

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

According to Roberts & Jacobs (1997, p. 3) literature is a work that tells stories, portrays human life situations, expresses emotions, and analyzes as well as offers ideas. Literary works can be either fiction or nonfiction, such as fictional narratives, essays, or biographies. These narratives also provide life experiences, conflicts, and adventures that offer insights into human existence. The function of literature itself is to convey emotions and feelings, including happiness, sadness, hope, and fear, and it often addresses social, political, and philosophical issues that invite readers to think more deeply.

One of the most popular and widely developed forms of literature is the novel, which refers to a wide range of long fictional writings composed in prose. As an extended narrative, the novel is distinct from short stories and novelettes because it allows for greater variation in characters, more complex plot development, richer background settings, and deeper exploration of character motives (Abrams & Harpham, 2015, p. 252). Stories found in novels are universal in nature, as every culture possesses its own myths, legends, and narratives passed down through generations. Despite originating from different backgrounds, these stories often follow a similar pattern known as the monomyth or universal narrative structure, a concept introduced by Joseph Campbell in his book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (2008).

Within these narrative structures, characters play a crucial role in conveying the story's meaning and emotional depth. According to Abrams & Harpham (2015, p. 48) characters are the individuals portrayed in a dramatic or narrative work, whose moral, intellectual, and emotional traits are inferred by the reader based on their dialogue and actions. The reasons behind their speech and behaviour, rooted in their temperament, desires, and moral nature, are referred to as their motivation. Some stories have characters that possess a supernatural ability. (Campbell, 2008, p. 50) mention that character with extraordinary abilities is termed as hero. In the context

of the monomyth, the hero is often portrayed as someone who is honoured by society, yet there are also many heroes who are unrecognized or even despised. In the monomyth, the hero suffers in a world that is marked by symbolic deficiency, and this hero is usually given the mission of saving a world on the brink of destruction.

In literary analysis, the monomyth represents a universal narrative pattern that underlies many myths, legends and literary works. The story of the character's hero journey has three main flows: departure, initiation, and return (Campbell, 2008a, p. 11). Departure is the beginning of the journey, where the hero leaves the familiar world to answer the call of adventure. Initiation is the hero's engagement in facing trials and gaining new insights, often through encounters with allies, enemies, or mentors. The journey ends with homecoming when the hero returns to his original world, equipped by his experiences and often with something valuable to share with others.

The structure of the monomyth is found not only in ancient mythology but also in modern literary works, including the novel *Suzume* (2022) by Makoto Shinkai. In this novel, the main character, a girl named Suzume Iwato, embarks on a journey that closely follows the monomyth pattern. This resemblance is evident in her departure from the ordinary world, her trials and transformation, and her eventual return with newfound wisdom. This illustrates that the monomyth remains a relevant and effective analytical framework for understanding character development and narrative structure. Therefore, this study aims to examine how the elements of the monomyth are reflected in *Suzume* and to explore the symbolic meanings embedded within its story.

To support this analysis, it is important to first understand the storyline of the novel *Suzume*. The novel follows the journey of a high school girl named Suzume Iwato, who accidentally opens a mysterious door that connects the human world with a realm of disasters. After encountering a young man named Shouta, Suzume Iwato becomes directly involved in a mission to close these doors in order to prevent further destruction. Throughout her journey, Suzume Iwato faces various physical and emotional challenges that ultimately transform her perspective on life, loss, and courage.

The novel *Suzume* was chosen as the subject of this study because its narrative closely follows the structural framework of the hero's journey, making it an ideal text for analyzing the stages of monomyth as outlined by Joseph Campbell (2008). Through the transformation of its main character, Suzume Iwato, the story presents a clear progression through the classic phases of departure, initiation, and return. While infused with fantasy and emotional depth characteristic of Makoto Shinkai's style, the narrative remains grounded in psychological realism, offering a compelling case study for mapping the hero's journey onto a contemporary female protagonist. This study focuses exclusively on identifying and examining the specific stages of the hero's journey embodied by Suzume Iwato.

