#### **CHAPTER I**

### INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Background of the Study

Racial injustice in the United States underlies a wide range of social issues that affect the life chances of different groups disproportionately by race. According to Shapiro (2004:33) in social science, racial injustice is typically analyzed as "imbalances in the distribution of power, economic resources, and opportunity". Racial injustice in America have manifested in American society in ways ranging from racial disparities in wealth, poverty rates, housing patterns, educational opportunities, unemployment rates, and incarceration rates. Current racial injustice in the United States have their roots in over 300 years of cultural, economic, physical, legal, and political discrimination based on race.

In the slavery era, the black people in America had been victims of racial injustice. The actions of white people as the owners over the slaves were incompatible with human being. Thirty years after the civil war ended the slavery era, the Southern of America, most relied on farming especially Cotton. The people existed social segregation between white and black people and supported racial injustice against the black people.

The white people of Southern challenged the Reconstruction by using their position in the central government in Washington. They found the ways, controlling the nations in order to keep the white people domination. Social segregation widely spread through all areas of Southern life aspects

such as restaurant, hotel, hospital, school and others. This started the racial injustice existed. The example case of this was the black people should give his seat to the white people in bus.

The impact of racial discrimination is distinguishing between the rights of black people and white people. Also, racial stratification continues to occur in employment, housing, education, lending, and government. These disparities have an impact on every aspect of life and relationship of black people and white people in America society.

Racial Injustice deals with the situation there was a deadly racial attitude towards the people who were different then the general public, which in this novel belongs to the black people. The problem of racialism and relationship of black people and white people in America can be seen through scientific book, journal, newspaper, film, or even novel. Many novel represents black and white relationship. Mostly, black people are describe as minority and discriminated. One novel that focuses on black and white relationship is *To Kill a Mockingbird*, a novel by Harper Lee.

The novel that I choose to be the object of this research is *To Kill a Mockingbird*. It is because of several reasons. First, the novel is a very famous literary work about racial injustice and was published in America in 1960s, which is at that time racial discrimination did not subside. The novel is renowned for its warmth and humour, despite dealing with the serious issues of rape and racial inequality. The novel tells us the how the black people discriminated in America in 1930s. *To Kill a Mockingbird* novel by

Harper Lee is a novel showed the case about racial injustice and power abuse of the white people and black people in society. Secondly, the novel has an interesting background. The novel is produced in 1960s but the setting was 1930s. The era automatically explains the background. Finding the social context is important because it would lead to find the cause of writing.

To Kill a Mockingbird was published in 1960 where African Americans were still denied many of their basic rights. Although, Harper Lee sets her novel in the South of the 1930s, conditions were little improved by the early 1960s in America. The Civil Rights movement was just taking shape in the 1950s, and its principles were beginning to find a voice in American courtrooms and the law.

The novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee is at once a powerful indictment of racial injustice. Narrated in the first person by Jean Louise (Scout) Finch, who lives with her father, Atticus Finch and her brother named Jeremy Finch (Jem). Atticus is a white lawyer with his black client named Tom Robinson who was accused since he raped white women although he did not conducted it. The situation forces him facing his environment because at that time whites did not like blacks.

The story setting is in Maycomb County, Alabama, in the 1930s, which was the year when Great Depression happened. In the Great Depression era, there are a lot of people lost their lands, their homes, and also their dignities. The condition gives big effect to American and African-American in some

aspect, such as political aspect. Therefore, they should live neighbouring between whites and blacks.

In her novel, Harper reveals a lot about the society of Maycomb and the norms and values of the small town. The reader is constantly able to see throughout the book what Harper Lee's conception of Maycomb's society is. Some black people worked as domestic servants or had poorly jobs. And the worst thing that happened was that if they were charged for doing something to a white person and it was not true, the court would find the black person guilty over the white person, just like Tom Robinson's trial. Maycomb's society is one deeply filled with racial injustice, social jealousy, and social hatred.

Lee told the reader what exactly happened during her life since she was born until she produces the novel. Moreover, it actually represent social group in that era. The group certainly has their way of thinking, the same feeling, though, and opinion. The issue related to the people's mind is racial injustice. Specifically in political view, racial injustice makes law cannot work well. Law obligate to solve every problem that is faced by everyone to get justice, instead of men in the novel get injustice because of different race. Shortly, the story is talking about black people as the victim of white people.

Racial injustice in our society not only shows itself in everyday talk, but also verbally represented in media discourse, in textbooks, political propaganda, laws and regulations, meetings, job interviews, literature and comics, and so on. Only some of these genres have systematically been examined in order to assess ethnic stereotypes, ethnocentrism, prejudice, or verbal discrimination (van Dijk, 1984:8).

