

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Research

Literary works contain various stories and themes. Many of them are the representations and reflections of issues that exist in the real world, such as social, political, economic, historical, up to psychological issues. In terms of psychological issues, psychological disorder on a character is one of them. There are several psychological disorders that might be represented in a literary work, one of which is Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). PTSD is a psychological state that develop in an individual as the result of experiencing stressor in which appears along with various symptoms (Keane and Kaloupek 21). The stressor may come from experiencing or witnessing traumatic events that causing long-drawn stress afterwards. According to the U.S National Center for PTSD (2010), the traumatic events are life-threatening, such as sexual assault, natural disasters, terrors, or serious accidents. Some survivors are able to recover to their normal state in a short time, however, for others it can get even worse over time (1). As a psychiatric diagnosis, PTSD was officially introduced in DSM¹-III in 1980 by American Psychiatric Association. In the last two decades, the awareness of the general

¹ Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders published by the American Psychiatric Association.

and clinical embodiment of the disorder in children and adolescents has raised (Drake et al. 1).

PTSD can happen to anyone of any age, starting from the first year of life. Generally, the symptoms begin to appear within the first 3 months after experiencing trauma, however, there are also cases where the onset of symptoms appears within months or even years later (American Psychiatric Association 276). So, everyone who experiences the traumatic event has different reactions and periods to recover. It can be seen from the symptoms later on. In *Handbook of PTSD, Second Edition Science and Practice* (2014), there are two sub types based on the duration; acute, which occur within 6 months, and chronic or delayed, with duration lasting more than 6 months (Friedman et al. 5).

The issue of PTSD turns out not only becomes a discussion in real world. In the field of literature, it is an issue that presented quite often. Many authors try to represent the issue in their works. One of them can be found in *Speak* (1999) by Laurie Halse Anderson.

Speak was published in 1999. This novel is a best-seller of *New York Times*. It also received several awards, such as 2000 *Edgar Allan Poe Best Young Adult Award*, 1999 *National Book Award*, *ALA Best Book for Young Adult*, *Michael L. Printz Award*, and *American Library Association Best Books for Young Adults*. The author, Laurie Halse Anderson was born in New

York in 1961. Making her debut with this novel, Anderson later becomes a best-selling author. Along with other works of her that contain young-adult stories, Anderson was awarded the *Margaret A. Edwards Award* by the American Library Association regarding her significant contribution in young-adult literature. In 2004, this novel was adapted to a movie with the same title (*Madwoman in the forest*).

The novel tells about a tragic story of a 13-year-old girl, Melinda Sordino who had to go through many obstacles in her teenage life. It is all begin from an after-summer party that she attended with some other students of Merryweather High. Everyone was having fun until it turned into a disaster. While drinking and dancing, Melinda meets a senior, Andy Evans. Andy is famous of his attractiveness. However, he takes advantages of his charm to flirt with the girls, including Melinda. Melinda tried to escape, but because of her drunken condition, she could not do anything to fight Andy. She ended up being raped by him. However, instead of getting any help from others, she was ignored by them. She starts receiving hatred ever since. Being exposed to such terrible incident has caused trauma for her. As a result, the incident and other triggers emerging several psychological problems that considered to be the symptoms of PTSD. Besides the representation of the PTSD, it is also depicted the actions that Melinda takes in order to cope with it, that is generally known as defense mechanism.

Most of Anderson's novels talk about young-adult and their problems. Among them, the writer considers *Speak* to be the most attractive. The reason of choosing this novel is it represents the issues that many teenagers have in real world. Bullying, sexual assault, and psychological problems are the examples portrayed in this novel. The fact that this novel inspired by Anderson's personal experience as a victim of sexual assault, making this novel feels more relevant to the real world issues. Although it was released in 1999, the issues are still related to what happen among teenagers today. I believe this novel is an inspiring reading, especially for those who face similar problems. It might motivate them to be courageous to speak out the truth. Therefore, the writer would like to do deeper analysis on psychological aspect of Melinda Sordino depicted in this novel.

1.2. Identification of the Problem

Through this novel, the writer finds that Anderson tries to portray some issues that are often found among young people, such as bullying and sexual harassment, as experienced by the main character, Melinda Sordino. This analysis aims to see how such issues would affect the victim either physically and psychologically, and how he/she can get through it. As for Melinda, she shows several symptoms that indicates her to suffer from PTSD as the result of traumatic event that she experienced and having struggles to deal with it. Therefore, the problems to be analyzed in this research are how

does the author depict PTSD, the symptoms that appear on Melinda, and the actions she takes to overcome her problems.

