CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Literature is widely known by people around the world. It is a kind of verbal artefact using language as the medium. People use literature to express their emotions, ideas, minds, etc. Laurence Perrine (1969: 6) states that the purpose of literature is to communicate significant experience because it is concentrated and organised. Its function is not to tell the readers about experience but allow them imaginatively to participate in it.

Literature, as an art of words, can help someone become more sensitive to language, both his own and other people. It means that he has the ability to use words in expressing our thoughts, feelings and ideas in better and clearer way. Literature also helps him personally and intellectually. It provides objectives based on his knowledge and understanding, and helps him connect to the broader cultural philosophic and religious world.

Besides broadening someone's knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, literature also enables him to learn about other cultures and way. He can immerse into the feelings of happiness, sadness and anger by reading literary works. Literary works are worthy for him since it develops not only his reading basic abilities in reading but also his skills of interpreting, judging and understanding what is read.

Literature consists of some genres. One of them is poetry. It is taught as a subject at the English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University. The writer thinks that it is an interesting subject because he can know what other people think. Besides, it is an important part that cannot be separated from human being's life because it is full of creative thinking and highly imaginative. Therefore, the writer chooses poetry as his subject of this study.

Perrine (1969: 64), in addition, states, (to quote Robert Frost): 'Poetry provides the one permissible way of saying one thing and meaning another.' Therefore, in a poem, the readers may see the surface meaning and the deeper meaning inside it. The surface meaning of a poem is called as the literal meaning: meanwhile, the deeper meaning inside it is called the figurative meaning. However, some poems are the direct spontaneous expressions of the poets not all poems have figurative meaning. It is possible for the poets to state what they exactly mean without any imagery and figure of speech. This is in line with Annas, et all (1990: 1414) who state that: 'Poetry is often built around images, representative of sensory experience.' While poetry concerns ideas and insights, the difference with the other kinds of writing is that they are usually expressed these through senses-oriented language. By so doing, the readers can 'see', 'smell', or even 'touch' them.

The writer chooses poetry because he likes it very much. According to him, he can have much pleasure by understanding the meaning of individual poems. With poetry, he can say something that can hardly be said in any other way. he can judge and criticise other people without hurting their feeling. The

writer thinks that there are many kinds of meanings, if it is compared to other reading texts.

The writer chooses Robert Frost as he is one of the greatest American poets. James M. Cox (1957:1) says that Robert Frost became a natural institution that he was called on to recite a poem at the 1961 Presidential Inauguration. It is still difficult to comprehend how deep his root goes down into time. He also says that he was writing poetry before modern literature had really begun.

Harold H. Watss (1967: 105) says that the bulk of his poetry is a dialogue in which one of the speakers is Robert Frost. It means that Frost includes himself to his poetry. He wants to his ideas through his poetry. When someone reads Frost's poetry, he is able to know how Frost thinks.

James L. Potter (1980: 9) claims that Frost's literary works affected his way of thinking, his general attitudes and perspectives, and this basic influence usually resulted in certain stylistic or technical similarities. Here, someone's work can influence someone else's thought.

In this study, the writer chooses Robert Frost's poem entitled, "The Death of the Hired Man." Though he tells simply story in his poem, it has lots of meaningful values of life. He pours out those values through a simple, beautiful and understandable language.

'The Death of a Hired Man' is one of Frost's longer works. Most of the lines are dialogues between Mary and her husband Warren about Silas, an old worker who comes to their farm when he needs money. Only this time, Mary senses that there is something different. Silas looks old and unwell, and is talking

about things that happened on the farm years before. She wants Warren to let Silas stay that this is home for him, even though he has a rich brother who lives nearby. Actually, Warren is stubborn not to let Silas stay because of some reasons. Moments later, Mary asks Warren to have a look at Silas' condition. So, Warren comes in to see Silas' condition and finds that Silas is dead.

Here, the writer wants to study the personal relationships between the characters in Robert Frost's 'the Death of the Hired Man.' The writer chooses this poem because it provides a wonderful interaction between the characters. Besides, Frost uses everyday language in this long poem. Therefore, people can understand the poem easily. Last but not least, it gives the writer a really good input about life. That is why the writer wants to analyse the poem.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

This study is conducted to answer the following question:

- How are the personal relationships between the characters in Robert Frost's poem 'The Death of the Hired Man'?

1.3. The Objective of the Study

Based on the statement of the problem, this study is to find out the personal relationships between the characters in Robert Frost's poem 'The Death of the Hired Man'

1.4. Significance of the Study

This study is expected to contribute to the study of literature in English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University. The writer expects that the students will be able to analyse literary works especially poetry. Moreover, the writer hopes that by reading this analysis, the reader can study how to maintain relationships with other people.

1.5. Scope and Limitation

Finding that discussion of the analysis is very broad, the writer limits the study to analysing the personal relationship between the characters in Robert Frost's 'The Death of the Hired Man'.

1.6. Definition of the Key Terms

It is important to know several terms that are used in this study to avoid misunderstanding. The key terms are:

1. Personal Relationships: comes from two words; personal and relationship:

   a. Personal: pertaining to a particular person; relating to, or affecting, an individual, or each of many individuals

   b. Relationship: connection or association; the condition of being related.

   c. Personal relationships: social associations, connections, or affiliations between two or more people who may interact overtly, covertly, face to face. (Wikipedia)

2. Poem: a kind of language that says more and says it more intensely than does the ordinary language (Perrine, 1969: 3)

3. Imagery: presents to the reader the poet's concrete world of things, and recall the sight and sound and feel of them (Knickerbocker; 1960: 306). As an example is John is naughty. John always kicks Michael. Naughty in the first sentence is abstract. The second sentence tells the reader how naughty John is.

4. Figures of Speech: images used in a particular way to explore the unknown to the less known. As an example, Joseph Conrad describes an old Chinese ship-owner as having "a face like an ancient lemon". The images in this figures are the face and the lemon, the first unknown to the reader, the second well known. Here, Conrad wants to say that the face is wrinkled, jaundiced, dried up, oval shaped, and toughened by time as the ancient lemon. (Knickerbockers; 1960:366)

1.7. Organisation of the Thesis

This study consists of five chapters. The first chapter is introduction presenting of the background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, definition of the key terms, theoretical framework, and organisation of the study. The second chapter contains a review of related literature consisting of language function and speech act theory. The third chapter deals with research methodology. The fourth chapter

discusses findings and discussion. The fifth chapter concerns with conclusion and suggestions.