

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of five subchapters. They are Background of the Study, Research Questions, Research Objectives, Scope and Limitation of the Study and Significance of the Study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Literature, in its broadest sense, is any written work. Literature is part of everyday existence. It is a sort of work that includes all components of the imagination as well as actual life. It can be noticed that the authors of literary works frequently mix up real-life situations. Not only that, but the authors also use their imaginative minds to create literary works. According to Wellek and Warren (1963:22) “state that the term literature seems best if we limit it to the art of literature, that is to imaginative literature. Literature is also produced by the imagination of the author. Literature is not just a document of facts, not just the collection of real events though it may happen in real life. Literature can create its own world as a product of the unlimited imagination”.

In literature, there are six literary works such as novel, prose, poetry, drama, short story and movie. Novel is the form of literary work in prose. In other words, novels as the representative of human’s activities involve many aspects such as problems, ambitions, failures, emotions, desires, etc.

In fiction more than in other literary forms, inner thoughts and feelings, as well as complicated and sometimes conflicting concepts or ideals, are frequently explored. Not only is the story itself more personal, but the reading experience is also more personal. While epics and similar forms of storytelling are intended to be read publicly or consumed by audiences, novels are aimed more at individual readers.

One of the popular novels which still exist now is *Crazy Rich Asian* is one novel by Kevin Kwan which begins in 2013. Kevin Kwan is the author of the internationally bestselling novel, which has been translated into more than 30 languages. He is known as the author of a trilogy of novels: *Crazy Rich Asians*, *China Rich Girlfriend*, and *The Rich People Problem*. *Crazy Rich Asians* is the first book in a trilogy of novels published in 2013. This is followed by the second series, entitled *China Rich Girlfriend* (2015), and the third series, *Rich People Problems* (2017).

Crazy rich is an expression used to refer to people who have abundant wealth and live different lifestyles than most people. In the novel, "*Crazy Rich Asians*" refers to the rich people who live in Singapore and are mostly ethnic Chinese. Their ancestors came from mainland China, moved to Singapore, and eventually owned most of the land there.

The novel tells the story of Nicholas Young, the only child of the Young family (One of the Crazy Rich in Singapore). Nicholas is described as a single man who could make all the girls in Singapore love him, because in addition to

being the heir to his family fortune, Nick was also very handsome and had a title of professor from Oxford University. It all seemed to mean nothing to him. He chose to live in America, worked as a history lecturer at one of the universities and he has a girlfriend, Rachel Chu, a woman of Chinese descent, a lecturer in Economics at her place of teaching.

The conflict of the novel begins when Nick wants to invite Rachel to come with him to Singapore to be at Nick's closest friend's wedding and meet his family. Rachel doesn't know Nick's origins, even though they've been dating for more than a year and agreed to come along to Singapore with him. But as it turns out, the journey they dreamed of was not as easy as they imagined because of the many obstacles. One of them is Nick's mother, Eleanor Young, who highly upholds the dignity of the family, and Eleanor will only marry Nick to a woman from the same family as him.

Since the novel was published, there are two researchers who analyze this novel using the sociology of literature as their theory. The first is "*Family Conflict Reflected in Kevin Kwan's Crazy Rich Asians*", written by Rohmawati from the University of Muhammadiyah Surakarta. The focus of the research is the family conflict reflected in the novel. The source of data used in this study is *Crazy Rich Asians* novel and for her data is utterances of character and the novel's author narration.

The second is "*Social Identity Expressions in Kevin Kwan's Crazy Rich Asians*". This research is written by Ifada from the University of Trunojoyo

Madura. Her focus is on the expressions of social identity in the Asian elite community circle in *Crazy Rich Asians* novel. The source of data used in this study is *Crazy Rich Asians* novel, and for data of this research based on the author's narration and the statements made by the characters in the novel.

In this thesis, the writer uses Charles Sanders Pierce's semiotics theory to examine how Kevin Kwan's novel depicts the rich Asian lifestyle. The writer focuses her study on the representation of a rich Asian lifestyle through icon, index, and symbol in this novel. The writer chose the problem as the focus of her study because it allows writers and readers to find icons, indexes, and symbols and allows writers and readers to understand the significance of the icon, index, and symbol in the novel. Of all the stories that have been mentioned in the background, the writer of this thesis is interested in choosing the *Crazy Rich Asians* novel as the source of her studies related to the representation of rich Asian lifestyles.

The writer chose *Crazy Rich Asian* novel to be analyzed because firstly, it has become the bestselling novel in New York in 2013. Secondly, this novel is narrated in a chronological plot that makes the readers not think hard to find the issue or even digest all the information in this novel. Lastly, this novel ended with a happy ending; struggle and sacrifice Rachel Chu and Nick Young finally reunited with the blessing of the Nick family. Because this novel is interesting, there are many researchers who use this novel as a source of data for their research.

Additionally, the result of this research is also expected to be a reference and alternative information for every writer of academic research, especially for the students of the English Study Program at the University of Trunojoyo Madura who have an interest in analyzing the representation of a rich Asian lifestyle in one literary work. Hopefully, this study can be useful for other researchers doing similar research.

1.2 Research Questions

In line with the title and the background of this study, a major focus is formulated as: the representation of rich Asian lifestyle.

1. How to express the rich Asian lifestyle in a Crazy Rich Asian novel?
2. What are the icons, indexes, and symbols that represent the rich Asian lifestyle in the novel?

1.3 Research Objectives

As stated in this study's above research question, this investigation will attempt to explain how to express the rich Asian lifestyle in the Crazy Rich Asians novel. And also discover what are the icons, indexes, and symbols that represent the rich Asian lifestyle in the novel?

1.4 Scope and Limitation

In this section of the research, the data that will be analyzed are limited by the writer only to analyze how to express the rich Asian lifestyle in Crazy Rich Asian novels and what are the icons, indexes, and symbols that represent the rich

Asian lifestyle in the novel? Because this study is centered on the novel's rich Asian lifestyle. So, the scope of this study is a semiotic theory proposed by Charles Sander Peirce that consists of three points of relation such as icon, index, and symbol.

1.5 Significances of the Study

There are two functional considerations for conducting this study. Furthermore, this study is critical because of its theoretical and practical applications :

Theoretically, as data for further study, it is anticipated that the study's findings will contribute to the existing theoretical bases of literary studies, especially those which are related to the semiotics representation of rich Asian lifestyle by Peirce in the novel "*Crazy Rich Asian*".

Practically, this study is anticipated to provide an understanding on how icon, index, and symbol can be used to discover the representation of rich Asian lifestyle in the novel "*Crazy Rich Asian*".