

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the background of the study, the statement of the research question, the objective of the study, the scope, and limitations, and the significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

The common problem happen in society is social class. The issue of social class has become a serious and sensitive topic for some people. People who still care about social status dominate people who have a lower class than others. This is called discrimination in the society and has become a social problem. Jessica McCrory Calarco (2012, p. 3), agrees that the social class occur because of the different of locations. Aside from the economy that creates social inequalities, their differences can also come from the perspective and culture of their social environment.

Humans are social beings and therefore, have a fundamental need to relate (Baumeister & Leary, 2017 p.497). People are social beings, thus they still required support from others in fulfilling what they need. To make it release, they must have an interaction with the other people. The interaction between people from lower class and upper class will be have several impacts. They may fulfill their own needs in order to survive, which is beneficial for them. The negative impacts, they might cause problem because they are from the different class and might have the different perspective. To survive together, people will build a group of community. This is called a social relationship between others. To make a group of society people must have a qualification and standards from a social point of view. To build a relationship with others there are several rules. These rules can differently depend on society's daily lives. This social struggle can affect social relationships. This condition makes an impact on several things. Economic and society are the two things that have a relationship each other. Economic will influence society, and society will generate

people like economic does. One of the causes of social inequality is due to economic factors. When social inequality occurs, one of the contributing factors is politics and economic. One of the things that often happens in social societies is that people with strong political power will quickly fulfill what they want. This causes social problems that often occur in social communities. Eagleton said that politic and economic are the potential source of sabotage (1996, p. 76).

The social issue is frequently depicted in literary works. Literary works can likewise astound readers by introducing some alterations in social life, similar to those in the real world regarding class and social differences. The writers often use social problems to give themes to their literary works. Wellek and Warren (2009, p. 21), states that literature is telling the truth through the view of life. Literary work becomes a document representing time and the social truth, and demonstrating how it relies on real-world experience. The thing that is most often felt by the community about the social class differences that often occur in society. A common example is weddings. People will make a consideration about their weddings. People will consider marrying their children. They will be looking for people that will suit their family. All of these things must be considered for those who still maintain the tradition of marrying people of the same level. This is one of the representations of social class in the society that's creates the social problems.

The primary data from this research is a novel published in 2001. Entitled *Atonement* this novel has three time periods, before, during, and after World War II in England. This novel is about people named Robbie who get punished because he was accused of a crime by people from the upper class. Robbie works for a rich family as a gardener and he had secretly loved with the older daughter in the family, Cecilia. Considering Cecilia is from the upper class, and Robbie is from the lower class, they weren't able to live together. People though Robbie a criminal and they did not give Roby a chance to explain and prove his innocence. Robbie's experienced could happen because he is from the lower class and don't have a power to changed his life.

One of the impacts of social class on society makes people from lower class cannot do anything. This novel *Atonement* proof that people from the upper class has more power than people from the lower class. Mostly people from the upper class have control in society to make people in the lower class get discriminated. This novel also mentions the domination in society that ruined by people from the upper class. How people from lower class get discriminated and exploited by people from upper class. As a result of the lower class's lack of ability to stand up to itself, the upper class people will be exploited for the benefit of those in the latter. This study will examine what kind of social class and determine the impact of social class between the lower and upper classes in the novel *Atonement* by Ian McEwan.

Ian McEwan is an English writer. He often writing novel based on the historical of life and the problem in life. This novel is about social class, conflict, and the other problem that might often occur in the society. Ian McEwan novel can get the attention of the readers because of the content of the novel. The issues raised in this novel tells about social class discrimination that occurred in time before, during, and after World War II. This novel will be analyzed by using Marxism theory. The reason for using this novel as the source data is that the novel contains various problems, such as politics, social, childhood, war, and discrimination. Ian McEwan uses various viewpoints and perspectives in each character in his writing. Ian Mc Ewan writes this novel by uses various background of life. The reason why this study analyzes the problem of this novel because it is containing the problem that occur in the society. This study wants to more discover the problem caused in the novel and the implication in the real life. This study will find out more about the social issues that happen in the novel.

The many problems that have emerged in society related to social class have led writers to take up this topic for their literary works. The emergence of a paradigm concerns the social relationship between humans, between someone with a high social level and someone with a lower level of socialization. This study discover the impact the social class in the novel *Atonement* by Ian McEwan. The case study conducted in this study involves social classes that occur in novels that often occur in society. By

using Marxism theory, it raises several previous studies with several other different social problems. Suwandi's thesis (2020) entitled "Marxist Analysis of Oppressions in SpongeBob SquarePants Episode Drive Thru" discusses the capitalist system from the upper class to the lower class. People from the upper class exploited people from the lower class to gain profit. The next study is Herman's thesis (2020) entitled "Class Conflict Seen in Parasite by Bong Joon Ho: A Marxist Study." The study goal is to find what the causes problems that make conflict by social class in the film. The third previous study there are Anggraini thesis (2022) entitled "Social Classes and Conflicts in Snowpiercer 2013 film by Bong Joon Ho". The study is to discover the factor caused social class. And the fifth previous study is from Bashir et al article entitled "Marxism and Literature: Marxist Analysis of "The Garden Party" (2020), The study analyses the Marxism that happens in the literary work. All of the studies above used Marxism theory to answer each research question. Another previous study is from Talevski's article (2020) entitled "Class and Social Inequality in Ian McEwan's Atonement". The research using the same data with this study. The finding from the data is that this novel represents the social inequality. The answer for the research question tells that social class still happen although people don't want it. People from lower class can't choose the decision for their life and upper class people control them. The study finds that from the novel, readers know about the social discrimination still happening in our society.

1.2 The Statement of Research Question

According to the background above, this study will discover the impact and explain:

1. What are the social class portrayed in the novel?
2. How does the impact of social class in the whole of novel?

1.3 The Objective of the Study

Based on the problem formulation, the study focuses on the impact of the novel social classes. The objective of this study is:

1. To describe of social class occurring in the novel
2. To elaborate how the impact of social class in the whole of novel

1.4 The Significances of the Study

This study have theoretical and practical significance to some parties. Theoretically, this research is likely to give contribute some references for the readers who want to apply the Marxist theory in their study. In practical significance, this study is intended to give information for the readers on the negative side of social class and the discrimination in social class. Also, this study intended to be the reference for the readers who will use the same issues or theory.

1.5 The Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study focuses on the novel entitled *Atonement*. A novel by Ian McEwan, addresses the societal issue. The analysis concentrate on what society does and think about the lower classes and the impact on the lower class that experienced discrimination from society. The scope of the study use Marxism theory to find the answer related to the issues above. The novel also has another issue that can be discussed in the next studies.