

RACISM IN WRIGHT'S *BLACK BOY* NOVEL



A Thesis

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in English Literature Study Program*

Written by
HASMAYANI
F21116029

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FACULTY OF CULTURAL SCIENCES
HASANUDDIN UNIVERSITY**

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With reference to the letter of the dean of Faculty of Cultural Sciences Hasanuddin University No. 350/UN4.9.1/KEP/2020 regarding supervision, we hereby confirm to approve the undergraduate thesis draft by Hasmayani (F21116029) to be examined at the English Literature Study Program of Faculty of Cultural Sciences.

Makassar, January 16th, 2021

Approved by

First Supervisor



Dr. Abidin Pammu, M.A., Dipl.TESOL
NIP. 196012311986011071

Second Supervisor



Rezky Ramadhani, S.S, M.Litt.
NIP. 199303102018074001

Approved by the Execution of Thesis Examination by
The Thesis Organizing Committees

On Behalf of Dean
Head of English Literature Study Program



Dr. Abidin Pammu, M.A., Dipl.TESOL
NIP. 196012311986011071

THESIS
RACISM IN WRIGHT'S *BLACK BOY* NOVEL

BY:
HASMAYANI
Student Number: F21116029

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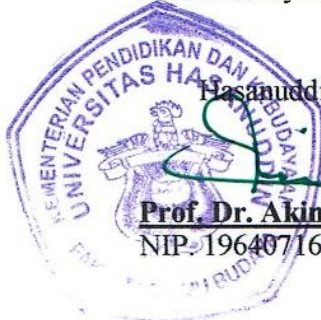
Dr. Abidin Pammu, MA., Dipl. TESOL
NIP. 196012311986011071

Secretary



Rezky Ramadhani, S.S., M.Litt.
NIP. 199303102018074001

Dean Faculty of Cultural Sciences



Prof. Dr. Akin Duli. MA.
NIP. 196407161991031010

Head of English Literature Study
Program Faculty of Cultural
Sciences



Dr. Abidin Pammu, MA., Dipl. TESOL
NIP. 196012311986011071

**ENGLISH LITERATURE STUDY PROGRAM
FACULTY OF CULTURAL SCIENCES
HASANUDDIN UNIVERSITY**

Today, February 10th, 2021 the Board of Thesis Examination has kindly approved a thesis by HASMAYANI (No. F21116029) entitled, **RACISM IN WRIGHT'S *BLACK BOY NOVEL***, submitted in fulfillment of one of the requirements of undergraduate thesis examination to obtain Sarjana Sastra (S.S.) Degree at the English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University.

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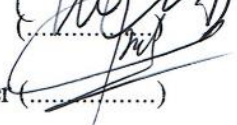
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This thesis by **HASMAYANI (No.F21116029)** entitled, **RACISM IN WRIGHT'S *BLACK BOY* NOVEL** has been revised as advised during examination on February 10th, 2021 and approved by the Board of Undergraduate

Thesis Examiners:

1. Dr. Muhammad Syafri Badaruddin, M.Hum. First Examiner 
2. Dr. M. Amir P., M.Hum. Second Examiner (.....)

PERNYATAAN KEASLIAN SKRIPSI

Yang bertanda tangan di bawah ini:

Nama : HASMAYANI

Nomor Induk Mahasiswa : F21116029

Jenjang Pendidikan : S1

Program Studi : Sastra Inggris

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Makassar, 22 Februari 2021



(HASMAYANI)

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The writer realizes that this thesis is still far from perfect. Therefore, all suggestion and critics will be most welcome to make this thesis better. The writer hopes that this thesis is helpful for all readers who are interested in analyzing the similar topic.

Makassar, 12 January 2021

Hasmayani

ABSTRACT

HASMAYANI. Racism in Wright's *Black Boy* Novel(Supervised by Abidin Pammu, and Rezky Ramadhani)

The purpose of this study are (1) to know the acts of racism that is potrayed in *Black Boy* novel, and (2) to describe the main character's responds toward the racism he experienced.

