CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Literary works have long been known to be one of the media that can touch the deepest side of the readers, offering a space that has never been reached before, and building a more profound knowledge of life. Through narratives, readers often find themselves connected to various elements of the text, such as the plot, characters, or themes, which significantly influence their thoughts and emotions (Eagleton, 2008). One example of how the resonance of literary works can impact the reader's unconscious mind is in the case of the murder of the former vocalist of the famous band The Beatles, John Lennon. The public perception assumed Mark David Chapman killed John Lennon by the influence of JD Salinger's novel *The Catcher in the Rye* which he began to identify himself as the main character in the novel, Holden Caulfield. This assumption is reinforced by Chapman's reading the novel after shooting John Lennon in front of his apartment (Jones, 1992). In literary work, the example of the resonance with a particular book can also be seen in the relationship between Hazel Grace Lancaster, the protagonist in *The Fault in Our Stars* by John Green, and her favorite book, *An Imperial Affliction*.

The Fault in Our Stars by John Green is not only a popular work of contemporary young adult literature but also offers a complex exploration of illness, love, and life's struggles through the perspective of Hazel Grace Lancaster, a teenage cancer survivor. In the narrative, *An Imperial Affliction* is not just a casual read for Hazel, but it becomes a mirror reflecting Hazel's existential struggles. The book represents the sense of hope, the fear of loss, and the search for the meaning of life that she experiences in the middle of

her vulnerable health condition (Green, 2012).

Hazel's deep resonance with *An Imperial Affliction* illustrates how literary works can affect individuals down to the unconscious. From a psychoanalytic perspective, a reader's in-depth reading experience can awaken unconscious cognitive processes, including bringing back memories of past traumas, changing self-perceptions, or forming a different view of the world (Freud, 1915). In Hazel's case, *An Imperial Affliction* serves as a medium to understand her condition and strengthen her belief in the unpredictability of life.

This resonance also has broader implications for how Hazel interprets her relationships with those around her, especially Augustus Walters, her partner in the cancer fighter and her first love. The book creates a new space for discussion between Hazel and Augustus and symbolizes their deep emotional connection. The book's influence on Hazel's unconscious mind can be seen in the decisions she makes both consciously and unconsciously as she navigates her health conditions (Miller, 2014).

This study is necessary because it shows a perspective on how the experience of reading a literary work can affect the reader emotionally. In addition, this research contributes to enriching the narrative on the role of literature as a medium that is used as entertainment but can also significantly impact the psychology of the reader itself, especially in the genre of young adult literature, which often reflects and challenges the lives of the younger generation (Nikolajeva, 2014).

The researcher assumes that there are indications that Hazel's resonance with *An Imperial Affliction* affected her unconscious mind. She tends to be selfless by putting others first before herself. Hazel believes that it is better to hurt Augustus by rejecting his love

rather than have him suffer the entire time in their relationship. From *An Imperial Affliction,* she also perceives the insignificance of life, as death will end it all and make one be forgotten. Consequently, the researcher analyzes the character's unconscious mind, focusing on her resonance with *An Imperial Affliction.*

1.2. Identification of the Problem

In John Green's *The Fault in Our Stars*, the main character, Hazel Grace Lancaster, shows a selflessness attitude, and her interpretation of death is strongly connected to her engagement with *An Imperial Affliction*. As Hazel seeks validation through the text, she risks creating a mirror of her own life with that book, which can limit her perspective. This deep connection leads her to shape her identity and emotional responses based on the reflections offered by the book. A potential issue arises when literature becomes the sole framework for self-understanding; this can restrict Hazel's experiences and emotions, preventing her from fully engaging with reality. This research aims to explore the implications of this mirroring engagement, emphasizing the potential of deriving one's identity and emotional framework only from literary works. As such, this research will highlight the interaction between literature and the psyche, illustrating how Hazel's self-interpretation through the text underscores the profound influence that literary works can have on one's unconscious mind. I argue that through this novel, Green wants to show how a person's interpretation of the text underscores the profound influence that literary works can have on one's unconscious mind.

1.3. The Review of Previous Studies

To support this research, the researcher has read and reviewed the previous studies or research related to the literary work, which is *The Fault in Our Stars* by John Green, and related to the topic. The researcher needs insight that is gained from the previous

related studies or the same topic to understand more. Here are some of the reviews of studies using the same object and topic.

