

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Literature is form of human expression in life. It contains some events that happen in real life and it is written in certain ways. Literature becomes the tool to create the self-identity for the people. The existence of self-identity itself is one of important things for people to express their own characters, thoughts, feeling, attitude and survive in many conditions toward life. In development era there are so many influences and movement which is changing people personality and perception. Furthermore, literature becomes more interesting and entertaining because it is full of imagination. Through literature itself, people can imagine and explore about the author's work. Burto (1903:1) states as follows:

...literature is a performance in a word. It has to be entertaining to afford pleasure. Most people have sense that cannot be expressed directly, that is why they need a tool to express it. One of the ways to express and explore their desire such as: experience, imagination, and feeling is using literature.

In other words, literature is simply another way we can experience the world around us through our imagination.

Identifying the work of literature, one will also be able to understand who is called the man of literature (the author). Both the author and work of literature cannot be separated from each other, and both of them will clearly appear in the words creator and creation especially in the term of literature. Hudson (1965:10)

adds that literature is the vital record of what men have in life; of they have experience in life, of what they have thought and felt about these aspects of it.

Literature is divided into two kinds, first is literature of power and second is literature of knowledge. Literature of power or imaginative literature contains such as poems, short stories, novel and plays, while literature of knowledge contains such as school text book, history book and dictionary.

Death of a Salesman is Arthur Miller's most famous work produced in 1949, marked an eye catching vestige in American drama. It casts a cold eye on the 'American Dream' and moral that is compromised to achieve it. This play explains about the dream of the salesman named Willy Loman; he is a man who struggles to get the 'American Dream' which is to make sense of his place in the society.

This play also is the greatest American tragedy, and Miller gained eminence as a man who understood the deep essence of the United States because the play examines the coast of blind faith in the 'American Dream'. The failure of Willy Loman in achieving wealth for his life can be seen when he is believed that he can become a successful traveling salesman. It makes him becomes more aggressive and full of ambition. But, it guides him to have wrong perception and ambition of the American Dream in the way he applies the vision toward himself and his family.

In regard with the discussion, the topic about American dream is chosen to reveal how the main character achieves his goal in achieving American dream and

the result of the goal in achieving American Dream toward Willy Loman and his family' life. Therefore, in this research, the researcher entitles this search as **“American Dream in Arthur Miller’s *Death of a Salesman.*”**

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Based on the background of this research, the two basic problems are formulated to be analyzed. The problems are as follows:

1. What are Willy Loman’s bad attitudes and actions in achieving American Dream in Arthur Miller’s *Death of a Salesman*?
2. What are Willy Loman’s good attitudes and actions in achieving American Dream in Arthur Miller’s *Death of a Salesman*?
3. What are the results of the American Dream pursuit in Arthur Miller’ *Death of a Salesman*?

1.2. Objective of the Study

To get a deeper and clearer understanding on the topic discussed, this research tries to answer the three questions as stated above:

1. To describe Willy Loman’s bad attitudes and actions in achieving American Dream in Arthur Miller’s *Death of a Salesman.*

2. To find out Willy Loman's good attitudes and actions in achieving American Dream in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*.
3. To analyse the results of American Dream pursuit in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*.

1.3. Scope of the Problem

It is very necessary to limit the scope of problem in order to get detailed understanding about the topic discussion. This research is limited to that the Willy Loman's family in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* and the other characters that support the data to be analyzed. The research focuses on the attitudes and actions in obtaining American Dream as the goal of their life as seen through the all of characters.

1.4. Significance of the Study

It is hoped that the result of this research can contribute something valuable not only for researcher but also for the readers. By reading this research, the readers may have good understanding about the American Dream as a part of knowledge particularly the literary studies in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*. Practically, the result of this work can motivate and attract the other researchers to do some other researchers on the literary studies.