

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Literary works are often considered as fictional works, but we cannot deny that they also include something real, stories, character, places and moments. That is why literary works are believed as a reflection of real life. It is in line with what Gibson said that the bridge between literature and reality is fictions that reflect real life. (2007:34). Some literary works, such as novel, poetry or drama, are created based on the reality in everyday life. They can be aspect of politics, social, religion etc.

Abrams in his *Glossary of Literary terms*, states that;

The term "novel" is now applied to a great variety of writings that have in common only the attribute of being extended works of fiction written in prose. As an extended narrative, the novel is distinguished from the short story and from the work of middle length called the novelette; its magnitude permits a greater variety of characters, greater complication of plot (or plots), ampler development of milieu, and more sustained exploration of character and motives than do the shorter, more concentrated modes (Abrams, 1999:190)

From this, we can say that, novel tend to have only slightly differences with the real life, compare to short story. It caused by the presentation about the plot in the novel, which is complete. The sense of complete here, can be illustrated by mentioning that novel can describe characters' life from when they are born until they are death, in a very comprehensive and explicit way.

Many issues are grounded the creation of novel. They can be political, sociological, religious, humanism or something else. Nowadays, we can easily find

novel that raise one or more issues in their contents. One of notable novels that raise some issues in an attractive way that is *The Da Vinci Code* that is written by Dan Brown. It tells us about Harvard symbolist Prof. Robert Langdon and cryptologist Sophie Neveu after a murder of Louvre Museum's curator in Paris, when they become involved in a disagreement between the *Priory of Sion* and *Opus Dei* about the possibility of Jesus having been married to Mary Magdalena. They managed to unveil the mystery of the murder, in which by doing this they found the fact from many symbols, which told them that there are possibility of Jesus marriage.

Dan Brown is the author of some bestselling novels, including *The Da Vinci Code*, which has become one of the bestselling novels and become the subject of debate among readers and scholars. Brown's novels are published in 52 languages around the world with 200 million copies in print. In 2005, Brown was named one of the 100 Most Influential People in the World by *TIME* Magazine, whose editors credited him as "an author who renews the popular topic about Leonardo Da Vinci, the history of early Christian, the existence of secret social organization which considered to be both real and fictitious." Brown's parents are mathematics teacher and church organist. Brown is supposed to be a big fan of interplay between science and religion. Those themes become main theme of his novel such as, *Angels and Demons*, *Digital Fortress* and *the Da Vinci Code*, those kind of theme often trigger some controversial and problematic issues that are debated by many people.

From Brown's brief biography above, we may come to a conclusion that there will be a pro and contra among the reader about *the Da Vinci Code* novel.

There are some books deny the contents of the novel. It can be understood well why the denial of the content of the novel become such an important thing to do. There is possibility that some Christians will be dubious about the belief they hold that Jesus do not married to anyone, after reading the novel. *The Da Vinci Code* provoked a problematic issue dealing the *Holy Grail* legend and Mary Magdalene's role in the history of Christianity. The novel has been accused by many Christian as an attack on the Roman Catholic Church, and the novel are also criticized for its historical and scientific inaccuracies, and due to this reason, the comprehensive denial about the novel content, for some people, is important to be made.

On the other hand, there is also group of people who see the novel just purely a fiction, so they think they do not have any business concerning with the novel and the belief. The comment about the novel, are vary. There are some who totally rejected the content of the novel, see it as pure fiction or say that in reading the novel someone need a right guidance so they do not mislead by the novel. Some others focus on the fact and fiction that are twisted in the novel.

In viewing the literary works, Mario Klarer in his *Introduction to Literary Studies*, proposed that there are four theoretical approaches to literature. They are, Text-Oriented Approach, Author –Oriented Approach, Reader-Oriented Approach and Content-Oriented Approach. Text-Oriented Approach emphasis on the internal textual aspects of a literary work. Extra-textual factors concerning the author (his or her biography, other works), audiences (race, class, gender, age, education) or larger contexts (historical, social, or political conditions) are separated from the analysis (Klarer ,2005: 78-79). The Author-Oriented Approach focused on a direct

link between the literary text and the biography of the author. Dates, facts, and events in an author's life are connected to literary elements of his or her works in order to find aspects which have relation with the biography of the author with the text (Klarer ,2005: 90) . Reader-Oriented Approach focuses on the reader's point of view. It does not focus only on a single objective text, but it assumes that there are many text's interpretation which are done the readers (Klarer ,2005:92). Content-Oriented Approach refers to a different group of schools and methodologies which do not see literary texts as self-contained, independent works of art but try to place them within a larger context. Depending on the nature, this context can be history, social and political background, literary genre, nationality, or gender. (Klarer ,2005:94).