1.3. Scopes of the Research

In this research, the focus of analysis is limited to Melinda Sordino's psychological problems. The subjects are divided into two. The first one is about the depiction of psychological disorder suffered by Melinda; Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), which includes the traumatic event she experienced and other factors that increasing the risk of the symptoms development, as well as the symptoms that characterize Melinda to have PTSD. The second one is defense mechanisms that she uses in order to deal with her struggles.

1.4. Research Questions

2.1.1. How does the author depict PTSD suffered by Melinda Sordino?

2.1.2. What are the types of defense mechanism that Melinda uses to overcome her PTSD?

1.5. Objectives of the Research

In general, this research aims to enhance the analysis of the main character, Melinda Sordino in *Speak* (1999) by Laurie Halse Anderson. This research specifically analyzes the main character's psychological disorder and

its symptoms, along with the defense mechanisms that she uses in order to overcome her problems which have not been analyzed in particular in the previous studies.

1.6. Review of Related Studies

In conducting this research, the writer tries to find some researches or studies about related topic to gain more insight and knowledge. The previous studies that analyze this novel shows the psychological disorder that suffered by Melinda Sordino and the defense mechanisms that she uses to overcome it have not been analyzed specifically. The related studies that the writer has collected help in giving more information and opinion from many aspects.

The first study is entitled “The Symbols of Isolation in Laurie Halse Anderson’s *Speak*”(2018) by Ridho Pratama Satria from Andalas University. This research focuses on analyzing the symbol of isolation from the main character, Melinda Sordino. The writer applies basic approach, specifically new criticism to analyze the role of symbols. The research is conducted by close reading, which means it is limited to intrinsic elements without involving the elements outside the text. In addition, the analysis also aims to strengthen the theme of salvation from isolation that the writer proposed. The findings of this research shows

there are three important symbols of isolation found in the novel. The first one is tree's painting, it represents the main character's broken condition. The second one is mirror, it symbolize her view about her actual condition that she does not want people to notice. The third one is Melinda's lips and mouth condition which represents her inability to speak. These symbols deliver the meanings of Melinda's struggle to get out of the isolation and her inability to speak. Through these findings, the writer has proved that salvation from isolation is the solid theme of this novel. This research helps to enrich the information about isolation that Melinda does in order to cope with her problems, since it is also discussed in my research.

The second study is an article entitled "Melinda's Struggle to Overcome Her Sexual Abuse Trauma in Laurie Halse Anderson's *Speak*: A New Criticism Study" (2015) by Donny Herdiawan Pratomo and Rina Saraswati from Airlangga University. This study discuss about the struggles that Melinda faces as a victim of sexual abuse. It is similar to the focus of my research, but in different perspective. In my research, I use psychoanalytic literary criticism to understand the psychological aspect of Melinda. While the writers use new criticism to focus on the formal elements of this novel, which include plot, characterization, setting, and symbolism to support the topic of this research. The result shows that plot

and setting explain how the struggles that Melinda faces appear and continue to grow, and how she survive through it. As for the characterization, the writers have interesting description about Melinda. They conclude that she is an introvert, sarcastic, and depressed, but also persistent. This study helps in adding ideas and opinions about the struggles that Melinda faces as she becomes a victim of rape that I discuss in my research as well. However, the weakness of this study is the explanation of Melinda's actions or attempts to overcome her problems is too short. The writers do not explain them in detail in which makes it not elaborated enough.

The third one is an article entitled "Society Contribution to Silent Tendency of Sexually Assaulted Child as Reflected in Laurie Halse Anderson's *Speak*" (2017) by Resty Maudina Septiani and Eva Najma from Andalas University. This study is about society contribution to silent tendency of sexually assaulted child that reflected in *Speak*. The writers proposed that *Speak* is the reflection of how society influences the silent tendency of child victim in America during the year of 1999 when the novel was released. This society influence is also one of the problems that I discuss in my research. However, I try to analyze this problem with psychological perspective, while this research analyzes it with sociology of literature proposed by Alan Swingewood. The analysis starts from

presenting the data of children sexual assault in America in 1999, which consist of the characteristic of the victim and the perpetrator, and the silent tendency happens to the victim. Then, the writers try to elaborate the silent tendency reflected in the novel. The writer believes that Laurie Halse Anderson purposely implies these issues in her novel to encourage the child victims of sexual assault to speak up so that they would be able to overcome their problems. The elaboration is quite clear and detail. The writer also includes the interviews and statements from people involved in sexual assault cases. This research helps to enrich the information and ideas in analyzing the society influence on the victim of sexual assault.

