

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Research Background

The mobility caused by globalization has influenced the growth of society in the 21st century. According to Xu (2013), the migration, tourism, domestic and international encounters that people have done in the 21st century, encourage them to stay temporarily or permanently in new places. Xu (2013) also adds that those who move from one community to another will bring their native languages and cultures with them. These aspects of globalization create a society which mixed up by people from different kinds of races, gender, ethnicities, religion, and social background. One of the social problems that often appeared in this kind of culturally diverse society is oppression. Haslanger (2004) explains that oppression can be defined as the unfairness and disadvantages received by an individual or group of people in a certain social structure. There are four forms of oppression mentioned by Schaefer (2013). Those forms of oppression namely prejudice, discrimination, exploitation, and segregation.

Oppressions are usually targeted at the minority group which stands on the weakest chain in a social structure. Thus, Marger (2015) mentions some minority groups which usually became the target of oppressions in society such as race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, and people with physical disabilities. Oppression against a certain minority group can happen anywhere in society, including at schools. There are some cases of oppression in schools found by previous researches. Spencer (1998) mentions some form of oppression against a race that is usually found around the school area among students. Those oppressions include the use of racial slurs or slogans, physical assaults, and segregation based on race, ethnicity, or language. Moreover, MinYu (2020) reveals that immigrant children experienced oppression and had to struggle, especially when their language and culture were not valued and visible. Meanwhile, Eslea and Mukhtar (2000) utter that oppression among Asian children happened a lot

of times. Those oppressions are usually related to religious or cultural diversity, such as the mock of the animal forms of the Hindu gods, the attributes wore by Indian Muslims or the way the Pakistanis spoke in their language. Lastly, Priest et al (2014) mention that in four Australian metropolitan primary schools, even though the students were having a good understanding of human diversity, they still found some forms of oppression experienced by the children of the minority group, such as Saudi Arabian students who got teased towards their darker skin color by their classmates, and also the Chinese students who received racist behavior from students of another ethnicity. From several cases of oppression in schools found by the previous researchers, it can be concluded that it is important to introduce students to social injustice against a certain group of people to avoid the growth of oppression in society.

According to MinYu (2020), people from every range of age, and every kind of race are possible to be the victim or the doer of oppression. Therefore, it is important to spread awareness about human diversities and differences to young adult learners. Priest et al (2014) state that young adult learners are started to notice the differences of human beings and construct a certain behavior toward a person of a different race, ethnicity, or religion from a young age. In this case, adults hold an important role because young adult learners mostly learn from their people. Besides, Priest et al (2014) points out that adults have a crucial part, especially in developing 's knowledge about human diversity. From adult young adult learners will also learn about how to respond to those diversities that they recognized around them. The attempt to spread the awareness about oppression to young adult learners can be done in the house by parents and can be done in school, which was the responsibility of the teachers and all the school workers. Furthermore, Spencer (1998) adds that school is the area where young adult learners can practice and work with diverse populations. In other words, young adult learners can learn and socialize with their peers who most likely have a different race, ethnicity, gender, or skin color.

In school teachers was one of the main learning resources for students. That is why teachers should try to discuss human diversity either during or after the learning activity

with their students. As mentioned by Priest et al (2014), after young adult learners achieved the school-age, both teachers and the learning environment became a crucial source that will affect children's knowledge about human diversity. Thus, this knowledge learned by students at school can be applied by them in their social life inside and outside the school area. Priest et al (2014), explain that the understanding of human diversity can be shared through explicit and implicit methods. The teachers are responsible for finding the appropriate tool to deliver human diversity knowledge to the students. One of the mediums that teachers can use to deliver topics about human diversity to their students is through literature. Brown and Tomlinson (1999), utter that literature for young adults is consists of the story about other people. The story can be about people from a different country, social background, race, or ethnicity. From the story of the people or characters in literature work, people can learn about human diversity and learn about positive moral messages. Brown and Tomlinson (1999) add that the readers are also able to feel indirect experiences from literature work since the stories in literature work use a variety kind of settings and characters. Literature is divided into some genres or categories, and those categories have different characteristics from each other. Brown and Tomlinson (1999), mention that the category of literature is consists of poetry, picture books, traditional literature, modern fantasy, realistic fiction, historical fiction, nonfiction, and the last one is multicultural and international literature.

