CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Meaningfulness of the text depends on the reader. That is why the text is a unique object. According to Rosenblatt (1978), before the text is read it was only a paper and ink object. This neutrality gives the reader freedom to respond the text based on his/her knowledge, experience, mood, and even the purpose of reading. The neutrality of the text also opens up various possibilities for reader to respond the text.

Text is neutral because readers from various classes and community can read the same text with different perspective. For instance, an exploited labor and an employer read the same Marxist text. Marxist points out to the social class issue and social exploitation. For the labor, this text may have moved him/her to make a different because s/he realizes that his /her employer had exploited him/her. While for the employer this text may become a threat.

Besides its neutrality, the text is unique because it leaves blank for reader to fill. Iser (1980), states that text consists of written and unwritten events. Written event is media to give knowledge for reader. The unwritten event is an opportunity for reader to picture item. Unwritten event is also called blank of gap. Blank is a place for reader to wander around in the text. Blank gives reader a chance for reader to expand his/her imagination by using his/her prior knowledge.

Interaction between the reader and the text causes a unique experience, it sparks readers' mind and mood (Allen, 1988). It is possible because literary work is not only an object but also an experience that is sharpened by the reader. So when the interaction takes place, Janus (1985)

states that readers must use their own imagination that they act as the ones who give the meaning. The meaning found is not only the meaning of the text but the meaning which is constructed by the reader.

Research around ReaderResponse has ever conducted by Lutch (1977) entitled *The Possible Worlds of "My First Negro" a Reader-Response Approach to Robert Comier's Short Story.* The research is based on many theories. The research is emphasized on the indeteminance factor, and gaps and blank of literary texts. Lutch discuss the short story *My First Negro* written by Robert Comier.

The short story is chosen by Lutch because he asumed this story has blanks which allows his respondents develop the meaning. The research was conducted at a school. He offered the respondents main character, setting, conflict, plot to be discussed. The discussion was directed to the finding of blanks. The respondents got the chance to re-write the story. The result of his research is new short stories written by the respondents. These new stories are the development of blank that his respondent fill from Comier's short stories.

1.2 Limitation of the Study

The first limitation of this study is using the writer as the reader. This study is very subjective because it only use one perspective to response the novel. Besides, since the novel is about political and economic scandal, the reader at least should know basic political and economic terms presented in the novel. The reader should also relate to the recent issue in the real life to retrospect the event.

1.3 Research Questions

The research question of this study are:

1. How is the plot constructed in *Checkers*?

2. How is the blank constructed in *Checkers*?

1.4   Aims of the Study

Despite the research questions above, the aims of this study are:

1. Finding out how the plot is constructed in *Checkers*.

2. Finding out how the blank is constructed in *Checkers*

1.5   Significance of the Study

This study is significant for student of english. Although this study do not take any English students as respondents to response the text this study is important because it gives an example for the reader in analyzing a novel using their background knowledge, imagination, and mood. This study also builds their awareness when they read a text. By using all their knowledge, the students will realize reading is not a static activity.

1.6   Research Methodology

This research paper treats the literary work as a document; therefore the research methodology used is content analysis. Neuman (1997), in Leavy (2000), defines content analysis as follow:

> Content analysis is a technique for examining information, of content, in written or symbolic material… In content analysis, a researcher first identifies a body of material to analyze… and then creates a system for recording specific aspect of it. The system might include counting how often certain words or themes occur. Finally the researcher records what was found in material. He or she often measures information in content as numbers… Content analysis is used for exploratory and explanatory

research but is the most often in descriptive method. (Neuman, 1997; 31, cited by Leavy, 2000).

This study will first present the structure of the text, in this case the plot of the story, by providing textual evidences related to the structures of the plots and the blank of the plot to fill. After presenting the data, the writer will then analyze it using Reader-Response Approach based on her background knowledge and literary experience when reading the novel.

1.7   Reasons for Choosing the Topic

The reason *Checkers* is chosen is that it is has broad theme to analuyze. From the political and economic issue to family relation and friendship. *Checkers* was actually the name of the main character's dog. The dog's skin looks like a chessboard game that is why the main character called him *Checkers*.

The novel is analyzed by using Reader-Response Approach because the approch gives the readers freedom in responding the text. To limit the wide range of response, this study only analyzes the plot of the story because plot is considered as the strengh in this novel. And since this novel is mostly about political and economic issue therefore this study applies Power Relation Theory. The reason is to lessen the subjectivity of Reader-Response Approach.

1.8   Clarification of Terms

Blank   :   The term as is used to refer to the succession of

dots in a text that indicates that something has

been omitted. A novelist typically uses a mark

ellipsis to get reader's imagination working:

what's happened here? Why are not told? (Hawthorn, 2001:97)

Fiction	:	Fiction is any literary narrative, whether in prose or verse, which is invented instead of being an account of events that in fact happened. In a narrower sense fiction denoted only narrative that are written in prose, and sometimes is used simply as a synonym for the novel. (Abrams, 1981, 65)
In Medias Res	:	Originalyl means "in the middle of thing," it's the narrative starts in a critical point instead of the introduction exposition. (Abrams, 1981:55)
Narrative	:	A narrative is a story, whether in prose, or verse, involving events, characters, and what characters say and do. (Abrams, 1981:123)
Novel	:	A great variety of writings that have in common only the attribute of being extended works of fiction written in prose. (Abrams, 1981:130)
Plot	:	A plot is a unity of action. If it is apprehended by the reader or auditor as a complete and ordered structure of actions, directed toward

the intended effect, in which none of the importance part, or incidents, is nonfunctional. (Abrams, 1981:160)

Reader-Response Critic : Reader-Response Criticism does not designate any critical theory, but a focus on the process of reading literary text that is shared by many of the critical modes which has come into prominence since the 1960's. (Abrams, 1981:169)

Stucturalist Position : Structuralist Position pays more attention to structure of individual words than character in a book. However when included in under the larger term of Reader-response theory, Structuralism depends very much on the reader (Lorenzon, 2006)

1.9 Organization of the Paper

Chapter 1 Introduction

This chapter is an introduction of the research. It includes Background of the Study, Scope of the Study, Research Questions, Aims of the Study, Significance of the Study, Research Methodology, Reason for Choosing the Topic, Clarification of Terms, and Organization of the Paper.

Chapter 2 Theoretical Foundation

Chapter 2 consists of relevant theories that the researcher apply to analyz and interpret the data. The theories include in this chapter are, Reader-Response, Blanks, and Plot Structure.

Chapter 3 Research Methodology and Data Presentation

In Chapter 3 the researcher write down the methodology to analyze the text. It consists of research questions, data collection prosedure, data analysis method, and tools of analyzing the data

Chapter 4 Findings and Discussions

This chapter includes the result of the study. It consists of findings and its discussions. The data will be analyze using relavent theories from Chapter 2 and methodology from Chapter 3.

Chapter 5 Conclusion

Chapter 5 is conclusion of the research has been conducted and suggestion for further research