CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this part, the writer explains the background of the study, the research question, the definition of the key terms, the objective of the study, the significances of the study, and the organization of the thesis.

A. Background of the Study

Literature often illustrated as a permanent expression in written or spoken form about life and the universe, both real and fictional. According to Eagleton (1996: 1), literature is writing form that is imaginative which means fiction and it has the definition that in literature someone can imagine something in creative attitude. Furthermore, the expression of imagination or thoughts can express through literary works.

Literary work defines as an art that uses words as a basis for building depictions, thoughts, or stories in a meaningful way. Pradopo (1994: 26) states that literary works as an image of the human life and also world as truth or the author's mind to portray anything in the primary criterion that applied to literary works.

Based on the definitions above, the writer draws the notion that literature is more than just a writing but a living thing. The author's thought has a role as the heart of a literary work that can make the reader's mind likely to influence by the views of the author which literature described as a form of media for inculcating values.

According to Sumardjo and Saini (1986: 32), novels and short stories are the most popular fiction in literary works that are most written and read. The novel as a form of fiction provides several values for each character, particularly those offered by a specific cast of the novel. Sumardjo (1998: 29) says that novel is a story written in extended prose which means that the story has a complex plot, several characters, and a variety of settings.

The messages conveyed by a novel is typically linked to societal phenomena depending on the setting time or true events that may occur in real life. Taylor (1981: 62) says that novel is a prose of work of quit some length and complexity which attempts to reflect and express something of the quality or value of human experience. In line with Taylor, Watson (1979: 3-4) says that the novel is defined as a method of learning about how things or cognitive instruments and those who turn stories as evidence must consider how often in conversation we use them to make points or answer questions.

Many stories of different characters in literary works, one of which is the story of woman. The woman characters represented in the novels often have various attractive characteristics, but sometimes women in literary works are portrayed as weak creatures. Since decades ago, many authors created literature about women's lives. Morris (1993: 7) states that literature gives people insight into the disadvantages that women have to receive from society. In many fields and cultures, they provide insight into people in society by complaining about gender discrimination.

From the existence of gender discrimination, it formed a stereotype in society. In gender stereotypes, women suffer many unfair treatments due to the negative labels which are made by the society. Stereotyping is indeed the act of labeling groups of people in negative ways (Fakih, 2012: 16). Furthermore, Aksu (2005: 14) states that these stereotypes are the social conventions that require men and women to behave differently. That way, women are characterized as dependent on others, weak, and preoccupied with their feelings. In contrast, men are stereotyped as independent, steadfast, and rational. Hudriati (2020: 77) describes that the attribution of characteristics to a person based on their group membership is known as stereotyping. In short, stereotypes are assumptions made by society about a group of people, some of them are based on gender.

Faced with such gender stereotypes as the foundation, the novel "The Handmaid's Tale" written by Margaret Atwood, focused on the role of women as handmaid named Offred as the main character to sexual slavery in a totalitarian state. The phenomenal of The Handmaid's Tale is Atwood's most well-known work. Further, The Handmaid's Tale has won several awards, one of them in the 1987 as the first Arthur C. Clarke Award for Best Science Fiction, Governor-General's Award for Fiction (1986), Toronto Arts Award and Los Angeles Times Fiction Award (Howells, 2006: xv).

Moreover, Gheorghiu and Praisler (2021: 61) state that Margaret Atwood's The Handmaid's Tale (1985) has been adapted into novels that is a graphic novel (2019) and a sequel novel The Testaments (2019), audio-book

(2013), feature film (1990) and TV series (2017-2021), radio (2000) and theatre plays, ballet (2013) and operas (2019 and 2000-2003). Thus, it displays a valuable, cultural phenomenon with a crucial message for women and young girls about female empowerment as well as resistance to stand and fight against the woman stereotypes.

The Handmaid's tale by Margaret Atwood is one of those literary works about women's lives in a patriarchal society which can open people's eyes that until now many women still face stereotyping. Walby (1990: 20) defines that a patriarchal social system is one in which men control, exploit, and oppress women. The novel contains a woman named Offred who is forced to live as 'handmaid' producing children against her. The novel is kind of science fiction which set in a dystopian future where a totalitarian regime has overthrown the United States government and created the Republic of Gilead. The novel became an instant feminist classic upon its release in 1985. Studying this novel in recent era is important to track back how women stereotyped since 19th Century in United States. What interesting move is the object of oppression is white woman.

Reading literary works that reflect on women's lives is worthwhile as it can broaden readers' awareness of women stereotypes so that people can have a deeper level of thought and more concern about it. Moreover, it can inspire stereotypical roles in women to challenge gender stereotypes.

The writer uses the feminism approach to focus on female character and see the stereotypes addressed to a woman as main character. The issue of

rights for women first became prominent during the French and American revolutions in the late 19th century. Feminism has become a huge area of study since the resurgence of the women's movement in the sixties (Osborne, 2001: 7).