One of the historical fiction novels for young adult learners is entitled *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* (2006). Brown and Tomlinson (1999), explain that the writer in historical fiction usually uses a young character who lives in a certain historical setting. As a child, in historical fiction, the main character in *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* (2006) is a nine years old boy named Bruno, a son of a Nazi's commandant. The novel tells about the curiosity and naivety of Bruno, which leads him to meet Shmuel, a Jew boy live in Auschwitz camp who always wore strange striped pajamas. This novel was written by John Boyne, an Irish writer which born in Dublin, Ireland, on April 30th, 1971. *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* (2006) has become one of John Boyne's famous

works. As cited in Gray (2014), the novel was sold at least nine million copies. Besides, this novel was also translated into around 46 different languages. Later on, in 2008, the novel was then adapted into a movie by Mark Herman as the director. Rather than that, Curthoys (2020) states that the novel is also chosen as one of the learning materials about the Holocaust literature in some schools in the UK and the US.

Based on several studies which analyzed *The Boy in the Striped Pyjama* (2006), the use of narrative and fable in Holocaust literature can help the readers to develop their knowledge about social issues that happened during the Holocaust era. The Holocaust history cannot be separated from the tragedy experienced by the victims, and the prisoners of the Nazis. According to Smith (2017), the use of fable in this novel can make the readers feel comfortable and less terrified to read the tragedy of the Holocaust. Boyne uses a fable to cover the Holocaust story and makes the novel appropriate to be read by people from any kind of age. Also, Barone (2011) states that young adult learners will develop their curiosity towards historical events by using historical fiction, rather than that the excitement from reading the narrative will help young adult learners to have a better understanding of a certain historical event. Therefore, *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* (2006) uses World War II as the setting and provides the social inequality issues influenced by human diversity that happened during that time. Besides, the characters of the novel represent both of the parties involved in the conflict. Moreover, the novel also shows the strategies done by those characters to survive through the Holocaust tragedy. From these elements of *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* (2006), it can be considered that this novel shows the representation of oppression and resistance strategies that happened during the Holocaust.

The study about oppressions against a certain minority group of people is related to Edward Said's Postcolonial theory (1979). According to Ashcroft, Griffith, and Tiffin (2007), Postcolonial theory focuses on the impact of colonialism felt by the colonized country or a certain group of people in terms of their linguistics, cultural, economic and political aspects. Besides, Ashcroft (2001) explains that postcolonialism

refers to a theory that observed the struggles of the colonized country against the oppression, domination, and assault which did by the colonizer. Meanwhile, according to Bhabha (1994), resistance strategies can be classified into three types namely mimicry, hybridity, and ambivalence. Since *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* (2006) is one of the historical fiction that exist among young adult readers, it is important to conduct a deep analysis of the form of oppression and resistance strategies reflected in this novel.

Therefore, from the background explained above, the present study analysed the oppressions and resistance strategies that appeared in *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* (2006) by using Edward Said's Postcolonial theory (1979) and Bhabha's resistance strategy (1994). This study was beneficial to collect the information about oppressions and resistance strategies represented in *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* (2006). Moreover, it will also be beneficial for parents, teachers, and students to better understand and know about oppressions and resistance strategies. The knowledge and understanding that they have will help them to avoid the growth of social injustice against human diversity in society.

## **1.2 Problem Identification**

Oppression against a certain minority group is one of the social issues which often found in 21st-century society, where people from a different kind of race, ethnic, religion and social background have to live together in one community. Therefore, it is important to spread awareness about human diversity such as racial-ethnic differences people on every range of age to avoid the growth of oppression in society. Literature can be used as a tool to spread awareness about the oppression, injustice, or inequality that victimized a certain group of people in that happened around the society. According to Machet (1998), good historical fiction will help young adult learners to understand the characters' feelings and experiences involved in certain historical events. As a part of the historical novel, *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* (2006) brings

its values to be learned by the readers. Using the Holocaust era as the setting, this novel provides the readers with a picture of colonialization and the social issues against human diversity that happened during that time. Therefore, the knowledge related to oppressions which the readers got from reading the novel, will help them to reflect on the mistakes that happened in the past. Besides having the appropriate knowledge about human diversity, the readers will also be able to grow their respect, empathy, and humanity after reading the novel. However, there is not much research that observed *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* (2006) as one of the historical novels for young adult learners. Hence this study was conducted to find the representations of oppressions and resistance strategies experienced by Bruno in *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* (2006).

