

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses some subchapters. Those are background of the study, statements of research problem, objective of the study, significances of the study, scope and limitation of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Literary work is the expressions from the author. There are a lot of authors who have described their social experiences through literary works. They also inform to the readers the accidents in the world. Literary work itself is the picture of the world and human life, the main criteria that is put on the literary work is 'truth', or everything that wants to be pictured by the author. Through that process, the reader of their literary work will be able to catch the characteristic of the author related with the world around him/her. From this way, the reader knows like what the author's experience through their literary work. Essentially, they have experience that sometimes it can be good and bad experience. Further, the experience it can be the description of the author's background.

In this study, the writer is interested to analyze *Human Acts* by Han kang rather than other novels. Moreover, the writer chooses *Human Acts* as the source of data in this study. There are some reasons why the writer takes *Human Acts* as the source of data. The first, because from the accident happens and the author was born is in the same place. The place is Gwangju's city. The second, because this story tells to the reader what happen to Gwangju's society . Certainly, this story is reality that tells about oppressions deeply in Gwangju's city. The third, the author uses different subject in each chapter. The subjects are Dong-ho, Joeng-dae, Kim Eun-suk, Soen-ju, Dong-ho's mother, and the author herself. Therefore, the readers understand deeply about what the author is telling about in Gwangju's city. The last, it can be the knowledge to writers that not only others countries faced oppressions from the government, but in Gwangju's city also faced oppressions.

“Literature indeed reflects the society, its good values and its ill. In its corrective function, literature mirrors the ills of the society with a view to making the society realize its mistakes and make amends. It also projects the virtues or good values in the society for people to emulate. (Duhan, 2015:192)”. The statement before shows that there is a relationship between literary work and the society. Moreover, the authors sometimes express their background through literary work. The background mostly tells about the society in their life such as social problems that are related with political issues, culture issues, and crime. In this case, people can criticize what the authors have written in their literary work by using the approaches which are acceptable with the social problem such as sociological analysis and psychological analysis. This statement also strengthens that “there is a strong relationship between literature and the author’s life because a literary work can be the medium where an author expresses what he experiences or believes in life (Anna, 2015: 100)”.

According to Wellek and Warren (1977: 69) “literature mirrors and expresses life that is even more ambiguous”. It means that literature is born from the events that happen in the society. In literature, the author presents a work to deliver his/her ideas to the reader. Therefore, the author can be a mirror of his or her country which has intended to describe what the issues happened in the country through literary work. Thus, the issues of literary work sometimes can be on how the government oppresses the society such as in Gwangju’s city, South Korea.

The novel, *Human Acts* was written by Han Kang. Han Kang is an author in South Korea, who gets the Man Booker International Prize-winning, *The Vegetarian*. She also has some novels either translated into English such as *The Vegetarian* (Portobello Books, 2015), *Convenience Store Woman* (ASIA Publisher, 2013), and *Human Acts* (Portobello Books, 2016) or non-English for example: *La Vegetariana*, *Wegetarianka*, etc. She was born 27 November in Gwangju when she was ten years old, then she moved to Suyuri, Seoul, to study about Korean Literature, in University of Yonsei. From where she was born and the accident

happened, the writer is interested to analyze her novel. Then, those are the reasons why this novel is really interested to be analyzed by the writer. In other word, the writer also knows on how the condition Gwangju at the time through her novel, *Human Acts*.

In *Human Acts*, Han kang (1980) would like to inform the reader what happen in Gwangju's city that describes the oppressions. This accident happened when Gwangju's society did not accept that Chun Doo-hwan as the next president. They argued that the system would be like last year if he was become president, because Chun Doo-hwan was like Park Chung-hee, the authoritarian system. Then, Gwangju's society was killed consciously by the police, paratrooper, and military because of their uprising in Gwangju city, South Korea. There was lot of victims which was described in each chapter in this novel. In other word, Han Kang also would like to describe some oppressions which was experienced by them. Since they were facing the oppression, their education had been ever stopped as well.

Regarding the explanation above, the writer analyzes the data by using theory of oppression. The theory is used because it is acceptable with the issues within the novel that discuss about the types of oppression that had been faced by Gwangju's society. This theory is surely acceptable with the issues in *Human Acts*. Therefore, the writer is interested to take *Human Acts* as the source of data in this study.

1.2 Statements of the Research Problem

Based on the background of the study, the question of the study is as follows:

1. What are the types of oppressions in *Human Acts*?

1.3 Objective of the Study

Based on the statements above, this particular study aimed at finding out:

1. To describe the types of oppressions in *Human Acts*.

1.4 Significances of the Study

Theoretically, this study is expected to be able to widen about theory of oppression that focus on discussing the types of oppression. It also can be as a reference to other writers who would like to study theory of oppression more intensively. Practically, this study will be useful for students who are interested in order to enrich and increase their knowledge about theory of oppression.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of this study is only about the oppression in *Human Acts*. Thus, the limitation of this study is on the types of oppression. Further, the discussion focuses on the types of oppression; exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, and violence. This study is only on the character's utterances and the narrator's narrations in *Human Acts*.