

CHAPTER I

Introduction

This chapter covers the introduction of the present study. It consists of nine sections: background of the study, research questions, aims of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, the object of the study, research methodology, data collection, data analysis, organization of the paper and clarification of the key terms.

1.1 Background

The role of a woman as participant in society is an interesting issue. It is because she takes part in developing society as an individual. People can see it through a woman's role in context of relationship both women existence in domestic sphere and public sphere. As cited in Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary (1987) that the word domestic means duties and activities are concerned with the running of a home and family, or someone who is domestic enjoys being at home and running a family. As Friedan's work *The Feminine Mystique* that the construction of women at feminism period that a woman loses her identity in domestic sphere (as cited in Kant, n.d). She says that a woman loses identity in doing domestic activities including homemaking or taking care the children in domestic sphere. From that idea, a woman as participant in society is allowed to participate in filling her life with pleasures as professionals in public sphere.

Context of relationship in domestic sphere focuses on how a woman deals with herself who has private desires in having homelife and how she deals her personal relationship with others. A woman's role in context of relationship in public sphere means that a woman has desires in having professional job as an individual in society. Both of domestic sphere and public sphere are two aspects that create the construction of a woman who fills her life in having private desires through domestic sphere and having professional desires through public sphere.

A Woman's Life, a novel written by Rachel Billington, describes three women characters, Connie, she is the youngest member of a large Irish family, beautiful, cheerful, strong. Nina, she is shy and the daughter of army officer. She marries her boyhood love and has two children. She loves painting a lot. However, in the end she realizes that her life is unfulfilled without painting. Fay, she is an ambitious doctor. She marries Ted, an eight years man younger than her. The three women characters are interacted each other as bestfriends for fourthy years. They share about the war happended at that time, their personal problem, career, and life. The setting of the novel is at the outbreak of World War II.

After reading the novel, the writer attempts to analyze the novel to see the three women characters, in regards to how Postfeminist and Popular Culture perspectives are reflected in the novel *A Woman's Life*. To analyze the three women characters in this novel, the writer employs Postfeminist and Popular Culture Perspectives as the theoritical framework.

Kant (n.d) argued about Postfeminism, Postfeminism is viewed as a reaction to feminism; Postfeminism was used in 1980s to signify a backlash

against second-wave feminism. Postfeminism emerged in 1980s, as Faludi (1991) in her book *Backlash: The Undeclared War against American Women*, that in 1980s feminism has successfully redefined feminism through its terms. In 1980s, many problems related to the construction of women's Liberation Movements are constructed by the media without reliable evidence. (cited in Women Movements and Human Rights, n.d).

According to Gamble (2001) Postfeminism expresses a flexible ideology which can be adapted to suit individual needs and desires. The idea of flexible ideology refers to the issue of *A Woman's Life* about individual needs and desires to become a woman. The ideas of Postfeminism and Popular Culture can not be separated. The role of popular culture emerges popular literature. The themes of popular writings are about popular culture issues. The role of Popular Culture can be seen in the success female as professionals in professional job. According to McRobbie (2004), the success female in wide range institutions, including law, education and the media shows the achievements of a woman that brings social change. The role of a woman as professional shows her success in public sphere.

The important point to employ in this study is the idea argued by Genz (2010) that Postfeminism is the dilemma of a woman to 'have it all'. She argued that Postfeminism is the dilemma of a woman who has desires in having professional job and rewarded homelife altogether. Genz (2010) states the idea that a woman faces her dilemma in filling her life with pleasures in domestic and public sphere.

Based on the explanation above, it is possible for *A Woman's Life* to find out how Postfeminist and Popular Culture Perspectives are reflected through the three women characters.

1.2 Research Questions

To conduct the research, the writer formulates the following research question:

1. How are Postfeminist and Popular Culture Perspectives reflected in the novel through the three women characters?

1.3 Aims of the study

Given the research question above, the aims of the study is:

1. To see how Postfeminist and Popular Culture perspectives are reflected in the novel through the three women characters.

1.4 Significance of the study

The findings of the research are to see how Postfeminist and Popular Culture Perspectives are reflected through the three women characters in the novel written by Rachel Billington "A Woman's Life".

1.5 Scope of the study

The study will endeavor to see how Postfeminist and Popular Culture Perspectives are reflected through the three women characters in a selected novel written by Rachel Billington “A Woman’s Life”.

