

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Precisely, this sub-chapter would like to deliver and highlight the theories applied in the analysis of this thesis. Theoretical framework will be useful to bring an understanding and comprehension on the theories including the fundamental concept and how it works on literary work analysis.

This thesis applies the sociology of literature and African American criticism as umbrella or underlying discourse of whole discussion in the thesis. The discussion goes on the social matter between Black and White Americans in the novel. Due to the applied of sociology of literature as the umbrella of overall discussion, sociology of literature approach will be useful to apply in this thesis, that the approach is used to approach and identify the problem of Black and White Americans in the social life in the Southern. Thus, as a foundation to analyze the problem between Black and White Americans in the novel, this thesis applies the theory of hegemony by Antonio Gramsci as main theory, and the theory of discrimination as secondary theory.

2.1.1 African American Criticism

Basically, Tyson (394) mentions that African American criticism is the study of a body of literature written by a specific group of marginalized people. As a subject matter, African American criticism can mean a literary work that is

written by an African American, and it is used as a theoretical framework.

However, as a theoretical framework, African American criticism foregrounds race include racial identity, African American cultural traditions, psychology, politics, and many others related to the life of African American. It is because of a reason that race, in America informs individual and cultural psychology and literature in profound ways.

In addition, African American criticism is somehow about African American Studies. It is defined as the systematic study of Black experience framed by the socio economic, cultural and geographical boundaries (Hayes III 24). Hayes adds that it is also about the Black intellectual tradition as it has assumed a complex burden over many generations and engage in a critical dialogue with White scholarship on a range complex issues including the definition and reality of race as social construct. Furthermore, according to Hogue (1), in the United States, the African American is constituted in a Black or White binary of signification that defines Whites as normative and superior and that African American represents Blacks as victim, inferior, and devalued others. Therefore, in the study of African American, Blacks are construed as victim and devalued people.

Due to the position of being a victim and devalued people, African American begins to establish a work of literature. As the historical evidence says that African American brings to an inspiration of establishing work of literature as historical script. The established work of literature contains the historical evidence of African American. It can be said that African American literature can be

defined as writings by people of African descent living in the United States of America (Richardson 34). However, it is not only African American history and life is extremely varied, but also African American literature. It means that African American literature can be varied according to its historical events, and it has generally focused on themes of particular interest to Black people in the United States.

Tyson (385) emphasizes that there are much effort has been expended in delineating the distinguishing features of what has been identified as the African American literary tradition. Many critics agree that African American literature has focused on a number of recurring historical and sociological themes, all of which reflect the politics include the realities of political, social, and economic power of Black American experience (Richardson 34). The African American literature is also described as it has arisen out of the experience of Black Writers in the United States, especially with a concern on historical racism and discrimination.

As the need of this study, the African American is used as a supporting discourse which underlies the discussion of African American in the novel *A Lesson Before Dying*. It is also used to strengthen the historical facts of African American life in the United States as it is connected to the novel *A Lesson Before Dying* by one of African American authors: Ernest. J Gaines.

2.1.2 Sociology of Literature

One of branches of knowledge which concerns with the social phenomenon is literature. Literature, is also striking in depicting human social life

through literary work as the art of literature. It is in line with the argumentation of Plato who claims that literary work is a mimetic of the real world and the world of idea (47). Sumardjo and Saini through Rokhmansyah, defines literature as an expression of human in personal sense including experience, thought, feeling, idea, and a spirit of faith in a concrete form which raises an enhancement by language used (2). The language used which contains experience, thought, feeling, idea, and a spirit of faith is clearly seen in written form of literary work. On the other hand, it is said that whatever written and expressed through the text in a literary work, obviously embodies and represents an author's feeling, idea, and experience which sometimes indirectly reflect the time of the written work including the social life. In sum, it is briefly concluded that both fantastic and mystical literary work form, cannot be separated from profound social concern. The close relation between sociology and literature leads to the emergence of sociology of literature.

Basically, the term Sociology of literature is taken from the word Sociology and Literature. Sociology comes from the Greek *Sos* which means united, companion and comrade, and *Logos* which means remark and likeness (<https://www.scribd.com>). Epistemologically, sociology is the scientific study of social behavior, social origins, social development, social organization, and social institutions (Speedy Study Guides 2014). Sociology is also concerned with describing and explaining the patterns of inequality, deprivation and conflict belong to all societies (Browne 2). So, sociology is the science of society (Kavitha 1). It gives a contribution to comprehend a social life of society.

