

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the writer discusses the background information on which this study was based, along with the issues raised; the objectives of the study; the research questions that need to be answered; and the theories used to answer these questions. In addition, this chapter also outlined the limitations and scope of the study to provide a clear picture of the focus and direction of this study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Anxiety is a psychological disorder caused by uncertainty or sense of impending danger. According to Freud (1926, p. 91), anxiety is a reaction to dangerous situations. This suggests that anxiety arises as a response to a perceived threat. Anxiety may have been brought on by feeling of fear, worry, or anxiety itself (Firdaus et al., 2024, p. 139). It is the body's natural defense mechanism, which helps it prepare for anything that is going to happen. Although this response is common in stressful situations, people with anxiety disorders may experience an overwhelming and persistent response that worsen over time (Zavala et al., 2016, p. 1). This suggests that anxiety reactions can become more severe and persistent, especially in those with anxiety disorders. When anxiety is high, a person's ability to think clearly is damaged; they only pay attention to minor details while ignoring other important aspects (Berutu & Mutiawati, 2023, p. 43). In this case, anxious people can become stuck in painful memories, which may increase their fear and affect their ability to think clearly.

This anxiety not only affects individuals but also society. Just like depression, anxiety has a real impact on everyday life in terms of health, social, and economic aspects (Akpınar & Karadağ, 2022, p. 675). When individuals experience anxiety, social relationships can be disrupted, and people tend to avoid interactions. Data from Forbes Health indicates a 25% rise in anxiety disorders, increasing from 298 million to 374 million (Duszynski, 2024). Considering how many people experience anxiety and its impact on their lives, analyzing anxiety help us understand how it effects daily thoughts and behaviors. By studying anxiety, better ways to tackle this issue in real life can be identified, which can help people live better lives.

Anxiety is a phenomenon that is frequently explored and depicted in literary works. Numerous literary works use various aspects of life as story themes, such as psychology (Fitriani, 2016, p. 2). The author portrays characters who experience anxiety as a reflection of human feelings in general. Through stepping into the thought and experiences of the characters, literature offers a wealth of viewpoints, information, and experiences that readers can learn from (Salomonsen, 2024, p. 1). By analyzing fictional characters dealing with anxiety, readers can learn more about how people manage emotional distress in real life.

One literary work that successfully depicts the inner struggle of human beings is the novel *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* by Zoulfa Katouh. The novel is set in Syria, a country plagued by prolonged conflict, and follows the life of Salama, a young girl who used to be a pharmacy student. Salama, the novel's main character, faces deep emotional turmoil throughout the story. As the story progresses, readers can see Salama's struggle with anxiety after losing most of her family to the war. Therefore, the psychological struggles depicted in Zoulfa Katouh's novel, especially those experienced by Salama, are highly relevant to analyze using a psychoanalytic approach. In addition, the anxiety she experiences is a key element in this study.

To analyze Salama's anxiety, this study uses Freud's psychoanalytic theory, which focuses on three types of anxiety. In his book *The Problem of Anxiety* (1936), Freud explain that there are three main types of anxiety. First, reality anxiety arise when a person faces a real threat from the surrounding environment. Second, neurotic anxiety occurs when a person feels unable to control unconscious urges or desires that can cause problems. Thirdly, moral anxiety arise from feeling like one is violating moral or ethical values. Freud tried to explain how these anxieties affect behavior and how people try to overcome them. In addition to anxiety, Freud also explore the different types of defense mechanisms that individuals use to overcome the anxiety they experience. Defense mechanisms include sublimation, regression, denial, projection, displacement, repression, and several others. Throughout the novel, Salama Seems to use these mechanisms frequently to cope with her anxiety. By using Freud's theory of anxiety and defense mechanisms to analyze the main character in the novel *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow*, a deeper understanding of how war trauma effect lives will be gained.

