CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Analysis

The term of literature has undergone a great widening of meaning, and has come to mean ‘anything in print’ or anything written. In reference to this, a treatise on astronomy or chemistry or physics is called literature; a travel brochure or a time table is called literature; nay even a leaf-let giving the description of a radio set receives the denomation literature. Yet, Literature in the true sense of the term is that kind of writing which is changed with human interest, and characterized by permanence, coloring of imagination, and artistic embellishment (Sinha, 1977: 1).

Tennessee William, the greatest American playwright is widely known especially for the one of his works, entitled A Streetcar Named Desire. The play is a product of culture in general. A Streetcar Named Desire represents in American culture as a product of adaptation and experience. The adaptation derives from culture or situation which was produced by experience because the adaptation is methodology of men to put their institution or identities in one place which must be adapted in society or social life. An adaptation is categorized to all people who have lived in one place by occupying of some various of ethnics or tribes as melting-pot. The experience derives from adaptation which is emerged from ideology in social life in doing activities, relationship and grouping that is describing the American society or culture (Porter, 1969: 17)
In this thesis, I analyze the downfall of Blanche Dubois as portrayed in Tennessee William's *A Streetcar Named Desire*. This analysis is focused on the backdrop of Blanche's downfall such as the failure of Blanche to understand the American Dream Myth or conceptions, idiosyncrasies as her attitudes, inability to make a good relations with her society into the stratification social, her status social status and her convinces to the past life experiences.

The life of Blanche Dubois depicts the girl who lives in free relationship into the extend society, but she assumes the relationship which free is the kinds of life that can make her prosperous be perpetually. Although Blanche Dubois believes in her social life which can help her institution life through her beautiful, performance, sensitive that convinces her social values in society towards Blanche life as purified woman. Those are making Blanche life in social values or her stratification social to be down or fall into disordered life. The situation makes Blanche is trapped because she did not realize her talents which can make worst and worth in social life, but she found worst images. Her talents brings her into the misconception of American Dream Myth, idiosyncrasies, accusations of her self which dirty life before society, convinces to the past experience and disordered life itself.

American Dream Myth is supposed to be a culture product of American people. It deals with social behavior covering a dream of success, better attitudes, moral values that penetrate patterns of living socially and personally. Thus, Myth is thought to be cultural spirit that encourages one to face living.

Myth is spoken mouth to mouth in the form of saying or proverbs. It summarizes the essence of worth living to achieve. Some think myth is real; the
others do it is fictitious (Cuddon, 2005: 525-6). In short, myth represents hope for better and success. American Dream Myth is like the conceptions of American people or ideology which can bring their life be succeed and famous in social life such as freedom, wealthy, independence, succeed in life and telling lies. But Blanche itself is misconception towards them especially for telling lies as the kinds of American Dream Myth which makes her downfall. Her telling lies is causing her conceptions to be disordered or unsystematically which caused all her social life or society becomes deceive and unbelievable towards Blanche. In American people believes that telling lies can help them to be covered or saved from all their mistakes or guilty, but Blanche used to conduct the telling lies as her keys to get succeed then it caused her downfall.

She lies from weakness, from immaturity, from a fear of reality. As people would prefer it to be, so she lies because she has a taste for a fantasy life better than her reality. The reality of Blanche life is something very sincere about her affection and kindness. Blanche lies, but never with intent to hurt. But she seeks to become what she thinks will please other.

Blanche Dubois has weakness in fragility and inability to fend her self, and her self deception have brought her to madness. It is because of Blanche used masking as the truth is part of entertainment her self, and it makes her to be isolated from her social life. Inability of Blanche is to diminish her high stylish like borguism, but the fact is not which derives from her illusion or dreams that Blanche must be adapted her past stylish towards present. This is caused by dependence life, and becomes fall.
The convince of Blanche to the past life experience is transferring her life experience to the darkness which brings her to be lost or death life such as her talents (beautiful, smart, treasure, desire and relations). From her past life experience which convinces success, so it emerges the idiosyncrasies of Blanche to think of her sins or her failure to wander her darkness life into the bright life. in fact that Blanche idealized her life is equal from that past life experience while the situation or place were different. She believes in her past life conceptions will never died then it’s not even past, it means that she has a freedom to choose her life destiny to be succeed rather then it takes to the ravine or darkness in failure.

Her idiosyncrasies is influenced by her convinces towards her past life experience as her central of truly in her own conceptions become her split personalities. This thing is making her life to be isolated from reality of her social life, and she becomes not precious person in social life. Idiosyncrasies persuades to be prestige or careless to join with others and appearance of egoism which caused her downfall or lost in frustration of life.

I choose this plays as the object of my analysis because I want to inform some statements caused the downfall of Blanche’s Dubois as the reflection to social life that is happened in present life, especially it describes some cases to the influence family life and society influences itself.

