

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Literature, in a broad sense, could be described as compositions that tell stories, describe situations, and express emotions. Traditionally, literature was the primary source that individuals used to learn about other cultures and investigate stereotypes. Teachers used plays, novels, poems, and short stories to teach students how to critically appraise the injustice of grouping people from diverse cultures into unrepresentative categories (Powers, 1998: 1).

In intercultural communication, the term *stereotype* refers to an exaggerated beliefs and images about a group of people and often based on a lack of information or contact. To say, for instance, that Americans are usually materialistic, that Frenchmen are romantic, that Black people are good at music, is merely to present guidelines about a group that certainly do not apply to everyone.

When stereotyping, we give a number of characteristics to a group to create its standardized image. In other words, stereotype could be described as a shared conception of characters of a group. As categorized as a group, people are thought to possess relatively same beliefs and show similar behaviors (Adler, 1996, cited in Ren and Wang, 2006: 2).

Stereotypes, whether positive or negative, can dramatically shape the way individuals perceive and interact with members of different groups (Allport, 1954: 1). The knowledge and attitudes that individuals hold toward members of either their own culture or members of other cultures are central to understanding cultural differences and interactions (Leong & Schneller, 1997).

Stereotype of a certain group can give some information about a particular culture. Every culture has its own set of core values which reflect how its members feel and act. Within that context, the members learn what is proper or improper to do and believe. Hence, we could learn another culture by reading and analyzing a literary work. As described by John Gay (1998), there is some insightfully information, trade, economy, technology, and other various knowledge that we can attain from literary works. It links us with cultural, ideological, and religious world of which we are a part.

There are a lot of mediums in which stereotypes are provided; direct or indirect experiences, mass media (e.g. television, films, music, newspapers, advertisement, etc), and certainly literature. One reason people need stereotypes is because it is impossible for them to personally experience everything, and as a measure of efficiency they develop simplified perceptions based on a few outstanding characteristics (Chen, 1998).

In literature, stereotypes are cliché or predictable characters or situations (Wikipedia-Free Encyclopedia). Throughout history, authors have drawn from stereotypical characters and situations, in order to connect the audience or the reader

with the story. Prose fictions such as novel, short story, or novelette are powerful tool of the socialization achieved through passing on stereotypes, because the written word is seen as having special power for representing objective reality (Bowers, 1987, cited in Jacobs, 1995: 1). People often lose sight of the fact that the written word is no more than a reflection of those people who produced it (Halliday, 1982).

Indonesia is a nation of diverse ethnic groups. Many stereotypes related to ethnic groups exist in the society. In such multicultural society, people must learn to become increasingly sensitive to the needs of many ethnic groups. However, it is important not to rely fully on stereotype since the wrong stereotype may cause misunderstanding even a conflict. We must not assume that everyone within a culture fits the stereotype. Many do, but certainly not all. That is why studying stereotype in a multiethnic society become important to avoid misunderstanding or conflict among different ethnic groups.

Javanese is the biggest ethnic groups in Indonesia (Raffles, 2008). They were traditionally concentrated in the provinces of East Java, Central Java, and Yogyakarta. However, due to migration within Indonesia as part of government transmigration programs, there are now high populations of Javanese people in almost all Indonesian provinces. Today, Javanese play important role in Indonesian government especially in politics and military.

According to the background above, the writer is interested in analyzing the stereotypes of Javanese in four novelettes written by Habiburrahman El Shirazy. They are *Dalam Mihrab Cinta*, *Takbir Cinta Zahrana*, *Mahkota Cinta*, and *Pudarnya*

Pesona Cleopatra. The writer chose these novelettes because the characters involved in the story are mostly Javanese. Moreover, he is a young popular writer who has strong influence on literature at the present time.

1.2 Importance of the Study

Through this research we learn to find and analyze the stereotype of a certain group depicted in literary works. Furthermore, we can learn the culture of a particular group to increase our knowledge and to avoid misunderstanding among different ethnic groups.

1.3 Limitation of the Study

In order to get more reliable result, the writer only focuses on character and characterization to identify the stereotypes of Javanese people and the meaning of those stereotypes. The characters analyzed are all Javanese characters, either male or female in each story.

1.4 Research Questions

To guide the research, the writer formulates the research questions as follow:

How are Javanese stereotypes constructed in the stories?

1. What Javanese stereotypes are found in the stories?
2. What do these stereotypes signify from a cultural study point of view?

1.5 Aims of the study

The study is aimed at:

1. Describing Javanese stereotypes that are found in the story.
2. Interpreting these stereotypes using Cultural Studies.

1.6 Research method

The analysis is conducted by means of qualitative approach and descriptive method. According to Kato (2000) in his research, that compared to quantitative research, in qualitative approach we may get information beyond what we expect from its results. Moreover, Jones (1997: 5) also states that qualitative approach allows the researcher to develop an overall “picture” of the subject under investigation.

A descriptive method is used in order to provide a systematic description of a situation or condition of a phenomenon as factual and accurate as possible (Joppe, 2001). The data that would be analyzed are words, sentences, dialogues, and discourses contained in the novel. Then, Cultural study will be applied to interpret the data collected. The writer will also provide the analysis with relevant sources (articles, books, journals, etc) pertinent to cultural study especially some concepts of stereotypes, representation, and identity.

1.7 Clarification of the Terms

1. **Novelette** : A piece of short prose fiction having a word count between 7,500 and 17,500 in length (Wikipedia-Free Encyclopedia).
2. **Stereotypes** : Exaggerated beliefs and images about groups of people and are often based on a lack of information or contact (Levine & Adelman, 1993).
3. **Ethnic group** : Those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonization and migration (Max Weber, 1978).
4. **Culture** : The set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs (UNESCO, 2002).
5. **Character** : A person in a literary work. The actions of characters are what constitute the plot of a story, novel, or poem (Gale, 2000).
6. **Characterization** : The process by which an author creates vivid, believable characters in a work of art. This may be done in a variety of ways, including (1) direct description of the character by

the narrator; (2) the direct presentation of the speech, thoughts, or actions of the character; and (3) the responses of other characters to the character (Gale, 2000).

1.8 Organization of the Paper

1. Chapter I: Introduction

This chapter contains the background and the reasons why the writer chooses the topic. It also contains the research questions, the limitation of the study, and the aims of the study that the writer wants to explore.

2. Chapter II: Theoretical Foundation

This chapter comprises the supporting theories of this research from books, journals, archives, articles, and other valid references.

3. Chapter III: Research Methodology

This chapter presents the research method that the writer employed.

4. Chapter IV: Findings and Discussions

This Chapter will discuss the findings that are collected from the text.

5. Chapter V: Conclusions and Suggestions

This chapter will conclude the data that has been analyzed and gives some suggestions for the next research related to cultural study and stereotype.