



**CONSTRUCTION OF AMERICAN HUNGER IN RICHARD
WRIGHT'S NOVEL *BLACK BOY***

A Final Project

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

For degree of *Sarjana Sastra*

In English

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Febrian Ramadhani Setiaji hereby declare that this final project entitled **Construction of American Hunger in Richard Wright's novel Black Boy** is my own work and has not been submitted in any form for another degree or diploma at any university or other institutes. Information derived from the published and unpublished work of others has been acknowledged in the text and a list of references is given in the references.

Semarang, 28 January, 2019

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MOTTO AND DEDICATION

Just do it

-Nike-



My final project is dedicated to:

- My family who is showing and giving me support without ever doubting my struggles;
- My partner, Uca;
- Anyone who makes this possible;
- The future, I am ready.

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Foremost, praise be to God. He alone we worship; He alone we ask for help. He shows us the straight path; the path of those whom He has favored.

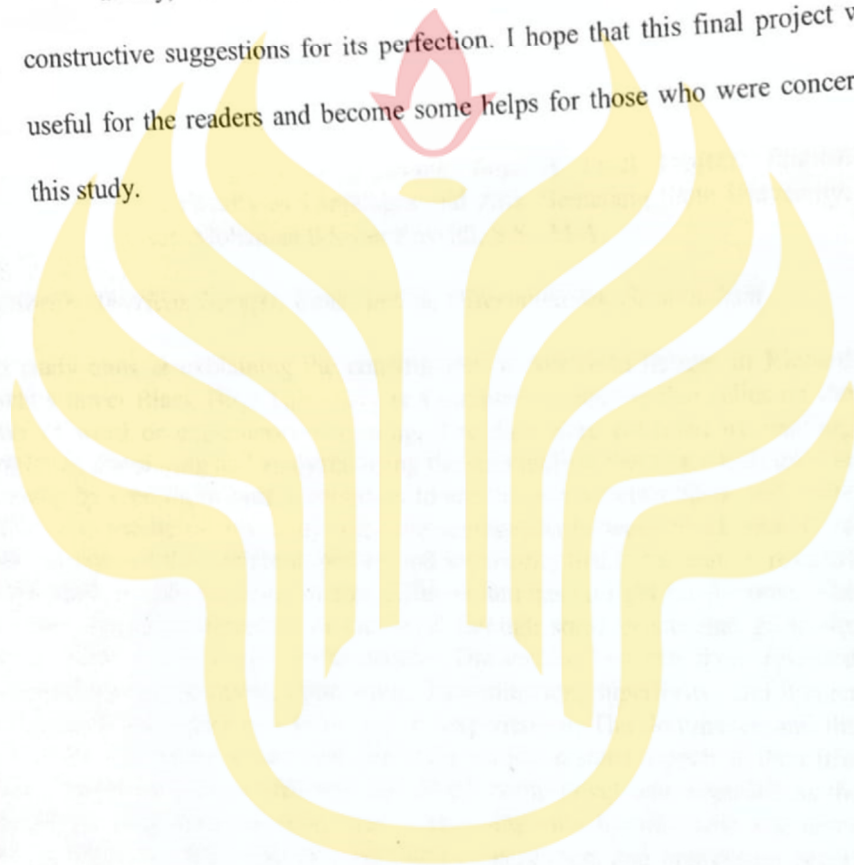
I wish to express my gratitude to Dr. Rudi Hartono, S.S., M.Pd, the Head of the English Department.

I thank to my advisor Mohamad Ikhwan Rosyidi, S.S, M.A., for the exceptional patience and guidance. I am so grateful for his great help to me for finishing this final project. Thank you for the mentorship and support on this project.

My sincerest gratitude is also addressed to all lecturers, librarians, and staffs at English Department of Universitas Negeri Semarang who have given their knowledge and guidance during my studies. My grateful thanks are also extended to my opa, oma, family and Awas kaki for their help in helping and tutoring me both in this final project and in life.

Not only them, I am also grateful to Uca who is supporting this final project by being a partner to discuss and doing this final project although having a lot of difference in thinking. Putranto Adi Perdana who helps me in giving advice for this final project due to the same supervisor.

Lastly, this is the final project I can present. However, I need some constructive suggestions for its perfection. I hope that this final project will be useful for the readers and become some helps for those who were concerned in this study.



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ABSTRACT

SETIAJI, FEBRIAN RAMADHANI. 2018. *Construction of American Hunger in Richard Wright's novel Black Boy*. A Final Project. English Department. Faculty of Languages and Arts. Semarang State University. First Advisor: Mohamad Ikhwan Rosyidi, S.S., M.A.

Key words: American Hunger, Construction, Discrimination, Structuralism

This study aims at explaining the construction of American hunger in Richard Wright's novel *Black Boy*. This study is a qualitative analysis that relies on the power of word or explanatory reasoning. The data were collected by reading, identifying, classifying and analyzed using the structuralism theories which used in this study by relating to binary operation to see the gap between black and white society. The results of this study were the segregation between black and white people in terms of the treatment, power, and superiority that in the end, it resulted that the black people are being treated different and has no right for freedom. The American Hunger is described in the novel through some events that go in the opposite between black and white people. The tension between them revealed from the different treatment, oppression, discrimination, superiority, and hunger that the black and white people or society experienced. The dominance and the power of the white people had harm the black people in some aspects in their life. Second, American Hunger that was described in the novel was regarded as the desire of the black people when they were living side by side with the white people in America. When the discrimination, segregation, and oppression occurs toward the black people, they satisfied their American hunger by standing against racial oppression, strengthen the superiority, and against the hunger.



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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the introduction of the study. It consists of the background of the study, the reason for choosing the topic, the research questions, the objectives of the study, and the significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Discussion on a social problem will never reach an end. The discussions have been existing and always will exist as long as human being live in the society due to the social problems come from the society as well. There are numerous kind of social problems that happen in the society. They are racial issues, discrimination, crime and any other social issue. Racial issue has become the main issue happened between the black and white society in America. Spencer (1985:239) stated that the greatest social problem for American people today is as it has been for hundred years, the presence of Negroes. Black people in the United States have been struggling to obtain their exact status that has not been settled yet, against racial discrimination for freedom and equal right. This case is still being the classic issue that happened in almost all countries all over the world. This issue has led them into inferiority and superiority.

There are so many definitions of racism itself based on scholar thinking. Racism centered on the same idea, behaviour of treating someone different based on the aspects of feeling superior and consider the other as inferior, still, racism

could be defined widely based on the people/scholar thinking. Racism is a global hierarchy of superiority and inferiority along the line of the human being that have been politically, culturally and economically produced and reproduced for centuries by the institutions of the “capitalist/patriarchal western-centric/Christian-centric modern/colonial world-system” (Grosfoguel, 2011). Whether according to Collins dictionary, racial issue is defined as an unfair treatment or bias against someone or a group of people on the basis of their race. (www.collinsdictionary.com)

Those definitions of racism conceives of diverse forms of racism, evading the reductionisms of many existing definitions. Depending on the different colonial histories in diverse regions of the world, the hierarchy of superiority/inferiority along the lines of the human being can be constructed through diverse racial markers. Racism can be marked by color, ethnicity, language, culture and/or religion. Indeed, racial issue can also push a sense of hunger about identity (Grosfoguel, 2016). For a human being, this case is pretty commonly happened for a person or could be a group who wants to have an admission from others. Especially for those minorities who felt as an inferior group. As this case happened between black and white society in America (in the world), there must be a segregation in between those groups. The black society have less power compared to the white ones. In many aspects, the white society or group dominate whether in educational sector, access of transportation, public service, health, and place of living.

