

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, there are some points conveyed including background of the study, problems formulation, limitation of the study, objectives of the study, significance of the study, and organization of research report.

A. Background of the Study

Literature is an expression of society (Wellek and Warren, 1949). It can be mirror to see what is social situation happened at the moment or it can be expected story to be real in society. According to Roberts and Jacobs (1995), short story is one of literary work which belongs to prose fiction. The short story can be analyzed in this study to know more about what kind of particular cases exist in society as described in the literary work. Twentieth century will be the main setting in this study. Twentieth century itself is the era of globalization. It makes people easy to move from one region to others to fulfill their desires. This makes people with different cultures and backgrounds interact each other. This moving can create multiculturalism. It happens when some groups of cultures and society exist and interact in one region (Wulandari, 2010). Caleb Rosado defines

Multiculturalism is a system of beliefs and behaviors that recognizes and respects the presence of all diverse groups in an organization or society, acknowledges and values their socio-cultural differences, and encourages and enables their continued contribution within an

inclusive cultural contact which empowers all within the organization or society (1997:2).

The other definition of multiculturalism comes from Bikhu Parekh (2000, pp. 2-3), he wrote that multiculturalism is not about difference and identity *per se* but about those that are embedded in and sustained by culture; that is a body of beliefs and practices in terms of which a group of people understand themselves and the world and organize their individual and collective lives. Thus, it can be concluded that multiculturalism exists in society. It becomes such a system of belief that respects all the socio-cultural aspects within the society or organization. Another issue which appears after the existence of multiculturalism is discrimination (Calma, 2007: 8). As written in article entitled *Discrimination*, it is defined that discrimination contradicts a basic principle of human rights: that all people are equal in dignity and entitled to the same fundamental rights. This principle is repeated in every fundamental human rights document (2007: 224). Discrimination itself can make some groups of people are treated differently. It happens to one person to the other because of some differences. Those are the difference of religion, belief, race, color, or ethnicity. In a particular case, there exists a discrimination called as racial discrimination. A journal entitled *National Action Plan to combat Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance* defines racial discrimination as following.

Racial Discrimination is any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, color, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the

recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life (2015:6).

Briefly, it can be seen that the definition of racial discrimination concerns to the unequal treatment of race, color, or ethnic origin which imply in public life. This concept, is similar to the definition of racism. According to the same source as written above, it is defined that:

Racism is an ideological construct that assigns a certain race and/or ethnic group to a position of power over others on the basis of physical and cultural attributes, as well as economic wealth, involving hierarchical relations where the ‘superior’ race exercises domination and control over others. Racism is a denial of people’s basic human rights, dignity and respect. Its expression ranges from small, every day acts of discrimination, through to barriers and omissions that may be inadvertently established at an institutional level, to acts of threatening behaviour and violence (2015:6-7).

The definition of racism that can be concluded is that the ideology where one group is superior than others. Racism is a belief that a certain race or ethnic tends to be dominant and control over other races. Gillborn (2008) even states that racism happens almost everywhere, and the target of this racism is just like the bullying target, someone with different color, race, or culture. Another definition of racism is based on Boyle (2005: 1) who explains that “Racism is to be found in all parts of the world. It is present in the workplace, in education, in health care

and in the courts. It is to be found in the media and the Internet.” From the statements, it can be seen that racism happens in many kind of aspects. Those can be in workplace, educational place, health care environment, and in the court. It can be caused by the difference of ethnicity, educational background, or even perspectives and the ways of thinking. So, from the definition above, it can be concluded that both racial discrimination and racism is similar. Both of them are concerning to give unfair treatment to other based on race, color, or ethnicity.

This kind of racism or racial discrimination will give bad impacts to the victim. Gillborn (2008) says that the racism object could be hurt both physically and mentally. It means that the differences based on race, color, or ethnicity may not only hurt one’s physically but also. “I had suffered the cruelty of their cleanliness and the tyranny of their culture to the breaking point.” (Yeziarska, 1920,10). The discrimination which is felt by the Anzia is cruel. She had suffered the cruelty of being different with other cultures that mentally discriminate her in society. The statement also can be example as the effect of racism that hurt mentally. Moreover, racism happens because there is a society who meets other society with some differences that can not be blended. So that there will be the one who feels discriminated.

