

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the background of study, statement of the research problems, objectives of the study, significance of the study, and the scope and limitation of the study.

1.1 Background of the study

Racial discrimination is the unequal treatment of individuals or groups on the basis of some, usually categorical, attribute, such as race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, or social class membership (George A, and Achilles G. 1979). It means that racial discrimination is something done by person's treatment to another person or group that get a negative attitude.

According to Aguirre and Turner (2011), discrimination is the act of denying an individual, group or subpopulation individuals by another individual, group, or subpopulation access to valued resources. The statement shows that discrimination is process by certain groups of people to get what they want, also to practice of treating someone or a certain group of society in less fairly way than others based on their races. In addition, racial discrimination can also be seen in some literary works, one of them is poem.

Poetry is one of literary works which has inside meaning and extensive of sense. So that is why every reader has different interpretation with the other readers. Many readers have the difficulties when reading a poem, so when reading a poem have to read slowly, carefully, and attentively.

Furthermore, poem can be one of ways for human to express their feeling in written. People can create poem based on experiences or feeling. According to Ollila and Jantas, the goal of poetry is to tell the story, express the various kind of emotion, thought or idea (2006). So that is why, most of the author tells their message by using the beautiful language.

Meanwhile, according to Jantas (2006), poem is a written language that is rhythmically structured and has the aim of expressing one's feelings in the form of literary works. It means that poem is one of way for human to express their feeling in written and also can be delivered a message through poem using written diction and patterns.

Poem is a form of imaginative expression of a person's strong feelings towards a memory or experience (Words Worth, 1800). It can be seen in Langston Hughes poem that shows a real condition that happened to black people. In some of the poems by Langston Hughes describe the life of lower class people, that is, real life black people in lower social, economic strata and superficial groups and prejudices based on skin color in the black community. That is why the writer chooses to analysis theme in Langston Hughes poem as the topic in this study, because it happens in life.

Related to the previous paragraph, Langston Hughes is famous American black writer. During the mind 1950 and 1960, Hughes wanted the black writers to be more objective about their life and their race. Langston Hughes has purpose to bring two worlds together, between black and white people to make them one, so that his poem becomes controversial poem in America.

Langston Hughes poem shows the black condition. The theme of Langston Hughes' poems is equal to be human being. The blacks have a dream as whites. The poem

communicates experiences, emotions, attitudes and proposition by dealing with a particular situation or event that implicitly embodies abstracts generalizations. (Altenbern and Lewis, 1966).

In this research, the writer uses several poems by Langston Hughes such as; *Let America Be America Again*, *The Negro Mother*, *The weary Blues*, *I too*, and *Negro*. These poems describe the racial discrimination that results the inequalities and ethnicity. The writer is interested in choosing Langston Hughes poems because the poems are show discrimination in social aspect and economical aspect. The racial discrimination in poem by Langston Hughes illustrated through the vocabulary contained therein. The use of imagery, metaphor and several other formal elements are able to describe the theme in the poem on the text itself and not based on how the reader feels when reading the poem by Langston Hughes.

The purpose of writer in choosing the poem by Langston Hughes is to find out one of the themes about racial discrimination in Langston Hughes Poems. In this research, the writer focuses on analyzing the text itself to provide facts and does not involve the author's background, reader feelings and other extrinsic elements.

In addition, to analyze the poems *Let America Be America Again*, *The Negro Mother*, *The weary Blue*, *I Too* and *Negro* the writer uses new criticism. There are several studies using poems by Langston Hughes. The first is Hutami (2017) used Socio-Cultural-Historical Approach to analyze poem from Langston Hughes entitled *I Too*, *Merry-Go-Round* and *Ku Klux*. His study focused on racial discrimination experienced by the poet. The second is Subhan (2011) used sociological approach to connect between historical backgrounds and the

literary works that written in that time entitled *Racism against Africa American Portrayed in Angelina Weld Grimke's Rachel*.

In relation with the previous paragraph, this study used new criticism theory to analyze the meaning of racial discrimination contained in the poem. In addition, the writer wants to explain this meaning based on the text itself or based on textual evidence. “The *text itself*” became the battle cry of the New Critical effort to focus our attention on the literary work as the sole source of evidence for interpreting it (Tyson, 2006). It means that, in this theory readers can interpret the meaning or theme in poem based on the text itself and several elements contained in the theory such as: imagery, symbol, Alliteration, metaphor. This is done to provide evidence of meaning in the poem based on the text itself.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Related to the background of the study, this study discusses racial discrimination in Langston Hughes's poems (*Let America Be America Again*, *The Negro Mother*, *The weary Blue*, *I Too* and *Negro*). The Racial Discrimination will be analyzed in this study are imagery, symbol, metaphor, and simile.

The reasearch question can be addressed as follows:

1. How is racial discrimination represented in the poems through formal elements?

1.3 Objective of The Study

Based on the research questions, the objective of the study are:

1. To explain the racial discrimination represented in the poems through formal elements

1.4 The Significance of The Study

This study is expected to support analysis poem to discover the theme, especially in poems (*Let America Be America Again*, *The Negro Mother*, *The weary Blues*, *I too* , and *Negro*) then, the result of the study is capable to enrich the readers knowledge and understanding especially about analyzing the poem using new criticism. This study is practically give better understanding about the poem. Meanwhile, the readers will be easy to understand and analyze the poem especially for the students of English department.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of this study is new criticism to analyze poems entitled *Let America Be America Again*, *The Negro Mother*, *The weary Blue*, *I Too*, and *Negro* by Langston Hughes in order to find the themes and the messages. Since the study identifies the racial discrimination, so that it uses new criticism and focuses on imagery, symbol, methapor, simile. The analysis limited only on some words and phrases in the poem to obtain the theme.