It implies more than simply distinguishing among social objects, but refers also to inappropriate and potentially unfair treatment of individuals due to group membership. Discrimination may involve actively negative behavior toward a member of a group or, more subtle, less positive responses than those toward an ingroup member in comparable circumstances. According to Allport (1954), discrimination involves denying 'individuals or groups of people equality of treatment which they may wish' (p. 51). Jones (1972) defined discrimination as 'those actions designed to maintain own-group characteristics and favored position at the expense of the comparison group' (p. 4).

Lawrence D. Bobo and Cybelle Fox (2003) state that the basic social processes invoked by the terms race, racism, and discrimination are quintessentially social psychological phenomena; sociologists ignore or downplay this basic insight at the discipline's peril/danger. These concepts concern the meanings of social groupings and how those meanings come to guide patterns of relations among individuals recognized as members of particular groups. They immediately entail the labeling and social learning of group categories, identity, feelings, beliefs, and related cognitive structure. In the real condition happened in a certain time in America, there was an era where a laws was being society's orientation in living. That laws was called *The Jim Crow Laws*. In the southern states, *The Jim Crow Laws* were unanimously being amended and forced upon the inhabitants of those states. The black community was very harshly treated during those times. Even innocuous incidents, like looking a white person in the eye were punishable by law. The punishments were very brutal and included forceful

arrest, severe beating and mob-lynching. Moreover, in expressing this reality, the black writer, has to first; explain the society to him and create his art while opposing that society.

This event leads to the conclusion that the black society is being treated different and has no right for freedom. The black people do not have such an “identity” of their living. As a result, the black society are longing for a sense of admission. I can simply say they feel “Hunger” of being American.

There are some novels which are presenting the similar issue in particular. The first novel is a novel entitled *The New Jim Crow* written by Michelle Alexander in 2010. This novel contains the historical intersection of racism. It gives an information and image about somehow that there is a deep history of politicians and wealthy white exploiting white working class vulnerability and racial resentments in order to preserve power and deliberately driving a wedge between poor whites and poor minorities. Moreover, *To Kill A Mockingbird* by Harper Lee is also standing for racial issue and discrimination. The author, Harper Lee tenaciously explores the moral nature of human beings, especially the struggle in every human soul between discrimination and tolerance. The main object of this research, a novel entitled *Black Boy* written by Richard Wright is presenting a real experience in life. Further, this novel is also a biographical memoir of author Richard Wright. It reflects the life experience of its author for sure. The reality of the African–American life in general is that of oppression; the task and the mission of the black writers therefore are with creating a work of art in a segregated society. Richard reveals in bitter personal terms a devastating

impact of racial prejudice on young black males in the United States. This perceptive ability to situate racism within a universal framework also proves the affinity of *Black Boy* with Peter Abraham's *Tell freedom* irrespective of their spatio-temporal locations. Because within the deep structure of racism, minority or majority is not a factor in the equation, but the existence of a super structure that ensures the perpetuation of and the continuity in the series of dehumanizing activities of destroying mankind deemed "inferior" race by a supposedly "superior" one. Mariam Webster (1981: 1321) states that literature is writing in prose or verse, especially; writing having excellence of form of expression and expressing ideas of permanent or universal interest (literature stands related to man as science stand to nature).

There are some results of analysis that discussed about American Hunger. They are Turner's inspiration to conduct his study entitled *An Insatiable Hunger: A Literary Analysis Of Richard Wright's Autobiography, Black Boy*, Sadeq's inspiration to conduct a study entitled *The Projection of Racism in Richard Wright's*, also Beemaeswari who conducted a study entitled *Racism And Oppression In Richard Wright's Novel 'Black Boy'*, a study entitled *Afro-American Autobiography as Ideological Documentation: A study of Richard Wright's Black Boy* written by Nasir Umar Muhammad, *Self-Discovery Journey Of Women: Richard Wright's Black Boy* written by Boynukara, *Racial Prejudice To Black Americans In Social Life Seen In Higher Learn IngMovie* By John Singleton written by LilisSyarifah and Prof. Dr. Nurdien HK, MA., *The Problems Of Black Identity In Richard Wright's Black Boy that is written by utaz Tarik*

Shakir and Dr.Chenna Reddy. And *Black Identity Through Rebellion In Richard Wright's "Black Boy"* conducted by G.Elakkiam and Dr.S.S.Nirmala. (2016)

In a study entitled *An Insatiable Hunger: A Literary Analysis Of Richard Wright's Autobiography, Black Boy* written by Turner, he is talking about the hardships and obstacles faced by a poverty-stricken family, and one boy's determination to escape the prison created by these circumstances as described in *Black Boy*. Beyond this, *Black Boy* is a story about a life-long struggle with hunger. Wright suffers from hunger his entire life, not only for food but also for acceptance, love, and an understanding of the world around him; but most important, Wright possesses an insatiable hunger for knowledge. Meanwhile Sadeq, he explains about the projection of a certain period in the 20th century that seems to have the same condition as described in Richard Wright novel's *Black Boy*. Partly American's law declare that there was already an equality between black and white in terms of slavery, freedom, rights, religion, economic, and politically. Beemaeswari is stating a study of a novel *Black Boy* clearly stated about the racism and oppression happened in the *Black Boy* novel. Some sequences gave a clear gap toward black and white community. The racism itself is about a global problem on how people differentiate others by their skin color, which in this case is black and white. In so many aspects, black people always treated differently, such as in terms of getting jobs, where they could live separate from white people, separate section between black and white traveler. *Afro-American Autobiography as Ideological Documentation: A study of Richard Wright's Black Boy* written by Nasir Umar Muhammad focuses on the issues relating to the

formation of an ideology in Afro-American Autobiography. In another work, *Self-Discovery Journey Of Women: Richard Wright's Black Boy* written by Boynukara, talked about how Richard's journey was determined by women around him. This journal proves the reader that there were at least three woman characters that shape who Richard is in the novel. Racial Prejudice To Black Americans In Social Life Seen In *Higher Learning* Movie By John Singleton written by Lilis Syarifah and Prof. Dr. Nurdien HK, MA., generally talks about the differentiation about black and white colored-skin in America. meanwhile in this final project, the reader will be given more information and finding about the American Hunger that is impacted by racial prejudice of white-colored society towards the black-colored society.