The fourth one is “Coping Behavior of Melinda in *Speak* Novel By Laurie Halse Anderson (1999): An Individual Psychological Approach” by Kristiana. This study aims to reveal Melinda’s coping behavior in *Speak* (1999). The writer applies individual psychological analysis by Alfred Adler in order to analyze how Melinda copes with her problems. From this theory by Adler, the writer found there are six kinds of coping strategy or behavior of Melinda, they are fictional finalism, inferiority feeling, striving for superiority, social interest, style of life, and creative self. By having those behavior to cope with her problems, Melinda’s personality has grown to be more mature, as well as getting more courageous in expressing her feelings. Besides the findings of coping

behavior, the writer also found it as a message from the author, Laurie Halse Anderson about the motivation to speak up for yourself and others. This study enriches more information and ideas about what Melinda has done during facing her problems.

The fifth one is entitled “Self Defense Mechanism in The Main Character of Emma Donoghue’s *Room*” (2019) by M. Fauzan from Andalas University. This research focuses on the psychological aspect of the main character, Ma. The writer applied psychoanalytical approach and Defense Mechanism theory by Sigmund Freud to analyze what are defense mechanisms that Ma develops in order to overcome her problems. Through the analysis, it is found that Ma had through many difficulties since she was kidnapped and locked in a room. She starts gaining some psychological problems, such as losing interest or enjoyment, sleep disturbance, and having the ideas of self-harm. Those are claimed as the symptoms of depression. In order to overcome the depression, there are some actions that Ma takes to protect herself as a result of applying defense mechanism. The result shows that Ma uses three types of defense mechanism, they are denial, isolation, and regression. Based on the discussion of psychological problems suffered by the main character and the actions to deal with it, this research enriches more insight and knowledge about defense mechanism that I also discuss in my research.

1.7. Theoretical Framework

In analyzing the PTSD symptoms and defense mechanisms of Melinda Sordino, the writer applies psychoanalytic literary criticism. The writer uses the structure of personality theory and defense mechanism proposed by Sigmund Freud. In addition, the symptoms of PTSD proposed by American Psychiatry Association will be used to analyze the symptoms of PTSD that Melinda develops.

Psychoanalytic Literary Criticism

Psychoanalysis is one of the theories that used in analyzing literary works. According to Hossain (2017), it is a theory that leads psychoanalysis to organization and dynamics of personality. The interpretation of psychological analysis is one of the instruments that used to figure out the implied meaning of a literary work (41). Basically, this criticism helps us in exploring and understanding the psychological aspect in literature. Seeing from the history of psychology, psychoanalysis originally came from medical field. It enters psychology field afterwards, and expands to other fields of study, including literary studies. It becomes one of the approaches applied in literature (Hossain 41).

Psychoanalysis principles were proposed by Sigmund Freud (1856-1939). The term refers to a series of psychological theories and techniques

that accentuate the significance of the unconscious in human adaptation and behavior. This is also where the psychological therapy called as 'talk' comes from. Freud's insights have contributed to the creation of psychology theories which pointing the role of the unconscious in mental life (Muran et al. 2). The goal of this analysis is to solve psychological problems, or also called disorders or dysfunctions. The focus is on patterns of behavior that are destructive in some way (Tyson 12). Along with other experts, Freud extent Freudian theory in the late 19th to early 20th centuries. Hossain stated that aside from psychology, psychoanalysis also helps to comprehend other aspects; philosophy, religion, culture, and literature. Thus, in the development of this theory, Freud frequently connected it with art in general and literature in particular (43). In literature field, psychoanalytic criticism focuses on:

- a. The author, which analyzes the author's life and his/her work,
- b. The characters, analyzing the psychological aspect of one or more characters in the literary work,
- c. The audience, which analyzes the readers' interest in the literary work,
- d. The text, which analyzes the role of symbols and language in the work.

