

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of The Study

Fiction is kind of imagination that filled in the stories by the author. Then fiction can be divided into several kinds such as romantic fiction, crime fiction, historical fiction and many others kind of fictions. According to Rowell, “Fiction is subjective and evocative. It is made up and indirect in its communication” (Rowell, 2014: 3). From the quotation, subjective means that the condition or the story is based on the reader’s feeling, perception or imagination. Meanwhile fiction is also evocative. It is not only about experience but also it can be the willingness that cannot be reached in the author’s real life or the feeling that combined with the imagination of the author.

Fiction can also be as evocative for the reader. It means that fiction story is made to evoke the reader’s emotion. Sometimes the story can make the reader feel angry, happy or sad. Moreover if they think and feel the same condition as the story tells about or even they have the same experience. This is what Kurland means that the fiction as a communication which can bring the reader indirectly to feel the same way like the story tells. Fiction is divided into two categories. The first one is literary fiction and popular fiction. Gelder, further, states that;

“Literary fiction is ambivalent at best about its industrial connections and likes to see itself as something more than ‘just entertainment’, but popular fiction generally speaking has no such reservations. It draws together the industrial and entertainment – the latter being a particular form of culture, of cultural production – so much so that they can often be indistinguishable“ (Gelder, 2004: 1).

Gelder explains that literary fiction has the purpose to be reached. It does not only become entertainment but also it wants to make the reader know that there is the purpose behind the fiction and the thought of the reader can be evoked by the fiction. Then according to (Allen, 2010) “literary fiction is fiction that attempts to communicate ideas, concepts, or feelings that transcend the structural elements of the story, e.g., the plot, the characters, the setting.” It means that the literary fiction focuses on the structural element of the story and then, how can the author make the plot, setting of time, place and who the character that will be antagonist or protagonist, or neutral is. So the reader knows what the ideas, concept or even feeling that they get from the story.

Meanwhile, popular fiction according to Gelder has the purpose to evoke the reader's emotion. Moreover the condition of the fiction story has the same condition as the reader's condition, their feeling and thought will be more attentive to the story. Then according to (Rao, 2011: 13) “The word popular is, of course, used to mean whatever is liked, desired, and approved by a large number of people.” This statement means that we can say something popular if there are a large number of people like it and they have desires to have it. The people will easily access it, because everyone has it. Actually the root of the word popular is “pop” which has the same meaning as erupt or explode or in the other word, it is something that well known by most of people. It is same as the meaning of popular which is something that known easily by the people and then it is liked, desired and approved by the large number of people. Then if the two words are combined, the word popular with fiction, it becomes the fiction which is liked, desired, and approved by a large

number of people as the communication and entertainment and it becomes known well by everybody. The explanation about popular fiction is deeply explained also by Rao. He stated that

Instead of respecting what is characteristic of a large number of people we seem to have come to believe that popular fiction, for instance, is inferior since it is read by a large number of people. The term popular fiction may be loosely used to mean fiction that is popular with a set of readers or an audience (Rao, 2011:13)

The statement above means that book or novel or something can be said popular is when there are a large number of people wants to buy it. Subsequently, the reader judges the popular fiction base on the diction or the choosing word that the author used or the words that are easily understood by the readers. Sometimes the author makes the common words become uncommonly meaningful or uses slang words to attract the reader, and makes the reader feels excited to read. The point of popular fiction is to entertain rather than to exercise the reader.

Nowadays, there are many kinds of popular fiction that known as genre like crime fiction, romance fiction, science fiction, children literature, fantasy fiction, adventure, and chick lit which genre of women's fictions. "A genre is thus the situation and the textual instantiation of that situation, the site at which the rhetorical and the social repro-duce one another in specific kinds of texts." (Bawarshi, 2000: 357). The specific kinds of texts can be combined to be one genre. Like the fictions which tell about love, boyfriend, girlfriend, and the other things about romantic. All of them can be included to romance fiction. In the other words Leavis in Thomson states that "a genre is a set of texts that a particular community agrees perform a similar function" (Thomson, 2009: 79). This statement also describes that specific

kinds of texts with the similar function and with a particular community who agrees can be called as a genre. In the other hand it describes about popular fiction that can be seen in the different types of genre.

Actually genre fiction cannot be separated from popular fiction, Thomson states that; “genre fiction is stated to be “popular fiction” as they both consider “mass” to the production of the literary work” (Thomson, 2009: 81). From the statement above, genre fiction is a part of popular fiction and both of them consider as mass to the production of the literary work. Then the statement from Thomson is also supported by the statement from Gelder that stated “the term of popular fiction is essentially genre fiction” (Gelder, 2004: 2). From those statements, the writer believes that genre fiction in one part of popular fiction that consider as mass to publish in the production of the literary work.

