

CHAPTER I

1.1. Background of the Study

Literature has always been a part of human life. People are interested to enjoy literary works because according to Gravina (2003) literary works involve feelings, spirit, belief, and imagination. Compared to reading newspaper, for example, readers are not only confronted with facts about life but beyond that. Behind the reality presented by journalist, a literary writer can open another reality beneath the fact. The way to do it is also different. A poet, a novelist, or a playwright invites readers to use their imagination to understand this new reality. By learning literature, people can learn a lot of experiences, languages, cultures, ideas, and other things needed for living. They are even introduced to situations which are different from their own environment and society. However, with the power of imagination, the readers are invited to reflect their own life to make their life better.

In general, there are three types of literature; they are drama, prose and poetry. Drama has specific mode of fiction compared to other genre since it aims to be presented in performance. This specific nature can be traced back etymologically. The term comes from a Greek word "*drao*" which is derived from the verb meaning "I do" or "I act". Commonly drama can be played in a theatre. However it can also be performed on television or even in radio. Drama can also be treated as a reading material in which people enjoy it as they do for reading

prose or poetry. While reading, they should also use their imagination to create a mental process of the performance since the drama text is always equipped with stage direction.

Drama also enhance our enjoyment of life, making life more enjoyable since drama is delivered and showed in fun way. Drama represent a special situation in life in the form of characters in dialogues, actions, and appearances; containing elements of conflict and which has its greatest appeal for those who seek their recreation as a group (Gravina, 2003). In addition to its entertainment aspect, Heikkinen (2004) states that drama also has educational aspect so that people can learn to be a better member of society.

Compared to other genres, drama is more interesting to read because it reflects daily life more vividly. Since drama is presentable through the interaction of its characters in drama, it is more real than any other literature such as poems, novels, and prose. Therefore according to Jarmo (2009), drama could be cherished by all and can therefore be used in teaching any kind of students. Drama also has many aspects which are interesting to be focused on, such as theme, plot, gestures, setting, characters and even moral value or motivation.

The drama under study, *Pygmalion*, written by Bernard Shaw, was very famous during 19th century because it contains both romance and humor. Generally, *Pygmalion* is closely similar with everything happening in this life.

Every scene written in *Pygmalion* script is easy to relate it into things that we have passed through or perhaps we may imagine with. *Pygmalion* is about the cockney flower girl called Liza Doolittle, whom Henry Higgins, scholarly gentleman, turns bets he can turn into a lady. Furthermore, *Pygmalion* is relevant in every era since people always put economic status first upon everything and that is the reason why people have something they are proud of. On the other hand, there is also something which is called *Pygmalion* effect. According to Farnam Street blog, the “*Pygmalion* effect” usually refers to the fact that people, often children, students or employees, turn to live up to what’s expected of them and they tend to do better when treated as if they are capable of success. This fact was proved by Robert Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobson by testing the IQ of elementary school students during their era. Such a phenomenon is quite classical in many children’ stories all over the world such as Walt Disney’s *Cinderella* or Indonesian story “*Bawang Putih dan Bawang Merah / The Garlic and Shallot*”.

Bernard Shaw himself is also an interesting playwright. Based on Shaw’s biography book which was written by Notes (1962), Shaw, who was from Dublin, started his career by being a novelist. Since he joined a socialist society, he got many inspirations to begin his career as dramatist. He was obsessed with a passion for reforming the world because he was born in both pride and poverty family. His formal education was limited yet he succeed to make his own success by making plays made up-to-date references and using modern stage properties

during that time. Having a powerful, logical, and satirical style makes Shaw's dialogue has vitality, clearness, and directness to speak about reality and bring realism as his characteristic of his play.

As one of classic drama, Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* has been studied and reviewed by many critics and has become an object of study in Indonesia. Barnett (2008) studied it from sociological approach in which he argued that the drama reflects a capitalistic society where material achievement is glorified. On the other hand, Dervin (1975), focused their study on the psychological perspective of the drama. Using psychoanalysis, they explicate the Oedipus complex and narcissism experienced by Dr. Higgins, one of the main characters in the drama. The two studies discuss the extrinsic aspects (Teeuw, 1987) of the drama which are more advanced than the common research of literature in the English Department of Widya Mandala University which mostly focuses on Formalism approach in which the researchers analyze intrinsic aspects such as theme, plot, character and setting.

