

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the study

Young Adult fiction is one of the categories of a novel. Cole Salao said this type of fiction is usually written for readers from 12 to 18 years old. Kathryn Taylor (2023) believes that Young Adult fiction often focuses on the challenges of youth as its theme but sometimes the themes can be horror, romance or thrillers.

Michael Cart (2018) shared his opinion about Young Adult fiction, he said that the term “Young Adult” was coined by the Young Adult Library Services Association in 1960 the topics of Young Adult fiction focuses on what teenagers can relate to, for example, friendship, school-pressure, identity exploration or family issues and sometimes Young Adult fiction sometimes present heavy topics such as mental illness or even death (usually suicide thoughts) but its offer solutions and hope at the end of the story. Kathryn Taylor (2023) Young Adult fiction has many genres, each genre has its own unique characters, themes, plot, and style. For example, Young Adult fantasy that usually contains magical creatures and imaginary worlds. Another genre is Young Adult romance that focuses on teenager relationships.

One of Young Adult fiction is called *A Tragic Kind of Wonderful*. It is an American Young Adult fiction series written by Eric Lindstrom. The books were published on February, 7th 2017. Suzanne (2017) wrote her review and the synopsis of the book. The book is about a six years old teenager named Mel Hannigan who is struggling from Bipolar disorder. She also struggles to keep her friends at arm's length, especially after her friends already knew the truth about her.

Usually, Young Adult fiction presents mental illness as its topics because the teenagers often have an interest in this kind of topics. In this era, mental illnesses are still ignored. Most people believe that having a mental illness is the impact of

lacking faith in God. Mental disorders consist of different categories. Mental disorder is not only depression or anxiety, but bipolar disorder is also one example of mental illness. Bipolar disorder is a mental illness shift in mood and it can last for one or two weeks. Mental illness is caused by a trauma that someone experiences, usually when they were younger. Through this theme the researcher will analyze the main character, Mel Hannigan, with a defense mechanism in psychoanalysis.

Kendra Cherry (2024) believes that in psychoanalytic theory, Sigmund Freud stated that defense mechanisms protect the conscious minds from the contradiction between the animalistic id and the idealistic superego. Sigmund Freud's daughter, Anna Freud (1936) developed and added ten defense mechanisms on her own. There are regression, denial, repression, projection, displacement, and sublimation.

There have been some previous studies with the same topic. The first study entitled "Defense Mechanism in the character of Hardin Scott Reflected in Anna Todd's After" by Siti Nur Shelah and Linusia Marsih (2022), using qualitative-descriptive as their method, the writers focused on one of the first characters named Hardin, his defense mechanism, and how he shows them. The writer used a defense mechanism by Sigmund Freud as their theory to analyze the main characters. The writers found that the form of analysis from the novel taken was that Hardin had an unconscious motive in the unresolved conflict experienced by his father, thus forming several defense mechanisms, namely displacement, denial, projection, isolation, reaction formation, rationalization, and identification with the aggressor.

Another study with defense mechanisms as it focused entitled "Defense Mechanism of the main character in Jostein Gaarder's An Unreliable Man" by Anas Nadya Difanda Arminata (2022). This paper aims to find out what defense mechanisms are used by Jakop and is focused on the defense mechanism of the main character named Jacop Jacobson. In this study, the writers used Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalysis approach to analyze Jakop. The writers found that Jakop 3

uses 8 types of defense mechanisms; denial, displacement, projection, repression, reaction-formation, isolation, and rationalization.

There is also a study that is also analyze A Tragic Kind of wonderful with bipolar disorder focused entitled “MEL HANNIGAN’S BIPOLAR I DISORDER IN ERIC LINDSTROM’S A TRAGIC KIND OF WONDERFUL” written by Kristina Juniarmi and Anicleta Yuliastuti, this study focuses on Mel Haniggan’s bipolar in A tragic Kind of Wonderful novel. The writer explains a little bit about bipolar disorder and starts talking about Indonesian celebrities who suffer from Bipolar and then the writer talks about types of bipolar. The writers apply the theory of bipolar disorder by NAMI (National Alliance of Mental Illness) The effect of bipolar disorder to Mel is having bipolar makes her antisocial and feels her life is hopeless. The result of this study is to find out which bipolar type that Mel suffers from. It turns out that Mel has four types of bipolar; mania, hypomania, depression, and dysphoric mania. The difference between this study with Kristina and Anicleta is the study that I write explain the defense mechanism of Mel Hannigan.

