CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In literature, there are many ways to express ideas, especially in a literary work. Literary works are created based on the creativity and imagination. According to Terry Eagleton, literature is imaginative writing in the sense of fiction - writing which is not literally true (1). Luken says that literature is traditionally described as the corpus that exists because of imaginative artistic qualities (3). Imaginative is related with human’s feeling and thought. Therefore, every person has different perspective in appreciating the literature.

In this time, literature and human beings cannot be separated because literature is reflection of real world that is described in different world through written imagination of writer. It reflects the writer’s feeling and thought based on the life experience. Taylor states that literature is essentially an imaginative act; that is an act of the writer’s imagination in selecting, ordering, and interpreting life experience and the writers build the story by using their own life experience (1).

The literary work is composed of words, not of objects or feelings, and it is a mistake to see it as the expression of an author’s mind (Knickerbocker and Reninger 4). Most of the modern theories divide the literary works into three parts; the first is fiction which consists of novel, short story, and epic, the second is drama, and the third is poem (Knickbocker and Reninger 277). Moreover, Ratna
states that There are many forms of art, like the composition of music notation, harmonious color arrangement in a picture, material configuration in architecture, and also characterization composition inside drama, novel, and so on…(192).

One of literary works is novel. Novel is normally a prose work of quite some length and complexity which attempts to reflect and express something of the equality or value of human experience or conduct (Taylor 46). Kenney states that novel is generally thought of as containing about forty five thousand words or more (103). The same thing also explained by Gill in his book Mastering English Literature, if novel as a work of art is specially made and formed by the author (130). He also thinks if a novel exists because the author has been determined to take its elements inside a certain way (77).

In this research, the writer is interested to analyze one of the Islamic novels entitled The Girls of Riyadh. The Girls of Riyadh is a novel International Best seller. Up to now, the right translation of the book have been sold to more than twenty five countries. The case in this novel is a classic tale that is generally anywhere in the world. About love, sex, betrayal, parents intervene, violations of norms, and all the familiar appear in West story topics. Written by Rajaa Al-Sanea. She is born on 1981. She is a Saudi’s writer who became famous through her novel. She is Moslem. The book was first published in Lebanon in 2005 and in English in 2007. The book was long-listed for the Dublin Literary Award in 2009. Al-Sanea grew up in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, the daughter of a family of doctors. She received her bachelor's degree in Dentistry from King Saud University in 2005. She is currently living in Chicago, where she is pursuing a
degree in endodontics. She intends to return to Saudi Arabia after attaining her
degree. She is twenty-five years old, and this is her first novel. Her novel and
lifestyle have caused controversy especially among the conservative sections of
the Saudi society but more liberal-minded individuals considered her a role
model.

The reason why the researcher is interested in analyzing Rajaa Al-Sanea’s
writing is because it happen in Arab society. It is unique, explosive and
illuminating for readers in Saudi Arabia in particular, and the Western world in
general. Women do not have freedom in deciding something, everything that
concern their life is determined by men, including about love and marriage. Raja
Al-Sanea wrote this novel because she wanted to open the screen that covered the
reality of part of woman in Riyadh through these e-mails. This novel daring
treatment of urgent issues which are considered taboo in Saudi Arabian society
and for giving voice to the voiceless majority of Saudi women by a female voice
from within. But in this novel, all the main characters do their own modes of
resistance and self-determination toward the conservative tradition in their
country. They attempt to find their true love and freedom in life without the
shadow of men.