The Problems Of Black Identity In Richard Wright's Black Boy that is written by Utaz Tarik Shakir and Dr. Chenna Reddy is needed for the further research that this final project is doing. The writer of this final project entitled *Construction of American Hunger in Richard Wright novel "Black Boy"* is trying to convey the proof of sequences that bring the meaning to the conclusion, which is American Hunger in The Black Boy novel

Black Identity Through Rebellion In Richard Wright's "Black Boy" conducted by G. Elakkiam and Dr. S. S. Nirmala. (2016) is trying to dig deeper into some elements of rebellion, racism, hunger, and identity in the novel Black Boy. It is not only focusing on one thing about situation or one aspect, but it's really general between the black and the white community that is reflected in the novel through some sequences, furthermore, reflected by the characters in the novel.

In my analysis, the writer of this final project is trying to reveal the ideology of the author of *Black Boy* novel written by Richard Wright by investigating and analyzing his writing and taking a look at his biography. The “American Hunger” will be the main case that the writer will be discussing in this final project. In *Black Boy*, there will be contained Wright’s bitter experiences and have seen the epic way for him to tries to deliver what was going on in the story or it can be in the true life situation. Opression and segregation still become a current issue happened everywhere.

In correlation to the topic that the writer is discussing, the writer is going to use the Structuralism approach to break down each sequences and relating those to the actual happening from the author’s life. Later, the findings will be covered the Ideology of American Hunger of the main character in the novel had or not. Further, as a student of English Literature, the writer has attempted to conduct a research for the purpose of completing the final project. Thus, the topic under discussion in this final project is *Construction of American Hunger in Richard Wright novel Black Boy*.

1.2 Reason for Choosing the Topic

The topic under discussion in this final project is *Construction of American Hunger in Richard Wright novel Black Boy*. The reasons for choosing the topic are based on the folowing consideration:

First, racial issue and discrimination become a common issue that happening world wide. It has become a problem and something that it is needed to be solved and talked about.

Second, Spencer (1985:239) stated that the greatest social problem for American people today is as it has been for hundred years, the presence of Negroes. This research also explains about how some sequences in the novel and the author's ideology affect the term of American Hunger. American Hunger lies on some sequences how the black people with unfair and ill treatment that is done by the white people.

Third, the novel *Black Boy* written by Richard Wright is analyzed by a lot of researchers, but most of them are only investigating the racial term, basic sequences that reflect the ideal image of the writer's ideology, Richard Wright, the projection of Jim Crow laws back in the certain era, the oppression and the differentiation about black and white colored-skin in America, while this final project, the writer tends to focus on deeper and complex matters due to its complexity of this novel and the American Hunger that is impacted by racial prejudice of the white-colored society towards the black-colored society. However, the novel *Black Boy* is an interesting novel to be analyzed.

1.3 Research Questions

Based on the title of the study *Construction of American Hunger in Richard Wright novel Black Boy*, I limit the problem in this final project as follows:

1. How is American Hunger described in the novel?
2. How do American-Black people satisfy their American Hunger?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

Based on the statements of the problem, the objectives of the study of analyzing *Construction of American Hunger in Richard Wright's novel Black Boy* are:

1. To describe how the novel is described in American Hunger
2. To describe how black people in America satisfy their American Hunger

1.5 Significances of the Study

The result of the study is expected to give a contribution to the readers comprehension of the *Black Boy* novel written by Richard Wright, enrich reader's knowledge about society problems, and give some findings that can be used as references for those who want to do a similar topic.

1.6 Outline of the Study

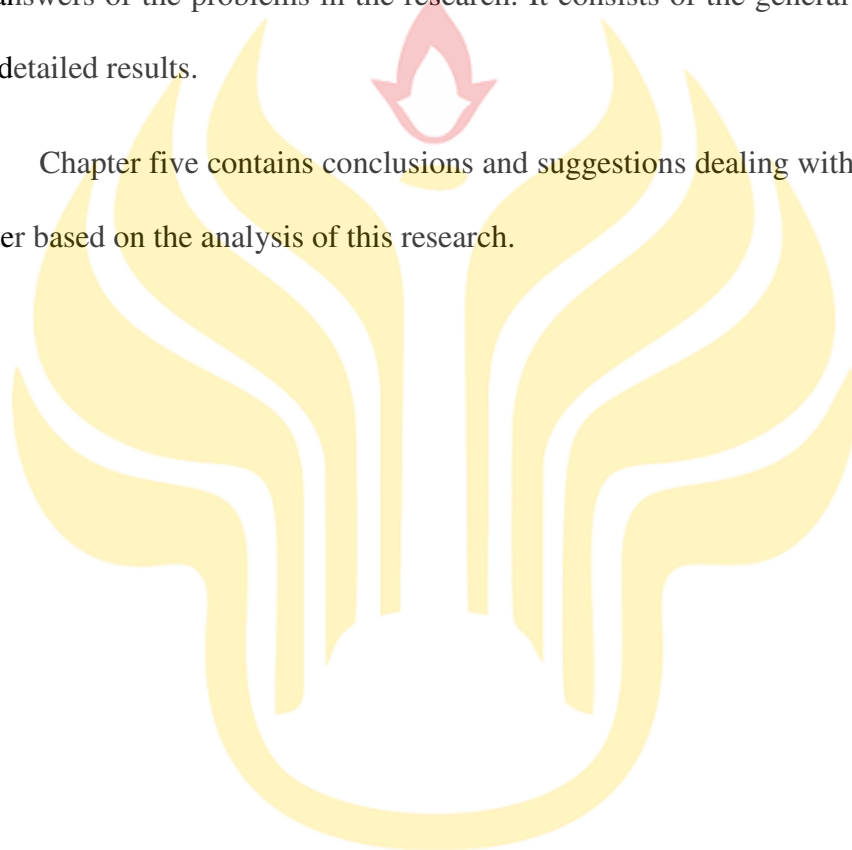
This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one is the introduction which contains of background of the study, reasons for choosing the topic, research questions, research objectives, significance of the study and outline of the study.

Chapter two is review of related literature. It discusses previous studies about the topic chosen and the theoretical background. The review of theoretical study provides theory supporting this research. Chapter three provides research methodology. It presents research design, object of the study, data and source

data, roles of the researcher, procedures of collecting data and procedures of analyzing data.

Chapter four is dealing with the findings and discussion. This chapter is the answers of the problems in the research. It consists of the general description and detailed results.

Chapter five contains conclusions and suggestions dealing with the subject matter based on the analysis of this research.



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CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter consists of three parts. The first is a review of the previous studies about the analysis of previous studies with similar topics. The second is a review of the theoretical study about general concepts of theories and data that is used in this study. The last is the theoretical framework of this study.

2.1 Review of the Previous Studies

There are some results of analysis that discuss about American Hunger. They are;

A previous study related to *The Construction of American Hunger* is conducted by Turner entitled *An Insatiable Hunger: A Literary Analysis of Richard Wright's Autobiography, Black Boy*. This is about the hardships and obstacles faced by a poverty-stricken family, and one boy's determination to escape the prison created by these circumstances written about in *Black Boy* Novel. Beyond this, *Black Boy* is a story about a life-long struggle with hunger. Wright suffers from hunger his entire life, not only for food but also for acceptance, love, and an understanding of the world around him; but most importantly, Wright possesses an insatiable hunger for knowledge.