There is one previous research conducted that discussed the same novel with different focus. In this essay, the researcher chose to analyze the main character's defense mechanisms by Sigmund Freud. This study aims to find out what kind of defense mechanism that Mel Hannigan used to protect herself from traumatic experiences that happened in the past.

The researcher will analyze a Young Adult fiction called "A Tragic Kind of Wonderful" written by Eric Lindstrom. The Researcher will use Sigmund Freud’s defense mechanism to analyze the main character, Mel Hannigan. The researcher chose to analyze this novel because the researcher wanted to know when the defense mechanism could appear when someone wants to protect themselves, in this case, Mel Hannigan with bipolar that of course sometimes, she will use the defense mechanism to avoid her traumatic experience. The researcher would like to conduct a research paper entitled "Mel Hannigan’s Defense Mechanism in A Tragic Kind of Wonderful by Eric Lindstrom”.

1.2. Research Question

1. What kind of trauma did Mel Hannigan undergo that led her to resort to defense mechanisms?
2. In an attempt to defend herself, what kind of defense mechanism undergo by Mel Hannigan?

1.3. Scope and Limitations of the study

This study focused on exploring the main character, Mel Hannigan. The researcher is also going to talk about the defense mechanism that has the connection with the main characters.

1.4. Objective of the study

The objective of this study is to find which defense mechanism appears when Mel Hannigan tries to protect her feelings for traumatic experience and psychoanalysis theory can help the researchers to explore more about the defense mechanism in A Tragic Kind of Wonderful.

1.5. Significance of the study

This study focused on exploring the defense mechanism of Mel Hannigan. By analyzing the defense mechanisms, the researcher can divide the narration and can understand the defense mechanisms through dialogue or narration of the novel, The Tragic Kind of Wonderful.

1.6. Previous Study

The first study entitled “Analysis of Defense Mechanisms in Hawkins’ *The Girl on the Train*” written by Bimal Kishore Shrivastwa, published on May 11 2023. In the introduction section, the writer talks about personality disorder. Bimal state that people that suffers from personality problem are prone to committee suicide, but if they able to “activate” their defense mechanisms, they can protect their life from the danger. This research paper is directed to mark the psychic disorders in Paula Hawkins’s psychological thriller, *The Girl on the Train*. The book was published in 2015, examining the complexity of individuals, and the effect through a journey into the lives of the people living beside the tracks, and some of the people traveling on the train. In the next paragraph, the writer starts talking about the character named Tom who used defense mechanisms. Defense mechanisms are behaviors people use to separate themselves from unpleasant events, actions, or thoughts (Holland, 2019). Tom disregards the fact but denies his fault throughout the novella by claiming him to be clean despite his involvement in murder and infidelity. Tom lives with the illusion of being clean and blames other characters for their actions. The primary source of this analysis is the text on the book called *The Girl in the train*, the secondary source such as reviews on journals, websites, and other resources commentaries are studied to find the research gap. The writer used qualitative research design to collect the data from primary and secondary text to analyze them. In the conclusion, the writer found that Tom mostly used 2 types of defense mechanisms; denial and repression. Tom is also suffering from ego splitting and trying to get out from tensions and anxiety, that is why he used some of the defense mechanisms to protect himself.

The next study entitled “Defense Mechanisms in Emily Brontë’s *Wuthering Heights*: How Catherine Earnshaw Deals with Egocentricity” Written by Nur Amaliyah and Yeny Prastiwi, published in 2023. In the introduction section, the writers, Nur Amaliyah and Yeny Prastiwi claim that this study focuses on the issue of the defense mechanism of a certain character named Catherine Earnshaw in the *Wuthering Heights* novel. The writers used qualitative research to analyze the main character. For the theory, the writers use psychoanalysis by Sigmund Freud in order

