

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

In English literature, various historical periods have created a diverse literary work, each intricately woven with the cultural and societal norms specific to its time. Klarer (2004: 67) outlines that the criteria used for classification encompass diverse areas, incorporating language history, national historical events, political and religious contexts, and artistic movements. These diverse areas contribute to the framework used to classify literary works. Jane Austen lived during a profound social, political, and intellectual change, straddling the late 18th and early 19th centuries, often characterized by the transition from the Enlightenment to the Romantic era. Austen's works, such as *Pride and Prejudice*, *Sense and Sensibility*, and *Emma*, are literary works that continue to captivate readers worldwide. In these novels, she deftly navigated the intricacies of her time, portraying her characters' experiences, aspirations, and tribulations with a remarkable degree of realism and depth. Her writing style, characterized by her keen wit, astute social commentary, and memorable characterizations, has solidified her place as a timeless literary figure whose work transcends the boundaries of her era.

The central theme of Jane Austen's novels is the examination of social class and its impact on the lives of her characters. Her work revolves around the dynamics between the upper and middle classes, illuminating how these social

classes intersect and collide. Austen's examination of social class is not just a superficial inquiry; it delves into the psychology and emotions of its characters. Her novels encourage readers to reflect on social class differences' emotional and psychological consequences and highlight the constraints and expectations placed on people navigating rigid social hierarchies.

In Jane Austen's literary work, language represents a powerful and diverse tool for demarcating social classes in her stories. Through the dialogue and expressions of her characters, she highlights the nuances that separate the upper and middle classes. Her characters' distinct speech patterns, vocabulary, and mannerisms serve as signifiers of their social standing, creating a detailed portrayal of the societal hierarchies and how individuals navigate them.

The use of address forms in literature plays a significant role in highlighting social relationships and class distinctions. These are not merely linguistic tools but are deeply embedded in the social fabric, indicating the levels of respect and familiarity between characters. According to Wardaugh, as cited in Rahmadani & Wahyuni (2018), the selection of address terms is influenced by numerous factors, including social status, gender, age, familial relationships, professional rank, ethnicity, and the degree of intimacy between individuals. In conversations, address forms serve as a way to distinguish individuals' positions through salutations, reflecting the social dynamics and relational context between the speakers.

Language and social class are potent lenses through which authors have examined society, dissected human behaviour, and constructed narratives. Social class, a cornerstone of Austen's world, captures her era's rigid hierarchies and societal norms and is the backdrop for her insightful observations. Conversely, language emerges not merely as a means of communication but as an extensive weave of words, accents, and expressions that indicate characters' personalities, aspirations, and places within the social fabric. Social class and language are an essential framework for understanding the complexities of human interaction and the layered narratives that literature seeks to unravel. In this study, the researcher wants to look at how Austen employs language to convey social class distinctions in *Pride and Prejudice*. This novel was chosen as the data source because of the story's background, which highlights the importance of social class in the Regency era. The study will give an understanding of how social class dynamics influence linguistic patterns within the context of the literary work. The research will delve into the interactions between characters' social class backgrounds and the language they use, shedding light on how linguistic choices reflect and reinforce social hierarchies.

## **1.2 Research Question**

The research questions proposed are aligned with the core objectives of the study.

The research questions are as follows:

1. What types of address forms, specifically generic titles, are used by the author to reflect the dynamics of social class among the characters in *Pride and Prejudice*?
2. How do the address forms used in *Pride and Prejudice* express social class and language dynamics?

## **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To analyze the types of address forms, specifically generic titles, used by the author to reflect the dynamics of social class among the characters in the novel *Pride and Prejudice*.
2. To examine how the address forms used in *Pride and Prejudice* express social class and language dynamics.

## **1.4 Limitation of the research**

This research is limited to analyzing the types of address forms, specifically generic titles, used by the author to reflect the dynamics of social class in Jane Austen's novel *Pride and Prejudice*. Specifically, it focuses on

chapters containing dialogues or interactions among characters, with particular attention given to instances where variations in address terms indicate the character's social status and how these forms express the relationship between social class and language.

### **1.5 Significance of the study**

The findings of this study will provide a deeper understanding of how social class and language are intertwined and can be used as material for developing literary theory and analysis. This study will provide valuable information to enhance students' language proficiency, including their ability to comprehend historical and literary language and adapt to diverse language contexts.