

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of five subchapters that are important to describe this study namely the background of the study, research questions, objectives of the study, significances of the study, and scope and limitations of this study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Along with the development of technology and industrial progress as well as the increasing human population in this era, it causes many problems to the environment and causes natural damage. Humans activities can cause damage to the environment (Bertens, 2007, p. 207). Some humans activities become problems that often occur including the occurrence of water pollution from industrial waste, air pollution from vehicle fumes, and illegal logging which resulted in the extinction of rare plants and animals. Humans are given reason and mind to be able to maintain natural ecosystems and preserve the environment and can behave well towards the organisms on this earth. One of which is to behave well towards animals, but because of the greedy nature possessed by humans can ignore the rights of other organisms. Human greed can be shown by their bad behavior towards animals, they often commit acts of cruelty and abuse that can endanger the animals population.

Some acts of cruelty committed by humans that can endanger animals populations are: confinement of animals in narrow cages, illegal hunting of skin, horns and ivory which can make endangered animals extinct, clearing forest land which causes organisms to lose their homes, and exploitation of animals. Some of these unkind actions are threatening the existence of animals on this earth. Even though the animals population must be preserved by humans on this earth because animals are an important part that can support the sustainability of ecosystems on this earth, therefore it is important to conduct this research, to provide an understanding of the impact of human cruelty on animals that can

cause the extinction of animals populations, so that the sustainability of environmental ecosystems does not run well.

According to Jorgensen (2009, p. 03) an ecosystem is a complex system composed of interconnected biotic and abiotic elements. Based on the statement above, the ecosystem is a mutual relationship between organisms (biotic) and the environment (abiotic). Abiotic components are non-living components such as climate, water, and temperature. Biotic components are living components (organisms) such as plants and animals. The true ecosystem will be realized if the two components do not damage each other. The relationship between the two components is not maintained because of human actions that are destructive and cruel to the ecosystem, which eventually becomes a problem in the environment. This is an interesting topic to discuss where the relationship between humans and animals is a serious concern for the integrity of natural ecosystems in this era. This concern for the ecosystem can be called ecocriticism.

Ecocriticism is the study of how literature and the physical environment interact Cheryll Glotfelty (1996, p. xix). Ecocriticism is a science that studies self-awareness to maintain natural ecosystems where humans can learn about literary criticism of the environment. In the environment, there are various ecosystems that must be maintained intact. Such as protecting animals populations from extinction because of human activities and the environment that has been damaged by humans so that animals cannot survive. Less human contamination of the environment means less environmental damage will occur (Sungkono, 2015, p. 3). The causes of environment damage are mostly contamination by humans. Humans cannot realize the loss of populations and ecosystems in animals occurs because of their own actions.

Many interesting topics in the current literature that describe environmental issues such as, the issue of ecosystem destruction. Nowadays many authors use environmental issues as a tool to explain the damage to ecosystems caused by human cruelty through literary works. literary work is a creation of writing that has meaning or aesthetics aimed that aims to be enjoy. To enjoy literary works

in complexity requires knowledge of the literature itself. Literature is the kind of writing which most persistently and most provocatively engages with the uncanny aspects of experience, thought, and feeling (Bennett, 2004, p. 35). Writing that is made involves thoughts and experiences, will produce a good literary. Several literary works describe human cruelty that can damage ecosystems, especially elephant persecution. One of which is a novel titled *Dumbo Circus of Dreams* by Kari Sutherland.

Kari Sutherland is an editorial agent and novel author from South America and now lives in New Jersey. Interest in the world of authorship made her love the fiction genre. One of the novels that discusses nature especially is human cruelty toward animals is *Dumbo Circus of Dreams* novel was published on 12 February 2019. This novel describes the cruelty of humans to the environment, in which humans are unfair to animals that are employed and exploited for human survival which causes anger and distress in elephants at circus performances. The *Dumbo Circus of Dreams* novel, tells the story of a baby elephant named Dumbo who has long and wide ears. Because Dumbo's ears are different from elephants in general, the circus leader feel cheated by the seller and makes the circus audience laugh. Dumbo's big ears make him fly, and it makes Dumbo treated as a moneymaker with a circus leader. This novel is based on the Disney movie by Tim Burton, but there is a slight difference in the content of the novel with the movie. In the movie, there is no identification of each character, but in the novel, there is an identification of each character. The cruel treatment of humans described in the novel is suitable to be analyzed using animals ecocritical theory.

Based on the research background defined above, the writer is interested in analyzing how humans treat animals badly in the circus described in the *Dumbo Circus of Dreams* novel, the writer uses ecocriticism theory by Greg Garrard as support to criticize and analyze the problems that occur in the novel. The theory of ecocriticism deserves to be used in the analysis because it is able to explore environmental problems between humans and elephants described in the *Dumbo Circus of Dreams* novel.

The writer found four previous studies used ecocriticism theory by Greg Garrard. The first is a thesis entitled *An Eroded of Ape's Species in Greg Cox's Novel "War For The Planet of the Apes": An Ecocriticism Analysis* by Hosen in 2019. Second, it is a thesis entitled *An Ecocritical Analysis of Nature Condition and Environmental Stewardship in J.R.R. Tolkien's The Hobbit* by Amril Bachtiar in 2019. The third, a thesis entitled *The Beginning of the End: An Ecocriticism Analysis on Clive Staples Lewis' the Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle* by Sungkono, Widodo et al in 2015. The fourth, an article entitled *An Ecocritical Analysis of Young Adult Dystopian Novel in Veronica Rossi's Under the Never Sky* by Azizah, R., & Sa'adah in 2017. The writer found ones previous study which discussed the movie *Dumbo* 2019, an article entitled *Moral Message in Dumbo Movie 2019* by Marwani, Fami, and Kristyowati in 2022. The difference between this analysis and the five previous studies above is that previous analysis used different novels and one used the *Dumbo* 2019 movie, but did not analyze the data by using ecocriticism by Greg Garrard.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the explanation contained in the background of the study above, the following research questions are formulated:

1. How are the elephants treated by humans in the *Dumbo Circus of Dreams* novel?
2. What is the impact of human cruelty towards elephants portrayed in the *Dumbo Circus of Dreams* novel?
3. How do humans restore the rights of animals in the *Dumbo Circus of Dreams* novel?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

According to the research question, the objectives of this study are:

1. To explain how the elephants are treated by humans in *Dumbo Circus of Dreams* novel.
2. To describe the impact of the human cruelty towards elephants in *Dumbo Circus of Dreams* novel.
3. To find out the role of humans in restoring animals rights in *Dumbo Circus of Dreams* novel.

1.4 Significance of This Study

There are two significances of the study in example the theoretical and practical ones, as follow:

1. The theoretical significance is that the findings of this study are expected to provide understanding and information about the theory of ecocriticism, especially in the animal chapter.
2. Practically, it is expected to inspire the readers to respect the rights of animals by maintaining the integrity of the ecosystem and preserving the environment. The writer also hopes these findings can be a reference for the next researcher. By analyzing animal ecocriticism, the writer can provide information to readers about the novel.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

In this novel, there are many interesting things to discuss, but the writer is focused on the analysis of human cruelty toward elephants which damages the elephant population. The writer uses Greg Garrard's ecocriticism theory to examine animals issues in the novel. This research is limited to human cruelty to elephants, through the characters' utterances and the author's narration related to the research questions.