The writer is interested in reader oriented approach or reader response theory, since it seems giving the readers chances to do everything with the text. Richard Beach in his *Teacher's Introduction to Reader-Response Theories*, proposed five strategies of reader response, they are textual, experiential, psychological, social, and cultural.

Textual reader response strategies focus on how readers draw on and use their knowledge about the text or genre conventions to respond to specific text features. Experiential reader response strategies focus on the readers' engagement or experiences with text in which, readers identify or connect the text with characters, visualize images of the text, relate personal experiences to the text, or construct the meaning of the text. Psychological reader response strategies focus on readers' cognitive or processes and how the processes vary according to both individual personality and developmental level. Social reader response strategies focus on the effect of the social context on the reader/text transaction the ways. Cultural reader response strategies focus on how readers 'cultural roles, attitudes, values, or historical context shape responses. (Beach, 1993:8)

The writer is working on analyzing responses about *the Da Vinci Code* from *amazon.com*, which the readers are the amazon customers or the guests. The writer has collected 266 responses, which it means there is great possibility that responses will be vary and it will be interesting to analyze the data by using those five strategies because after quick analyzing the writer gets the responses expand into 433 kind of responses, since a response from a reader may contain more than one strategy.

Seeing the phenomenon of *the Da Vinci Code* novel, that there are vary responses about the novel, and many aspect of it that are responded, it will be very interesting to analyze, those responses, by using reader response strategies proposed by Richard Beach, since this approach focuses on various readers' point of view and it also assumes that the text is as many as the reader. Every reader has his/her own idea about the novel.

From the brief explanation above, that's why the writer chooses the novel *the Da Vinci Code* become his object of his study and specifically entitles his study with *Between Fact and Fiction in Dan Brown's The Da Vinci Code (2003): Reader Response Analysis*.

1.2.Limitation of the Study

The study is limited to analyze the responses from amazon customers and the guest who drop responds to *the Da Vinci Code* novel. The responses which are taken are from the paperback version and it is limited to the responses which were dropped on June 10th 2006 until February 7th 2015.

1.3.Problem Statement

Major problem statement is to unveil the application of reader response strategies on Dan Brwon's *the Da Vinci Code*, in amazon.com. The detail are as follows;

1. What reader response strategies are applied by the readers to respond Dan Brown's *the Da Vinci Code*?
2. How are the reader response strategies applied by the readers to respond Dan Brown's *the Da Vinci Code*?
3. What dominant issues are raised by the readers in applying reader response strategies on Dan Brown's *the Da Vinci Code*?
4. Why are the issues problematic?

1.4.Objective of the Study

The objectives of the study are:

1. To know kind of reader response strategies that are applied by the readers to respond Dan Brown's *the Da Vinci Code*.
2. To describe how the readers apply the reader response strategies on Dan Brown's *the Da Vinci Code*
3. To describe the dominant issues raised by the readers in applying reader response strategy on Dan Brown's *the Da Vinci Code*
4. To know why the issues are problematic.

1.5. Benefit of the Study

By conducting this study the writer hopes that the study give both practical and theoretical benefits.

The practical benefit the writer hopes is that the result of the study gives an alternate interpretation of how literary works describe a real life phenomenon, an idea about telling a history through the literary works etc. while theoretically, the writer hopes this study enriches the idea about reader response study and give a real contribution to it.

1.6. Thesis Organization

Chapter I is an Introduction. It contains, background of the study, limitation of the study, problem statement, objective of the study, benefit of the study and thesis organization.

Chapter II is Underlying Theory. This chapter includes previous study, theoretical review and theoretical framework.

Chapter III is Research Method. This chapter explains about type of research, subject of research, data and data source, technique of collecting data and technique of analyzing data.

Chapter IV is Research Finding and Discussion. This chapter discusses about research finding and discussion.

Chapter V is conclusion, suggestion and pedagogical implication. This last chapter presents conclusion of the research and suggestion for reader and other researchers.