

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### **1.1. Background of the Research**

Literature becomes a bridge as well as a medium for the author and the results of his thoughts. A literary work is a reflection of the nation's culture which cannot be separated from the soul and society of the author, and cannot be separated from the socio-cultural influences in which the work was created. Klarer (2004) described that the author makes literature to leave an imprint on himself through self-expression. This work outlived the author's lifetime and will convey a message to readers. A literary work is able to convey a message from its author to its readers in a very deep and inspiring way. Through beautiful language and evocative stories, writers can express their feelings, thoughts and outlook on life. Thus, literary works are not only entertaining, but also able to provide new insights and change the reader's perspective on the world. The reader tries to understand the author's work to get the meaning of the literary work. One of the literary works that conveys the author's meaning is a novel.

Authors of literary works create literary works based on their imagination or experiences which are expressed in literary works. Novels are literary works that are often created by authors to express ideas. Novels allow readers to engage in the world the author creates, providing a deep and satisfying experience. A novel is a long fictional story that tells life and events involving many characters and settings. Novel is a medium in which characters can live and develop, becoming a central

element in building convincing narratives and providing deep experiences for readers.

Characters in a novel are built through careful development, involving details of background, personality, and evolution over the course of the story. Created characters often represent general characteristics of a person, group of people or abstract ideas (Klarer, 2004). Characters are fictional representations of the individuals in the story. A character's personality includes the psychological and emotional traits that shape the character's behaviour and responses to the situations they face. The character's personality can be analysed using a psychological approach.

The psychological approach to literary analysis is a technique for understanding characters, motifs, and conflicts in literary works by using psychological ideas and concepts. This method examines the ways in which a character's emotional and mental states impact their relationships, behaviour, and overall growth. Readers can get to know the characters in a novel deeply. The psychological approach provides a school of thought that will emphasize the influence of the subconscious mind on behaviour (Freud, 1920). One way to see personality in characters can be seen with personality structure. Personality structure refers to the basic components that make up an individual's personality and how these components interact with each other.

Personality structure refers to the basic components that make up an individual's personality and how these components interact with each other. In Sigmund Freud's psychological theory, the personality structure consists of three

main components: id, ego, and superego (Freud, 1920) . Each component has unique functions and characteristics and contributes to the way a person thinks, feels and behaves. Character analysis in literary works often utilizes personality structure theory for character behaviour or expression. Ego is one of the main elements in forming a person's character. In the context of psychology, the ego can be interpreted as the part of the self that is responsible for realizing one's identity, maintaining a balance between internal drives and external reality.

A phenomenon related to Ego is found in one of Matt Haig's novels titled "The Midnight Library". This novel is a fictional novel that tells the story of a woman named Nora Seed who feels that her life is full of regret and sadness. After attempting suicide, Nora finds herself in a magical library located between life and death. The phenomenon found in this novel is related to the theory of psychology by Sigmund Freud as seen below.

As time stood still, Nora's curiosity about the lives around her slowly grew. It turned out to be near impossible to stand in a library and didn't want to pull things from the shelves.

**‘Why can't you just give me a life you know is a good one?’ she said suddenly.**

‘That's not how this library works’ (Haig, 2020, p. 63-64)

Nora Seed, the main character, finds herself in the "Midnight Library", a place between life and death where she can explore various alternative lives. Nora experiences increasing curiosity about the lives of others around her, but finds it difficult to choose which life she should live. Nora expresses her desire to be given a “good” life directly, indicating her desire to avoid complex processes of exploration and decision-making. However, he was told that this library did not work that way.

The ego is responsible for mediating between the id which may desire immediate gratification and the superego's demands which are based on moral values and external reality. The ego can make decisions by considering reality (Freud, 1920). Nora, in this context, may experience a conflict between the desire to avoid or improve the current life and the hope for a better life. The ego operates based on the reality principle, which means adapting hopes and desires to existing reality. In this case, the library may represent a challenge or conflict that Nora must face in accepting and understanding life as it is, rather than seeking instant solutions or manipulation of situations.

Ego as part of the personality structure that is responsible and makes decisions (Freud in Feist et al., 2017). When the ego faces conflict, it can use defence mechanisms to reduce psychological tension. The ego's relationship to defence mechanisms to overcome internal and external conflicts that arise. Defence mechanisms are unconscious psychological strategies to protect the ego from anxiety, stress, or conflict that can disrupt a person's psychological balance. phenomena related to defence mechanisms can be seen below:

‘He’s lying very still by the side of the road. I saw the name on the collar, I think a car might have hit him. I’m sorry, Nora.’

