

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Background of Study

A society usually is constructed by a group of people who live together in an area which consists of people with different backgrounds. This difference can be seen in terms of culture, for example customs, habits, language, beliefs, and so on. It can obviously be seen in many countries. This is influenced by the increasing number of immigrants from various regions or countries which have an impact on the emergence of ethnic, language, and cultural diversity (Grishaeva, 2012, p. 917). There are many countries with residents from different cultural background such as Indonesia, Singapore, United States, Australia, United Kingdom, etc. This situation is known as multiculturalism. The term indicated that there are various kinds of cultures and each culture has its own uniqueness.

Since the beginning of the year 2000s the discussion about multiculturalism has been increasing. People began to realize that there must be individuals who come from different cultural backgrounds. News media often reports many conflicts that occur in multicultural societies. This is due to discriminatory actions or unfair treatment toward certain ethnic groups. Berkes (2010, p 4) argues that the idea of multiculturalism can be used to solve the problems experienced by minorities. The United States of America for example, whose citizens comes from different cultures, sees discrimination as a problem that must be overcome. Therefore, people need to be educated on the importance of multicultural values.

The term ‘multicultural’ is often associated with several terms such as plurality and heterogeneity. However, if people interpret diversity in terms of variations including kinds of ethnic groups, languages, beliefs, etc., then according to Lan (2011, p. 280) it would be more appropriate to associate it with heterogeneity rather than plurality. Talking about the significance of knowledge on multiculturalism, there are actually many media, especially entertainment media, literature, and popular culture products that show experiences related to multicultural values such as television, films, advertisements, magazines, etc.

Society consisting of individuals with different cultural backgrounds is often depicted in American films. This is something educative and interesting because movies as popular entertainment media play an important role in society. It should be realized that, many aspects in everyday life can be reflected in movies. Therefore, in terms of multiculturalism, Cortés (2000, p. 23) argued that various elements of media, including films, can shape a person’s mindset in perceiving the meaning of being diverse.

The point above shows that studying films in order to explore the multicultural values contained in them is necessary. Since people like to watch film, especially Disney films, this opportunity can be used to identify essential elements related to multiculturalism and its relation to society. American films produced by Disney can be categorized as films which are popular among people of all ages. Almost all the films produced by Disney are loved by people from different countries. This is an indication that Disney films need to be discussed and analyzed because their influence on the world community is considered quite large.

So, this theme is considered worthy of discussion because in reality, the world consists of people from various types of cultural and social backgrounds who are now increasingly exposed because of the rapid development of science and technology. If have less knowledge on multicultural values, problems will arise and will ruin the peace and harmony in society. In addition, to identify the issues related to multiculturalism, film is considered the right media because they (especially Disney production animated movies) are popular culture products that are in demand by many people.

1.2. The Problems of Study

Related to multiculturalism which is the theme in this study, there are two problems listen in the form of question that need to be discussed: (a) why is having multicultural values important? (b) how do Disney animated films show multicultural values?

1.3. The Objectives of Study

From the formulation of the problem listed above, the objectives of this research is:
(a) to identify the importance of having multicultural values
(b) to analyze the way Disney animated films show multicultural values.

1.4. The Purposes of Study

Studies that focus on multiculturalism can basically contribute in various ways. Therefore, the objectives of the study can be seen from two perspectives. Theoretically, all types of cultural studies can essentially contribute to enriching theories in the field of cultural studies or other relevant studies. By this way, researchers in cultural sciences can obtain more complete references. Practically, this study can be used by everyone to understand about multicultural values, especially those who live in countries with multicultural societies, so that people can create harmony in their lives.

1.5. The Literature Review

From the result of reviewing literature, there are indeed previous studies published in journals discussing about multiculturalism, for example, a research by McFeaters *et al.* in 2001 talked about the importance of applying multicultural literature at schools; Collins' research (2010) who talked about multiculturalism in a Japanese movie in; Rhee (2016) discussed about multiculturalism in Korean movies; etc. In addition, there are also Indonesian researchers such as Akil (2010) and Alismail (2016) who both emphasized the application of multiculturalism at schools. Researches on multiculturalism in movies was discussed by Hartanti (2018) and Sukmono (2019) focusing only on Indonesian films. This study shows the discussion of multiculturalism will be something useful to enrich people's knowledge if it is related with the images shown by Disney animated films and is analyzed by using a semiotic approach to find the implied meanings. This is the research gap that this study can fill and to distinguish it from those previous studies.

1.6. The Scope of Study

This study is conducted by observing American animated films that could represent multiculturalism. Indeed, there are many American films which portray multiculturalism. However, considering the time, ability as well as cost of carrying out this research, the films chosen to be observed and analyzed were Disney's films (see the data source section). By this way, this research can proceed according to the plan. It is also possible that non-Disney American movies can be inserted as supporting data in the analysis process.