This article tells us about hunger that the main character, Richard, endures. It begins with Wright's struggle with hunger started within his family. His family was never able to provide everything that a family is supposed to, such as love, security and acceptance. In fact, the majority of their interactions are the

exact opposite of this. The adults in his family often argued with him, and prefer to have as little contact with him as possible. And then, it grows even more as Wright is never fully able to satisfy the hunger for acceptance, even amongst his peers. The other African-American boys he comes across are never able to understand Wright and his attitude, nor he theirs. As a result, he is never able to really fit in. Wright desires to fit in socially but his inability to concede to their point of view makes this impossible.

The hunger for acceptance agitates Richard's hunger for understanding, since it exaggerates his inability to understand why he is unable to fit in anywhere. Wright's largest hunger, the hunger that is fed by all others, is his hunger for knowledge. This hunger sets him apart from those around him, which drives the wedge created by their differences further between them. Nevertheless, it gives Wright's life meaning and direction. The hunger starts growing at a young age, with his first real bite of knowledge coming from a coal man teaching him how to count to a hundred. His next substantial bite comes from a school teacher named Ella reading him a story; this is where the hunger really begins to grow.

Turner was using an explanatory reasoning in order to explain about his findings. He took some evidences from the book in order to prove about the hunger that the black people had. Although it is true that his intense appetite for knowledge often alienates him from others, it is still his greatest asset, acting as both the motivation and the key to his life's success. The article entitled *An Insatiable Hunger: A Literary Analysis of Richard Wright's Autobiography*,

"*Black Boy*" literary will help this final project to find out how American Hunger is constructed in *Black Bo*

ynovel. Along with the subject of the study of both research, this final project will complete the research that Turner did which is some hungers that were revealed in *Black Boy* novel.

Another previous study related to *The Construction of American Hunger* is conducted by Sadeq. The second article is *The Projection of Racism In Richard Wright's Black Boy* which was written by Sadeq (2016) who told us about the projection of a certain period in the 20th century that seems to have the same condition with what happened in Richard Wright's novel *Black Boy*. Partly American's law declare that there was already an equality between black and white in terms of slavery, freedom, rights, religion, economically, politically and e.t.c. while in southern America, there was still The Jim Crow Laws that was up against the black community. The term 'equality' was non-existent or irrelevant in the states of Southern America. In the southern states, the *Jim Crow Laws* were unanimously being amended and forced upon the inhabitants of those states. This laws implemented that there will be still an un-equality between black and white in terms of everything. "The black" were harshly and brutally treated for one or another reason. The distinction between black and white was highly captured by the Jim Crow Laws. This article that is done by Sadeq (2016) gives some lights on and insight in the way how in Jim Crow Laws, black was up against the injustice which represented by *Black Boy* novel. Moreover, Richard's brave and determination was being a symbol of success and achivement toward the Black

who were living in the time of the Jim Crow Laws. Moreover, the story in the novel *Black Boy* mainly recollects the life of Wright and more importantly his interactions with the whites, his neighbors and his own family who were scared and very pious during the Jim Crow Era. The methodology used in this studies are was using historical approach. This study was using the historical approach because it underlies the light of historical evidence or based on the context in which a work was written, including facts about the author's life and the historical and social circumstances of the time.

This final project will be different from this article in term of the finding itself. This article talks about how The *Black Boy* novel become the projection of Jim Crow laws back in this certain era. Meanwhile in this final project entitled *Construction of American hunger in Richard Wright novel Black Boy*, the finding will be how the American hunger is highlited more that the background era. Eventhough the background era is also taking an important role to shape the writer's concious to deal with the novel. Moreover, the word "construction is important to this research due to the proof of how whether or not American Hunger sticks to the main character; Richard.

Beemaeswari (2017) also wrote an article dealing with the *Black Boy* novel entitled *Racism And Oppression In Richard Wright's Novel Black Boy*. This article clearly states about the racism and opression as described in the *Black Boy* novel. Some sequences gave a clear gap between the black and the white community. The racism itself is a global problem on how people differenciate others by their skin color,which in this case, are black and white. In so many

aspects, blacks are always treated differently, such as in terms of getting a job, where he could live separate from white, separate sections for black and white travelers. In term of oppression, although his grandfather was an ex-military, he did not get any pension because he is black. The conclusion of the novel *Black Boy* reflects the racism and oppression of the black people at every place. Even women were not spared from this suffering. As a growing child Richard faced many problems of hunger, family and his identification and at last he recognized his potential and understood the knowledge which he was searching from childhood. He came across many difficulties and faced boldly instead running from it. Being a black is like a punishment for the blacks. Richard worked at many places and experienced many events which made him to acquire knowledge of solving difficulties. The novel is about the struggle of an individual to survive in the atmosphere of oppressors and cope up with the environment. Richard was able to break away the racial system of the society at that time of segregation of blacks. Through his life long struggle with racism and oppression in the society he discovers his potential, self-worth and as a writer. He worked and did not get paid because he was born as a black after that. Beemaeswari (2017) was classifying the data into some part that was reflecting the idea of racism and oppression in the novel that later, those data become the evidences for her research dealing with the results and findings of her study.

An article by Nasir Umar Muhammad entitled *Afro-American Autobiography as Ideological Documentation: A study of Richard Wright's Black Boy* focus on the issues relating to the formation of an ideology in Afro-American

Autobiography. It is known that the work of Richard Wright is an autobiographical work which presents the bitter personal terms which come from the impact of racial prejudice on young black males in the United States. This racial prejudice is the outcome of the oppression which is the reality of African-American life in general. Therefore, Black Writers tend to express this reality by representing the idea of black people in the oppression. By the oppression, Wright has been consistent in presenting his ideology in relation to the reality of African-American life in "Black Boy." Some examples of Wright's ideology of a black people are presented in this article. Richard's cultural alienation had begun in his black home and in black community where as a small child he was scarcely aware of the existence of a white race. That his family had tried to beat fear and submission into his mature years before interracial contacts made evident the rationale for a "Nigger" identity and saw black and whites as inseparably fused in their acceptance of a grotesque racial myth.

In chapter one of a "Black Boy", awareness comes to young Wright at the age of four. This awareness for a black child carries with it mixed and contradictory emotions: love, fear, guilt, distrust, longing and feeling of hopelessness, all within the early stage of growing up. Wright opens his eyes as a child and finds his psyche entrenched with an image reflecting the social and racial realities of his time. For instance, in Memphis, the black people live in a one-story brick tenement. The stone buildings and the concrete pavements looked bleak and hostile to Richard. The absence of green growing things made the city seem dead. Living space for the four of us – Richard's mother, brother, father, and

him was a kitchen and a bedroom. In the front and rear were paved areas in which Richrad brother and him could play, but for days I was afraid to go into the strange city street alone. It states something within Wright's autobiographical consciousness, we find a succinct revelation of a life characterized by a horrible experiences from childhood. This made young Wright's life as a harsh journey through which he must pass. And his defense strategies for survival within those conditions include a brutal approach. What he aims for is a feeling of satisfaction in most of those brutal actions, after setting the house a fire, the next brutal action was killing the kitten.