Several previous studies inspired the writing process in conducting this study, which offers a thorough understanding of the framework of this study. The first previous study is titled *Using Mythic Structure of Campbell's Monomyth to Analyze Spirited Away: A Heroine's Journey* by Meng-Hsuan Wu and Ya-Huei Wang (2022). This research studies the application of Joseph Campbell's monomyth framework to Hayao Miyazaki's *Spirited Away*, exploring how the main character, Chihiro Ogino, embarks on a transformative journey that follows the stages of the hero's journey. The study highlights the importance of cultural and narrative elements in shaping a hero's path, which provides valuable insights into Campbell's overall monomyth in various contexts.

The second previous study, *Monomyth: The Hero Struggle of Ezio Auditore in Oliver Bowden's Assassin's Creed Renaissance Novel* by Muhammad Akmal Farhan Noor (2020) examined the journey of Ezio Auditore through the lens of Campbell's monomyth. The research highlights the hero's struggles and the trials that shape his transformation. Focusing on characters in modern novels, this study demonstrates that the monomyth framework can be used to analyze heroic stories in a contemporary context while showcasing the monomyth's versatility across different literary genres.

The third previous study, *Monomyth Analysis on Katniss Everdeen's Journey in Suzanne Collins's The Hunger Games 1st Series* by Rohmat Anang Fakhruddin and Pratiwi Retnaningdyah (2019), this research discusses Katniss Everdeen's heroic journey using Campbell's monomyth structure. This research outlines how

Katniss, as a female protagonist, goes through the stages of departure, initiation, and return in the dystopian setting of *The Hunger Games*. It provides an understanding of the challenges of adapting the hero's journey into a story that focuses on survival, rebellion, and the search for identity.

The fourth previous study, *Hero's Journey in Alexandra Olivia's Novel The Last One* by Fandi Kurniawan (2023), This research discusses the hero's journey in the novel *The Last One*. The focus is on the main character's psychological and physical changes, which reflect the core elements of Campbell's monomyth. Set in a world after great destruction, this study demonstrates the monomyth's flexibility in depicting human resilience and adaptability in extreme situations.

These studies collectively contribute to understanding Joseph Campbell's monomyth and its application in various narrative forms. They demonstrate the framework's adaptability and relevance in analyzing traditional and modern stories, offering a solid foundation for exploring the hero's journey in this study.

1.2 Research Questions

1. What are the stages of the hero's journey represented by the main character in *Suzume*?

1.3 Objective of the Study

1. To identify and examine the stages of the hero's journey as they appear in *Suzume*, mapping key events in the novel to Campbell's monomyth.

1.4 Significances of the Study

The first significance is theoretical. This study provides strong theoretical support for Monomyth's fundamental principle that literary works have the same narrative pattern. The monomyth divided into three stages departure, initiation, and return. It is a narrative pattern found in literary works. This study proves that this theory can be used to analyze literary works because their narrative patterns tend to be similar.

Practically, this research provides valuable insights for writers, directors, and other storytellers in understanding how the stages of monomyth theory can be used

to write or create stories that appeal to readers or audiences. This study of *Suzume*'s novel can help readers understand the implicit messages of character growth, courage, and struggle in the face of earthquake disasters in modern society. In this case, the research results can be a reference for practitioners in education and literature to introduce the stages of the monomyth structure in the story to students to broaden their experience and understanding of narrative development and common themes in literature.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

This study analyses the narrative structure in the novel *Suzume* by Makoto Shinkai using the stages of the hero's journey or monomyth by Joseph Campbell. This study includes identifying each stage in the *Suzume* novel's storyline to understand how the stages in the monomyth theory, such as departure, initiation, and return, are applied in the story. In addition, this study also includes analyses of personal growth, sacrifice, and courage in the novel and how these reinforce the relevance of monomyth theory in literary works such as the novel.

This study is limited to the novel *Suzume* and examines only the narrative elements within the text with a specific focus on dialogue character utterances and narration. The analysis centers exclusively on Suzume Iwato as the main character while other characters are considered only in relation to her journey.