

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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

1.1 Background of The Study

What people may think firstly about India, it would be Taj Mahal that comes to their mind at the first time. Yet, some of people will realize that India is one of famous countries in the world of its Bollywood movies and also actors and actresses in them, such as Shahrukh Khan or Karina Kapoor. Further, India is also well- known as a unique country. It is because of there are many unique cultures that can be found only in India, for examples the culture about the caste system and the dowry system. Therefore, the writers of India might be inspired to adapt it into literary works as the expression of human feelings.

Furthermore, there are many Indian writers that are quite famous in the world. They are Arundhati Roy, Jumpa Lahiri, Kiran Desai, Mulk Raj Anand, Salman Rushdie, and others. Besides that, Aravind Adiga who was born in Chennai (Madras), India, is also one of Indian writers whose works are recognized by many people. Adiga was educated in English Literature at Columbia University in New York and Magdalen College, Oxford (GradeSaver, 1999). He has written many works like articles and essays that has been published in many publications, such as The New Yorker, The Sunday Times, The Financial Times, and The Times of India (Ramteke, 2013: 48).

Adiga was working in *The Time* for three years as a journalist before he wrote novel and short story. Adiga has won Man Booker Prize for fiction in 2008 for his first novel (Ramteke, 2013: 48). Besides that, according to Prasannarajan, Aravind Adiga, the winner of Man Booker Prize, is the first novelist who “has taken an exhilarating ride through the darkest alleys of modern India” (in Suneetha, 2012: 164). It shows that Adiga is one of interesting authors since most of his works such as his novels and his short stories bring the notion of lower class perspectives of Indian people and he is the first author who brings these notions, while other authors do not pay attentions to it.

Furthermore, the writer uses Adiga’s first novel entitled *The White Tiger* to be analyzed in this study. This novel consists of many symbols, connotations, and cultural systems that exist in India like the dowry system for women and caste systems of *Varna* and *Jati*. Besides that, this novel also tells the social gap which appears among Indian society because of that caste systems. Those are the interesting things of this novel to be discussed. Therefore, the writer determines to use this novel in this study.

This novel is arranged like a series of letter where the major character writes a letter toward Chinese Premier Minister, Wen Jiabao who wants to visit India in order to learn entrepreneurship. According to Brian Scott, “when a story is composed entirely of letters, diary entries, or these days even emails or blog posts, it is known as an epistolary style” (Freelance writing, 1997). It means that, this novel includes into epistolary novel. Therefore, this novel is different from other Adiga’s works, entitled *Last Man in Tower* and *Between the Assassinations*,

and more interesting. Hence, this novel is written in common word and easily to be understand, because it is a series of letter that tells Balram's experiences.

The major character who writes the letter in this novel is Balram Halwai, a fellow who lives in the Laxmangarh or called The Darkness. According to Richardson, the Halwai caste or means sweet-makers, is "so pure that even a Brahmin can take water from their hands without the need for a purification ritual" (Richardson, 2002: 340). Based on Richardson's statement, it assumes that Halwai is not in the same line like Brahmin -the highest Varna-, but belongs to the below Varna, because Halwai needs to doing purification ritual if they are not so pure.

In this case, since Halwai or sweet makers involve in business and agriculture that they are make and sell sweet, so halwai are include into Vaishya – the third Varna. However, Richardson states that "in practice, many modern sweet-makers do not belong to the revered halwai caste" (Richardson, 2002: 340). Regarding to this statements, in the novel of *The White Tiger*, Balram is the son of a rickshaw-puller and his families do not make or sell sweet and being workers, so that he rather belongs to the lower caste. Therefore, Balram faces many obstacles in reaching his dream to be successful entrepreneur in order to raise his caste up.

Furthermore, Balram tells his experiences to Wen Jiabao about his struggle to stand out from Laxmangarh, to be a successful entrepreneur in the Light, or in the Bangalore city in his letter. Balram states that what Mr. Premier may find in the street of the books of how to become an entrepreneur, are "so yesterday" while Balram himself is "tomorrow" (Adiga, 2008: 4). Within his

struggle, he has to fight in term of social and even cultural aspects. At the end of the story, Balram kills his master and brings his master's red bag that is containing much money. He finally changes his name by being Ashok Sharma – the name of his ex master- and opens a business by that money.

Furthermore, there are several studies that have taken *The White Tiger* as the source of data. They are Sheikh (2009) who uses Marxism theory of Karl Marx, Pierre Bourdieu and Louis Althusser, Poonkodi (2009) who uses the theory of Imagery, Singh (2009) who uses Post-colonialism theory, Schotland (2011) who uses Comparative studies, and Waller (2012) who uses Jacques Derrida's theory to analyze this novel. All of them present the analysis on the major character, social condition, and or the caste system in India. However, none of these studies analyze this novel by using the five narrative codes of Roland Barthes theory.

The codes of Roland Barthes are divided into five narrative codes. They are Hermeneutic Code, Proairetic Code or The Code of Action, Cultural Code, Connotative Code, and Symbolic Code. Furthermore, the writer of this study therefore intended to analyze this novel by using these five narrative codes of Roland Barthes to analyze *The White Tiger*. These five narrative codes are appropriate to use in analyze and interpret this novel because this novel consists of many cultural aspects, connotations, and symbols that they are part of these five narrative codes itself. For example, the interpretations of things, name of the characters like the name of Munna, Balram, The White Tiger, and Ashok Sharma.

1.2 Statements of Research Problem

Related to the background of the study, this study discusses the Five Narrative Codes of Roland Barthes toward the novel of Aravind Adiga, entitled *The White Tiger*. The research problem can be formulated on questions:

1. What are the hermeneutic codes of Roland Barthes that appear in Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*?
2. What are the proairetic codes of Roland Barthes that appear in Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*?
3. What are the cultural codes of Roland Barthes that appear in Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*?
4. What are the connotative codes of Roland Barthes that appear in Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*?
5. What are the symbolic codes of Roland Barthes that appear in Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*?

1.3 Objectives of The Study

In line with the statements of the research problem previously, this study attends to explain:

1. The hermeneutic codes of Roland Barthes in the novel of Aravind Adiga entitled *The White Tiger*.
2. The proairetic codes of Roland Barthes in the novel of Aravind Adiga entitled *The White Tiger*.
3. The cultural codes of Roland Barthes in the novel of Aravind Adiga entitled *The White Tiger*.

4. The connotative codes of Roland Barthes in the novel of Aravind Adiga entitled *The White Tiger*.
5. The symbolic codes of Roland Barthes in the novel of Aravind Adiga entitled *The White Tiger*.

1.4 Significances of The Study

Hopefully, this study is expected to give contributions both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this study is expected to enrich reader's knowledge about Roland Barthes theory of his five narrative codes. Meanwhile, practically this study is expected to be useful references for lecturer, student, and even the society about India, its culture, and the issues within Indian society based on *The White Tiger* novel.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

This study discusses the five narrative codes of Roland Barthes in the novel from Aravind Adiga entitled *The White Tiger*. Furthermore, the writer limits the analysis to focus only on the narrator's narrations in describing both the condition, situation, and especially cultural, symbol, and connotative elements that occur through the story. This study is also considering the utterances from the characters that exist within the story related to the five narrative codes of Roland Barthes. It is not only to give evidences to the reader, but also in order to strengthen the writer's statement.