By those quotations, Wright has success in dramatizing by expressing the truth in the reality and the result of his will and ideology of being in the Black society. So, from those experiences of Wright develop over time and culminate into an ideology. As known that Africa and America have long history of oppression, because of that oppressed peoples have found an outlet in the autobiographical form. In this book, Wright demonstrates what Barret J. Mandel (1980) established about autobiographies: "Autobiographies are not essentially tabular; they are experimental: an autobiography shares experiences as its way of revealing reality." It all shown in the book that Wright shares his experiences of bitter life. Moreover, Wright shows his rebellion attitude and the different ideology of being a Black man to earning a better future.

An article by Nasir Umar Muhammad entitled *Afro-American Autobiography as Ideological Documentation: A study of Richard Wright's Black* examines the theory of Afro -American autobiography and places Richard

Wright's *Black Boy* within the continuum of Black autobiography. This research is only fundamental of this Final Project entitled *Construction of American Hunger in Richard Wright novel Black Boy*. This research focuses only on sequences that reflect the ideal image of the writer's ideology, Richard Wright. While this final project, tends to focus on deeper and complex matters due to the complexity of this novel.

Boynukara (2010) in his study entitled *Self-Discovery Journey Of Women: Richard Wright's Black Boy* tells about how Richard's journey was determined by women around him. This article proves the reader that there were at least three woman characters that shaped who Richard is being the novel. These characters seems to be obvious toward the identity's of Richard Wright.

The first one is his mother, Ella Wright. In the article, it is stated that the mother of Richard can be said that she may be the single biggest factor that shaped his life. She is left by her husband for another woman. She is left with herself alone and then Ella suffers from strokes that leave her paralyzed. She is dependent on her family for survival. Ella is a strict mother and tries her hardest to discipline Richard. She tries her best to raise Richard after his father left the family but she could not. Her illness prevents her from caring for herself and her children. In some ways, she is not able to give Richard the emotional support he wants. As a former school teacher, she encourages Richard in his efforts to learn to read; but she is too beaten down by her husband's abandonment, her lack of money, the responsibility of looking after the boys. It is not also easy to get a clear impression of Richard's mother. Proceeding more, the second character is his

Granny. Ella's mother was strict and religiously moralistic. She looked after Richard and his brother during periods when Ella was too ill to take care of the boys herself. Granny had no faith in Richard's abilities and instead tried to discipline him through physical punishment. Under his grandmother's religious supervision, Richard felt hunger both physically and intellectually. For Richard religion was more of a hindrance than a path to salvation. It was his grandmother's religious belief that not only prevent him from being adequately fed, but stunt his intellectual growth. She thought Richard was sinful and she had little tolerance for his behaviours. Like her husband Granny was also the child of slaves. Due to her partially white ancestry. She looked white and Richard opened his novel with Granny's white and ill face. That face disturbed Richard as a little boy because he couldn't understand how such a whiteskinned person could be 'black'. The other female character was Aunt Addie, Ella Wright's sister. She is Richard's aunt and teacher in a religious school. Addie lives with Granny. She wanted him to obey the religious rules on her guidance. Aunt Addie tried not to miss any opportunity to beat or humiliate him. She seemed him as a threat to her authority. She was uncertain how she act toward her nephew. When he refused to tell her who had been eating walnuts in her classroom she punished him. The hostility between them grew until finally Wright threatened her with a knife in his grandmother's house, where she had tried to beat him again.

From the title, the research is already way different in term of the object that is observed. (Boynukara, 2010) is trying to find out the role of women toward Richard in *Black Boy* novel. This research argues that from the story of some

female characters, Richard Wright is notably impressed by the adventures of female characters in *BlackBoy* and their touching stories and these women characters make significant contribution to his selfdiscovery. This final project focuses on some sequences that prove American Hunger is striking to Richard's character. Furthermore, it has the similarities in term of the structure of the analyses. Both of the research tend to give the structured proof which in the end, it will revealing the finding of its context of analyses.

John Singleton in his study *Racial Prejudice To Black Americans In Social Life Seen In Higher Learning Movie* is telling about the domination of white group to the black group is the beginning of racial conflict happened between those groups. White Americans in this movie is irresponsive to black Americans. Their mindset is not changed yet. They predicate black Americans as slaves and inferior race. Physically white Americans and black Americans have a clear skin color differences. It makes the distance between whites and blacks in Columbus University become longer. In Columbus University all race are united into one area so the multicultural atmosphere is very close there. However, white Americans do not gather with black Americans because there is a negative prejudice in their mind, such as blacks are immoral and can not be trusted. That example makes white Americans treat black Americans unequal. As the consequence, black Americans have to accept unequal treatment from white Americans. For example, Monet is insulted by Billy, Malik Williams is underestimated by Remy, and Deja is shot by Remy. (Lilis Syarifah and Prof. Dr. Nurdien HK, MA) believes these unequal treatments in social life are caused by

the background of black Americans in the past as slaves. Then, the effect of those unequal treatments after that era is a racial prejudice toward black Americans. Therefore, the impact of this racial prejudice is a degradation of black people's self confidence in the environment of Columbus University.

The method used in this study is literature review using social approach to examine past influences in the history of black skin were slaves with their association in 1995. In this approach the writer analyzes each main character and the conflicts that occur between leaders due to racial prejudice. This article generally talks about the differentiation between black and white colored-skin in America. Meanwhile in this final project, the reader will be given more information and finding about the American Hunger that is impacted by racial prejudice of white-colored society toward the black-colored society.

Mutaz Tarik Shakir, Dr. Chenna Reddy through their research dealing with a novel *Black Boy* whose title is *The Problems Of Black Identity In Richard Wright's Black Boy* tells us about how the black identity is constructed. The oppression and rejection shape the black identity. The fear, alienation, insecurity, and hopelessness stick to the black identity (Mutaz Tarik Shakir, Dr. Chenna Reddy, 2017). Ashamed being black was truly the most important of all of the sickening and terrifying experience that they can not change. But it is different with Richard Wright who is extraordinary. He changed his identity from subservient to insubordinate by constructing his identity to be a fighter. Moreover, he did not want to be an average black boy, thus, he wanted to be a person who

has a n impact toward his surroundings. He was barely tired with everythings that he experienced. By writing, he thought, it is one way to fight against racism.

This essay concentrates on the theme of the identity of black people in Black American literature with special. Mutaz Tarik Shakir, Dr.Chenna Reddy's intention is to show that racism and oppression indeed is a prominent theme in Black Boy, especially because the book was written during the Jim Crow era at a point where racism was very prominent in the American society. A study entitled *Black Identity Through Rebellion InRichardWright's Black Boy* written by (G.Elakkiam, Dr.S.S.Nirmala, 2016) contains of several aspects of how Richard as a black boy rebels against the system and norm of white folk rules. It starts with an honest and brave feeling of Richard Wright who has enough courage to speak out what he felt through his books which are desccribing about his childhood. His childhood was tinged with the element of violance, setting fire to their wooden house and hanging the kitten to death.