Sociology of literature is a combination between two major kinds of knowledge: sociology and literature. Both of two kinds of knowledge itself have a similarity on the object: human in society. Sociology of literature concerns with literature and society, and it is mentioned as a study of a comprehension on work of literature by considering the societal aspects (Siswanto 191). The societal aspects are figured and mirrored in a totality of literary work. A totality of literary work means a dialectical relation between literature and society (Reising 185). The dialectical relation is a relation that reflects a connection between literary work and society (Faruk, Purwanto and Soemanto 86). In other word, if a sociologist portrays human life and society through scientific and objective analysis, an author expresses those (human life and society) through emotion subjectively and evaluative. Thus, sociology of literature attempts to find a quality of interdependency between literature and society.

As the need of this study, the sociology of literature is applied in this study. It is due to the range of the discussion is about social phenomenon which is reflected in one of literary work *A Lesson Before Dying*. Hereby, this study uses the sociology of literature as umbrella of overall analysis toward the object *A Lesson Before Dying*. This study analyzes Black Americans with their social life. It will be about how they were treated by White Americans in the Southern.

2.1.3 Sociology of Literature Approach

An approach comes to approach and identify an object in a research. In literature, an approach is used to analyze a matter in the work of literature. There are several approaches which seem to be familiar for researchers who concern

with literary studies especially the social study in literature. Therefore, there are at least two sorts of approach proposed in literature: intrinsic and extrinsic approach as proposed by Wellek and Warren (Dady *ed* 438).

Wellek and Warren state that extrinsic approach usually questions literature in the relation to society, ideas, and the other arts (Ramakrishna 2). The extrinsic approach is somehow discussing the extrinsic element of literature. As Nurgiyantoro states that the extrinsic element is an element which exists outside of literary work, and indirectly influences the construction of literary work (Yudiono 109). One of the extrinsic element of literature is the social context of literary work (Wiyanto 2219). However, from the argumentation of Wiyanto, it can be stated that the extrinsic approach is done based on the social context of literature. The social context will view and discuss about society, social structure, social interaction, and social problem. Thus, it can be summarized that the social context of literary work which includes several previous items, influences the construction of outside world of literary work.

Dissimilar as the extrinsic approach, the intrinsic approach is somehow a research of literature which is autonomously originated from the literary text itself. The intrinsic approach can also be mentioned as structural approach which talks about the elements which construct the inside world of literary work (Wicaksono 29). It means that the intrinsic or structural approach researches literary work as an autonomous work which in case, is alienated from the background of social, history, author's biography, and anything exists outside of literary work. Further, the intrinsic approach attempts to elaborate the relevancy

and function of each element of literary work as a structural unity that concurrently produces an overall meaning (Dirgantara 123). Thus, the intrinsic approach is an approach in the study of literature whose work is to analyze the elements which construct the inside components of literary work.

As the need of this research, the sociology of literature approach is taken as an approach in the research. The sociology of literature approach is one of approaches in the study of literature especially literary work extrinsically. The sociology of literature approach attempts to analyze human in society in their relation (Elliott 2013). This approach considers literary work as it belongs to society. It means that literary work is the ownership of society. In its principle, the sociology of literature approach has a fundamental thought that there is an innate relation between literary work and society (Budiana, Husen, Budiman and Wahyudi 128). The relation is produced through an author. An author is a part of society which becomes a famous one in a particular period (Escarpit 129). It means that author is one of members in society who becomes well known as he creates a literary work in his period by relying on the context of social. Thus, the sociology of literature approach is an approach towards work of literature in which it connects the work of literature with the aspect of social (society) due to the author's experience and view of social life.

Hereby, the sociological approach is chosen as an approach used to approach and identify the object matter. The object of this study is Black Americans in the novel who live in the Southern, and the matter or problem is

about the social relation between Black and White Americans in the Southern as narrated in the novel *A Lesson Before Dying*.

2.1.4 Hegemony Theory

The theory of hegemony is pioneered by Antonio Gramsci, an outstanding Italian Marxist. The notion of hegemony is illustrated in Gramsci's popular book *The Prison Notebooks*. *The Prison Notebooks* was written when Gramsci was in the jail that the Italian Fascist government sentence him to imprison his ideas in which he was not capable to write his ideas. The book which consists of 33 daily notes and 2.848 handwriting contains the ideas of hegemony and civil society (Ratna 184). Thus, the notions of hegemony are explained in Gramsci's outstanding book *The Prison Notebook*.

