

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

All humans have their own habit of how they live in the society. People use their habit in their daily life continually. This brings to the conclusion that such habit is so called as culture. It deals with Triandis (1994:15) who defines that culture provides traditions that tell people what has worked in the past and makes it easy for humans to pick behaviors that may work again in the present. Customs make the social environment more predictable.

All cultures are simultaneously very similar and very different. The researchers of cultural study can expect similarities when they compare cultures that have emerged in similar ecologies. When these conditions do not hold for social behaviors, they should expect to encounter differences (Triandis, 1994:6). It is accordance with the writer's study in which she only focuses her discussion on the cross cultural misunderstanding of British and India as depicted in "A Passage to India" that shows the different cultures of both nations that lead to the misunderstanding.

A cultural misunderstanding sometimes arises when two people or more coming from different cultures and backgrounds are collided in a situation. Problems of misinterpretations do not result every time to the members from the different cultures in communication. Some misunderstandings may not be significant and can be easily ignored or reminded in the society. Other conflicts

are more serious in cause misinterpretations and create persistent negative attitudes toward foreigners (Holidin, 2004:39). However, it is not enough. Cross-cultural misunderstanding problems may not be due to language code, but to the different cultural assumptions about what behavior is appropriate in certain society. Misunderstanding problems may also arise because of different expectations about the structure of information and argument (Smith in Ngadiman, 1997: 2). Finally in this study the writer demands to analyze cross cultural misunderstanding as depicted in Foster's "A Passage to India."

Since the writer takes novel as her source of data, it is necessary to include theory of literature in this study. This is aimed at making both the writer and the reader understand both novel itself and the problem analyzed easily. Literature was primarily a treasury of costumes and customs, a source book for the history of civilization. Many of the modern readers derive their chief impressions of foreign societies from the reading of novels (Wellek and Warren, 1956:103). Based on this fact the writer takes a novel as one of literature products as her source of data in analyzing cross cultural misunderstanding in "A Passage to India."

Cross Cultural Misunderstanding problems are found in many kinds of novels. One novel that depicts this problem is the novel written by Edwards Morgans Forster "A Passage to India." That is why the writer determined to analyze this novel. In analyzing a novel, she chooses the one of the greatest English novelists and the most famous one with his universal works that is E.M. Forster.

The reason that the writer chooses E.M. Forster is that he has some uniqueness. In his novels, Forster does not only challenges the artistic and thematic conventions of the novels of manners, but the traditions of manners and morals on which Englishmen's life and fiction depended. His characters do not discover a place within the community, but remains outside the community. The plots establish the validity of instinct, passion, and inner life (Levin and Hugo, 1962:117). Moreover that Forster's plots represent the exploration of his principle characters to escape social entrapment by expressing feelings and passions and by creating personal relationship. He expanded the novel's range beyond the drawing rooms that provide the setting for so much of the English novels. In his efforts to reach for poetry and passion he also expanded the novel geographically (India is an essential and troubling reality in "A Passage to India" that gives significance to the world he occupies), sociologically (Leonard Bast; the schism that divide classes, races, and religions), and cosmologically (mysterious Marabar caves and the Hindu objective in "A Passage to India") (Levin and Hugo, 1962:117).

However, the writer chooses "A Passage to India" instead of other novels because it has some uniqueness as Levin and Hugo state in their essay that "A Passage to India" is original in concept, theme and execution (1962: 122). It means that "A Passage to India" describes the real situation of social life in India. The novel describes the clash between English and the traditional Indian cultures in India and shows considerable criticism of Forster's portraits of the English in India. This novel depicts social psychology, and racial obstacles to human relationship which can also happen in real life.

As Forster saw how the Indian lived under the rule of English, he was bound to write a “True novel” about the relationship between the English and the Indians (Ernawati, 1987:5). Forster’s understanding of the real Indian society at that time championed the authenticity of the content of the novel. Throughout the novel, Forster who was inspired by the condition of societies surrounding him during his stay in India presented “A Passage to India” successfully.

Another reason for choosing E.M. Forster is the fact, so far, as the writer understands it, that none of the students of the English Department of Widya Mandala University has conducted a research and written a thesis on novels by this author. Thus, the writer of this study would analyze the theme of the cultural misunderstanding problems as depicted in E.M. Forster’s novel.

1.2. Statement of the problems

Based on the background of the study described above, the writer formulates the problems as follows:

1.2.1 What causes of cultural misunderstanding between the characters are depicted in E.M. Forster’s “A Passage to India” ?

1.2.2 How are they resolved?

1.3. Objective of the Study

In line with the problem of the study, the objective of the study are to find out the cultural misunderstanding problems between British and India and the resolution of the misunderstanding problems as depicted in E.M. Forster’s “A Passage to India.”

1.4. Significance of the Study

The writer hopes that the result of this study can give contributions to the student of English Department at Widya Mandala University related to problem analyzed such as cross cultural understanding and misunderstanding. The writer also expects that the readers will learn about the possible causes of the problems and the possible solutions. By this study, the writer also wishes that the reader will know that the relationship between human beings always exists in the human being's daily life, so that it is important to maintain it better.

1.5. Definition of Key Terms

In order to avoid misinterpretation, it is better to define terms applied in this thesis.

1. Literature

Literature is an expression of society. Literature, at any given time, is mirrors of social situation 'correctly.' Literature can be connected with concrete economic, political, and social situation. Of course there are interrelationships between all spheres of human activities (Wellek and Warren, 1956:105).

2. Novel

Novel is structured imitation of life and is not to be confused with a literal transcription of life itself. It organizes and refines the raw material of fact to emphasize and clarify what is the most significant in life (Pickering, 1989:30).

3. Conflicts

Conflicts simply mean that a story brings together two opposing forces, which is called as a protagonist (that is, one who struggle for) and an antagonist (that is, one who struggle against), and then develop and resolves the struggle between this two forces (Scott and Madden, 1976:6).

4. Culture

Culture is the complex whole of the system of concepts and usages, organizations, skills, and instruments by means of which mankind deals with physical, biological, and human nature in satisfaction of its needs (Panunzio in Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1952:82).

5. Cross Cultural Misunderstanding

Cross Cultural Misunderstanding is the misunderstanding of a person from alien culture toward a complex pattern when it has a different meaning across culture (Holidin, 2004:56).

1.6 Scope and Limitation

As matter of fact there are a lot of aspects which can influence the relationship between India and Britain. However, in this study the writer will limit her analysis on cultural misunderstanding causes and solutions as depicted in "A Passage to India," which bring much influence to the relationship between Englishmen and Indian.

1.7 The Organization of the Thesis

The writer divides this study into five chapters. Introduction of the study, including the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, the definition of key terms, the scope and limitation, and the organization of the thesis, are in chapter one. Then chapter two deals with the review of related literature. The writer presents the research methodology in chapter three. The analysis will be discussed in chapter four. In the last chapter, chapter five, the writer makes conclusion about what she has already analyzed.