This study uses a completely different approach by using reader response theory (Davis and Womack, 2002). In Abrams' seminal work, *The Mirror and The Lamp* (1958), approaches in literature can focus on the work itself or out of the work which is described as universe, writer and reader. Reader-response theory focuses on the fact that readers are the ones that interpret the work itself which may differ from the original writer's intention. In a class of drama, for example,

students may read a certain drama and make responses toward it. By responding to drama, students can learn new knowledge, or even a new culture since drama is the finest way to transfer cultural knowledge when all the knowledge is learned by doing (Jarmo, 2009). Moreover, in understanding students reader response, Felder and Brent (2005) claim that students differ from one another in a wide variety of ways, including the types of instruction they respond best, the ways they approach their study, and their attitudes about the nature of knowledge and their role in constructing it. Therefore reading a drama script can have many perspectives, perceptions and responses toward the drama script. The diversity of these perspectives are going to be analyzed thoroughly in this study in which students of the English education department of Widya Mandala Catholic University were required to respond to several questions regarding Pygmalion which they had read before . In this line, interrogating students' perspective on Shaw's Pygmalion is a very interesting aspect to discuss since there has not such a study at the English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University, Surabaya in particular and in Indonesia in general.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Based on the background of the study, therefore the problem to be answered in this study are,

1. How do readers respond to the questions regarding the main element of Pygmalion Play?
 - a) How do readers respond to the question regarding Dr. Higgin's characteristics textually?
 - b) How do readers respond to the question regarding the climax of the drama?
 - c) How do readers respond to the question regarding the theme of the drama textually?
2. How do readers respond to the question regarding the contextualization of Pygmalion Play into Indonesia's socio-cultural situations?

1.3. Objective of the Study

This study may establish many several new responses based on Pygmalion Play Script. The writer wants to find out the readers' responses about the main element of Pygmalion and some elements of Pygmalion Play that can be implemented into Indonesian situation.

1.4. Significance of the Study

The writer hopes that the result of this study will be appreciated and useful for other teachers or those who are interested in doing a similar research on this topic so that those people can use the given information to support their research. The result of this study shows that reader-response is important to interpret every literary works. Furthermore, the writer hopes that many more people will be interested in studying about literary analysis since literature affects every aspects in this life.

1.5. Limitation of the Study

This study is based on the theory of drama in English education and reader-response. Since the type of this research is a literary analysis, the study is limited on textual and socio-cultural context of reader response.

1.6. Theoretical Framework

Literary work and literary criticism are the two sides of a coin. Writers will never create great works without ignoring criticisms from their previous works. Critics in literature appeared after the reader gave their responses toward the work. Influenced by New Criticism and Formalism approach in literary analysis,

literary critics have been willing to interpret a literary work based on the meaning, both literal and configurative. The problem with this approach is that the literary critics solely rely on their interpretation. They fail to come to an agreement on the true meaning of the works they are analyzing.

On the other hand, the scientific world has offered the multiplicity of meaning. In this postmodernist perspective, reader-response criticism offers a golden middle way in literary analysis. It invites readers of diverse background to comment on the same work and a literary critic has the opportunity to analyze the differences. As a theoretical paradigm, reader-response criticism explores three principal questions,

1. Do various responses to literary works produce the same (or similar) readings?
2. Can literary texts genuinely enjoy as many meanings as readers are able to create?
3. Are some readings essentially more valid and justifiable than others?

(Davis & Womack, 2002, p.51)

Therefore, the response that has been given toward this script will create a new perspective since every of us absolutely has different opinion. This becomes an interesting thing to be focused on because people usually give response to

something they can relate. Response itself is a reaction which is often had by many people and based on how things seems.

In line with this theoretical framework, the writer is going to discuss theories of literature, drama, reader-response, perceptions, and any other related studies. The writer will discuss all theories in chapter 2 to make this study enriches of references.

1.7. Definition of Key Terms

Defining key terms is a must to deal with this literary research. Some of key terms appear are:

- a) Drama : Drama is a form of literature which is performed by actors. (Roberts and Jacob, 1989)
- b) Reader-Response : an approach of literary analysis which focuses on readers' different responses to a literary work. ((Davis and Womack, 2002)
- c) *Pygmalion* : a drama written by GB. Shaw which explores the complex problems faced by Eliza Doolittle who wants to improve her social economic status with the help of Doctor Higgins, a prolific scientist of language. (Notes, 1962)
- d) Textual response* : reader response about specific text feature which included plot, setting, and characters. (Beach, 1993)

- e) Socio-cultural response* : reader response that got impact from readers' social background which affect their perception toward the artwork. (Davis and Womack, 2002)

*see the appendixes for further information

1.8. Organization of the Study

This thesis is divided into five chapters. The first explains the introduction which consists of general information or knowledge about this study and the previous ones. The second chapter contains some literature which is related to this study to support the writer's argument. Then, chapter 3 is about the methodology conducted by the writer. Chapter 4 shows the result of analysis and discussion of the findings. The last chapter is written a conclusion of this study and give some suggestions to the readers.