

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

After analyzing and investigating the narrative structure of the five select short stories in Jhumpa Lahiri's *Unaccustomed Earth* short stories collection by using Tzvetan Todorov's theory of narrative structure, the research finds out Lahiri's ideas about the importance of cultural assimilation. Through the narrative structures of the short stories, the analysis reveals that Lahiri exposes some obstacles which are faced by Indian people in experiencing cultural assimilation in the United States of America.

In the stories, the writer discovers how cultural assimilation happens among the characters. Based on the narrative structure of "Unaccustomed Earth" and "Hell-Heaven", the analysis comes to the conclusion that the first generation of Indian immigrants finally find out the way to make their life happier while living in America. It is by adapting the culture. Ruma's father has adopted American culture and he convinces Ruma that she does not need to be worry about him anymore. He decides not to live with Ruma, so he and Ruma have their own path for their own sake. Meanwhile, in "Hell-Heaven" Usha's mother also finds that actually she is wrong about American people. She starts accepting American culture. Then it makes her have a peace with her husband and her daughter who have accepted the assimilation first.

In the "A Choice of Accommodations" and "Nobody's Business", the analysis finds how Indian and American people have a problem in their life

because of their different cultural background. The problems show that actually although Indian immigrants have adapted American culture, but still they have their Indian culture in them. It is seen in “A Choice of Accommodations”. The problem in the story happens because Amit, an Indian man, still sometimes thinks like an Indian that he cannot say his complains openly about his wife’s American wife-style. Actually thinking liberally and democratically is common for American people that it is actually acceptable for Amit’s wife, Megan, to hear his complaints about her. However, he does not say it.

Moreover in “Nobody’s Business” the problem happens because Sang, an Indian woman, cannot accept the way American people live without thinking about other’s personal life. Although Sang seems to have adapted American life style, sometimes she still thinks like an Indian woman. Both stories show that even though the Indians have assimilated with their new culture but still they have their eastern culture deeply rooted in them. They cannot totally change, and that sometimes creates problem for them. The ending of the story tells that the problem is resolved by talking openly with each other and the acceptance of American people about their different culture.

The last one is the problem of cultural assimilation of the second generations of Indian immigrant in “Only Goodness”. In the story, Lahiri shows that though people have similar cultural background, like Sudha and Rahul who are the second generation Indian immigrants with similar parents, but they are different in assimilating the cultures. Sudha who is able to negotiate with American culture finally succeeds in getting her bright future. Meanwhile Rahul,

who cannot control himself in following American drinking habit, ruins his life. He is separated from his family, even his lovely sister.

Thus, based on the five short stories' narrative structure the writer concludes three ideas of cultural assimilation based on Jhumpa Lahiri's perspective. Firstly, cultural assimilation is a process that should be taken by the first generations of Indian immigrant who have decided to settle in America. Their goals to get happiness and better life in the new place will be reached when they are able to accept openly their recent culture. Secondly, cultural assimilation is a process that should be agreed by the second generation of Indian immigrant as a process to build their future in their new home. Thirdly, cultural assimilation does not make Indian immigrant entirely leave their original culture as Indian. They still have their Indian culture in them although they have adopted American culture in some aspect of their life.