Richard Wright is not an average black boy. He is supposedly inferior to the white man faded (G.Elakkiam, Dr.S.S.Nirmala, 2016). Richard does not behave like a normal black boy. It grows from the ill-treated and hits back he felt. The first attempt of his actions toward the white man was the first time he wanted to sell the dog, He refused to part with it for ninety-seven cents offered by the white woman, three cents less than what he has demanded. This is a major episode of his life which underlines the stance taken by him regarding the problem of racial discrimination. Wright earlier memories were livng in a humble shack overlooking the Mississippi river near Natchez. From this rural environment, his

parents moved to the city of Memphis, Tennessee where they lived with their two children in a small tenement. When Richard turned six, his father deserted the family to go off with another woman. Until his mother could get a job Richard had very little to eat. After that, he redeemed from the orphanage, Richard and his brother accompanied their mother to Arkansas, where they lived for some time with relatives. While he was waiting for the train that would take the Wright family to Arkansas, Richard Wright became aware of the racial discrimination. The first time he noticed that there were two lines of people at the ticket window, a "White" line and a "Black" line. In small Arkansas towns Richard became more aware of the frightening contacts between Whites and Blacks. The morning after white ruffians murdered his uncle, to rob him of his profitable saloon, the rest of the family fled town without even trying to claim the body. Richard also participated eagerly in the stone-throwing wars between the White and Negro boys. Richard was already a rebel, but it was not for lack of discipline. One of his earliest memories was of being almost whipped to death by his terrified mother, after he had set the house on fire at the age of four. From that time on, his mother, father, uncles, aunts and school teachers all thrashed him whenever he violated their code of behaviour. Wright's keen intelligence and touchy independence made it difficult for him to hold a job. Then came the turning point. He stumbled upon *A Book of Prefaces* by H.L Mencken. The next year Richard left the south for Chicago and a new life. The past was dead, only its roots would persist as a memory of the days that had done.

This study's methodology took a look at more at the major concern of the American Writers since the early 1920s was the phenomenon of illusion and reality, the search for a lost ideal and the search for identity. They have endeavoured to express the American conception of business, progress, self-reliance, success, suffering and love but with a few peculiarities. These peculiarities represent the unique American predicaments, delusions, hopes and promises of a nation in search of its own identity. This study is also trying to dig more into some elements of rebellion, racism, hunger, and identity in the novel *Black Boy*. It is not only focusing on one thing about situation or one aspect, but it's really general between black and white community that is reflected in the novel through some sequences, furthermore, reflected by the characters in the novel.

This final project entitled *Construction of American Hunger in Richard Wright novel Black Boy* will somehow make a further research on the black boy novel since this article is only talking about the oppression and racism. The theme of the novel which is about the oppression and the discrimination that lies in every sequences in the novel is interesting to talk about. The previous studies used in this novel is very helpful in order to complete and enrich the findings of this research, *Construction of American Hunger in Richard Wright novel Black Boy*. This research will reveal more about the American Hunger that comes from one of which are oppression and racism that Richard experienced. Each sequences that reflect the idea of superiority, oppression, and the hunger lies in the novel gave the idea of how the thought of the black people when they live along with the white people in the novel constructed. Indeed, from the sequences, the

construction of the hunger will be presented in this research. Those are the things that differ from previous researches.

2.2 Review of Theoretical Studies

The object of the study in this analysis is a novel entitled *Black Boy* written by Richard Wright. The story has been published in 1993 and it reflects the condition of American society in the dark period. In addition, this sub-chapter provides plot summaries

2.2.1 Plot Summary

Black Boy by Richard Wright

As an introduction, Richard Wright wrote this novel entitled *Black Boy* due to the struggle of racism in American history. The book contains illustrations of Richard Wright's dark times that he has been through in life. One of the scenes that show the different races is that when Richard is working at the clothing store and he witnesses white men beat a "black" woman and the police in the corner don't react at all. From that action, it determines that the color of the skin is the matter in what achieving feedback. The contents of this book are about pain, the future uncertainty and feelings that a black boy, Richard experienced during the hardship of his life in a particular era. Racial prejudice which seems to be the main theme of this book as far as the book is concerned. Racial prejudice which seems to be the main theme of this book stood gallantly still as far as the book is concerned. It

was so much that Richard's mum was stretched out of the hospital in a pretence to be dead to get an ambulance. The reason for being that, there wasn't any hospital facility for the coloured people. Availability of better jobs, social amenities were also racially controlled in a way that the blacks were restricted from getting certain jobs.

It even got so bad that blacks were not allowed to go borrow books. And at this point, the writer had a picture of how crazy racial discrimination could be. In her own write-up, Anne Moody gives insights on her personal experiences as well. In a portion of the book, she recounts how Negro students nursed fear on realising that there were a lot of white kids in some colleges they were going.. Reason being that, there wasn't any hospital facility for the coloured people. Availability of better jobs, social amenities was also racially controlled such that the blacks were restricted from getting certain jobs. It even got so bad that blacks were not allowed to go borrow books. And at this point, I had a picture of how crazy racial discrimination could be. In her own write-up, Anne Moody gives insights on her personal experiences as well. In a portion of the book, she recounts how Negro students nursed fear on realising that there were a lot of white kids in some colleges they were going. In this book, I found that it seems Richard is more focus on giving or revealing his opinion. Moreover, Richard Wright's *Black Boy* is an autobiographical account that projects the dealings of the white majority with the black minority in a country where equal rights were withheld, thus leading to a divided society pioneered by intentional hate for the poor black folks. It is yet another good book that tells the difference between being courageous to the rise

of our countrymen and that which opens the eyes of the entire public to our historical heritage

2.2.2. The History of Black People in the United States

The existence of black people in the United States began from the arrival of Spaniards in their early explorations. In about early sixteenth century, they discovered Pacific Ocean. Many black people were joining in the exploration. When they arrived in the United States, they were deciding to settle down in there. By the time, the number of black people was increasing. More than half of the United States black people population lived in the south. Their position in the society in general was under the condition of slavery. There had been many movements done by the black activist to struggle their rights before and during civil war. At the end of the civil war, the population of black people was overwhelmingly a peasant population. By 1950, it was 62 percent urban, and migration of black people to urban areas increased rapidly during 1950's.

The migration brought increased educational and occupational opportunity for the blacks. Some blacks were employed in service domestic occupations or others. This differentiation represented considerable occupational mobility and improvement in standard of living. Although their wages had been tripled, it was still a half of the whites' wages and the number of black people in high-status jobs were small. This condition placed them in the position of second-class citizens. Most southern blacks, because of poverty and ignorance, continued to work as

tenant farmers. Although the blacks were legally free, they still lived and were treated very much like slaves (Locke, 1962: 14163-14167)

The urbanization that went on rapidly in the United States brought some problems such as slums and increased community tension. Employment and educational opportunity offered black people more cultural incentives and political power. Some of them were elected to be legislative and several to congress as representatives from a state (Locke, 1962: 14167). Although black people had got a better life chance in the United States and it could be said that they also had political power, their existence still had not settled completely yet.

