

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the writer presents the background, research focus and research formulation, research questions research purposes, and benefits.

1.1 Background

Social value is an important thing in a country because it reflects the way of thinking, manner, and also attitude of the people. Social values have been a vocal area in advertising research for decades. Past experience, cultural and social norms, and the money at our disposal are some of the most important. Schaefer (1986, p.67) states that each individual develops her or his own personal goals and ambitions, yet culture provides a general set of objectives for members. Values may be specific, such as honoring one's parents and owning a home, or they may be more general, such as health, love, and democracy. Values influence people's behavior and serve as criteria for evaluating the actions of others.

When one reads a literary work, he can learn not only about the literature itself but also about others such as the social values and historical events. According to Albrecht (1954, p.425) the relationship of literature and society has been variously conceived. Three general assumptions are that literature reflects society and culture, that it serves as a means of social control, and that it influences attitudes and behavior of people in ways considered in some respects desirable, in others undesirable.

In <http://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-the-connection-between-literature-andhistory.htm>, between literature and history have a main connection. It is that literature used to report and represent history. Therefore, analyzing literary works means revealing the complexity of life itself. Roberts and Jacobs (1989, p.2) state that literature helps us grow. Literature is an important component of a total language arts program at all grade levels. Through the description of life in

literature, other people can understand humans with all their problems, or events taking place in our lives. Literature enables people to develop a perspective on the events that occur around us and in the world at large. So that, it can be seen if literature does not only give people the picture of human's life and make people understand human, the world, and life, but also gives people the pleasure because literature is designed to tell stories to the readers. It makes them interested and entertained when they read it. According to Rosenblatt (1995, p. 175) says the power of literature to offer entertainment and recreation is still its prime reason for survival.

Literature is divided in some genres. One of them is drama. Among the literary genres, drama is a special case. A drama could consist of social value. Whittaker (2008, p.5) explains that drama is the process, something that is ongoing. Biays and Wershoven (1988, p.101) say that enjoying drama, whether you are watching or reading a play, requires you to use your imagination, to enter the world of the play. Thus, drama can cover rehearsals and work up to performances and also the process of learning.

Bennett (1975, p.149) explains that drama is derived from the Greek word *dran*, which means "to do" or "to act". Abrams (1988, p.45) states that drama is the literary form designed for performance in the theater, in which actors takes the roles of the characters, performed the indicated action, and utter the written dialogue.

The text of drama consists of the substance of the drama that can be seen from the themes, events, characters, and also the ending of the drama. The dispositive figures of the drama can be seen from the direct exposure of the characters, the figures dialogue (speech), the action of characters, and other responses from each character in the drama. Besides, drama has the characteristics. They are based on the human experiences, form of a dialogue, performed by the actor or actress on the stage, and perform in front of people.

The writer wants to analyze about the American values reflected from the characters in *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller. This drama won the New York Drama Critics Circle Award, the Pulitzer Prize and the Antoinette Perry

Award. Besides, the writer finds out that the play reflects social values of the society in which the author lived after reading this drama. In this final report, the writer tries to find out how the American values are reflected on the characteristics of the main character in the drama.

1.2. Research Focus and Research Formulations

1.2.1. Research Focus

Drama as a literature work has the elements. They are plot, theme, character, and so on. In a play, reader can know the political issues, economic issues, and social values developing in the era. The writer believes that every work written by a playwright reflects the social values where and when S/He lived. That is why, the final report goes to the American social values reviving in the 20th century and what the American social values are reflected on the main character of drama “Death of a Salesman”.

1.2.2 Research Formulations

Death of a Salesman is the tragedy of a small man destroyed by false values of his society. This drama was written when the American economy grew unparalleled caused by the increase in the birth rate and the military spending. Under such conditions, the writer believes that there are some values reflected on Arthur Miller’s Death of a Salesman especially reflected on the main character Willy Loman.

1.2.3 Research Questions

1. What are the American social values in this drama?
2. How the American values reflected on the main character of this drama?

1.2.4 Operational Definitions

a. Drama

Drama is the literary form designed for performance in the theater, in which actors take the roles of the characters, performed the indicated action, and utter the written dialogue.

b. American Social Values

American social values here refer to the internal culture of the way of thinking and perceiving. It contains the values and beliefs unconsciously learned while growing up in a particular culture. These values and beliefs determine most behavior.

c. Death of a Salesman

Death of a Salesman written by Arthur Miller is the best American plays ever written and a successful twentieth century tragedy with a tragic hero. The first paperback published on 18th March 1949 by Viking Books, on the other hand the first hardcover published on March 18th 1994 by Heinemann Library. It consists of two scenes. The writing of that play was in the postwar years, the time after The Second World War (1939-1942). It began in the winter of 1946/1947 and finished in the spring of 1948. This play was produced on February 10, 1949 and consists of 105 pages text. It is the tragedy of a small man destroyed by false values.

1.2.5. Research Purposes

The purposes in this final report are :

- a. To know what the American Values in the twentieth century based on the drama.
- b. To analyze the American values reflected by the main character in this drama.

1.2.6. Benefits

The writer :

1. To know the American values that existed in the twentieth century.

2. To fulfill the requirements in State Polytechnic of Sriwijaya.
3. To know the way how to analyze drama.

The reader :

1. To be additional information about the literature genres such as Death of a Salesman drama by Arthur Miller for the English Department Student.
2. To give the information about the American Values that existed and reflected on the characteristic in the main character of this drama.