Thus, the writer decided to conduct study on this topic because some issues in the field of feminism are frequently interesting to be discussed, some questions remain unanswered, and some issues remain unresolved. One American politician, Hillary R. Clinton gives speech at the UN ahead of International Women's Day, she states that women's and girls' rights are the unfinished business of the twenty-first century.

As Historian Judith Bennett writes that almost every girl born today will endure greater restraints and restrictions than a boy born today into the same social conditions as that girl (Bennett, 2006: 10). It can be interpreted that women's difficulties still exist and must be solved. It examines stereotypes and perceptions of women in literature, literary mistreatment of women, the status of women in patriarchal society, and the issues that women experience in the modern era (Cuddon, 1999: 315).

Based on the explanations above, the writer conducted the research with the title of this thesis is "Woman Stereotypes Under Patriarchy System on Margaret Atwood's Novel "The Handmaid's Tale".

B. Research Question

According to the phenomenon found in the background above, the research question is: how are the woman stereotypes in Margaret Atwood's Novel "The Handmaid's Tale" realized?

C. Definition of the Key Terms

The writer defines the key term which is aimed to make easy to understand the topic. There are five terms which are presented: Patriarchy, Women Stereotype, Novel, Margaret Atwood, and The Handmaid's Tale Novel.

1. Patriarchy

Walby (1990: 20) says that a system of social structures and practices in which men more dominate, oppress and exploit women is called patriarchy.

2. Women Stereotype

Stereotypes for women have emerged in which women are treated differently from men. There are many stereotypes that are made by society on a group of people and some of them are based on gender. Johnson lists some common stereotypes that society gives women as well: inefficiency, cooperation, mutuality, equality, sharing compassion, caring, emotional expressiveness (Johnson, 1997: 160).

3. Novel

Sumardjo (1998: 29) says that the term "novel" refers to a story written in long prose, with a complex plot, numerous characters, and varied settings.

4. Margaret Atwood

Margaret Eleanor Atwood was born in Ottawa, Canada, on November 18, 1939. Atwood has written everything from children's books to literary and cultural commentary. Her work has been translated into over twenty-two languages and serves as the foundation for course syllabi spanning from A Level to doctoral studies, as well as a complete academic institution. Atwood has also received a number of prestigious literary awards, including The Booker Prize, The Giller Prize, and The Governor General's Award, and she has honorary doctorates from several universities, including Harvard, Cambridge, Toronto, and the Université de la Sorbonne Nouvelle in Paris. She was elected to the Royal Society of Canada in 1987 (Macpherson, 2010: 1-3).

5. The Handmaid's Tale Novel

The Handmaid's Tale is Atwood's most well-known work, depicting a horrifying future that emphasizes the crucial necessity for women's tales. This novel is told from the perspective of the main character, Offred. Offred is one of the first wave of handmaids, women forced to bore children for infertile, wealthy couples, and she gives us the

perspective of a recent captive struggling to adjust to Gilead's new totalitarian government (Macpherson, 2010: 53).

D. Objective of the Study

Based on the research question, the aim of this study is: to find out the types of woman stereotypes realized in Margaret Atwood's Novel "The Handmaid's Tale".

E. Significances of the Study

The result of this research is expected to give a number of significances, as follows:

1. Theoretically

This study can be used for the next researcher who wants to conduct a research in the realm of literature. Other researchers may use the finding of this study as one of the references in conducting further studies about literature especially women stereotypes in the patriarchal system based on literary works.

2. Practically

The research can give the benefit practically for the writer and the readers.

a. For the Writer

The writer can get knowledge about depiction of women stereotypes in a patriarchal system in a novel, entitled "The

Handmaid's Tale" by Margaret Atwood. In addition, this study can improve the writer's skill on academic writing.

b. For the Readers

By reading this study, readers can get useful information and help the readers learning about the literature field, especially feminism that can enrich their knowledge.

The writer hopes that the readers are more aware of the fact that there should be no discrimination that happens because of differences, especially woman stereotypes against women since every human was born with the same right, either a man or a woman.

c. Pedagogically

The purpose of this study is to invite students of English Education Study programs to critically find out about women stereotypes in the novel. Moreover, the result of this study can help the English learners to append the theory about literature especially in feminism and also can be a comparison of other exist theories.

F. Organization of the Thesis

The writer organizes the thesis into five chapters, which are introduction, review to related literature, method of investigation, findings and interpretation, as well as conclusion and suggestions. Chapter I presents introduction which consists of background of the study, research question, definition of the key terms, objective of the study, significances of the study,

and organization of the thesis. Chapter II discusses review of related literature which consists of theoretical study, previous studies, and theoretical framework. Chapter III is method of investigation which consists of research design, the source of data, technique of data collection, and technique of data analysis. Chapter IV is findings and interpretation. The last is chapter V which covers conclusion and suggestions.