

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

War always brings calamity. War is a situation in which there is a fight or aggressive competition between groups, companies, countries, and also the environment (Turnbull.J, 2010, p.1672). However, beside uncounted numbers of material loss, beneath the competition in war, it is undeniable that people actually kill each other. According to Garry J. Hall (2016) in his book entitled *We Need to Talk About Liberty* Albert Einstein ever said, “It is my conviction that killing under the cloak of war is nothing but an act of murder.” In a time of war, casualties toward citizens could not be avoided or limited. Despite that attacking citizens was condemned by every nation and against international law established by the League of Nations Assembly in September 30th, 1938, Sam (2015) says that over 60 millions of people were killed during the last world war in 1939 to 1945. Sadly, 80 percent of war victims were children and women.

The action of attacking citizens was considered as a strategy to win the war similar to a strategy from Sun Tzu in *The Art of War* (1910) to win the battle by forcing the enemy to surrender. The success of the strategy is proven by the unconditional surrender of Japan in 1945. Considering the facts above, the effects of war were dangerous for the entire population, especially when it affects children. According to

Plante (2008) war was also affecting children in many aspects such as their health, education, and also their mental stability.

Many anti-war movements were done such as Anti-war organizations, protests, and paintings were made as an objection of the war destruction. Another famous work to protest about the cruelty of war are movies such as *Apocalypse Now* (1979) which is about the cruelty of Vietnamese war faced by soldiers, *Full Metal Jacket* (1987) which is about the struggle in soldier camp, and *Path of Glory* (1957) which is about bravery and sacrifice of soldiers in World War I. Particularly for children of war, there is a movie released in 1998 which titled *Grave of Fireflies*.

Grave of Fireflies took place in Japan in 1945 when the deadliest war due to the failure of League of Nations maintained the peace, World War II happened. It pictured a tragedy of world war II in Kobe, Japan. Furthermore, the cruelty of war for children also emphasized by the fact that the movie was presented by the children as their main characters, Seita and Setsuko. In addition, some journals and reports such as “Human Right and Contemporary Slavery: Children of War” (Plante.J, 2008), “Journal of Paediatrics and Child Health: Children and War”(Pearn.J, 2003), “War-Affected Children: psychological Trauma and intervention” (Analyti.A, 2012), and “UNICEF Child-Alert: Childhood in Time of War” (2016) also argued that war left children with scars physically and emotionally. Similarly, as a movie which have world war II as their setting, *Grave of Fireflies* was reflecting the children’s scars which pictured by Seita

and Setsuko, as mentioned in those journals. This movie can probably remind people about the cruelty of war for people especially children.

Grave of Fireflies is interesting to analyze because it successfully pictured the cruelty of war, especially for children through its settings and characters. The analysis deals with intrinsic elements of the film, therefore the appropriate approach to do the analysis is formalistic approach which focus on the intrinsic elements such as theme, characters, settings, plot, and symbols existed in the movie. Formalistic approach itself is an approach which believes that a work of literature is an independent creation which can only be explained by the work itself (Barnet, et al 1997 pp.1919-1920).

There are reasons the writer chooses *Grave of Fireflies* as his object of analysis. First, there are lots of aspects in the movie that the writer can analyze such as character, theme, setting, and plot which leads the writer to get more understanding toward the cruelty of war, especially on children. Second, the movie has a great quality as an anti-war movie proven by three awards won by *Grave of Fireflies* – Blue Ribbon Awards in 1989 for Special Awards, Chicago International Children’s Film Festival 1994 for Rights of the Child Award and also for Animation Jury Award. Having considered the above facts, the writer writes a study entitled “*War and Children Pictured in Isao Takahata’s (1988) Grave of Fireflies*”

1.2 Field of Study

The field of study is Literature

1.3 Scope of the Study

The study focuses on understanding the cruelty of war and the effects of war suffered by children based on the movie. All these analyses have been done by using formalistic approach which emphasizes the form of the movie such as character, plot, and setting. Formalistic Approach uses a method called close reading on all intrinsic elements such as character, figures of speech, imagery, plot, point of view, setting, and theme. The term of close reading applied in the movie means to pay attention to the detail of the movie. Despite many aspects of intrinsic elements in the movie, this study will only focus on two aspects. First is setting which will explain about the cruelty of war in general. Second is character which will explain about children suffer.

1.4 Problem Formulation

1. How is the cruelty in war described in the movie?
2. What are the effects of war suffered by children presented in the movie?

1.5 Objective of the Study

1. To find out how the cruelty of the war is described in the movie.
2. To know the effects of war suffer by children in the movie.

1.6 Significance of the Study

Through this study, the writer will deepen his understanding of film analysis especially the analysis using formalistic approach. The findings of this study will give understanding toward war as portrayed in the movie. Moreover, through this study the

writer is also going to bring up the issue on the effect of war suffered by the children which is usually being overlooked. The study will help readers to realize the cruelty of war, especially that experienced by children.

1.7 Definition of Terms

1. Formalistic Approach:

This approach emphasizes literary works as an independent creation. It focuses on how intrinsic elements such as the construction of the plot, the contrasts between characters, the theme of the film and other elements work together to create a story that affects the viewers. Therefore, to a formalist, literary works are not something that has connection with historical, social or even something to do with the author's life. It is a literary work that can be understood only by reference to its intrinsic elements (Barnet, et al. 1997 pp.1920-1921).

2. Effect

According to Joanna Turnbull (2010, pp.468), effect means a change that something causes in something else. In another words it's a change which is a result of an action.

3. Children

According to Joanna Turnbull (2010, pp. 243), child (children) means a young human who is not yet an adult. Moreover W.J. Stewart (2006) said that all people under 18 years old are children.

4. Cruelty

According to Joanna Turnbull (2010, pp 353), cruelty is a behavior that causes pain or suffering physically or mentally to others, especially deliberately. In addition cruelty is something that happens that seem unfair.

5. War

When it came to the term of the meaning war itself, there are many different opinions among people. According to Turnbull (2010, pp 1673) war was a state of open and usually declared armed conflict between rival political or social factions within the same state. In a book *On War* by Carl Von Clausewitz (1832, pp.87) said that war was a continuation of politics carried on by other means. In the other words, war was waged by certain parties paid by government to resolve political or territorial disputes. War could also mean a situation in which there was fight or aggressive competition between groups, companies, countries, and also environment.