In general, hegemony can be construed as an influence of leadership, power, and domination of a social group to another social group (Jackson II and Hogg 324). Hegemony can also be identified as an influence and more control towards other state and other group of people (Dowding 306). The control can be manifested in the form of domination and authority in field of social, culture, ideology and economy. It can be precisely stated that hegemony can be performed in the sector of social, culture, ideology and economy, and it is manifested in the term of domination.

According to Gramsci's thought on hegemony, it is true that hegemony is a power or domination on life values, norm, and culture of social group where the domination will be a doctrine for other social groups, so that the indoctrinated social group will consciously follow. It means that the dominated social group do

not have a sense of being oppressed. It is similar as Plehwe, Walpen and Neunhoffer's argumentation in their book that:

“... It combines the aspects of ‘political leadership’ and ‘consensus’. Hegemony is to be understood as the ability of the ruling groups and classes to pursue their interests in such a way that they are regarded as common or general interests by ruled groups and classes, and that there are broadly shared ideas about social relations and their development. To this extent, hegemony is the active consent of the ruled” (246).

From the above statement, it can be concluded that the indoctrinated social group will automatically feels that the domination which is done by the dominating social group is the matter that actually should happen.

According to Gramsci, the most important factor as the stimulant of hegemony is the ideological and political factor which is created by the dominating social group in influencing, directing and shaping the public mindset (Budiman 127). It means that the dominating social group which performs hegemony is caused by the ideological and political aspect. For the success of performing hegemony and as referring to previous statement clarified by Plehwe, Walpen and Neunhoffer, the dominating social group should give a consensus on their subordination to dominated social group. It is done for the purpose of obtaining a respect of dominated social group. Thus, the previous assumption of Gramsci's hegemony reminds to what is called as dominating by moral leadership and intellectual consensually.

As the practice of consensual hegemony, Patria and Arief said that the consensus is seen as a desired action and voluntarily which is accepted individually (124). It is also known as the starting point of Gramsci's hegemony. Gramsci always relates the term consensus with psychological spontaneity which

includes a variety of socio-political acceptance of the rule or other rules (125). For Gramsci, hegemony through consensus emerges through an active commitment on the social class which has historically born in the relations of production (126). Through a consensus, the ideology of the dominant group can be spread to others.

As Simon says that consensus is a major point in Gramsci's hegemony. Consensus is performed in the way of politic and ideology, but it just remains ideology as a first major focus in the hegemony of Gramsci (23). Ideology can be identified as a set of ideas which supports a power of particular social group (Barker and Jane 602). As ideology in the concept of hegemony, Robinson claims that ideology constitutes the glue that sustains social control under consensual arrangement (30). It means that ideology stands to construct a condition of being tied which maintain a social control practiced through consensual arrangement. Thus, ideology is definable as a set of ideas which is performed by a particular social group to maintain and stabilize the hegemony to other groups.

According to Salam, a powerful state is a state that is hegemonic. Hegemonic countries described as a country which is able to build its power by consensus (Salam 31). A hegemony which is committed by the state is the intellectuals who spread his power through religion, education, mass media, or other ideological strength (15). In other words, a social group within a state which performs hegemony over other groups, utilizes ideology to manipulate the consciousness of another group. Due to this, the dominated social group unconsciously support the power of dominant social group.

The above statement indicates the important of ideology in the process of hegemony. It is known that ideology plays an important role in consensual hegemony of Gramsci. According to Sudiarja, Subanar, Sunardi and Sarkim *ed*, ideology is a core of all human thoughts (912). It means that ideology is a core thought of human. It becomes an important matter of human treatment in his social life. As Stevenson defines that ideology is a system of power protection belongs to a controller (person in charge) (27). It is a set of ideas and principles that explain how society works, and it offers an extract of order of particular society (Michael 75). It means that it performs a power which eventually produces a consensus of a dominated social group. Therefore, for the dominant class, ideology is aimed of maintaining social cohesion and the dominant interests.