This research uses the structuralism approach that focuses to analyze the intrinsinc elements of the literary work. In this case, the writer also uses descriptive method with the library research to obtained the data.

Through this research, the writer finds that the form of racism in the *Black Boy* novel consists of personal racism and institutional racism. In order to fight against racism, the main character's responds toward the racism he experienced is by fighting their treatment, for example responding to the words of people who try to underestimate him.

Keywords: *racism, structuralism, and responds.*

ABSTRAK

HASMAYANI. Rasisme dalam novel *Black Boy* karya Richard Wright (dibimbing oleh Abidin Pammu, and Rezky Ramadhani)

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah (1) untuk mengetahui tindakan rasisme yang digambarkan dalam novel *Black Boy*, dan (2) untuk mendeskripsikan tanggapan tokoh utama terhadap rasisme yang dialaminya.

Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan strukturalisme yang menitikberatkan pada analisis unsur intrinsik karya sastra. Dalam hal ini penulis juga menggunakan metode deskriptif dengan studi pustaka untuk memperoleh data.

Melalui penelitian ini, penulis menemukan bahwa bentuk rasisme dalam novel *Black Boy* terdiri dari rasisme personal dan rasisme institut. Untuk melawan rasisme, tokoh utama merespon rasisme yang dialaminya dengan melawan perlakuan tersebut, misalnya menanggapi perkataan orang-orang yang mencoba meremehkannya.

Kata kunci: *rasisme, strukturalisme, dan respon.*

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the writer explains the introduction of the research, consists of the background, identification of problem, scope of the problem, research of question, objective of writing, significant of writing, and sequence of writing.

A. Background

Literature is a creative work of the author's imagination that most commonly refers to work including, poetry, drama, fiction, nonfiction, and in some instances, journalism, and song. However, sometimes the source of inspiration for authors also comes from social facts such as culture, history, politics, religion and even social life.

In Wellek and Warren in Wiyatmi (2006: 14), literature must be able to produce an aesthetic creation and try to transmit the needs of human life and be a spot to aspire the ideas, thoughts, and feelings of the authors about human life.

Differences in a society are something that is normal, including gender, religion, social stratification, race and others. However, social differences will not prevent individual or groups from interacting when all societies have high solidarity with each other. Conversely, when people see differences as separation in interacting with each other, where there are people or groups who feel better than other groups, they feel superior to other groups, then that will cause conflict in society and this factor is also the basis for racism happens.

Racism is an ideology that bases itself on discrimination against a person or group of people, because their race even becomes a political doctrine (Liliweri, 2005:21). Many authors choose racism as a theme in their work to represent minority people, one of them is Richard Wright.

Richard Wright is an American novelist, short story writer, poet, and essayist. His work focuses more on issues related to black people in American society. Through experience, Richard Wright was able to express the feelings and difficulties experienced by black people in overcoming the nation. His work is known for its vivid detail about the emotions black people feel in white society and is work that talking about balck people in *Black Boy* novel.

Black Boy tells about Richard Wright's persistence in pursuing his dream even though he often felt unfair actions in his environment since childhood, especially from white people, but in order to have a successful career and have a better life, Richard did many things. This book tells the story of Richard Wright's childhood and young adulthood. The book is written in two parts, "Southern Night" which deals with his childhood in the South, and "Horror and Glory" which deals with his early adult years in Chicago. Nonetheless, this book has become an integral part of black American literature and the unity of the black community.

Richard Wright in the book is the protagonist, narrator, and author. *Black Boy* runs through Richard's childhood, as he grew up in a brutal and racist environment in the South where Jim Crow's laws were upheld and prejudice was ubiquitous. As a child, Richard did not feel between blacks and whites. He studied independently

at a young age because of poverty; responded by his father. The spirit of individualism is one of the many elements of the American dream.

The writer chose this novel as the object of research because this novel is an interesting novel, where the novel is made based on a reflection of the author's life and a motivation to readers in achieving their own success as what Richard did in the novel. To be successful, people have to work hard and do not always to depend on others, because everyone become a decision-makers for themselves.

