

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with introductory explanations regarding the research which include the background of the study, the research question, the aim of the study, the scope of the study, the significance of the study, the research methodology, and the organization of the paper.

1.1. Background of the Study

Postcolonialism is a theory that deals with the impact of colonization in cultures and societies and postcolonial theory emerges only after colonization occurs and after the colonized people think about their oppression and loss of cultural identity and transform it into writings and literary works (Ashcroft, et al., 2000; Bressler, 2007). Meanwhile, colonialism according to Horvath (1972) is “a form of domination – the control by individuals or groups over the territory and behavior of other individuals or groups” (p. 46). Horvath further states that colonialism has also been seen as a form of exploitation with the emphasis on economic variables and also as a culture-change process. That is why colonialism contributes to most of the countries’ construction of identity, because according to Ashcroft, et al. (1989) almost all nations in the world have experienced colonialism.

Japan happened to be one of the colonizers. In fact, Gage (1991) says that Japan was a major colonial power that took over several countries such as Korea, Taiwan, and China. However, according to Dower as cited in Hogan (2010), Japan was intensively subjected to the form of colonial occupation by almost one million American troops for roughly seven years in 1945. However, Japanese westernization was actually started during the Meiji Restoration period (Segal, 2015). According to Segal (2015), the Meiji Restoration believed that in order to strengthen Japan’s power against Western, Japanese must learn how to be “civilized” to negotiate with the Westerners and retain their independence. In Japanese’s perspective, being civilized means that they had to be more like Westerners (Segal, 2015). Through the Japanese’s interactions with the Westerners, Japan is left with significant artefacts which Tyson (2006) names as

“cultural colonization”; a situation in which the colonized country mimics the cultural values of the colonizers (p. 419).

This tendency of mimicking the colonizers’ values is called mimicry. Mimicry often occurs as the representation of the colonizers’ narcissistic behavior and the process of native “colonization-thingification” (Cesaire, 1972, p. 21). Bhaba as cited in Tibile (2009) defines mimicry as “an exaggerated copying of language, culture, manners and ideas. And this exaggeration means that mimicry is repetition with difference” (p. 87). It means that mimicry can be used as a tool for the colonizers to see how much they have influenced the colonized peoples. It can be seen in the number of how many countries copy the values of the colonizers; the more colonized countries mimic the colonizers, the bigger is the colonizers’ influence. However, in Bhabha’s perspective, mimicry can also be a symbol of inappropriate practices because the colonizers tend to treat the colonized peoples as Other; people of not wholly human, or the people of inappropriates.

To see how the practice of mimicry influences the Japanese people, conducting a research on Japanese literature in the postcolonial era can be one of the ways. Even though Japan may not be seen as a colonized country, the practice of mimicry does appear in Japanese’s literary work. According to Tyson (2006), the ideology of colonialist and anticolonialist can be existed in any literary text, so that “a work doesn’t have to be categorized as postcolonial for us to be able to use postcolonial criticism to analyze it” (p. 418).

Hence, this study uses Junichiro Tanizaki’s *Naomi*, a novel which was serialized in issues of the *Osaka Asahi* and *Josei* in 1924. *Naomi* tells a story about a *moga*, a “modern girl” who defies Japanese tradition in dress, etiquette, and morality. This novel is chosen because the description of the central character as a portrayal of a girl who is obsessed with western culture can indicate Japanese cultural colonization and mimicry. In other words, it is assumed that *Naomi* can provide data of how the central female character in the novel represents Japanese modern girls in constructing her identity by using the view point of postcolonialism.

1.2. Research Question

This research focuses on the issue of mimicry of the central female character named Naomi in Tanizaki's *Naomi* to answer this following question:

- How does mimicry shape the construction of the central female Japanese character in Junichiro Tanizaki's *Naomi*?

1.3. Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to explore the issue of mimicry in central character, Naomi, in Junichiro Tanizaki's *Naomi* and how mimicry affects the characterization in the process of character development.

1.4. Scope of the Study

In this study, the analysis of how mimicry influences the construction of the central character in Junichiro Tanizaki's *Naomi* is limited around the central female character, Naomi. Supporting characters and antagonists characters may be presented briefly to support the analysis of the central character, not to be included as the focus of attention in the study.

1.5. Significance of the Study

Generally, the result of the study is expected to give contribution to critical analysis of prose and postcolonial literature, especially in the issue of mimicry, and also, the study will broaden the research of Japanese Literature.

1.6. Research Methodology

This study used descriptive qualitative method that involves a critical analysis which seeks answer to the questions by examining various aspects of the novel (Sandelowski, 1991; Riessman, 1993). As Creswell (2003) suggests, the collected data that were used in this study were in the form of words, phrases, and sentences. They were selected as textual evidences to be reported in a subjective way.

The descriptive qualitative method was suitable for this study because it helped to discover and explore mimicry as a postcolonial issue in Tanizaki's *Naomi*.

1.6.1. Data Collection

The data were collected after doing a close reading on *Naomi*, and in the form of words, phrases, and sentences. They were gathered by identifying how the character was shaped in the depiction of the central female character in the novel, *Naomi*, by seeing the ambivalence that occurred within herself. Then, the data were framed and analyzed by using Bhabha's (1984) theory of mimicry.

1.6.2. Data Analysis

The analysis began by identifying ambivalence from *Naomi*'s practice of mimicry, then, categorizing the ambivalence based on the meanings. Furthermore, this theory helped to disclose and explore the construction of identity in *Naomi*.

1.7. Organization of the Paper

This paper was composed in this following organization:

1. Abstract

This section functions as summary of the paper presenting brief information about the content that is elaborated further in the next sections.

2. Introduction

This chapter deals with background of the study explaining what drives the writer to analyze the chosen topic, the purpose or personal intention of the writer in writing the study, the significance of the study describing what is the study's contribution in an individual or a society, and presentation of research questions.

3. Literature Review

This part of the study examines the bases of theories (theoretical framework) used in the study and also what other researchers have found in the earlier studies.

4. Methodology

This section presents the methods used in the study and also the details such as: who are involved, where the data are obtained, and how the data are collected.

5. Findings and Discussion

This chapter deals with the findings when the study or analysis is finished. The findings will be transcribed, analyzed, and finally discussed to answer the research question

6. Conclusion

This section sums up all the information from the chapters and concludes an idea as the result of the analysis. In this section, suggestions for further research are also presented.