

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the explanation of some parts of introduction. They are background of study, statement of research problem, objectives of the study, significances of the study, and scope and limitation of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Literature is a part of human life since it is regarded as a “laboratory” to deliver the human experience (Knight, 2015). Literary work which is the product of literature can entertain or even give a certain knowledge in it. Fiction is one of the major genres of literary works. Some canon literary works of fiction which have been famous all over the world, are *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Red Badge of Courage* by Stephen Crane, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* by Ernest Hemingway, *To Kill A Mockingbird* by Harper Lee, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel García Márquez and many others. Those are the examples of the timeless literary works or the literary work which are unaffected by time even though they have been written much long time ago. Nowadays, there are so many literary works that have been produced by all sorts of human age. However, literary works become part of society since the authors or writers are regarded as the product of society itself.

There are many kinds of literary works, such as novel, drama, and poem. One of the interesting literary works that exists in society is novel. According to

Watt (2000), novel is written in prose which uses the everyday language to give the authenticate for its characters, locations and events, and narrative arises from multiple and varying viewpoints which allowed for both psychological closeness to characters and more detached, evaluative meanings on the part of the author. Commonly, novels tell about the stunning stories such as the imagination or the experience of the authors. They could deliver the idea well using appropriate dictions to make the readers would be able to create good imagination besides reading the text. On the other hand, there are so many genres in a novel, such as satire, adventure, romance, science, fantasy, and history. One of the newest genres is a magical realism or magic realism. Nowadays, magical realism has been popular and used in many kind of literature, art, and film.

The term “magic realism” or “magical realism” was proposed by an art critic, Franz Roh, in 1925 to designate German post-expressionist painting (Camayd-Freixas, 1998). The term post-expressionist is generally applied to art of the twentieth century, it is the painting that tends to be emotional and sometimes mystical (Tate, 2017). It was independently applied for the first time to literature, with a diverging meaning, by Italian novelist Massimo Bontempelli in 1927 to characterize modernist fiction (Camayd-Freixas, 1998). Faris (2004) stated that magical realism was used among several famous novelists like Gabriel García Márquez, Salman Rushdie, and Ben Okri who bring a good impact to other novelist to explore and create the other literary works that constitute a magical realism in it. Magical realism stands for two words that have different meaning, “Magic(al)” and “Realism”. According to Bower (2004), “magic refers to any

extraordinary occurrence and particularly to anything spiritual or unaccountable by rational science”, meanwhile realism is assumed that something *really* has happened in a real world (p. 19). In general, magical realism combines two opposites things; real and fantasy. Magical realism combines realism and the fantastic so that makes the fabulous thing seems to grow organically within the ordinary, and it blurs the difference between them (Faris, 2004, p. 1). It means that magical realism combines between real and unreal thing or real and fantasy.

Faris (2004) said, “...an investigation of the general significance of the mode of magical realism can begin to address the lack of attention given to the spirit in contemporary theory” (p. 40). In the other word, magical realism also can be the theory besides the genre. Magical realism is the appropriate theory to analyze the source of data of which combines two opposite things, real and fantasy. One of 21th century novels which contains of magical realism is *The Time Traveler’s Wife* written by Audrey Niffenegger. It was published in 2003 and she becomes the number one bestselling author because of this novel. It indicates that the author has been working very well so that the novel was sold in a very huge number. This novel tells about the life of the time traveler, which named Henry, during traveling the time. He suffers genetic disease that makes him becoming the time traveler. Its disease changes his life become something like magic that cannot be explained by the logical thoughts. Moreover, he has to face the interesting, yet dangerous, and pitiable things when he has to go to the past and the future time that cannot be controlled by himself. Additionally, this study explores a cultural history in Chicago where the time traveler lives. Here,

Henry's action is categorized as the revolt against the evil boss organization in post war era.

The novel entitled *The Time Traveler's Wife* by Audrey Niffenegger has been used by other researchers who analyzed it using different theory. The first researcher is Cecelia Retnowati (2003) from Bina Nusantara University, her work entitled *A Structuralism Approach: Barthes' Five Codes in The Time Traveler's Wife Novel by Audrey Niffenegger*. The writer of that study uses five narrative codes by Roland Barthes and the aim of that study is to find out how the five narrative codes are applied in the novel.

The second researcher is Angela Lee (2011) from University of Pennsylvania, USA with her work entitled *Time Travelling with Fanfic Writers: Understanding Fan Culture through Repeated Online Interviews*. The aim of her study is to explore the response of the transformative nature of fan culture and audience participation in the era of the Internet. The third researcher is Emilija Dimitrijevic (2008), her work is *The Characters of Love: The Case of The Time Traveler's Wife*. That study uses Marxism and new criticism which focuses to explore the sense of romance of the character in the novel.

Based on the previous studies above, the writer of this study finds the differentiation of the previous studies which used the same source of data. The differences are located in the theory and the problem of the research. The first previous study uses the five narrative codes as the theory, the second research uses reader response theory and the last previous study uses Marxism and new

criticism as the theory, meanwhile the writer of this study applies magical realism as the theory to analyze the source of data.

1.2 Statements of the Problem

Based on the background of the study, the research questions are formulated as below:

1. How elements of magical realism are portrayed in Audrey Niffenegger's *The Time Traveler's Wife*?
2. How is the cultural history as a part of magical realism reflected in Audrey Niffenegger's *The Time Traveler's Wife*?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Based on the research questions, the writer has several objectives to follow:

1. To describe the elements of magical realism work in Audrey Niffenegger's *The Time Traveler's Wife*
2. To explore the way cultural history as a part of magical realism is reflected in Audrey Niffenegger's *The Time Traveler's Wife*.

1.4 Significances of the Study

Hopefully, this study is expected to give contribution both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this study is expected to enrich the reader knowledge about the theory of magical realism as reference for the next studies. The result of this study also aims to give other reference, such as the cultural

history in Chicago which one of the main character in the story does the activity to revolt against the evil boss organization in post war era. Meanwhile, practically, this research shares moral values in this novel, such as hard work to struggle against the cruel world and the patience of the time traveler.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

In order to avoid an extensive discussion in this study, the writer puts scope and limitation to make it clearer and focused on the issues that exist in the source of data. The scope of this study is Magical Realism of Wendy B. Faris' concept, it includes five elements of magical realism and also the cultural history in Chicago (Post War). This study also focuses on the phenomena that happen to Henry that makes it regarded as the magical realism which is portrayed in *The Time Traveler's Wife* written by Audrey Niffenegger. In this study, the data are taken from the characters' utterances and supported by the author's narration as well.