### **1.3 Research Limitation**

The research limitation for this study is analyzing the oppressions experienced by Bruno and the resistance strategies represented in Bruno's experience as the main character in *The Boy in The Striped Pajamas* (2006). This study focused on the novel elements such as the character and the characterizations, the setting, the point of view, the plot, and the theme. Those elements of the novel were analyzed by using Edward Said's Postcolonial analysis (1979) and Bhabha resistance strategies (1994).

### **1.4 Research Question**

Based on the background of the study and the problem identification, the following statement of problems are addressed:

1. What are the oppressions experienced by Bruno in John Boyne's *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* (2006)?
2. What are the resistance strategies represented in Bruno's experience in John Boyne's *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* (2006)?

## 1.5 Research Objectives

Based on the statement of problems above there are two research purposes of this study:

1. Analysing the oppressions experienced by Bruno in John Boyne's *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* (2006).
2. Analysing the resistance strategies represented in Bruno's experience in John Boyne's *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* (2006).

## 1.6 Research Significance

The significance of this study can be divided into two namely, theoretical significance, and practical significance. The two significances was descried below:

### 1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

This study is expected to be beneficial especially for literature learning, language learning, and historical learning.

#### 1.6.1.1 Literature Learning

In terms of literature learning, this research is expected to contribute to literary analysis through the elements of the novel. Besides, this study is also expected to be beneficial for young adults to get new knowledge and moral messages through literature because literature work is not only a text but it is full of values. As cited in Gamble and Yates (2002), literature does not only consist of didactic text which can be used to learn academic things, but it also has messages which can deliver moral values to the readers. From literature, the readers will able to understand, and also be mindful of the diversity of the world. As cited in Brown and Tomlinson (1999), literature can help the readers to get to know about universal stories, cultures, and points of view from various sides of the world. Also, literature can develop the readers's morals and

empathy as part of society. Therefore, Ruzicka (2014) states that literature can help people realize how it feels to be human.

### **1.6.1.2 Language Learning**

This study is expected to give knowledge in language learning since literature work can help people to learn a certain language. Based on the researches from Cunningham and Stanovich (1998), and also Daane et al (2005) which mentioned in Barone (2011), students who often read tend to have higher intelligence, better deciphering ability, prosperous vocabulary, and also have a massive comprehension ability. As one of the examples, Barone (2011) mentions that in reading poetry, the readers can learn about how to value the uniqueness of a word used by the writer, while also relish the sound of the language.

### **1.6.1.3 Historical Learning**

This study is expected to contribute to developing knowledge about historical events, especially the Holocaust tragedy to the society. Historical fiction can help the readers to develop their curiosity about historical events, it also can help them to get a better understanding of the history through an exciting narrative that is provided in the story (Barone, 2011:68). Meanwhile, according to Machet (1998), the historical novel, especially those that use Holocaust as the setting can assist students to be mindful of the Holocaust itself and the issues behind this tragedy.

### **1.6.2 Practical Significance**

This study is expected to give practical benefit and significant contribution for language teachers, parents, EFL students, and also students in society.



### **1.6.2.1 Language Teachers**

For language teachers, this study is expected to give its significance, especially in terms of using literature as a learning medium or material in the classroom. By using literature in their classes, language teachers can develop the students' language skills, while also learn how to appreciate arts. According to Brown and Tomlinson (1999) for reading comprehension, the use of literature can help the students to practice their reading skill, and also learn to appreciate literacy. Besides, good reading materials can increase students' interest in the reading activity. If the students are interested in the chosen literature work, it can change their perspective from reading as a learning activity to reading as an enjoyable activity (Barone 2011:03). Also, according to Puurtinen (1998), interesting literature work can embolden young readers to read more, and from this, they may also develop a lasting attraction towards literature. Meanwhile, for the other language skill such as writing, Brown, and Tomlinson (1999) explain that through reading various kinds of literary work, the students can try to find and develop their own style in writing.

