

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Problem

Anxiety is a psychological response that arises when we are dealing with a discomfort situation. In the psychoanalytic, Sigmund Freud proposed theory of anxiety which divided into three types, including reality anxiety, moral anxiety, and neurotic anxiety. To overcome this anxiety, Freud used the term defense mechanism to refer to a person's unconscious that defends against anxiety; this mechanism protects someone from external threats or impulses arising from internal anxiety by distorting reality in various ways. (Minderop, 2018:29). Moreover, quoting from journal by Rezeki, Alamsyah, and Setyowati (2023) entitled Defense Mechanism of the Main Character of The Invisible Man Film, A defense mechanism is a strategy employed to shield an individual or entity from threats. Freud identified that fear serves as a warning of potential danger to people. Similar to how fear prompts actions like fleeing or fighting, it also serves as a signal to safeguard oneself. The defense mechanisms people utilize to manage fear differ from one individual to another. Consequently, the elements that affect personality challenges and help alleviate anxiety can be observed in both real life and literature.

One of the varieties of literary works that overcome psychology themes such as anxiety and defense mechanism is a movie script. Movie script is a written text that serves as the basis for a movie. A movie script usually describes the action that will occur in addition to the dialogue that the characters will say. The characters' gestures, facial expressions, actions, and dialogue are also explained in movie script (Collins, 2005 cited in Amelia, 2020).

Therefore, I choose a movie script written by Samuel D. Hunter and directed by Darren Aronofsky entitled The Whale (2022) as the object of my research. It depicted the compelling narrative that examining psychological defense mechanisms particularly repression and reaction formation that was represented by teenage character named Ellie.

The movie script centers around the life of Ellie, the teenage daughter of the protagonist, Charlie, who is struggling with obesity and emotional trauma. Since Ellie 4 years old, Charlie abandoned her and divorced her mother because Charlie fell in love with his male student, Alan. However, while Ellie was living and growing up with her mother, Mary, and Ellie never received any moral support or guidance due to the fact that her mother is a drinker. In her present age, which 18 years old, Ellie reunites again with his father. Throughout the script, Ellie embodies a complex portrayal of anxiety, that inherited from her broken family structure. Ellie is shown to be deeply affected by her strained relationship with her father and her feelings of abandonment, which are compounded by her father's emotional and physical decline. Ellie's anxiety is shown through her action, as she often represses her bad memories of her childhood and uses oppositional behavior such as sarcasm, hate speech and insults to her father's obese body because she is hard to show a true sense of longing for her father as she navigates the complexities of returning relationship with her father.

This research aims to focuses on how anxiety drives Ellie to employ repression and reaction formation in shaping her interactions along with the emotional responses. By analyzing Ellie's character through psychological framework, this study aims to understand how father's neglect and emotional unavailability can impact someone's emotion and the ways they cope with it. Therefore, I assume that the theme of this research is "Neurotic Anxiety Leads to Repression and Reaction Formation Towards Ellie's Character in The Whale (2022) Movie Script. This research will dive into the better understanding on the role of anxiety and defense mechanisms in forming character's behaviour.

## 1.2 Identification of the Problem

Based on the background of the problem, I identify the problem in this study is Ellie uses repression and reaction formation as her defense mechanism to deal anxiety that caused by her father abandonment during her childhood which shown in The Whale movie script. Therefore, I assume the theme is "Neurotic Anxiety Leads to Repression and Reaction Formation Towards Ellie's

Character in The Whale Movie Script" which can be conducted by using the intrinsic and extrinsic elements of literature.

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

Based on the identification of the problem above, I limit the research problem in The Whale movie script to focus on: The reflection of neurotic anxiety, repression and reaction formation towards Ellie's character, the theories and concepts I use are through a literary approach, characterization, plot and setting. Through a psychological approach, using the concept of anxiety and defense mechanism.

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

Based on the limitation of the problem, the problem in this movie script can be formulated as follows: Is it true that the assumption of the theme of his work is "Neurotic Anxiety Leads to Repression and Reaction Formation Towards Ellie's Character in The Whale (2002) Movie Script". To answer this question, I formulate the problem as follows:

- 1) How are the characterization of the character in The Whale movie script?
- 2) How are the plot and settings in The Whale movie script?
- 3) How are the concepts of Psychology of literature through anxiety and defense mechanism of The Whale movie script?

### **1.5 Objective of the Research**

Based on the formulation of the problem, the objective of the research is to show that Neurotic Anxiety Leads to Repression and Reaction Formation Towards Ellie's Character in The Whale (2022) movie script. To accomplish this goal, I carry out the following stages of research.

- 1) To analyze the characterization by using characterization through dialogue, external action, internal action, and reaction of other characters in The Whale movie script

- 2) To explain the plot and setting in building the theme of The Whale movie script
- 3) To analyze using the anxiety and defense mechanism in The Whale movie script

## **1.6 Benefit of the Research**

From this research it is intended to be used as a reference and assist future researchers or English Literature students who might be interested in exploring and investigating films and issues relevant to the research that I conducted. I also hope that this research will enrich readers in understanding and comprehending topics relating to human psychology, specifically anxiety and defense mechanisms by applying the intrinsic and extrinsic approaches of literature.

## **1.7 Systematic Organization of the Research**

To make it easier to see and know the discussion in this research as a whole, it is necessary to put forward a systematic framework and guidelines for writing research. The systematic writing as follows:

### **1) The Beginning of Research**

The initial section contains the research title cover page (front), research title cover, Intellectual Property Statement page, Letter of Approval (LOA) page, Term Paper Validation page, Introduction page, Abstract page in English, Abstract page in Indonesian, Table of Contents page, List of Tables, and List of Figures.

### **2) Research Main Section**

Based on the title of the research above, the main part of research will be arranged in order as follows:

## **CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION**

This chapter contains of the Background of the Problems, Identification of the Problems, the Limitation of the Problems, the Objective of the Research, Benefit of the Research, and the Systematic Organization of the Research.

## **CHAPTER II: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This chapter contains of intrinsic approach (Characterization, Plot, Setting, Theme) extrinsic approach (Psychology of Literature, Anxiety, and Defense Mechanism) and previous related studies.

## **CHAPTER III: RESEARCH METHOD**

This chapter contains of time and location, research approach and method, research object and data, data collection technique, and data analysis technique.

## **CHAPTER V: NEUROTIC ANXIETY LEADS TO REPRESSION AND REACTION FORMATION TOWARDS ELLIE'S CHARACTER IN THE WHALE MOVIE SCRIPT**

This chapter contains of the whole research analysis using reflection of the concept of Anxiety and Defense Mechanism in *The Whale* Movie Script through characterization, plot, setting.

## **CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION**

This chapter contains of the references, scheme of research, and curriculum vitae.