On the other hand the writer discusses about racism because nowadays, there are still many people who difficult to have good relationships with other people because they put too much emphasis on skin color differences. For example in Indonesia, some people still underestimate the Papuan just because of their different skin color.

The importance of this reserarch to the current life is to intertwined good relations between all communities without seeing the difference, to build a tolerance and nationalism against the people.

B. Identification of the problem.

1. The acts of racism that is potrayed in *Black Boy* novel.
2. The main character's responds toward the racism he experienced.

C. Scope of the problem

In this research, the writer focused on discussing about the act of racism that is potrayed in *Black Boy* novel and the main character's responds toward the racism he experienced.

D. Research question

Based on the identification of problem there are problems that will be analyzed in this research.

1. What are the acts of racism that is portrayed in *Black Boy* novel?
2. How are the main character's responses toward the racism he experienced?

E. Objective of writing

1. To know the acts of racism that is portrayed in *Black Boy* novel.
2. To describe the main character's responses toward the racism he experienced.

F. Significance of writing

The importance of this research for the current life is to provide an understanding of how people establish relationships with others without seeing the differences in ethnicity, religion, race, and so on.

G. Sequence of writing

The writing is divided into five chapters. One is the introduction that consists of background, identification of problems, scope of the problem, research question, objective of writing, significance of writing, and sequence of writing.

Chapter two explains the literature review, consists of the previous study, and structuralism approach that contains intrinsic elements of the novel such as theme, character, plot, and setting.

Chapter three discusses methodology of research, consists of methodological design, method of collecting data, method of analysis data, and procedure of the research.

Chapter four discusses data collection and the results of research related to the *Black Boy* novel by Richard Wright.

Chapter five is the closing chapter that consists of a conclusion of the research and suggestion from the writer to the reader in order to give input to the same study.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, the writer will explain the literature review, consist of the previous study, a structuralism approach that contains intrinsic elements of the novel such as theme, character, plot, and setting.

A. Previous studies

A previous study is one reference which is used by the writer to support this research. There are three previous study in this thesis. They were Nurmuttaqin (2015), Muh. Ilyas (2017), and Andi Ririn (2017).

First is, Nurmuttaqin (2015) doing research with the title is “Racism in Chris Rock’s stand-up Comedy Show “Kill the Messenger”. The objectives of this research are to transcribe the utterances expressed as racism in Chris Rock’s stand-up comedy show “Kill the Messenger”, to identify the kinds of racism in Chris Rock’s stand-up comedy show “Kill the Messenger” and to know why racism is a problem. Based on the result of data analysis, the writer found that there seven identified kinds of racism in this comedy show and the reason why is racism a problem based on the direct testimony.

Second is, Muh. Ilyas (2017) under the title Violence and “Racism as reflected in southern america 1950s in Lee’s Go set a watchman”. This research purpose to describe violence which is caused by racism as a reflection of social condition in southern america 1950s in the “Go set a watchman” novel by Harper Lee and also to explain the relationship beetwen the characters of white people and black

people in the novel. The result of the research indicates that there are some violence which are caused by racism acts in the novel which is reflected as social condition in Southern America 1950s such as voting right revocation, racial segregation.

Third is, Andi Ririn (2017) under the title “Racism in Stockett’s *The Help*”. The research purpose to find out racism aspects that occurs in Southern America in 1960s, which is the turbulent times for society in Mississippi especially for African American, and the result the research shows that the situation of the society in South America strictly segregated along racial lines and discriminated African-American.

The three researches above explain racism with genetic structuralism approach with a different object of research. Therefore, in this research, the writer discusses racism on the *Black Boy* novel especially the acts of racism that is portrayed in the black boy novel, and the main character’s responds toward the racism he experienced with the structuralism approach.

B. Structuralism approach

According to Junus in Endraswara (2013: 49), structuralism is often implemented as a form (literary work is a form), therefore structuralism is often placed in modern formalism because they are looking for a common meaning from the text itself, based on the opinion it can be concluded that structuralism is an approach that discusses the intrinsic elements in the work itself.