There is a *cause* for discrimination based on a variety of factors.

Article 2 of the CRC, for example, specifically names as causes of discrimination “the child’s or his or her parent’s or legal guardian’s race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other

status". The final item, "or other status", allows for many other causes of discrimination such as social class, occupation, sexual orientation or preferred language (Discrimination, 2007: 224).

It explains that racial discrimination will never work without a cause, and there will be many causes of that. The different nationality or social origin which is added with different color, ethnic, and status make the discrimination happened in society. This also can be seen in Anzia Yezierska's *Soap and Water* short story. "She told me that my skin looked oily, my hair unkempt, and my finger-nails sadly neglected" (Yezierska, 1920:10). The statement tells how Miss Whiteside explained clearly about the Anzia's bad appearance which could not be accepted by her. Moreover, Anzia is also picturized as someone who would never be accepted by Miss Whiteside although she tried to have better appearance.

She never looked into my eyes. She never perceived that I had a soul. She did not see how I longed for beauty and cleanliness. How I strained and struggled to lift myself from the dead toil and exhaustion that weighed me down. She could see nothing in people like me, except the dirt and the stains on the outside (Yezierska, 1920:10).

From the paragraph in the short story as written above, Anzia explained how Miss Whiteside never perceived her soul even though Anzia had tried to have beauty and cleanliness. Anzia thought Miss Whiteside always sees nothing on people like her except the bad appearance. She feels Miss Whiteside never recognizes her struggling to have good things on her body. The racism described above is similiar with the concept of racism by Dr. Rowan Wolf. He states that racism as a

belief, policy or it is more like a regulation to subordinate the people based on skin color, or their race. According to the statement, what happened in Anzia as explained above is a kind of racism on her personal appearance. Thus, it can be seen clearly that actually the racial discrimination is exist in the Anzia Yezierska's *Soap and Water* short story.

This phenomenon of the discrimination happened in Anzia Yezierska's *Soap and Water*. The main character of *Soap and Water* is told as the one who feels some discriminations because she does not have good appearance as a Russian who moved to America. She has oily skin and unkempt hair that makes her look unclean. That is why she is discriminated by American clean society as depicted in the short story. The situations also seem worse because her surrounding can not accept her well.

This study is intended to describe racial discrimination portrayed in Anzia Yezierska's *Soap and Water* short story. This short story is chosen because the story is based on the main character's experience dealing with racial discrimination, then there will be a lot of things to learn by others to survive in facing racial discrimination in multicultural society.

B. Problems Formulation

There are two problems which is investigated in this study, as follows:

1. How is the racial discrimination described in Anzia Yezierska's *Soap and Water* short story?

2. How does the main character deal with racial discrimination portrayed in Anzia Yeziarska's *Soap and Water* short story?

C. Limitation of the Study

The study limitation concerns on the racial discrimination existed in Anzia Yeziarska's *Soap and Water* short story and how the main character deals with the discrimination.

D. Objective of the Study

The objectives of this study are:

1. To describe the racial discrimination in the Anzia Yeziarska's *Soap and Water* short story.
2. To describe the ways of the main character deals with racial discrimination as portrayed in Anzia Yeziarska's *Soap and Water* short story.

E. Significance of the Study

In this study, there are some following expectations:

1. This study of racial discrimination which is portrayed in Anzia Yeziarska's *Soap and Water* short story and how Anzia deals with the discrimination would be beneficial for the students of English Literature Program who would like to learn more about all things correlated to racial discrimination.

2. For other researchers, this study may be beneficial for them in conducting a new study related to the issue of racial discrimination portrayed in literary works.

F. Organization of the Study

In order to make this study easier to understand, this final project is presented in five chapters. The first chapter is introduction. This chapter covers the background of the study, limitation of the study, problems formulation, objective of the study, significance of the study and organization of the research report. The second chapter is review of related literature. It consists of synopsis, and some theories of related literature: American culture, racial discrimination, the realization of racial discrimination in American society in twentieth century, and theoretical framework of the study. The third chapter is research method. It includes types of research, data organizing, and analyzing of the data. The fourth chapter is findings and discussion. It has racial discrimination portrayed in the Anzia Yezierska's *Soap and Water* short story and the way dealing with racial discrimination. The fifth chapter is conclusion and suggestion.