In mid of twentieth century, the American black people were awakening and their resistance was growing stronger. In recent years, the mass struggle of the American black people against racial discrimination, freedom and equal right has constantly been developing (Peking Review No.33,1963).

The history of black people's struggle against racial discrimination that indirectly placed them in oppressed position in the United States had been so long and spread out almost all over the world. Many countries had known this condition and it had created a general presumption that black people were the second-class citizen.

2.2.3. Multicultural Concept in the United States

The United States like other countries in the world has a multicultural concept because the people came from various places of origin that brought their own culture with them. It created various societies in the United States. A group of

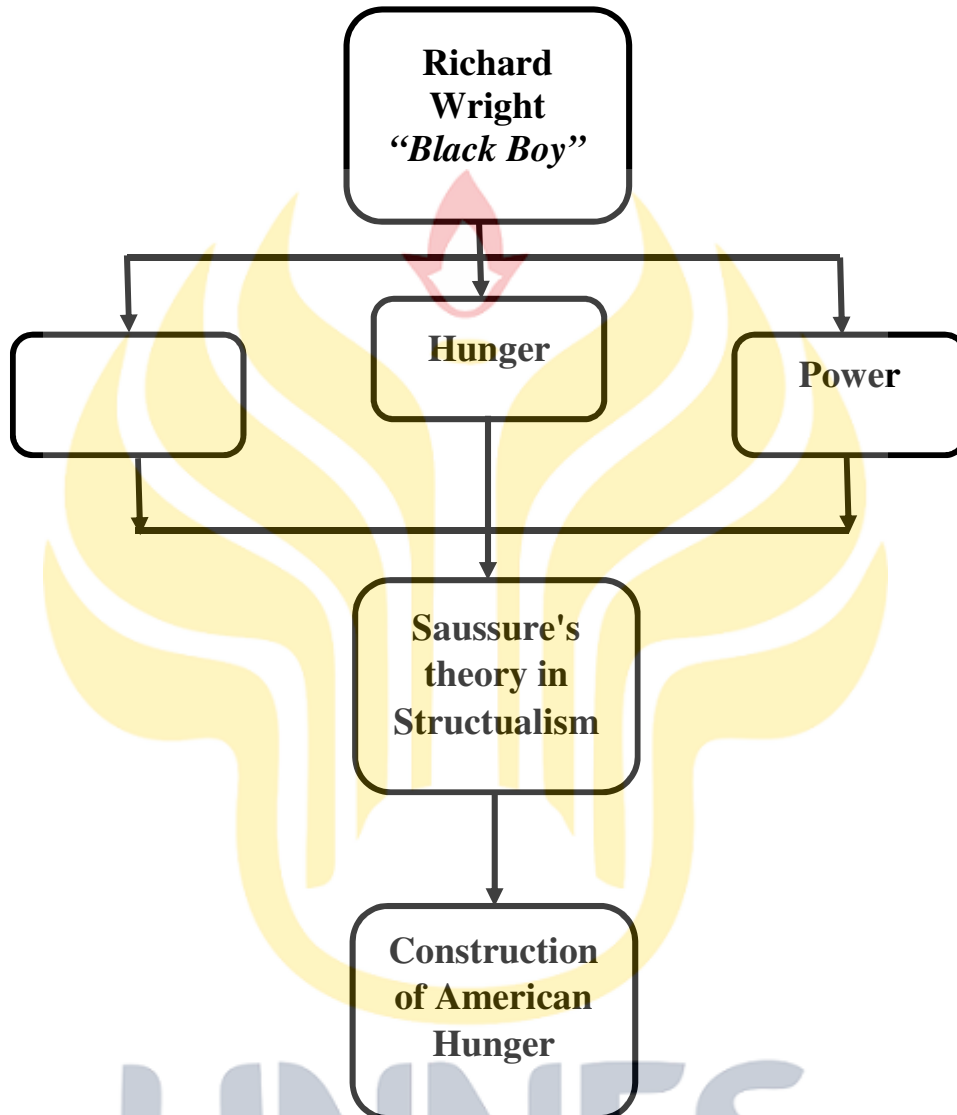
people who has a lot of sameness usually gathered and forms a community. Although the number of the community is large, it is still regarded as comers, which has no privileges in the society as free as those in their own origin because the social rule where they lived in does not serve any privileges for the comers. They are called minority group. Spenser (1985:266) explains: Minority group are ethnic groups that have a subordinate or oppressed status compared to one or more dominant ethnic groups. A minority group may actually have more members than the dominant group, but it is still called a minority if it is subordinate

There are some minority groups in the United States. Among others are: American Indians, Chinese, American, Japanese Americans, Hispanic (Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican and so on), Jews, and Black people. The existence of a black people as one of the minority groups in the United States has not settled yet. Whether it is regarded as phenomenon coloring American culture that could be accepted obviously or it is hidden.

2.3 Theoretical Framework of the Study

2.3.1 Structuralism

In order to get the analysis done, the writer of this final project is using the Structuralism Approach. Structuralism, in a broader sense, is a way of perceiving the world in terms of structures. The shortest and simplest way of explaining structuralism is to quote Scholes (1985:4), who claimed that structuralism is a way of looking for reality not in individual things but in the relationships among them.



Theoretical Framework 2.1

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The essence of Structuralism is the belief that “things cannot be understood in isolation, they have to be seen in the context of larger structures they are part of. The contexts of larger structures do not exist by themselves, but are formed by our way of perceiving the world. Saussure's 'theory of the sign' defined a sign as being made up of the matched pair of signifier and signified. The signifier is in the

interpretation of the signifier that meaning is created. While the signified is the concept, the meaning, the thing indicated by the signifier. It need not be a 'real object' but is some *referent* to which the signifier refers. The thing signified is created in the perceiver and is internal to them. James Henry (1948) had defined that structure as the observation of any arrangement of entities which embodies the idea of wholeness, transformation, and self-regulation. He put more emphasis on language, point of view, characterization, and discourse. From that point of view, it is expected that structuralism learn how to think about what we read, to interpret readings, and to re-write them in our own perspectives.

