

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter elaborates conclusions of the research, which refer to findings and discussion in the previous chapter. In addition, this chapter also provides suggestion for those who may want to investigate related issue.

5.1 Conclusions

The research has investigated the issue of hybrid identity in Julia Alvarez's novel entitled *How the Garcia Girls Lost their Accents* (1991). Based on the data analysis, the hybrid identity of the main characters, the Garcia sisters, is constructed in, to use Bhabha's terms the 'Third Space', or the space of in-betweenness. The in-between space occupied by the Garcia sisters is categorized into in-between past and present, and in-between Dominican and American cultures. As the result of living between two different countries and cultural traditions, the sisters embody both identities as Dominican and American.

The Garcia sisters, except the youngest sister Sofia, are caught between Dominican past and the United States present. The Garcia sisters' in-between past and present is represented in the form of memories, and for Yolanda also the hallucination. The memories and hallucination that emerge and disrupt the sisters' present life appear mostly during the early years of their migration to the United States. The memories of the Island symbolize the sisters' yearning towards their old home, the Dominican Republic. Along with the hallucination, the memories also portray the trauma that the sisters had back in the Dominican Republic.

The memories and hallucination indicate that the Garcia sisters could not forget their old home even though they already moved to the United States. In other words, the

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past becomes inseparable part of the Garcia sisters' life; part of them embodies Dominican identity and another part embodies American identity. However, unlike the three sisters, Sofia is the one who does not experience the in-between past and present due to the very short time she spent in Dominican Republic. Due to her lacks of memories of the Island, Sofia is considered as the most rebellious and Americanized among the sisters. Sofia mostly spent her childhood, hit the puberty, and grew up in the United States, so that she was more accustomed to American life than Dominican life.

The Garcia sisters are also caught between Dominican and American cultures. This in-betweenness is resulted from their migration, from living in two different countries: the Dominican Republic and the United States. The sisters' migration forces them to experience Dominican and American life, and both its cultures. The space of in-betweenness that is occupied by the Garcia sisters constructs their doubled, hybrid identity as Dominican-American. The in-betweenness also leads the sisters to the feeling of displacement, linguistic and cultural inadequacy, and the sense of 'unhomely'. The term 'unhomely' is used to refer to the situation when immigrants feel 'out of place'. In the novel, 'unhomely' is especially experienced by Yolanda who is the most emphasized character in the novel. The in-betweenness makes Yolanda feels that she belongs to either the Dominican Republic or the United States and neither of them.

Furthermore, it can be concluded that the Garcia sisters manifest their identity in three ways which are categorized into adopting American life, embracing American values and preserving Dominican cultures. They struggle to become the part of American society and to be the typical Americans by adopting American life, while at the same time they are not rejecting the Dominican cultural traditions and heritage.

The facts that the Garcia sisters adopt American life and embrace American values indicate their desire to 'looking for a join', to be fully accepted into American society. Given that the sisters lived within American society, they wish to become a part of them. Therefore, the sisters strive to become Americans, to 'join' them by adjusting the American life and embracing the values that belong to the Americans in general. The

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fact that Garcia sisters adopt American life and embrace American values also symbolizes that the sisters undergo the process of mimicry. However, the sisters' mimicry towards American life and cultures is '*almost the same, but not quite*'. It means that they cannot perfectly mimic the American life, because the sisters still perceive some of Dominican cultural traditions.

Besides adopting American life and embracing American values, the Garcia sisters also manifest their hybrid identity by preserving their origin homeland cultures, Dominican cultures. The sisters are not rejecting the Dominican heritage and still retain the Dominican cultural traditions. They perceive the Dominican cultures although they admitted that they are more than adjusted into American life and they had been pretty well Americanized.

Hybrid identity that is experienced by the sisters leads them to encounter a conflicted, complicated feeling. They desire to be fully accepted into American society by adopting American life, however, they still retain their Dominican cultural traditions. The sister cannot simply disregard their old home because there are memories, family and friends in Dominican Republic. The sisters will always be a divided self; they existed in a limbo with hybrid identity. They may lose the Dominican accents, like the title of the novel, but they cannot completely ignore their Dominican past, their old home.

5.2 Suggestions

The present research chose to investigate the issue of hybrid identity of the main characters of the Julia Alvarez's novel *How the Garcia Girls lost Their Accents* (1991), the Garcia sisters. This research employs the concept in postcolonial theory: hybridity. Since the theory of hybridity is varied and complicated, the writer decided to apply Bhabha's concept of hybridity. Bhabha's concept can cover few things of hybridity issues existing in the novel such as how hybrid identity is constructed and how the main characters manifest their hybrid identities.

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Thus, for those who want to conduct research on the same issue, the writer suggests that they should pay attention to the theories employed. Furthermore, for those who want to conduct research using Bhabha's concept of hybridity, it is very useful to read many journals or books which are discussing Bhabha's concept of hybridity. The words that Bhabha used to describe and explain the concept of hybridity are a little bit complicated, so that reading journals and books is needed in order to gain more comprehension regarding to the concept. Hopefully, this paper can give a beneficial input for everyone who is doing similar research.

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