

Chapter I

Introduction

1.1. Background of the study

Literature is anything spoken or written down. In practice, the works of literature consists of narrative, drama, poetry and non-fiction prose (Roberts 3). Narrative is a chronological account of series of events, usually fictional. Short stories and novels are included in narrative fictions. Drama is designed to be performed on stage by live actors. Poetry is a broad term that includes a great number of a separate sub-types, such as ballad, sonnet (Roberts 8). Here the thesis writer only chooses a novel.

Novel is "a fictional prose narrative of considerable length, typically having a plot that is unfolded by the actions, speech and thoughts of the characters" (Morris 340). According to Henry James, a novel is in its broadest definition a personal, a direct impression of life; that, to begin with, constitutes its value, which is greater or less according to the intensity **of** the impression (James 82).

The thesis writer chooses a novel for her primary source because novel is the most popular form of literature. In comparison with other forms of literature, like drama or poem, novel, for the thesis writer, is the easiest one to understand since the fundamental aspect of a novel is its story-telling aspect. A story is a narrative of events arranged in their time sequence-dinner coming after breakfast, Tuesday after Monday, decay after death and so on. What the story does is to narrate the life in time and what the entire novel does, **if it is a good novel**, is to include the life by **values as well** (Forster 29). In principle, the story in the novel should make readers recognize a chain of events, which are like those in real life. **In** daily life, people never understand one another, while people in a novel can be understood completely by the reader, if the novelist wishes; the inner as well as their outer life can be exposed.

According to E.M. Forster, the specialty of the novel is that the writer can talk about his characters as well as through them he can arrange for the readers to listen when they talk to themselves (142).

Among many authors, Sinclair Lewis has attracted the thesis writer's attention in doing her thesis. Lewis is famous with his satire that is a term in literary criticism to ridicule people, ideas, customs or organizations in order to expose their follies and thereby to correct them (85). Through his novels, he mixes satire, parody and caricature. He was a paradox in the United States, because as a critic and novelist, he was the most read and considered as an interpreter of American life. In 1930, Lewis received the Nobel Prize in Literature in the Swedish Academy; the first American so honored. As a satirist, Lewis has created a picture of America that corresponds in a remarkable degree with the naive caricature of America that all but the most enlightened and perceptive Europeans carry **in** their heads (Mumford 106).

Lewis has written many good novels, such as Babbit, Arrowsmith, Main Street, Elmer Gantry and Dodsworth. These five novels make him famous. The writer **chooses** Main Street, as her primary source for her thesis because **it is** Lewis'

first best known novel that uses Sauk Centre, Minnesota, the author birthplace as its setting. Main Street is a reflection of Sinclair Lewis' life. Besides that, Sinclair Lewis uses a woman as the main character. Carol, the main character in Main Street is a graduate university woman with a brilliant brain who has a great idea about the modern society but she has to struggle against the conservative inhabitants of a small town to realize her great idea to change the world. Main Street makes Lewis famous as one of well-known satirists. According to Lewis himself, Main Street describes about real people and real scenes in Sauk Centre. The satire of Main Street is that small-town life is dull, shallow, unbeautiful and frustrating: its desire is that become lively, profound, beautiful and fulfilling. Main Street is a story of an individual who is trying to reform the world, or to find salvation by escaping it. In this novel, Lewis was rebelling against hypocrisy of all kinds.

Furthermore, after reading the novel and the critic's opinion about the novel, the writer is interested in discussing the conflicting opinion between Carol Kennicott and villagers in Gopher Prairie for her thesis. The novel tells about a city woman who follows her husband to move to his home town which is a remote small town. She is

dissatisfied with the condition of the village and its people. Carol Kennicott, the heroine in this novel, has no alternative to compromise. The different opinion that she has found in Gopher Prairie are on privacy, humanity, spending leisure time, money management and how to appreciate literature and books. The writer chooses this topic because the writer thinks it is rather difficult for people to accept others' ways of life, so that it can cause the conflicts in this life. The same thing happens to Carol and villagers. At first, it is hard for Carol to accept the villagers' ways of life. But after undergoing the process, she finally realizes that the life in small town is not always bad. So, for adapting with others' people ways **of** life, it needs a process.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Through this thesis, the writer is **curious** to find out what kind of different opinion that Carol and villagers have in Gopher Prairie and how she adapts her opinion with those of the villagers'.

1.3. Purpose of: the study

Through this thesis, the writer would like to explain about the different kinds of opinion about ways of life that Carol and the villagers have; those are on privacy, humanity, money management, spending leisure time and how to appreciate literature and books. Furthermore, the writer would also **like** to discuss about Carol's process in adapting her opinion with those of villagers.

1.4 Importance of the study

People may have different opinion about ways of life with others in a new place. Through this thesis, the writer expects that the readers will understand more about the other people's ways of life and how they can adapt with different ways of life. And the writer also expects that the readers do not judge that their ways of life are the best because in this life people live with society which every society has each way of life.

Besides that, the writer also expects that the readers will understand more about the author, Sinclair Lewis. He became more famous after he received the Nobel Prize in Literature in Swedish Academy.

1.5. Scope and limitation

In this thesis, the writer will limit the discussion on the different opinion about ways of life on privacy, humanity, money management, spending leisure time and appreciating literature and **books** between Carol and the people of the village, such as Mrs. Bogart, Juanita Haydock, Miss. Villet and others. And the scope of the discussion will cover the conflicting opinion between Carol and villagers and also Carol's process of adapting her ideas with the villagers.

1.6. Methodology

The methodology that the writer uses in collecting the data is library research. As the primary data, the writer uses Sinclair Lewis' novel, Main Street. **In** order to analyze more about this novel, the writer also uses data from literary critics and literary theory, like the theory of conflict and characterization.

1.7. Organization of the study

The thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter one is introduction, explains about the reasons why the thesis writer chooses the topic. Chapter **two** explains about review

of related literature, that is the elements which support the thesis. Chapter three explains about the analysis of different opinion between Carol and villagers. Chapter four explains about Carol's ways **of** adapting with the villagers' opinion. And chapter five explains about conclusion from one until chapter four.