Furthermore, ideology works in the social life of society through two levels: level of philosophy and common sense level (23). Common sense is the public awareness in the practice of everyday life. According Eriyanto, if the idea or the notion of a dominant group is accepted as common sense, and the ideology is accepted, the hegemony has clearly occurred (107). From this view, it is known that the existence of a procedure for the implementation of hegemony by a social group against other social group, is clearly available. It can be seen that common sense which is known as an ideology of the practice of everyday life, can be accepted by the other groups. Therefore, it can be stated that the success of hegemony will appear as the success of a dominant group by the acceptance of dominated social group over the ideology and common sense which the dominant social group spreads.

There can be summarized that the hegemony of a social group can be performed in several phases which can be formulated as a phase of domination and a phase of direction. A phase of domination is performed by a social group which intends to include its idea or thought. It can be said that a phase of domination is the first stage in the process of Gramsci's hegemony. It firstly implants the idea of a social group to other social group. After implanting the idea of a social group, a phase of direction comes to strengthen the implanted idea. It is defined that a phase of direction means that a direction which is performed by a social group which is successful to perform domination towards dominated social group. (<http://nederindo.com>).

2.1.4.1 Phase of Domination

Domination is understood as a condition which is suffered by a social group when it depends on a social relationship that other social group dominates it (Schuppert 29). It means that domination is about being structured. In this field, school, mass media and state institutions are common domination performed by apparatus state (Law 105). The apparatus state plays an important role in a domination of a social group, because state is an apparatus of domination (Exner, Fleissner and Kranzi 245). As Evans, Ruschemeyer and Skocpol say that the apparatus state is very powerful role and have a strong interest in domination (338). The apparatus state then includes the ideology to a dominated social group, in which it is done to be a legal norm that is acceded by dominated social group. By this view, it can be claimed that domination is the first point in the process of hegemony.

2.1.4.2 Phase of Directing

In the case of directing, society should be submissive to the dominating social group (Paul and Elder 222). It is due to a fact that a state compels its ideology to society through persuasive power. Persuasive power (persuasion of power) is defined as persuading subordinate classes to accept moral, political and cultural values belong to dominant class as natural order (Jackson 53). The persuasive power can be identified through mass media, education and religion that are intentionally dominated by a state. A state then implements the awareness of society, in which the awareness unconsciously supports the power of a state (Salam 64).

Therefore, the first phase: phase of domination is used for the first problem of the study and the phase of directing is used for the second problem of the study. It is due to the reason that White Americans in the novel firstly dominate the law in some aspects of life and finally enable them to direct Black Americans involve their ideology into a discourse that White is the dominant and a supreme social group in which Black Americans should respect and admit White domination.

Based on these stages, Gramsci tries to provide an overview of the implementation of hegemony through two cases: moral leadership and intellectual leadership. According to Hardiman *ed*, moral and intellectual leadership are mentioned as a leadership over other social groups. Moral and intellectual leadership is influential in producing a support and a consensus on dominated social group (176). He adds that a group can be said performing

hegemony over the other groups for the group has an effect that encourages the emergence of agreement (consensus) of these groups. After a dominant social group obtains a consensus, a dominated social group can be argued accepting the domination of dominant social group.

As the need of this study, the theory of hegemony is applied as theoretical base in analyzing the problems between Black and White Americans in the novel *A Lesson Before Dying*. The problem occur due to a social interaction and social relation between Black and White Americans in the novel. The theory of hegemony will be applied as a base in identifying the White domination on Black Americans in the novel. The practice of consensual hegemony can be identified in the process of White American domination to Black American. The Black Americans in the novel are those who live in the Southern, and mentioned as free Black who still have several rights as nation.

Finally, this study does its research on the acceptance of Black Americans over the domination of White Americans that is believed as a phase of domination, and the effect of White Americans treatment to Black Americans which is said to be a phase of directing in the novel *A Lesson Before Dying*. Over all analysis of both problems, the theory of hegemony is particularly the main theory in this study.

2.1.5 Theory of Discrimination

Fishbein in his book *Peer Prejudice and Discrimination: The Origins of Prejudice* (6-7), says that discrimination involves harmful actions toward others because of their membership in a particular group. Paludi means discrimination as

treatment or consideration of, or making a distinction in favor of or against, a person or thing based on the group, class, or category to which that person or thing is perceived to belong to rather than on individual merit. Thus, this includes treatment of an individual or group, based on their actual or perceived membership in a certain group or social category.