There are many linguistics theories that can be used to analyze a discourse. One of theories is Critical Discourse Analysis theory that able to analyze the underlying social practice of a discourse. According to Litosseliti (2010:127), CDA evolved formally in the early 1990s as a perspective applied by a network of scholars with shared political concerns about social inequalities in the world but with widely differing interests in areas such as literature, politics, media studies, genre studies and information technology. Since then, various branches of the movement have emerged. Among these, Critical Linguistics (e.g. Fowler et al., 1979), French Discourse Analysis (e.g. Pecheux, 1982), Social Semiotics (e.g. Hodge and Kress, 1988), Socio cognitive studies (van Dijk, 1991), and the Discourse-historical method (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997:266).

According to van Dijk (2001:352), Critical Discourse Analysis is a kind of analytic investigation on discourse that primarily studies the way in which the abuse of social power, domination and inequality are practiced, reproduced and occasionally combated by texts and speech in the social and political context. Critical discourse analysis, with such a particular investigation, explicitly takes sides, expecting to contribute in a more effective way to the resistance against social inequality. Therefore, Critical Discourse Analysis proposed by van Dijk being the appropriate tool to

analyze discourse that legitimated the act of racial injustice. It is because Critical Discourse Analysis proposed by Teun A. van Dijk use social cognition (how do the author recognize the society and represent it into the text). It can reveal the ideological implication of the author to reproduce the act of racism in media discourse. We can understand the implicit meaning through the structure of discourse; macrostructure, superstructure, and microstructure.

CDA is often applied in the study of discourse to gain an understanding of role in the reproduction of racism. This particular field of study within CDA is spearheaded by van Dijk. He observes in Schiffrin, Tannen, & Hamilton (2001:362) that, even though it is not regularly related to discourse, racism is "a complex system of social and political inequality that is also reproduced by discourse". Today, the role of text and talk in information societies is of great importance in the enactment of racism as it is used as a type of verbal discrimination (van Dijk, 2002:145). Discourse can be very persuasive to marginalize minority groups and it is particularly hurtful since it is considered natural and normal by "those who engage in such discourse and interaction" (van Dijk, 2000:34).

In critical discourse analysis not only analyzes the linguistic elements, but also concern to the context behind the discourse. Because of that, critical discourse analysis according to van Dijk explained that the analysis of a discourse not only based on text analysis, but also examines how the text is produced. CDA is concerned with the (re)production of or the resistance

against power, dominance and inequality through text. By trying to discover patterns of manipulation or dominance in discourse, the analyst wants to expose what is hidden or not immediately obvious (van Dijk, 1995:18-19).

In this research, the writer has an attempt to know the social cognition of the author of discourse when they influenced by their society. The writer analyzed the novel using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). It is the appropriate tool to analyze the reproduction of racial injustice in *To Kill a Mockingbird* novel by Harper Lee.

### 1.2. Statement of the Problem

According to the background of study above, the statement of the problem for this research is:

- 1.2.1. What are the structures of Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* novel tells about racial injustice?
- 1.2.2. What is the social context of Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* novel?

# 1.3. Objective of the Study

Based on the problems above, the objectives of the study are aimed:

- 1.3.1. To reveal the structures of Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* novel tells about racial injustice.
- 1.3.2. To analyze the social context in Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* novel.

# 1.4. Significance of the Study

This study is expected to give both theoretical and practical contributions in relation to the study of Critical Discourse Analysis.

Theoretically, the result of this study will give contribute to the Critical Discourse Analysis theory proposed by Teun A. van Dijk. It will strengthen van Dijk's theory by performing how the author shares their ideology and their opinion through discourse structure.

Practically, the result of this research will be use as reference for student, especially student of UIN Sunan Ampel and other readers who take Critical Discourse Analysis as the main consent.

# 1.5. Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study focused on the racial injustice in *To Kill a Mockingbird* novel by Harper Lee. The researcher focuses on how the author of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Harper Lee tells about racial injustice through the structure of her novel.

This study limited on the structure of Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* novel which analyzed using Critical Discourse Analysis proposed by Teun A. van Dijk. The analysis is centered on the macrostructure, superstructure, and microstructure of the novel.

## 1.6. Definition of Key Terms

Racial injustice

: the act of being unjust to an individual or group base on race, particularly concerning legally recognized rights.

Critical Discourse Analysis: a kind of analytic investigation on discourse

that primarily studies the way in which the abuse of social power, domination and inequality are practiced, reproduced and occasionally combated by texts and speech in the social and political context. Critical discourse analysis, with such a particular investigation, explicitly takes sides, expecting to contribute in a more effective way to the resistance against social inequality (van Dijk, 2001:352).

To Kill a Mockingbird

: a novel by Harper Lee published in 1960. The plot and the characters are loosely based on the author's observation of her family and neighbours. The novel is renowned for its warmth and humour, despite dealing with the serious issues of rape and racial inequality.