents of the work and the author's background of life.

1.2 Statement of Research Problems

This Study will analyze biographical analysis in Harper Lee's novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Based on the background of the study, the statement of the research problem is formulated as follow:

1. What is Harper Lee's life experience?
2. How are the author's historical backgrounds reflected through her novel *To Kill A Mockingbird*?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Based on the statement of the research problem formulated above, this study has several objectives. They are:

1. To portray the life experiences of the author
2. To analyze author's biographical toward this novel

1.4 Scope and Limitation

This subchapter, the researcher emphasizes the scope of the study using biographical criticism as an approach. The analysis of this theory through the main point of the description of what is written down or factual recorded in the novelist's biography and any resources according to the author related to

the story of the novel in order to point up some similarities or conformities of life experience of the author in her literary work.

This study is limited to analyze the data which are related to the social experiences in this novel and attachment between the author and their literary work.

1.5 Significance of the Study

1. Theoretically

This study is expected to increasing and enriching the insights of the writer and the reader about novel and literary criticism, especially in biographical criticism, to know further about the personal life of Harper Lee.

2. Practically

This study will be used in educational fields especially in English Department or non-English department. Therefore, this study will be useful and expected contribute for curriculum design in this department and also to help raising a clear understanding about biographical criticism.

3. Specifically

The writer hopes for English department students, it expected can give better and more understanding to apply biographical criticism in analyzing a literary work. Furthermore, this study expected can be an input and additional reference for the following research about biographical criticism as the result of this study.