### **1.6.2.2 Parents**

The result of this study is expected to be useful for parents to choose appropriate reading material for their family. Besides, this study is also expected to be beneficial for parents who wanted to use literature work to introduce their family to social issues and the values of the world. According to Machet (1998) from historical fiction, the readers can learn about the point of view of the victims, oppressor, or any other figure that is written in the story, and then gain moral values from them. Rather than that Machet (1998) also mentions that a book or a narrative can be used as one of the media to get to know about human diversity. Then from the process of reading, parents can spread awareness towards human diversity and human rights.

### 1.6.2.3 Students of English as a Foreign Language

For students of English as a Foreign Language or EFL students, this research is expected to be useful to improve their English ability. According to Alami (2016), the use of literature work in EFL class can give the students the exposure to learn more about the linguistics aspect of English, such as phonology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. Besides, Alami (2016) adds that English literature for EFL students is beneficial to help them get to know the target language's culture. Moreover, as cited in Alami (2016), by using English literature, the students can increase their reading, writing, and communication ability by using English.

### 1.6.2.4 Students in the Society

For students in society, this study is expected to be beneficial in order not only able to recognize the social issues that happened in the past by reading historical fiction but also can learn and reflect from those issues to today's society. Therefore, according to Teo (2015), from historical fiction, the readers can learn about the change or progress of the world from time to time. Besides, this study is also expected to give its significance on helping to stop the growth of oppression in society, especially among students. In the novel entitled *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* (2006), students will be able to see the examples of injustice, rejections, and oppression, towards a certain minority group of people. From the oppressions that are reflected in the novel, the readers will be able to learn and get the example of social injustice against human diversity that happened in the past. Furthermore, the students can try to apply the lesson they got from those human diversity issues in their surroundings, such as school, or neighbourhood.

## 1.7 Definition of Key Terms

Some terms was used in this research and the definition of those terms was explained below.

### 1.7.1 Historical Fiction

Historical fiction is one of the genres in literature. According to Barone (2011), literature can be used as a medium to share history of a certain event to the readers by the use of narratives which written in the form of a story by the author. From the characters included in a historical fiction, the readers can develop their knowledge about the historical events by using a similar point of view as them. Besides, Brown and Tomlinson (1999) explain that some themes can be found in historical fiction, namely, seeking a new frontier, finding freedom from maltreatment, impacts of war, and family closeness in times of difficulty. One of the examples of historical fiction that is popular in today's society is *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* (2006) that written by John Boyne.

### 1.7.2 Oppressions

Oppression is one of the social issues that is often found in society. Haslanger (2004) utters that oppression can be defined as the misappropriation of power against a certain individual or group of people that occurred in a certain social structure. Hence, Haslanger (2004) states four possible combinations of oppression that are possibly found in society. Those combinations, namely individual oppresses individual, individual oppresses group, group oppresses individual, and group oppresses group. Moreover, there are some forms of oppression mentioned by Schaefer (2013), which are prejudice, discrimination, exploitation, and segregation.

### 1.7.3 Resistance

Resistance is a common result produced by the minority group who lived in an oppressed society. Knowles and Linn (2004) explain that resistance is the reactions made by someone or a group of people against any form of oppression or change. Besides, Knowles and Linn (2004) add that the occurrence of resistance is triggered by the desire of those people who were oppressed. Thus, their desires are transformed into

reactions in the form of resistance. As mentioned by Bhabha (1994), there are three types of resistance strategies which often found in an oppressed society. Those resistance strategies are mimicry, hybridity, and ambivalence.

#### **1.7.4 Postcolonialism**

Postcolonialism is an approach that originally comes from Edward Said's thoughts. According to Ashcroft (2001), the core meaning of this term is used to referring the cultural literature interactions between the colonial communities. The other definition of postcolonialism as mentioned by Ashcroft and Ahluwalia (2010) is a theory that observed the impact and responses of colonialization to the colonized societies, especially towards the cultural and political changes. In addition, Ashcroft, Griffith, and Tiffin's (2007) postcolonial study focus on the experience of the former European colonies in terms of their political, linguistic, and cultural field.