Subsequently, one of types of genre is chick lit. It tells about women’s fiction and it is so familiar and popular. There are also some writers who make chick lit become their research. Chick lit is about women and the author also women. This literary work is then from women to women. Actually chick lit has been existed from nineteenth century. The basic meaning of chick lit according to Stephanie states that

“Chick lit is genre fiction within women fiction which has been a rapidly growing popular cultural force, spawning films, websites, publishing imprints, how-to manuals and a group of genuinely talented, interesting writers with compelling stories to tell about modern women struggling and succeeding with work, relationships, motherhood, infertility, finances, and the right shoes to wear with the right dress or in the case of fashion. Constantly it was humorously and lightheartedly” (Stephanie, 2008: 1)

The statement clearly stated that chick lit is the genre fiction which tells about women's fiction which is very popular. The stories can be about relationships, motherhood, or work, women struggling, finance and the other that have correlation with the women's life. The author relates the stories to the real life of women. Then (Stephanie, 2008: 1) also stated that "Initially, women writers were trying to find a way to write about their lived experience that was vibrant and authentic and creative and artful. Now it is a range of definitions for chick lit". It means that the author or writer tries to find the way to express and write their lived experience and they make it creatively, then now, that is known as chick lit.

Subsequently, the type of popular fiction is continuously growing. Chick lit now as the root for the other genre of women's fiction. The newest genre in the field of popular fiction is chica lit. It also tells about women's fiction but in more specific culture or ethnic. According to (Glasburgh, 2006: 18) "...including 'Sistah' lit and 'Chica' lit also excluded were titles that fell into subcategories of chick lit..." This statement also explains about chica lit that becomes one of subcategories of chick lit. Then this statement is supported by Hedrick,

"Chica lit novels, written by United States Latina and Mexican-American authors and featuring a young, upwardly mobile US Latina or Mexican-American protagonist (or a group of Latina girlfriends) are part of a fast-growing subgenre, itself a nichemarket of what is now best known as "chick lit." (Hedrick, 2012: 342)

From the statement above, it describes about chica lit as subgenre of chick lit in a popular fiction. Chica lit is written by Mexican- American or United States Latina author that tells about the women in their life. Hedrick also stated about protagonist that means a group of Mexican- American women and their friend's relationship.

The literary works that included to chica lit tell about the romantics love, and also the struggle of women, how they can have successful career even though they are women, and then how they can survive their family life. “Chica lit can help serve as a set of manuals that show readers how, as well as how not, to do a modern, American, and properly gendered ethnicity” (Hedrick, 2012:). From the quotation means that the reader will learn also from chica lit about how should or should not do as American.

Chica Lit was influenced by the enormous success of *The Dirty Girls Social Club* (2003) by Alisa Valdes-Rodriguez. Then Valdes’ blockbuster hit novel, *The Dirty Girls Social Club*, has sold close to 700,000 copies in the U.S. alone. Subsequently it is also being published in 11 different languages worldwide, such as German, French, Portuguese, Chinese, Dutch, Polish, Korean and Icelandic (Marvista, 2014). Latina is explicitly at the center of everything in *The Dirty Girls Social Club*, from the extensive promotion of the book to the protagonists’ various family histories. Then within a year of the novel’s release, St. Martins had printed more than 300,000 copies, with an additional 32,000 in Spanish.

The novel entitled *The Dirty Girls Social Club* that written by Alisa Valdés-Rodríguez which describes about chica- lit. This novel was published on 2003 and since this novel published, chica lit being popular. The novel talks about friendship between six girls, they are called as Mexican- American women or Mexican who lives in America. The author of this novel is also Mexican- American women. In the novel, the author explains each of the six Mexican- American women per

chapters. Those six women met each other in the University of Boston. Their names are Lauren, Elizabeth, Amber, Usnavys, Sara and Rebecca. The story tells about girlfriends that have their own problem with their relationship such as relationship to parents, husband, or even boyfriend. Then how they are success as a single girl and the women who has not gotten the best man yet until in the end of the story, even though in the end of the story some of them find the right man. Then the story also tells about how they are as carrier women. There are several elements more inside of the novel that construct it become *chica lit*, and then they are called as the formula.

The writer chooses *chica lit* as the analysis, exactly is about the formula of *chica lit* seen in Valdés-Rodríguez's *The Dirty Girls Social Club* novel. *Chica lit* is the newest genre in the field of literature. This is interesting to be discussed because it gives the knowledge to the reader about new culture, such as Mexican that live in America, and then how they survive their life. It is not easy become someone who intimidated as a Hispanic or illegal immigrant who gets the protests. The formula deals with the structures that form the story line.

1.2 Formulation of The Problem

According to the background of the study above, the writer formulates the problem as follow;

What is the formula of *chica-lit* seen in Valdés-Rodríguez's '*The Dirty Girls Social Club*?

1.3 Objective of The Study

Considering the formulation of the problem above, the objective of the study is to elaborate the formula chica-Lit seen in Valdés-Rodríguez's '*the Dirty Girls Social Club*.

1.4 Uses of The Study

The uses of research are:

1.4.1 Theoretical Uses

Theoretically, this thesis can inform the issue related to Mexican- American women literature or chica- lit generally through the novel from Valdés-Rodríguez's '*The Dirty Girls Social Club*

1.4.2 Practical Uses

Practically, by this thesis, there will be connection between formula of chica-lit and the life of Mexican- American women in Valdés-Rodríguez's '*the Dirty Girls Social Club* story.

1.5 Scope of The Study

The writer gives the limitation in this analysis; the discussion focuses on the formula of chica-lit as reflected in Valdés-Rodríguez's '*the Dirty Girls Social Club*. This research uses Cawelti 's theory about formula and Hedrick's theory about chica-lit.