

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

From the fourth semester until the seventh semester, the students of the English Department are taught Literature. They are obliged to take eight credits : Literature I (2 credits), Literature II (2 credits), Literature III (2 credits), and Literary Appreciation (2 credits). The students are expected to read critically, understand, and appreciate poems, short stories, novels, and drama written in English (Teachers' Training Faculty of Widya Mandala Catholic University 1991:106).

Studying Literature is not only interesting, but also useful to increase our knowledge. Roberts and Jacobs (1989:2) claim that Literature can help us grow both personally and intellectually. It helps us connect ourselves to the broader cultural, philosophical, and religious world of which we are a part. Literature also broadens its readers' mind, knowledge, and insights about human beings in facing life reality. In addition, it enables us to recognize what human dreams, struggles, and how a character faces his or her dreams and struggles in different places, times, and conditions that one would never know.

Literature has three classes: prose fiction, poetry,

and drama (Roberts and Jacobs 1989:2). The writer chooses drama as the topic of her thesis because drama is worth reading due to its efficiency. According to Little (1966:113), "Drama is a subject to a time limit (say two or three hours) to which the novel is not restricted." Thus, one can get lots of information even in a shorter time than if one reads a novel. Besides, drama is also worth reading because of its "content quality". Drama presents characters which are shown in dialogues and action, so that drama has a dramatic characterization in which others do not have. It has a quality to describe human characters and attitudes in action (Scholes 1978:731).

For this thesis, the writer has chosen A DOLL'S HOUSE, a social drama written by Henrik Ibsen. The consideration of choosing this drama is based on the fact that when reading this drama, the writer finds out that the theme being presented by Ibsen is closely related to human being's life and its problems. The lesson taken from this story is really useful to broaden the writer's knowledge about Nora's life, especially in this modern era in which a woman can act as a mother, a career woman or both.

This play is also interesting to the writer's opinion due to the fact that the writer has been studying at a

Teacher Training Department in which the writer is taught to be a good teacher who should take care of her own life, educate herself, and later on be able to educate others (the students, her own children, etc). Related to daily life, this play is a good example of how a woman finds out her own identity and idea which are of a great influence to her life, her family and her social life.

Henrik Ibsen is one of the masters of the realistically problematic plays in the nineteenth century. He wrote a string of realistic dramas or sometimes called social dramas that deal with the troubled relationships between the individual, the family, and the community (Roberts and Jacobs 1989:1438). A Doll's House is one of Ibsen's best plays written in 1879. It is a social drama which signifies a true story in an ordinary situation (King 1980:10). This idea is supported by Annas and Rosen (1990:1444) who state that social drama is attempted to reproduce as faithfully as possible the reality of daily life as it might appear to an observer.

To get the message of A Doll's House, the writer analyzes Nora's personality as the main character by studying her verbal behaviours or her dialogues toward the other characters in the play. Smith (1964:89) states that personality can be attained through the author's explanation, the character's speech and actions, or other

characters' opinion about them. Furthermore, Annas and Rosen (1990:1439) also state that the dialogues, especially in early scenes, not only move the action forward, but also provide us with important information about the characters. Since A DOLL'S HOUSE is concerned with human being's life and its problems, the writer is interested in studying more about this play, especially on Nora's personality as reflected by her verbal behaviours towards other characters.

### **1.2 Statements of the Problem**

In line with the background, the research questions raised in this study are formulated as follows :

1. What type of personality does Nora have as reflected in her verbal behaviours toward the other characters in the play ?
2. What character changes does Nora experience at the end of the play ?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

In line with the problems stated above, this study is intended :

1. to describe Nora's personality as shown by her verbal behaviours towards the other characters in the play.
2. to describe Nora's character changes at the end of the

play.

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The writer hopes that the results of the study give some contribution, to Literature in general, especially to the study of drama, and the study of A Doll'S House in particular. Finally, this research is hopefully able to share something significant to women's life that good communication and understanding between husband and wife is very important to avoid divorce and to overcome problems that might arise in a family or a marriage.