*The Girls of Riyadh* tells about the story of four young woman who relates
her girlfriends’ stories via e-mail messages. In *The Girls of Riyadh*, Rajaa Al-
Sanea writes using transcribed emails that tell the stories to public on a website. In
the story’s narrative, the emails are sent every Friday.
There are two main characters in the novel *The Girls of Riyadh*. They are, Sadeem and Michelle. Sadeem is the first main character of the novel *The Girls of Riyadh* and the most talented among them. She is a wedding planner, she can dance, can play piano, good in poem writing, and she was always a top student as she also graduated with honors. Behind Sadeem’s talents and achievements, she also suffered from losing her father, as her father was died because of a sudden heart attack ten weeks before her final exam. On her college level, she took business management. After being hurt by the two man that she has love before, at last she was wed to her aunt’s son Thariq. Another main character of the novel was Michelle. Michelle is a slim girl. Her father met her mother in Stanford University in America. During her college, she took computer science. Michelle is not really her real name because her real name is a Saudi name Mashael Al-Abdulrahman and her family name means “servant of the merciful”. But she loathed Saudi Arabia and its severe traditions. Michelle is an educated and cultured girl, she do not want to be like her poor friends who are all under controlled. Michelle’s mother is also facing some cancer that results her to having no babies again. Michelle has been in a relationship with an Arabian man but when they decided to marry, her fiancé Faisal’s mother did not agreed because she is an American girl. She is now living with the other girl and with her best friend Hamdan.

Based on the discussion above, the researcher wants to analyze main characters love live using a Triangular Theory of Love approach especially from Robert J Sternberg. Aside from that, the researcher also uses New Criticism
theory to support the main theory. The researcher uses that theory because the researcher analyzes the characteristics of the main characters.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Based on the background of the study explained above, the writer is interested in analyzing the problems, which are formulated as follows:

1. How many main characters are there in the novel?
2. How are the main characters described in the novel?
3. How are the main characters love life described?

1.3 Objective of the Study

Based on statement of the problem, the objectives of the study are formulated as follows:

1. To determine the numbers of main characters in the novel.
2. To describe the main characters in the novel.
3. To describe the main characters love life.

1.4 Scope and limitation

In order to prevent non-relevant problems, the study will focus on the novel *The Girls of Riyadh* focused on describing the main characters and their love life. The writer uses New Criticism approach and A Triangular Theory of Love by Robert J. Sternberg.
1.5 Significance of the study

Through this study, the researcher hopes that this will be useful to the ones who study about literature, especially in new criticism approach. Then, the researcher divides the significance into two categories, the theoretical category and the practical category.

Theoretically, the results of the study are expected to give some contribution to develop the study and analysis on literary study related to new criticism approach to the novel The Girls of Riyadh by Rajaa Al-Sanea.

Practically, the writer also expects this study will give inspiration to other studies, especially in English Letters Department (for those who are taking bachelor degree of English Letters) of State Islamic University of Sunan Ampel Surabaya. Also, the writer hopes that this research can be a helpful reference for other researchers who are interested in conducting further research. The researcher also wants to give some understanding about how the main characters’ love life in the novel relates to the three components of love of Sternberg and how the novel relates to literature.

1.6 Method of the study

This research is library based. The writer applies qualitative research method. It means the writer describes and analyzes the data which are not numeral data but the data are from words and sentences.
1.6.1 Data Source

The writer has the primary and secondary data in this study. The primary source is from the novel by Rajaa Al-Sanea entitled *The Girls of Riyadh*, the secondary source is from the books and online resources.

1.6.2 Data Collection

The writer uses qualitative research method. The research follows the following steps:

a) Reading the novel as the primary source to get the complete and well understanding on the whole story.

b) Reading the secondary source which related to the problem.

c) Selecting and collecting the data in form of narration and conversation from the novel related to the problem.

d) Analyzing the data collected by categorizing them into two points, dealing with the statement of problems.

e) Making conclusion based on the result of data analysis.

1.6.3 Data Analysis

The writer follows the following steps as follows:

a) Reading the whole story and deciding the topic to research problems.

b) Analyzing some data that have been collected based on the statement problems.

c) Giving the best conclusion based on the analysis.
1.7 Definition of Key Terms

a) Intimacy: encompasses the feeling of closeness, connectedness, and bondedness one experiencing in loving relationship (Sternberg 119).

b) Passion: encompasses the drives that lead to romance, physical attraction, and sexual consummation (Sternberg 119).

c) Commitment/Decision: encompasses with the short term, the decision that one loves another, and in the long term, the commitment or maintain that love (Sternberg 119).