

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Problem is literally a part of life. It comes to all of kind of human, all of age, and status. Human cannot live alone, they always need other people's support and help. One of many kinds of help is sharing. Most of people often do share every time they got problems, they believe that sharing could reduce their sadness because they could not just keep the problem themselves. Sharing barely solve people's problem, but they still do it because people think that sharing their thought make them feel easier and avoid stress or frustration. Whereas, stress or frustration will influence human's physic and mental health. Being listened by other is a big deal for some people, sometimes the other parties do not need to give a settlement, because listening will help so much.

By sharing the problem, human normally could calm themselves down. Problem often makes people cannot think properly, they are half confused so they cannot make a proper decision. They will be afraid to take one choice, because of some reasons, or all the time even more afraid to take another. People need something or someone to strengthen their decision and their mental as well. So here sharing exists to get people's mind go clear. After they calm down, they will rearrange their minds. They became confident to choose a decision, so that is how sharing works. Pennebaker (2001: 02) said expressing emotions and talking about the feelings and we will be able to get on with life quickly.

Holding up emotion is not a proper choice. It sometimes bring damage, or even a bigger problem. According to Pennebaker (2001: 07), people who had non-shared emotion reported to have a higher number of illness than people who did not have it. He also found in his study that people who had not share their emotion scored lower on a number of life satisfaction indicators. So based on the study sharing problem is one of

the best choices. We often hear so many cases of the impact of holding up emotion, and it ends up to death or commit suicide. According to Dr. Alex Lickerman (2010) there are several reasons why people commit suicide, like, they are *depressed, psychotic, impulsive, have a philosophical desire to die* (avoid suffering from a terminal illness), and many more. All of them are the impacts of being unable to hold up emotion any longer. They cannot accept the difficulties in their lives, moreover they do not have other people to support them. Then they decide to end their lives, which is a big fault choice. Commit suicide literally does not solve problems at all. To avoid the effect, such a depression, frustration, insane, or even commit suicide, people need to share their problem to others and get some supports.

Problem sharing deals with the social psychological field. Social psychological and group processes are interesting objects to be explored. These themes not usually used by authors of literary work, but it always been a great theme to build a story. One conflict of writers which reveals about social psychological and group processes is English author Elizabeth Noble in her novel entitled *The Reading Group*. It was originally published in 2003. Then this U.S first edition published in 2005, by HarperCollins Publishers Inc.

Elizabeth Noble was born in December 1968, in Buckinghamshire, England. She was educated in England and Canada, where the family lived for several years in Toronto. In 1990 she graduated from St. Edmund Hall, Oxford University, with a BA in English language and literature. Over a six year period she worked in the editorial, marketing, publicity, and sales departments of several big publishing houses. She took a career break to have her two daughters, after her marriage in 1996. When her youngest daughter was ready to go to nursery school, and real work beckoned, she decided to try what she had been threatening to do for years, and wrote a hundred pages of *The Reading Group*. Then it took her nine months to work up the courage to send it to an agent. *The reading group* was published in the UK in January 2004 and went straight to the number-one position in The Sunday Time's Fiction Best-seller list.

Reading group is an informal meeting group participated by anyone who likes to read books, share thought through the books, or for anyone who likes to read books but unsure to choose which books worth to read. The group would recommend such a book and share thought about the book. As an informal group, it usually does not have a structure organization, it only has founder. The founder in this reading group is Harriet. Harriet with her best friend, Nicole, to join, and then the three other members followed. They mainly scheduled to meet in the first week of the month. They discussed the book they had read the whole month there. One of them chose the book they had to have for the next meeting.

The Reading Group novel itself tells about a reading group arranged by the main role, Harriet. This reading group had some members, Nicole –Harriet’s bestfriend-, Susan, Polly, and Clare. They had meeting every month to mostly talk about the book they had chosen before, and they became very intense as they included into each other’s life, also they became very close to each other. Each of them had one complicated life. For Harriet who always complaining of her ‘so-not-supposed-to-be’ husband she ever wanted, while Tim –her husband- was always trying to be perfect husband for her, and only looking at her, even though Harriet never tried to understand him and saw his effort. There was Nicole, who never got tired of her Don Juan cheating husband, Gavin. He kept repeating his fault and apologizing as she would never cut him off. Also Susan to deal with her old and senile mother who kept waiting for her husband as he hadnot died. Then Polly, a single parent who dealt with her pregnant teenager daughter. The last was Clare, a midwife who didnot had a single child for years of wedding. Not just that, she found her husband cheating to her friend’s daughter until she pregnant, it was Cressida, Polly’s daughter. Things were very complicated and exhaustingut it wenteasier as they had their bestfriends around them, it meant so much for their each other’s life.

The writer chooses this novel because it is kind of unique novel. This novel has a different taste because it focused on the bonding of the group, whereas rare. There are a lot of love story novels, the author inserts group bonding into it, but it just for a

complement so the readers can feel the story much better, but this novel is focused on the bonding. The reader can really feel the bonding in first pages, not just for a complement. This novel is also very realistic, from the story we can find such people and story around us, which is very familiar. Very familiar even sometimes we can see ourselves into the characters, as we stand on the roles' shoes. Moreover, the author keeps it detail and explains the whole story as we can feel the roles. It has simple plot but the roles characterization is very strong.

Based on the background above, the researcher proposes to conduct a research entitled **Problem Sharing Reflected in Elizabeth Noble's *The Reading Group* (2005): a Social Psychological Perspective.**

B. Problem Statement

The problem of the study in this paper is Problem Sharing reflected in Elizabeth Noble's *The Reading Group* (2005): a Social Psychological Perspective. The research questions to be answered in this study are:

1. What problems are shared in the reading group?
2. How is the problem being discussed?
3. Why did the author write *The Reading Group*?

C. Scope of the Study

The writer focuses on the research in analyzing Problem Sharing between characters Harriet, Nicole, Susan, Polly, and Clare at Elizabeth Noble's *The Reading Group* (2005) on a Social Psychological perspective.

D. Objectives of the Study

Conducting the research, the writer formulates the objectives of the study, as follows:

1. To describe the problems shared in the reading group.
2. To describe the process of discussing the problem.
3. To analyze the reason of the author writing *The Reading Group*.

E. Benefit of the Study

The writer expected a lot that the research which investigates the issue Problem Sharing between characters Harriet, Nicole, Susan, Polly, and Clare in this *The Reading Group* novel bears many benefits. The benefits of this study will be differentiated into two benefits:

1. Theoretical Benefit

The result of this study is expected to be able to give information and contribution of knowledge to the academic reference. It can be also as a reference for other researchers who want to conduct further research and particularly the literary studies on this *The Reading Group* novel.

2. Practical Benefit

The study is expected to enrich knowledge and experience for the writer in many things and for other students of Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta or for other universities which are have the same interest in literary study on the literature from a social psychological perspective.

F. Paper Organization

This research paper organization of Problem Sharing Reflected in Elizabeth Noble's *The Reading Group* (2005) is as follows:

Chapter I is introduction, which consists of the background of the study, problem statement, limitation of the study, objective of study, benefit of study, and paper organization. Chapter II concerns with the underlying theory, theoretical application, and previous study. Chapter III deals with kind and design of research, object of study, type of data and data source, technique of data collection, technique of data analysis. Chapter IV comprises the structural analysis, and discussion. Chapter V elaborates conclusion and suggestion.