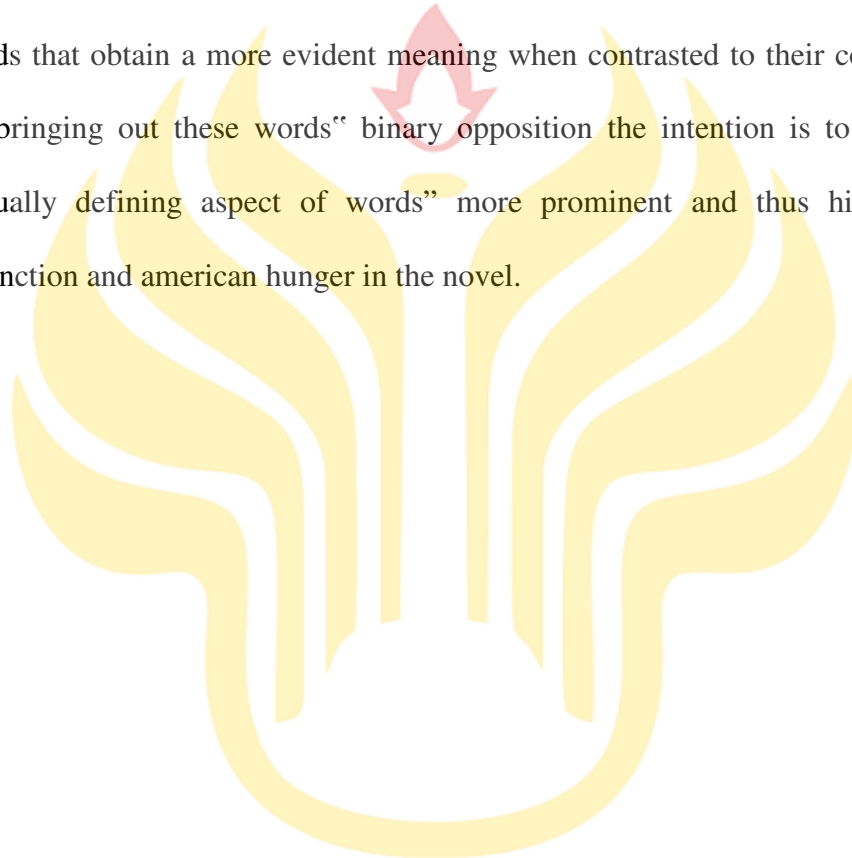
Structualism is needed to point out and define the distinction between black and white society or people. A structuralist view has been applied to the novel using binary oppositions to bring out the distinction itself. In an attempt to decide what is traditionally considered the gap or distiction, in these binaries they have been compared to the way black people are treated. Finally, an account of the central character's attitude and actions in relation to these binary oppositions will be presented.

Binary opposition is a key concept in structuralism, a theory of sociology, anthropology and linguistics that states that all elements of human culture can only be understood in relation to one another and how they function within a larger system or the overall environment. We often encounter binary oppositions in cultural studies when exploring the relationships between different groups of people, for instance: upper-class and lower-class or disabled and non-disabled. On

the surface, these seem like mere identifying labels, but what makes them binary opposites is the notion that they cannot coexist. The problem with a system of binary opposites is that it creates boundaries between groups of people and leads to prejudice and discrimination. One group may fear or consider the opposite group a threat, referred to as the 'other'. The use of binary opposition in literature is a system that authors use to explore differences between groups of individuals, such as cultural, class or gender differences. Authors may explore the gray area between the two groups and what can result from those perceived differences.

Structuralists also argue that in the process of defining the arbitrary symbols that words really are we compare them to other expressions and in relation to these find out the meanings of the words. According to Peter Barry, structuralism can be seen as the idea of how phenomena must be put in a larger context to be understandable. Everything is a part of a larger structure and by analyzing this structure we can get to know more about each specific case. Barry refers to the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure who claimed that “the meaning of words are (what we might call) *relational*” (42). Furthermore, Barry states that if we have paired opposites then this mutually defining aspect of words is even more apparent (42). This suggests that words such as “dark” would have little meaning if not compared to the word “light” (Barry 42). The aspect of structuralism that will dominate the analysis of the novel is the idea of binary oppositions.

The reason for choosing binary oppositions applied to this final project of *Construction of American Hunger in Richard Wright's novel Black Boy* is that it is a novel that has been frequently discussed in several writings. Subjects such as racism, discrimination and power have often been dealt with. These subjects are words that obtain a more evident meaning when contrasted to their counterparts. By bringing out these words' binary opposition the intention is to make "the mutually defining aspect of words" more prominent and thus highlight the distinction and American hunger in the novel.



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CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

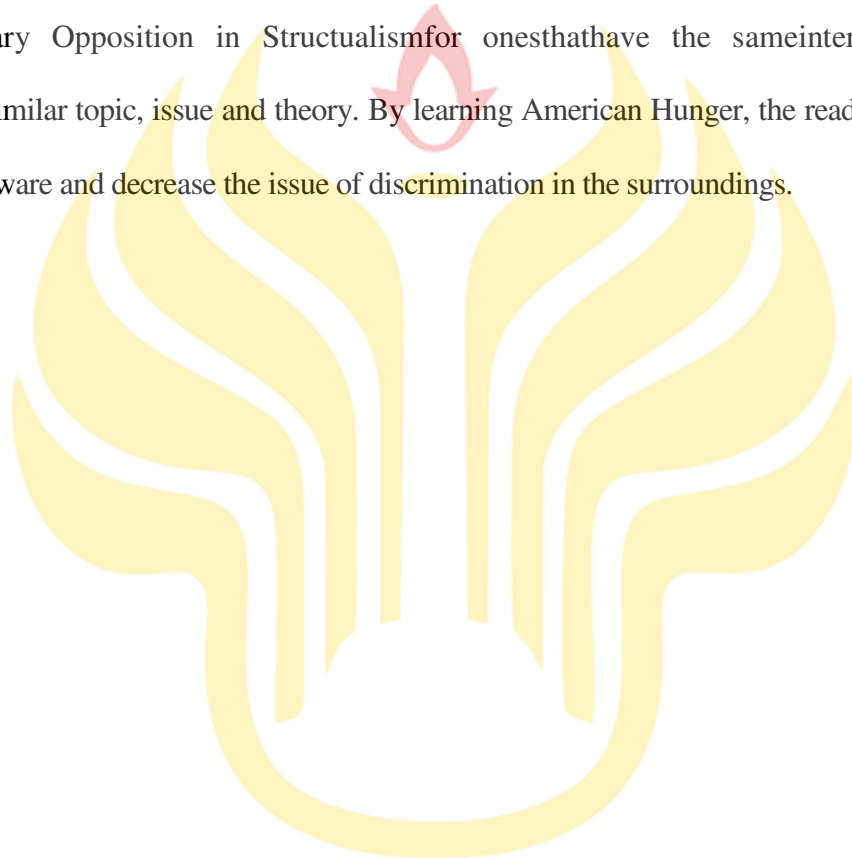
This chapter presents the conclusion and suggestion of my analysis. The conclusion consists of the answers of research questions that cover the whole results of analysis in the form of several paragraphs. Some suggestions are also provided for readers and next researcher who want to conduct such similar research in the future.

5.1 Conclusion

From this study, it can be concluded that: First, the American Hunger is described in the novel through some events that go in the opposite between black and white people. The tensions between them reveals from the different treatment, oppression, discrimination, superiority, and hunger that the black and white people or society experienced. The dominance and the power of the white people had harm the black people in some aspects in their life. Second, American Hunger that is described in the novel is regarded as the desire of the black people when they are living side by side with the white people in America. When the discrimination, segregation, and oppression occurs toward the black people, they satisfy their American hunger by standing against racial oppression, strengthen the superiority, and go against the hunger.

5.2 Sugestion

Based on the conclusion above, the writer suggests the next researchers to learn and search more about new analysis and research in the context of American using Binary Opposition in Structuralism for one that have the same interesting and the similar topic, issue and theory. By learning American Hunger, the readers can also be aware and decrease the issue of discrimination in the surroundings.



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