The first study is an article by Dita Herma Yulistya and Retno Budi Astuti (2022) entitled "Narrative Function of Vladimir Propp in John Green's Novel, *The Fault in Our Stars*", this article examined the narrative of characters in the novel *The Fault in Our Stars* by John Green and to aim to find out the narrative function by using the Narrative Function by Vladimir Propss, which describes 31 narrative functions commonly found in folktales. The researchers used a qualitative descriptive method to identify 14 of these functions in the novel, including prohibition, offense, delivery, and marriage. Their findings show that Propp's framework can be applied to modern narratives, demonstrating how characters like Hazel Grace embody heroism in their fight against illness. This research contributes to the understanding of narrative structure in contemporary literature, highlighting the relevance of Propp's functions in analyzing character actions and story development. This research is relevant to the present study as it analyzes the same novel as the primary object of investigation.

The second study is an article by Maya Nurfadilah, Muhammad Iqbal Firdaus, and Nargis (2019) entitled "An Analysis of Metaphoric Translation of *The Fault in Our Stars* Novel", employing the theories of Bassnett, Lefevere, and Snell-Hornby to categorize the translation methods used. The study identifies three primary strategies: translating metaphors into the same metaphor (69%), different metaphors (20%), and sense (11%). Additionally, it assesses the accuracy of the translations using Nababan et al.'s (2012). In the assessment system, it was found that 79% of translations were considered accurate, while the other 21% were not very accurate, without translations that were grouped as inaccurate. This study highlighted the importance of maintaining

aesthetics and context in literary works. The relevance of this research lies in its focus on the same literary work analyzed in the present study.

Then there is the third article of Sasmi Saragih and Mhd Johan (2020), with the title "Maxime in Novel *'The Fault in Our Stars'* Written by John Green: Pragmatic Approach" which focuses on four maps: Quantity, quality in relationships, and method. The use of qualitative descriptive methods by researchers identified 30 examples of the most common quantity proverbs, namely, 15 occurrences and followed by relationships (10), quality (3), quantity, quality, relationship, and way. Using a descriptive qualitative method, the researchers identified 30 examples of proverbs, with the most common quantities (15 occurrences), followed by relationships (10), quality (3), and means (2). This research shows the importance of the principle of cooperation in daily communication and literature, demonstrating that effective interaction can be achieved through adherence to the tone of this proverb. This finding also underlines the pragmatic relevance to understanding the interaction of characters and their implications in a narrative. Both this research and the present study center their analysis on the same novel, establishing a clear point of comparison.

The subsequent study is the fourth study of an article by Sarah Meilinda Angel Bertris, Evert H. Hilman, and Evi Jovita Putri (2022), "Idiomatic Expression Translation Strategy in the Novel *'The Fault in Our Stars'*", which uses qualitative methods and theories from Chesterman and Searle. In this study, it was found that change is still the strategy that is most often used by distribution as a semantic strategy, and scheme change as a syntax strategy is This research underlines the complexity and translates idiomatic expressions, emphasizing cultural wants and rooted in language. A comprehensive review

of this literature related to placing this research is in an ongoing discussion on translation studies that focuses on the importance of understanding the author's context of this study. This research contributes to the foundation of the present study by employing the same novel as its object of analysis.

The fifth study is an article by Selviana Nurafni and B.R Suryo Baskoro (2023) entitled "An Analysis of Compound Words in The Novel '*The Fault in Our Stars*". The author uses descriptive qualitative analysis to investigate the types of compound words used in John Green's novel. This study identified two main categories of compound words: endocentric and exocentric, with a total of 207 examples analyzed. The findings show that endocentric compound words dominate, at 73% of the data, while exocentric compound words account for 27%. This classification is in line with the morphological theory of compounding elaborated by Yule (2016) and other linguists, which emphasizes the structural aspect of compound formation (Nurafni & Baskoro, 2023). This research highlights the importance of understanding compound words for language learners and provides a comprehensive framework for future research in morphology studies. The connection between this study and the current research is evident in their shared focus on the same literary text.