According to Jean Peaget in Endraswara (2013: 50), structuralism contains three main points. First, the idea of the total (wholeness) in the sense that its parts or elements conform to a set of intrinsic rules that determine both the whole structure and its parts. Second, the idea is still ready to serve new ingredients. Third, the idea (self-regulation) does not require things outside of itself to maintain the transformation procedure, the structure is autonomous from references to other systems.

In this research, the writer uses a structuralism approach that explains the intrinsic elements of the novel such as theme, character, plot, and setting.

1. Theme

A theme is the main idea or meaning contained in a story. The theme of a short story/novel about all problems in human life. These problems can relate to issues of power, affection, jealousy, et cetera.

A theme is the main idea or meaning contained in a story. The theme is the main thought in a story that is conveyed through the fabric of the story. So, a story not only contains a series of events arranged in a chart but also has a specific purpose.

According to Siswanto (2008: 161) theme plays the role as the starting point of the author in creating the fiction. It means that theme is general idea of story.

2. Character

Character is any person, name, or entity whose existence comes from a fictional work or performance. The existence is considered by those who participate in the show as an audience, readers, or otherwise.

According to Edgar (1987:6) a character probably defined as a verbal representation of a human being. Through action, speech, description, and commentary, authors portray characters that are worth caring about, rooting for, and even love, although there are also characters you may laugh at, dislike, or even hate.

3. Plot

A plot is a narrative of events that emphasizes causality. It means that is the sequence of event in a story based on cause and effect.

Gustaf Freytag in Suroso (2015: 14) argues that the plot has shaped the story. These section consists of the exposition, complication/rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution/denouement.

1. The exposition

The exposition introduces all of the main caracters in the story.

2. Rising action

According to Freytag in Suroso (2015: 14) Rising action begins with the introduction of conflict.

3. Climax

The point of climax is the turning point of the story, where the main character makes the single big decision that defines the outcome of their story and who they are as a person.

4. Falling action.

According to Freytag in Suroso (2015: 14) falling action in the sense that the loose ends are being tied up.

5. Resolution/denouement

Resolution is a final confrontation between the protagonist and antagonist, where one or the other decisively wins.

As the conclusion, plot is defined as an important element in a story of literary work. Every story has a sequence of the incident to help the reader easy to understand the meaning of the story.

4. Setting

A setting is the time and place a story occurs. It is one of the literary elements used in novels, short stories, dramas, films, etc. and is usually introduced at the beginning of the story (exposition). The setting can also include the story environment, which can consist of physical location, climate, weather, or social and cultural environment.

According to Stanton (2007: 43-44) setting is the description of the situation or condition that covers the story including the description of place and time. It means that setting is about situation of place and time in the story.

C. Racism

In 1758, Carolus Linnaeus was a Swedish biologist, who founded modern taxonomy by publishing the nature of his system. In formulating the racial classification system he included several genetic characteristics such as skin color, hair shape, hair color, and also many biological personal assessments. (Encyclopedia Americana, 1992: 118).

Carolus Linnaeus in Berdicewsky (1996: 25) divides into homo Europeans, homo Asianticus, homo Afer, and homo Amerecanus.

According to Neubeck, (2001 : 86) there are two types of racism. The first type is Personal Racism, and the second type is Institutional Racism.

1. Personal Racism

Personal racism occurs when individuals or small groups have suspicious attitudes and engage in discriminatory behavior. The manifestation of personal racism is individual stereotyping of alleged racial differences, insulting names and references, discriminatory treatment during interpersonal contact, threats, and acts of violence against members of minority groups who are suspected of being racially inferior. For example, one teacher assumes that children in the class who are not white members cannot learn and are therefore given little attention.

2. Institutional Racism

Institutional racism involves special treatment for minority communities at the hands of institutions. Institutional racism draws attention to the fact that groups such as Native Americans, African Americans, Latin Americans, and Asian Americans are often victims of the organizational structure of routine work. Unlike some forms of personal racism, racism that occurs during the daily and annual operations of large-scale institutions is often difficult to detect without investigation. An example of an act of Institutional Racism is the Seniority rule applied only to employed whites. Recently minority workers are more subject to layoffs than whites.