1.6 The object of the study

The source of data chosen is the novel entitled “A Woman’s Life” written by Rachel Billington (First published in Great Britain in 2002). The main focus to be analyzed in this research is on the reflection of Postfeminist and Popular Culture Perspectives through the three women characters in a selected novel written by Rachel Billington “A Woman’s Life”.

1.7 Research Methodology

In conducting the research, the writer employs a qualitative descriptive method with textual analysis approach to achieve the aims of the study. According to Bogdan and Taylor (cited in Moleong, 2009), qualitative method produces descriptive data in forms of written and oral from investigated the character. The writer thinks that qualitative descriptive method is appropriate for the study because it can be describe phenomena related to women’s characteristics as in Rachel Billington’s novel and will need a lot of description. The textual analysis method is conducted to analyze and describe the reflection of Postfeminist and Popular Culture Perspectives through the three women characters in the novel A

Woman's Life by analyzing the words, phrases, sentences and dialogues that are related to the three women characters as depicted in the novel.

1.7.1. Data collection

In this study, the data are collected from the novel *A Woman's Life* written by Rachel Billington. The technique of this research is included to the data through the following steps:

1. Reading and re-reading the novel thoroughly to get deeper understanding of issues in the story, especially to find out how the three women characters are constructed in the text and to see how Postfeminist and Popular Culture Perspectives are reflected in the novel through the three women characters.
2. Finding and reading secondary sources related to the research to form the theoretical framework.
3. Highlighting textual evidences from the novel which are related to the three women characters are constructed in the text and to see how Postfeminist and Popular Culture Perspectives are reflected in the novel through the three women characters.
4. Categorizing the data, focusing on how the three women characters are constructed in the text and to see how Postfeminist and Popular Culture perspectives are reflected in the novel through the three women characters.
5. Interpreting the data findings.

1.7.2. Data analysis

After collecting the data, it will be analyzed through the following stages:

1. Reading the novel critically to see how Postfeminist issues communicate with Popular Culture.
2. Finding the textual data to support the construction of three women characters as evident in the text.
3. Finding the textual data to support description of events happening to the main character's life and the reaction of the three women characters.
4. Collecting the textual data by collecting the dialogues of the three women characters.
5. Interpreting the textual data through reading the novel critically.
6. Examine the construction of three women characters based on the Postfeminist and Popular Culture perspectives.
7. Discussing the findings and drawing a conclusion.

In this research, the data are taken from the novel *A Woman's Life* written by Rachel Billington which is related to the construction of three women characters and Postfeminist and Popular Culture perspectives. The writer uses textual analysis as an approach to analyze the novel through the finding and discussion of textual evidences; the textual evidences consists of the construction of three women characters and the reflection of Postfeminist and Popular Culture Perspectives through the three women characters.

1.8 Organization of the paper

The paper of the research will be organized into five chapters as follows:

Chapter I

This chapter is the introduction that consists of the background which relates the novel to the study, research questions, aims of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, the object of the study, research methodology, and organization of the paper.

Chapter II

This chapter describes the theoretical framework of the study, containing literature review which provides information to investigate research problems.

Chapter III

This chapter contains the research method of the study and description of procedures in investigating the problem of the research, including the data collection and data analysis.

Chapter IV

This chapter provides finding and discussion, containing the result of the study after conducting the research and obtaining the necessary data that depicted including the analysis of the data using theoretical framework.

Chapter V

This chapter contains the researcher interpretation of the research findings in a form of conclusion and suggestion.

1.9 Clarification of the key terms

1. Postfeminist Perspective

According to Susan Faludi in her bestseller book *Backlash: The Undeclared War Against Women* Postfeminist Perspectives is viewed as reaction against second-wave feminism.

Postfeminism gives the impression that equality has been achieved and that feminists can now focus on something else entirely. (Mcrobbie, 2004)

2. Feminism Perspective

Cited in The New Oxford Encyclopedic Dictionary, feminism is advocacy of extended recognition of claims and achievements of women; advocacy of women's right.

5. Popular Culture

The emergence of Popular Culture is highlighted by the role of the media. Strinati (2004) popular culture is called as mass culture. She says that in 1920s and 1930s, cultural products such as popular press, cinema and radio become the consumption of mass society.

6. Popular Literature

Popular literature includes those writings intended for the masses and those that find favour with large audiences. The growth of popular literature has paralleled the spread of literacy through education and has been facilitated by technological developments and printing (www.britanica.com)