In addition, as Healey and O'Brien, discrimination refers to an unequal treatment based on group membership (22). While, as Theodorson and Theodorson (115-116), defines discrimination as an imbalanced treatment against person or a group in the basis term of race, tribe of nationality, religion, or social class membership. Discrimination is also a form of injustice (Mikkola 196). The injustice is manifested in the distinction between legal treatment against fellow citizens, on the basis of skin colour, tribe, ethnic group, religion, sex (gender) and many others (<http://plato.stanford.edu/>).

Myriad forms of discrimination have been practiced in the life of human. Those forms resemble race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language, and birth (Epstein and Walker 677). In the United States, the term discrimination is always related to racism. Racism is prejudice or discrimination against other people because of their race or what is thought to be their race (Reilly, Kaufman, and Bodino 16). Both terms can be combined and produce an incoming term: racial discrimination. Racial discrimination is a form of injustice based on racial status.

Related to this study, the theory of discrimination is applied to emphasize the existence of discrimination in the domination or hegemony of White Americans in the Southern America as narrated in the novel *A Lesson Before Dying* by Ernest J. Gaines. The evidence within the novel shows that the hegemony of White Americans also produce a discrimination on Black Americans in the Southern. It means that, when Black Americans are under the hegemony of White Americans, Black Americans are also discriminated.

2.2 Review of Related Studies

This part of chapter attempts to present some related researches to the novel *A Lesson Before Dying* by Ernest J. Gaines. It is done for the purpose of clarifying the previous related researches to make a comparison of analysis for the sake of finding differences within the same object analysis.

This research with the title *Hegemonic Discrimination as Seen in Ernest J. Gaines' A Lesson Before Dying* has its previous researches done by several researchers. The previous researches come from a thesis by Fatima Annisa K and a journal by Corina Anghel Crisu. Both previous researches have its own analytical principles. Although both previous researches have the same object *A Lesson Before Dying*, but both have different discussions which then influence to the theory and approach used in the analysis.

The first previous research is a research by Fatima Annisa K, a student of English Department Faculty of Humanities Diponegoro University, with her thesis title *The Influence of American Black Liberation to The Major Characters' Attitude Changes In Ernest J. Gaines' A Lesson Before Dying*. This thesis

concentrates the analysis on Black American liberation toward Jefferson's and Grant's attitude change, where other Black Americans including his godmother, Reverend Ambrose, Grant Wiggins, and Grant's aunt always deliver a support for the sake of Jefferson's life, that he should die with dignity as a man, not a hog.

In the analysis, the writer of this thesis concerns with some approaches; Structural, Sociological, and Psychological approach. By the help of some approaches and theories used in the thesis, it makes the result of the analysis is true that two main character's attitude changes (Jefferson and Grant Wiggins) are caused by the spirit of liberation done by Black American in their environment. Hence, Annisa K as the writer of this thesis assumes that the persuasive sense of Black Americans influences two main character's attitude changes.

The further research was done by Corina Anghel Crisu entitled "*Tell Nannan I Walked*": *Reconstructing Manhood in Ernest J. Gaines's A Lesson Before Dying*. This research finds that the author, Ernest J. Gaines attempts to reconsider the black male character in the context of racial prejudice in the segregated Southern in the late 1940s. In Crisu's assumption, Gaines's novel reveals us the African American man as a standing hero, in which his final endurance remains an exemplary lesson inscribed in both the black and white communal spirit. Therefore, as the writer, Crisu briefly notices that stereotypical assumption undermined in Ernest J. Gaines's novel is the inability of the African American character to transform, to evolve, and to be more than a simple pawn in the white people's legal treatment by not seeing Black people as citizen.

In brief, *A Lesson Before Dying* has been studied by several researches as previous explanations. Both previous researches with the same object *A Lesson Before Dying* by Ernest J. Gaines, are equally different with the core discussion of this research. The discussions or the taken issues in both previous researches are different, where the difference will lead to the different theories used in the analysis. Therefore, this research entitled *Hegemonic Discrimination as Seen in Ernest J. Gaines's A Lesson Before Dying* somehow tries to observe and discuss about the life of Black Americans under hegemonic discrimination done by White Americans which is commonly done in the social, law, and cultural aspect. To find and discuss the hegemonic discrimination which is available in the novel, the writer of this research proposes some related theories as necessary in the analysis.