to investigate the main character's egocentric tendency and defense mechanism. The writer talks about two previous studies so the readers know the gap between their studies and previous studies. The first study is "Its Consequences in Wuthering heights" by Newman (2018) who explores the character's issue and "The themes of evil and Revenge in Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte" written by Dino (2018) who talks about the linguistic issue. The writer claims that the gap between their study and these two previous studies is that they analyze 3 problems; The description of Catherine Earnshaw's personality, the causes that make Catherine Earnshaw become an egocentric person and the defense mechanism used by Catherine Earnshaw to balance her egocentricity. The writer concludes several conclusions. The first one is Catherine Earnshaw who is described as a naughty girl but with a charming face. Second, Catherine Earnshaw's egocentric tendencies are due to her feelings, wishes, conception which approve herself according to her desire. And the last one is while facing her egocentric tendencies, Catherine Earnshaw will release her feelings that will follow egocentric desires that are not satisfied in her reality.

Another previous study with defense mechanisms as it focus entitled "DEFENSE MECHANISM OF THE MAIN CHARACTER IN LAURIE SPEAK NOVEL" written by Ritsnaini Zulfaisya and Hasnini Hasra, published on 20 July 2020. The writers start with the abstract and then the introduction about a novel according to Warren (1956) and the defense mechanism by Sigmund Freud (2015). The writers start to explain about types of defense mechanisms; repression, regression, projection, sublimation, denial, reaction-formation, denial, isolation, rationalization, identification, fixation and displacement. The writer used 3 previous studies, the first one is "Why wont Melinda just talk about what happened?" by Chris Mcgee (2009), she believes that Melinda would not confess what really happened without an adult figure. The second one is "Women Representation and Identity Construction in the HBO series "Girls" by Tina Mustonen (2015) Tina examines how gender is represented in the media through linguistic and multimodal means and it focuses on the representation and identity construction of women in the received a great deal of attention for its realistic

portrayal of women. The last study is “Coping Behaviour of Melinda in Speak novel by Laurie Halse Anderson (1999); “An Individual Psychological Approach” by Kristina (2012) this paper aims to analyze the character of Melinda Sordino based on psychological analysis developed by Alfred Adler. The result shows that Laurie Halse Anderson creates the main character, Melinda, as a way to convey her idea about adolescence coping’s behavior. The writer claims that the gap between this study and 3 previous studies is that there is not any research conducted discussing defense mechanisms to analyze the main character. The writers explain about the novel, Speak by Laurie Halse Anderson. The writer uses qualitative-descriptive to analyze the novel. The writer found eleven types of defense mechanisms that are used by Melinda. These defense mechanisms are experienced as a result of psychological condition change after being sexually harassed by her seniors and being avoided by people in her school.

Another previous study entitled “FLEMING’S DEFENSE MECHANISMS IN STEPHEN CRANE’S THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE” written by Adam Anshori, published in 2011. The writer talks about anxiety based on Sigmund Freud. Sigmund Freud divides anxiety into three types; neurotic anxiety, moral anxiety and reality anxiety. Sigmund Freud also believed that in order to deal with anxiety, defense mechanisms will help shield the ego from the conflicts. The writer focused on the psychological aspects of Fleming’s personality. Psychoanalysis is used to help the writer analyze the psychological aspect of the main character and the writer starts to explain the defense mechanism stated by Anna Freud. The writer found out 25 defense mechanisms conducted by the main character, Henry.

It can also be seen in a journal entitled “The main character’s defense mechanism in the Safe Haven film” written by Siti Nurrohmah Cahyani, published in July 2018. The writer begins to talk about a movie called Safe Haven. A film or a movie is one of the media that people use to deliver a message to the audience. According to Djokosujatno, film analysis generally uses the character as an object that can be seen as human. Djokosujatno also said that a text of a character can be analyzed to find implicit text into the unconsciousness of the character.

Psychoanalysis can be used to find the unconsciousness of the character. In the next paragraph, the writer talks about the Safe Haven movie. It is a thriller romantic movie about the main character named Katie Fieldman who has psychological problems. With her case, the writer focused on analyzing Katie's psychological problem by using Sigmund Freud psychoanalysis. The writer's research question is "how would the main character defend herself against her fear and anxiety in this film?" to help the writer analyze the main character, the writer will use qualitative methods with descriptive analysis. The writer examines the main character's psychological problem through defense mechanisms by Sigmund Freud. The writer found out that the main character uses some type of defense mechanism in order to heal herself from her past life.

