CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Literature is a written or printed work which expresses feeling, attitude and life of human in society. According to Wellek and Warren (1977:94), literature represents ‘life’ and ‘life’ is a social reality, even though the natural world and the inner or subjective world of the individual have also been objects of literary ‘imitations’. Through literature, an author tries to express his or her idea about what he or she ever experienced in life time or what was happening around them from natural phenomenon to the life of the people in their community.

According to Peck and Coyle (1984:103) novel, as one of literature genres, is a long work with a great amount of detail on every page. It presents all the complicating facts that need to be reconsidered before we can reach any sort of judgment.

In this thesis, Uncle Tom’s Cabin is the object to be analyzed. It is a novel written by Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811-1896). Published in 1852, the novel became one of the biggest best-sellers of the 19th century. Uncle Tom’s Cabin is very interesting. It is a novel with a purpose. Through the novel, Stowe wanted to show the readers that black people are human beings. This novel firmly agrees that racial discrimination in any form of it, is not allowed to do. Stowe clearly motivated the readers to fight the racial discrimination.
Uncle Tom’s Cabin is one of the most popular historical novels that presents actual events from the point of view of the author. It touches the real human’s life at a certain place in historical time. This novel is dominated by the gap between two races, the black people towards the white people. The racial concept caused inequalities in black people’s life. Therefore, racial discrimination should be an unsolved problem until the present time. Further, Gosset (1985:135) clearly stated;

At this point Stowe introduces a problem in Uncle Tom’s Cabin which almost as difficult of solution as that of slavery, and one which has by no means been solved up to the present time, the matter of social relationships among members of different races.

Based on the description, racial discrimination became the focus of analysis in this thesis. Racial discrimination has been a big issue in United States since the colonial era and slave era as the main setting of time in the novel.

The writer chooses this topic to be analyzed because the writer found that the main idea of this novel is about the racial discrimination among the race in United States. As it is generally known, the majority race in this novel is the Whites. The White people as in this novel have a negative prejudice of the black people. They have their own opinion towards the black people. According to them, the black people have no rights to posses their own independence. Harriet Beecher Stowe described the situation of it intelligently.

According to Bowling (2002:21), racism is the belief that certain groups are innately, biologically, socially, morally superior to other groups, based upon what is attributed to be their racial composition.

It can be said that racial discrimination itself is an unequal treatment based on someone’s race. The most notable form of American racism began with the
institution of slavery, during which Africans were enslaved and treated as property. Prior to the institution of slavery, early African and non-white immigrants to the Colonies had been regarded with equal status, serving as sharecroppers alongside whites. After the institution of slavery, the status of Africans was stigmatized and this stigma was the basis for the more virulent anti-African racism that persisted until the present. The condition and situation are clearly drawn by Stowe through *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*.

According to the novel, black people were never treated well and always became the victim of white people bad treatments. This novel shows us the individual experiences which may portray the life experience of the black people living in the United State that were always afraid of being sold to the slave trade and being sent to the plantation. It describes the reality that happened toward black people in United States at the time.

Racial discrimination is strongly shown in this novel when black people on United States became slaves and were sold just because the prejudice of white people. The black people experienced many sufferings and miseries because of the racial discrimination such as separated away from their family, physical mistreat, and the human trade.

In the novel *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe, the writer found racial discrimination is the dominant theme of the novel. This dominant theme is very interesting for the writer to choose the novel to be analyzed. As racial discrimination is one of big problem which occurs in American society until present time, the writer decides to make further analysis upon the racial discrimination.
1.2 Problems of the Study

It is important to find out the problems that are going to be analyzed to get the clear description on the object of the study. Based on the statement about the racial discrimination above, the writer points out the problems of the study are:

1. What are the forms of racial discrimination that black people has been through in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* novel?

2. What are the effects of racial discrimination in black people’s lives in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* novel?

1.3 Objective of the Study

There are two objectives based on the statement of the problem above that have been decided:

1. To portray the form of racial discrimination that black people have been through in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* novel.

2. To describe the effects of racial discrimination in black people’s lives in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* novel.

1.4 Scope of the Study

In doing the analysis of this thesis becomes much sharper, some scopes of study are arranged. The main concern of the analysis in this thesis is all about the racial discrimination reflected in the story of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. Based on it, this
thesis is going to reveal how the racial discrimination that is experienced by one leading character of this story. This thesis focusses the analysis in showing the form of racial discrimination such as prejudice and slavery towards black people that represents by Uncle Tom has been through in this story.

After discussing about the form of racial discrimination in this story, then the analysis moves to the effects of racial discrimination such as human trade, family separation and physical mistreat that Uncle Tom experienced in this story.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The analysis of this thesis is expected to give significance to the readers generally and for the writer especially. The significances are:

1. This thesis can be a reference to the reader who will discuss about literary work, especially novel.

2. This thesis can give information and add the reader’s knowledge about Harriet Beecher Stowe’s work.

3. This thesis can enrich the knowledge of English Department Students in studying about the intrinsic elements and other literary study so that they interesting to analyze the other side that contain the novel Uncle Tom’s Cabin.