The writer chose to study anxiety and discover defense mechanisms in the novel *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* by Zoulfa Katouh, because it clearly depicts psychological struggle of the main character, Salama, against the backdrop of the Syrian war. Therefore, Salama is an appropriate candidate to be analyzed using Sigmund Freud's theory of anxiety and defense mechanism due to her experiences with trauma, loss, and internal conflict.

This novel is still relatively new because it was published in 2022, therefore only one researcher has analyzed this novel, namely a thesis entitled *The Analysis of Hierarchy of Needs in As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow by Zoulfa Katouh* (Setiagi, 2024). This study was written by Vekarisna Setiagi which focuses on the types of needs depicted by the main character. However, there are many researchers who discuss the same topic and use Sigmund Freud's theory of anxiety and defense mechanisms. The first study entitled *Anxiety and Defense Mechanism of the Main Character in 'The Black Cat' Short Story* (Kasprabowo & Adriana, 2020). The study was written by Wulidha Mahfuroh Andriana and Teguh Kasprabowo, where the study focuses on finding the type of anxiety and defense mechanism used by the main character. The second study with the title *Anxiety and Self-Defense Mechanism of The Characters in Maleficent Movie* (Andini et al., 2023). The study was written by Rinda Dwi. A, Diana Anggraeni, and Nurvita Wijayanti. The study focuses on how two characters in Maleficent movie use defense mechanism to deal with anxiety. The third study is titled *Defense Mechanism as a Strategy to Overcome Jacob's Anxiety in William Landay's Defending Jacob* (Febriana & Darma, 2022). Written by Annisa Febriana and Diana Budi. D, the study aims to reveal the type of anxiety in Jacob Barber's character and how the defense mechanism deals with anxiety. The fourth study with the title *Voldemort's Anxiety and Defense Mechanism in Rowling's Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince and Harry Potter and The Deathly Hallows: A Psychoanalysis Study* (Wibiana, 2018). The study was written by Brigitta Arsilia Wibiana in which the study focuses on finding out the type of anxiety and its causes and revealing the defense mechanism used by Voldemort's to deal with anxiety. In addition, there are several other researchers who discuss the same topic with the same theory.

While previous studies have applied Freud's theories to older books and movies, this research will present a new viewpoint by concentrating on a novel published in 2022. No psychological analysis of the novel *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* has ever been conducted, especially regarding the trauma and anxiety caused by the war. In addition, this study will not only find out how anxiety is experienced by the main character, but also will explain how the anxiety arises by relating it to the id, ego, and superego.

Based on the explanation in the previous paragraphs, this study aims to identify how anxiety is experienced by Salama in the novel *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow*, using Sigmund Freud's theory of anxiety. In addition, this study also analyzed how Salama used various self-defense mechanisms to overcome the anxiety she experienced throughout the story.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background of the study, this study focused on analyzing the anxiety and defense mechanisms of the main character in the novel *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* by Zoulfa Katouh. The research question are as follows:

1. How are the anxieties experienced by the main character in the novel *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow*?
2. How are self-defense mechanisms used by the main character in dealing with anxiety that occur throughout the story?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study is to explore:

1. How the anxiety is experienced by Salama, the main character in *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow*, using Sigmund Freud's theory.
2. How the main character uses defense mechanisms to cope with anxiety

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to provide two types of benefits: theoretical and practical. Theoretically, this study shows how the main character's experience with anxiety and defense mechanisms in the novel *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* it contributes to the existence at psychological challenges in literature, specifically through Freud's theory of anxiety and defense mechanisms. Practically, this study raises awareness about mental health by highlighting the challenges of anxiety and offering insights to help readers better understand and empathize with those who experience it.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study discussed the anxiety and defense mechanism of the main character, Salama, in the novel *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow*, focusing on using Sigmund Freud's theory of anxiety and defense mechanism. The limitation of this study was that the data analyzed only came from the text of the novel *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* in the form of author's narration, both main character and the other characters utterances which reflected how anxiety was experienced and how defense mechanisms were used by the main character only.