Defense mechanisms also appear in a journal entitled "EGO DEFENSE MECHANISM OF THE MAIN FEMALE CHARACTERS IN MALEFICENT MOVIE" written by Nurul Khoirunisa and Endang Yuliani Rahayu. This study talks about the main character's defense mechanism in the Maleficent movie. In the introduction section, the writers start talking about the meaning of a movie according to the experts. A movie is a combination of a moving picture that people watch on television. Klarer (1999:57) said that the difference between a movie and a drama is that a movie is a play that people can watch multiple times while drama is only a one-time play. The writers aim to analyze the main female character based on psychological aspects that appear in the movie. There are 3 previous studies that the writers used. The first one is by Aisyatul that talks about a novel called Splendor: A Luxe. The writer focused on the main female character's personality development. The second study by Intan, Ida and Parthama focuses on exploring the main character's personality in the Maleficent movie. The last study by Wulandari, Yesi and Herika focuses on describing influential factors of the main character of maleficent's personality changes. The writers used a qualitative descriptive method to analyze it. The two writers, Nurul Khoirunisa and Endang Yuliani Rahayu explain about ego defense mechanisms, that is, a mechanism that people use to protect themselves from danger or trauma. There are two defense mechanisms that the writer uses; projection and repression. Projection is one of the

defense mechanisms that people use to protect themselves from our bad actions or feelings by accusing others. Repression is a mental process by which distressing thoughts or memories may cause anxiety. The author found some conflicts with Maleficent, the first one is when Steffan cuts both his wings that causes Maleficent to feel betrayed and angry. The second conflict is when Maleficent feels disappointed at Steffan and wants to take revenge on Steffan because he cursed her daughter. The writers also found the defense mechanism in this movie. Repression appears when maleficent regret her bad deeds and want to revoke the curse. And projection appears when Maleficent changes the object of her anger from Steffan to cursed her daughter named Aurora.

It also appeared in a journal entitled “Anxiety and Defense Mechanism of The Main Character As reflected in Joker Movie” written by Ghammatul Adi Saputra, was published on 22 June 2022. This study analyzed the main character named Joker who suffers from anxiety and the type of defense mechanisms that the main character used to protect himself from traumatic experiences. A movie is one of a form of literary works that has a massive audience, technological developments support the public interest to enjoy a movie. The society then starts to analyze a movie, from analyzing the character to analyzing the scene that represents something. To analyze a movie, some people used some theories to help them analyze it. Psychoanalysis is a literature approach that was coined by Sigmund Freud. Following Hossain, psychoanalysis has an important role to understand human thought and making decisions. Character is important in literary works; a person, animal, even a figure. Each of the characters have development, one of the factors that influence the characters development is conflict. Ghammatul Adi Saputra also explained about anxiety, as following Feist and Feist (39) anxiety can be defined as an unpleasant state that warns a person about danger. A character that experienced anxiety can act as a defense mechanism as their response. Joker is a movie that was released in 2019, this movie tells about the main character, Joker, who faces various kinds of pressure in his life. He suffers from psychological disorders, bullying, and a job that did not go well. He also has poor social relations and is familiar with violence. The researcher used a question to help him analyze

the main character, the first question was “what type of anxieties faced by the main character described in the Joker movie?” And the second question is “How does the defense mechanisms of the main character cope with the anxiety reflector in the Joker movie?” The researcher focused on the anxiety and the form of the defense mechanism of the main character. There are two objectives of this study; to identify the anxiety and to analyze the defense mechanism of the main character. In the literature review, the author talks about anxiety and defense mechanisms in detail. Following from Freudian, there are three types of anxiety; reality anxiety that has the purpose to guide human behavior to find a way out, moral anxiety that arises from the conflict, and neurotic anxiety described as the fear of unknown danger. Defense mechanisms arise without any unconscious will from within and each person uses a different type of defense mechanism. In the conclusion section, the researcher summarizes his journals. The researcher also claims that in this movie, there are four types of defense mechanisms that the main character used to protect himself; repression, projection, displacement, and fantasy.