**She was so scared of her sudden switch in emotions right then that she kept smiling**, as if the smile could keep her in the world she had just been in, the one where Volts was alive and where this man she’d sold guitar songbooks to had rung her doorbell for another reason.” (Haig, 2020, p.5)

The context above describes a deep and emotional moment for Nora when she received very shocking and sad news from Ash about her pet, Volts. Ash tells Nora that her pet died which was probably hit by a car. This was shocking and painful information for Nora. Nora was very afraid of her sudden change in

emotions. Despite the sadness, Nora responded by keeping a smile on her face. This smile was not an expression of happiness, but an attempt to contain his deep emotions.

Nora Seed experiences deep emotional conflict after receiving news that her beloved cat, Volts, she died as a result of an accident. Denial the individual's defense mechanism is subconsciously refusing to acknowledge painful facts (Freud, 1920). Her first reaction is not to believe or refuse to accept reality, which is an example of an ego defense mechanism called denial. Nora's smile reflects her efforts to keep herself connected to the world where the Volts still live. The smile served as a form of denial of the reality he had just accepted. In her mind, she probably hoped that by smiling, sge could maintain the previous reality, where Volts still existed

Soleha (2021) analyses the main character in the short story *Atsim Al-Hawa'* by Ibrahim Al-Syamlan by Ibrahim Al-Syamlan. The researcher uses a qualitative descriptive method to obtain data to analyse the main character based on the psychoanalytic theory by Sigmund Freud. Researchers get the results of this study. The result is that the main character in the short story has a problem with his personality. Researchers divide personality problems based on Id, Ego and Superego. The Id aspect of the main character is more dominant than other personality aspects.

The second article was written by Afkarina and Wardhani (2019) with the title "Psychoanalysis of the main character's personality in the movie *Moana*". This study aims to understand the personality of the main character and the factors that influence the development of the main character. Researchers have eleven data that

affect the personality of the main character. One of them is the factor of the family environment and culture. So that the results of this study are closely related to the research that will be made by the researcher.

Based on the phenomena above. Researcher was interested in applying a psychological approach. Researcher also wanted to know character development based on personality structures and ego defence mechanisms. The researcher decided to research the novel with the title "The Midnight Library by Matt Haig" as the data source. The researcher took the novel as the data of research because this novel talks about the forms of the character Nora who is the main character and the novel is in accordance with the theories that will be used by researchers to conduct research. Based on these phenomena and the research above. The researcher uses research entitled **Ego Defence Mechanism of the Main Character in the "Midnight Library" By Matt Haig: Psychological Approach**

## **1.2. Identification of the Problem**

Following the issues from the background of the research, the problems were identified as follow:

1. Hierarchy of needs analysis of the main character in novel "The Midnight Library" by Matt Haig
2. Anxiety disorder analysis of the main character in novel "The Midnight Library" by Matt Haig
3. Personality structure of the main character in novel "The Midnight Library" by Matt Haig

4. The Ego defence mechanisms of the main character in the novel “The Midnight Library” by Matt Haig

### **1.3. Limitation of the Problem**

According to the identification of the above problems, the problems solved were limited as follow:

1. Personality structure of the main character in novel “The Midnight Library” by Matt Haig
2. The Ego defence mechanisms of the main character in the novel “The Midnight Library” by Matt Haig

### **1.4. Formulation of the Problem**

According to the limitation of problem, the research is focused on resolving the following questions:

1. What are personality structures of the main character in novel “The Midnight Library” by Matt Haig?
2. What are the Ego defence mechanisms of the main character in the novel “The Midnight Library” by Matt Haig?

### **1.5. Objective of the Problem**

The objectives of the problems were designed taken from the research question as follow.

1. To find out the personality structures of the main character in novel “The Midnight Library” by Matt Haig
2. To find out the Ego defence mechanisms of the main character in the novel “The Midnight Library” by Matt Haig

### **1.6. Significance of the Research**

The results of this study are expected to provide benefits for many people or students who will make research. There are two forms of benefits that are expected from this research, namely:

#### **1. Theoretical Significance**

The results of this study hope to be able to provide new ideas in Indonesian literature that is still related to psychoanalysis problems and provide new knowledge to readers about what psychoanalysis is.

#### **2. Practical Significance**

The purpose of this research is to hope that it will be a source of research for students who will make research, as a comparison reading with other research that have existed before, and readers can apply these theories into the novels.

### **1.7. Definition of Key Terms**

**Psychological Approach** : Psychology is the study of the soul or mental and thoughts of a person. Psychology does not directly understand and give an assessment of the soul or mental, but psychology will see and



limit the expression of the soul, namely in the form of actions and the process of its activities

**Personality Structure** : Personality structure is a structural model of the area of the mind that has three structures. The mind area has three parts, namely the Id, Ego, and Superego. The three will play a role in the conscious

**Ego Defence Mechanisms** : Defence mechanisms aim to block unwanted or inappropriate thoughts and worries from entering a person's conscious mind.