1.2 Problems of the Analysis

The thesis analysis has been focused on how the heroine-Blanche Dubois, fails to fulfill her ultimate goal of life. She has been betrayed by her own dream which is manifested in the myth of beauty that brings success. It also refers to her
idiosyncrasy which places the truth of her own. In addition, the beauty has been broken into pieces for her mistake in the past life experience by doing promiscuity which finally destroy her life into downfalls. Based on that assumption above, I come to state my problem analysis as follows:

1. What are the causes of Blanche Dubois’ downfall in materializing the American Dream Myth in her life?
2. Is it idiosyncrasy that makes her fail to recognize her own personality which leads her into downfall?
3. What is the seamy side of past life experience that traps her into downfall?

1.3. Objective of the Analysis

In analyzing that Blanche Dubois’ downfall as portrayed in Tennessee William’s *A Streetcar Named Desire*, I have some purposes as follows are:

1. To explain the causes of Blanche Dubois’ downfall as portrayed in Tennessee William’s *A Streetcar Named Desire* as reflected in the American Dream Myth.

2. To analyze Blanche Dubois’ downfall for her personal mannerism in which she thinks she is the most perfect one above all. This kind of mannerism is known as idiosyncrasy.

3. To explain badly past experience life of Blanche Dubois that leads her coming into her downfall.
1.4 Scope of the Analysis

I restrict my analysis in this thesis into three aspects of manifesting American dream myth through the leading character that is Blanche Dubois. Firstly, the causes of Blanche Dubois’ downfall; secondly, the idiosyncrasy attitude; and thirdly, the bad past experience which is not accepted in social norm.

These three aspects are confined to the way Blanche Dubois’ way of thinking which believes that her beauty will give her success in her life. Her specific performance which is different from others directs her into idiosyncratic manner which is rejected by people around her. Her habit of telling lies to cover bad past experience for security is also uncommon to people around her. These aspects are related to her downfall which is then formulated as the scope of the analysis.

1.5 Method of the Analysis

In analyzing the plays I am using descriptive approach which describes the downfall of Blanche Dubois’ as portrayed in Tennessee William’s A Streetcar Named Desire. The main source or primary data of the analysis is Tennessee Williams A Streetcar Named Desire: what I mean by the data here is the quotations I selected from the play. Thus, the first step of the method procedure is reading the play several times. After having understood the story, I come to find out the idea which is related to American dream myth.

The selection of data is important in order to get relevancy with the analysis. So, the selected quotations are interoperated to get the actual meaning. After that, I analyze the data for the truth of the analysis.
In doing the research, I focused on books and references to get information for the data I analyze. Since the data are documented in written form, the method of my analysis is known as documentation method of analysis. In other word, this kind of research is really library research.

1.6 Significance of the Analysis

This thesis is entitled Blanche Dubois downfall as portrayed in Tennessee William’s play *A Streetcar Named Desire*. The significance of the analysis contains theoretical and practical use. Theoretically, this analysis is meant to add a study of literature through play as one genres of literature, particularly American literature which is represented by Tennessee Williams’ *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Thus, this play may give information about American play for students of literature in general, students of English literature in particular.

Practically, the students of English literature may get knowledge of literature especially through Tennessee William’s play *A Streetcar Named Desire*. And this analysis may be reference for further analysis in literary works especially drama.

1.7 Review of Related Literature

In analyzing this play, the writer deals with some books which has close relation to the title itself. Thus, he states them as the importance to the analysis:


   Explains the dramatic Milieu and American drama in the introduction. It clarifies how the concept of American dream myth comes into the central
idea of literature especially drama. It is further added that such kind of myth has became central to literature.

This book offers idea which help me to do further analysis in my thesis. It is related to an understanding of how the myth becomes the product of adaptation to American culture. It is said that because the myth represents experience that offers attitudes of American to reach success. American dream myth which is manifested in slogan such as “work hard, good performance, beauty and unique appearance can be materialized in achieving succeed. Yet, it is true culturally but not realistic factually. For some evidence, the myth can betray the dream for success in terms of failure or downfall.


He says that literature can be seen from four elements. Firstly, from the work itself as the product of the writer; secondly, it is from the writer’s point of view; thirdly, from the connected elements such as idea, feeling or events which become the foundation of analysis; fourthly, it is viewed from the reader’s point of view.

Of what Abrams says, I apply the first, second, and the third. I do not refer to the second because the analysis is not viewed from the playwright’s point of view. It is only based on the work itself, the idea it offers and my own interpretation about the work.


The name of some modern American Playwrights include in this book, and of them is Thomas Lanier Williams (Tennessee Williams). In this book the
background of playwright’s life and lists of his works presented here. From this one, I take it and devote as the other chapter of the analysis.