#### **1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study**

This study concentrated only on the major character -Nora- since the play is about a woman in the world of males or a play about "human rights". The writer focuses on Nora's verbal behaviours in order to know her personality towards Helmer (her husband), Doctor Rank, Mrs Linden, and Nils Krogstad. They are the characters that reveal the personality of Nora to be more obvious.

#### **1.6 Theoretical Frameworks**

There are three theories underlying the study under report. They are the theory of Literature especially drama, the theory of Discourse Analysis, the theory of Psychology (Behavioral Psychology), and some previous

studies related to the topic of the study under report.

Literature refers to either written or spoken composition designed to tell stories, dramatize situations and reveal thoughts and emotions, and also, more importantly to interest, entertain, stimulate, broaden, and ennoble readers (Roberts and Jacobs 1989:1). Besides, Literature contains much information and the readers have to seek the information.

Drama contains dialogues spoken by the characters, directed from the author telling what the characters do and perhaps how they speak their lines and with directions (usually fairly brief) describing the background against which they perform their actions (Brooks 1964:613).

There are three elements of drama which cannot be separated: characters, dialogues, and plot (Scholes 1978:753). Together they create imitative world of every play through the dialogue of the characters. Since characters are like people in real life, and dialogue and plot are the things they say and do.

Since A DOLL'S HOUSE is a drama which consists of dialogues, the writer uses discourse analysis to analyze and to find out the meaning above the sentences or clauses used by the characters in the play. For discourse analysis is the study of the organization of language above the sentences or above the clauses, and therefore, it is used

to study larger linguistic units, such as conversational exchanges or written texts. Furthermore, discourse analysis is also concerned with language in use in social contexts, and in particular with interaction or dialogue between speakers (Stubbs 1987:1).

Sartain (1973:26), on the other hand, confines that psychology is the scientific study of the behaviour of living organisms with special attention given to human behaviour and it also includes thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and values.

Since human behaviour is abstract and intangible, every human being is different from one another. Each has his or her own characteristics, therefore it is important to understand the psychology of someone's personality (Lindgren 1961:3).

Behavioral psychology is used here since this study deals with the behaviour of the main character, Nora. Her feelings, dreams, experiences, fears, emotions revealed in her verbal behaviours are all important sources of analysis. Furthermore, Sartain (1973:31) also mentions that personality is a means of interpreting and predicting the behaviours of individuals as unique human beings in the field of psychology.

## 1.7 Definition of Key Terms

There are several terms that need further explanation in order to avoid misunderstanding of readers. These terms are :

### a. Dialogue

Conversation among two or more characters in a play (Roberts and Jacobs 1989:1006).

### b. Personality

The whole characteristic of an individual's structures; behaviour, interests, attitudes, capacities, abilities, and aptitudes—as others see him (Munn 1962:518).

### c. Major character

The character who plays as the central of the plot, fully developed, and complex (Annas and Rosen 1990:1446).

### d. Verbal behaviour

The use of spoken and written language in communicating with others. Since the subject being discussed here is a drama so the verbal behaviour is the spoken language conducted by the characters in the drama (Otello 1976:571).

e. Character

It can be either a person in a literary work or an individual's qualities and characteristics (Roberts 1969:10).

f. Characteristics

One of the essentials of structure form, materials or function that together make up and usually distinguish the individual (Evans and Bennet 1964:150).

### **1.8 Organization of the Thesis**

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter I deals with Background of The Study, Statements of The Problem, Objectives of The Study, Significance of The Study, Scope and Limitation of The Study, Theoretical Frameworks, Definition of Key Terms, and Organization of The Thesis. Chapter II deals with Review of Related Literature. Chapter III deals with the Methodology that underlying the analysis. Chapter IV presents the Analysis of Nora's verbal behaviours and its findings. Chapter V presents conclusion that emphasizes the importance of verbal behaviours in revealing the personality of Nora.