The sixth study is an article by Meilina Putri Dewanti (2022) entitled "The Main Character's Decency Strategy in *The Fault in Our Stars* Novel", exploring the politeness strategy used by the main characters, Augustus and Hazel, in *The Fault in Our Stars* by John Green. Using Brown and Levinson's politeness theory (1987), this study analyzed 263 speeches to identify the type of strategy used and the factors that affect its application. The findings show that positive politeness is the most commonly used strategy (38%),

followed by extraordinary notes (22,4%), baldness in notes (20,6%), and negative politeness (19%). This study concludes that the protagonist's choice of politeness strategy is influenced by sociological outcomes and variables, including social distancing and power dynamics, which highlights the importance of pragmatic competence in effective communication. This study aligns with the present research in that both utilize the same novel as the central object of analysis.

The seventh study is an article by Annisa Febriana and Diana Budi Darma (2022) entitled "Defense Mechanism as a Strategy to Overcome Jacob's Anxiety in *Defending Jacob William Landay*", using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory to explore the type of anxiety experienced by Jacob Barber in *Defending Jacob by William Landay* and the defense mechanism he used to deal with it. The findings show that Jacob experiences neurotic, moral, and realistic anxiety, with realistic anxiety being the most common. To overcome his anxiety, Jacob uses five defense mechanisms: rejection, projection, displacement, rationalization, and reaction formation, with projection and displacement being the most commonly used. This study highlights how literary characters reflect psychological theory, demonstrating the application of defense mechanisms in navigating complex emotional experiences, explaining how characters navigate their emotional anxiety through various psychological strategies. By examining the main character's use of defense mechanisms, this study contributes to the theoretical framework of the present research.

The eighth study is an article by Mardasari, M Amir P, and Harlinah Sahib (2024) entitled "Analysis of the Main Character in the Film Michel Gondry *Eternal Sunshine of Spotless Mind* (2004): Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalytic Approach", In this study, the

author applies Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory to explore the personality dynamics and defense mechanisms of the main characters, Joel and Clementine, in *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*. The findings reveal that the character shows life instincts and death instincts, with the dominance of death instincts causing anxiety. The analysis identified repression as the primary defense mechanism used by Joel to overcome painful memories, along with other mechanisms such as projection and rationalization. This research highlights how the concept of psychoanalysis can deepen the understanding of character behavior in films, which depicts the complexity of human emotions and relationships. Using defense mechanisms helps characters face their complex emotional state. This study contributes to the author's research on defense mechanisms by exploring how the main character responds to life and death instincts through various psychological defenses.

The ninth study is an article by Azzahra Safira Dewanti and Fitri Kurniawan (2025) titled "The Innocent Id: A Psychoanalytic exploration of Jenny Currana's unconscious desires in *Forrest Gump* (1994) Film". In this study, the author uses Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory to analyse Jenny Curran's character in the film *Forrest Gump*. The research focuses on the dynamics between the Id, Ego, and Superego, which reveals how Jenny's unconscious desires, shaped by childhood trauma, influence her self-destructive behavior and relationships. The findings suggest that Jenny's actions are primarily driven by the Id, which seeks pleasure and escape from emotional pain, leading to impulsive decisions and unstable relationships, especially with Forrest. This analysis contributes to a deeper understanding of female character development in film, illustrating how unresolved trauma and unconscious motivations determine behavior and choices, focusing on how her unconscious desires and childhood trauma shape her

behaviors and relationships. By analyzing the interplay of the id, ego, and superego, this study provides insights into the unconscious motivations behind the main character's behavior, thus supporting the writer's research focus.

1.4. Research Questions

Based on the background, the researcher proposes two research questions as follows:

1) How does Hazel Grace Lancaster's resonance with *An Imperial Affliction* reveal unconscious psychological processes related to her experiences with illness, death, and relationships in *The Fault in Our Stars*?

2) How does Hazel Grace's resonance with *An Imperial Affliction* impact her unconscious mind and influence her behavior and state of mind?

1.5. The Scope of the Research

The researcher of this research focuses on the intrinsic aspect of the novel *The Fault in Our Stars* by John Green, to explore the main character's unconscious mind. The research itself will cover the main character's characterization by using intrinsic elements to reveal the responses from the resonance, and also use the psychological approach to analyze how the main character's impact on the resonance on her unconscious mind.

1.6. The Objective of the Research

The objective of this research is to find out the impact of the resonance on the main character's unconscious mind in the novel *The Fault in Our Stars* by John Green, and also to find out how she goes through life based on the result of her resonance readings. This research will provide an analysis of the main character's unconscious mind from the novel *The Fault in Our Stars* by John Green from the perspective of literary psychology.