Sigmund Freud: The Structure of Personality

In the *Theory of Personality* (2005), Duane P. Schultz & Ellen Schultz stated that Freud divided the concept of personality into three levels: the

conscious, the pre-conscious, and the unconscious (53). Those three levels are like the form of iceberg, which conscious takes place above the surface of the iceberg and each of pre-conscious and unconscious taking places in the middle part and below the surface of the water (53-54). From this concept, Freud later introduced three basic structures of human personality: the id, the ego, and the superego.

The id refers to primitive desire or impulse in a person (Hossain 43). It conform the notion of unconscious that provides energy to the other structures. According to Schultz, the id only works according to pleasure principle (54). Basically, the id is all about desires for pleasure. It has no cognition in reality, including in terms of ethic, social convention, etc. Therefore, the id could be compared to a newborn baby who strives for satisfaction of his/her instinctual drives without having no idea about how to meet the satisfaction (Schultz 54).

The second structure is the ego. The ego works as an intermediary between the id and the super-ego that compromises to compose both of them. It can be said that ego means as the sense of time and place (Hossain 43). As written by Robert B. Ewen in *An Introduction to Theories of Personality* (2003), the ego formation was assisted by experiences that help the infant to distinguish between self and non-self, especially those concerning its own body (19). Unlike the id that operates in unconscious, the ego operates

according to reality. Even though ego is also attracted to pleasure, it delays the pleasure principle for the sake of reality and postpones the release of tension until it finds a suitable object. This allows someone to avoid making mistakes, such as fear of getting punished for doing forbidden act (19). While the id is an impulse of pleasure desire, ego controls it by the reality principle. Therefore, ego works as a protection of an individual.

Superego is the control of society and parental standards of 'good' and 'bad', 'right' and 'wrong' behavior (Hossain 4). Superego unconsciously controls someone in censoring moral, conscience and pride. According to Schultz, the superego as the ideas of right or wrong that were acquired since childhood. The moral basis is usually learned at the age of 5 or 6 and starts from the rules of behavior arranged by parents. By giving compliments, punishments, and examples, children will understand which behaviors are examined as good or bad by the parents. Behaviors that caused children being punished forms the conscience that includes as one part of superego (56). Therefore, this stage will be very important for parents to control their children behavior, to teach them the concept. Schultz believes that when moral teaching and the concept of behavior about right or wrong understood by children, there will appear the self-control from themselves. They will feel guilty or ashamed when they make mistakes (Schultz 56).

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

The application of psychological diagnosis is basically to analyze human psychological aspects, however, I believe this can be applied to analyze characters in literary work. As we know, despite the characters in literary works are fictional, they represent human traits in the real world. Therefore, the psychological problems they show are inspired by the problems experienced by humans as well. In psychology field, the diagnosis of psychological disorder can be done by using fictional characters through a case study. In “Psychology Case Study on Fictional Character”, Gibson performs the analysis of Narcissistic Personality Disorder through a fictional character, Anita, in Cruella De Vil (UKEssays). This also works otherwise. In “The Kinds of Personality Disorders in “Inside Out” Movie Script”, Zaman and Permaludin conducted an analysis of a psychological disorder in a literary work. They applied the diagnosis of Personality Disorders as written in Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-V) by American Psychiatry Association (60). In accordance to this, the diagnosis of PTSD in DSM-V is applicable on this research too.

According to APA (2013), there are some criteria and symptoms to diagnose if an individual is suffering from PTSD. They are divided into five criteria as explained in the following (271).

- a. Must be directly exposed to threatening events; this include witnessing, involving the traumatic event, witnessing in person family member or

close friend suffer in the traumatic events (could be threatening death or accidental),

- b. Having intrusion symptoms associated with the traumatic events (re-experiencing trauma), this include recurring recollection of the events, disturbing repetitive dream related to the events, feeling the recurrence of the events, having the flashback of the events, and profound distress due to any reminder of the events.
- c. Avoidance symptom; this include the attempt to avoid thoughts, memories that related to the traumatic events, avoiding people, places, objects, or else reminded to the events which could bring up the recollection of the events.
- d. Negative changes in cognition and mood regarding to the traumatic events; this include inability to recall the detail of the events, having constant negative beliefs toward others, a tendency to blame himself/herself or others, having constant negative emotions, losing interest in activities or involve with others, and feeling isolated from people.
- e. Arousal symptom, this include irritable behavior or explosion of anger, reckless behavior, being excessively cautious, having problems with concentration and sleep.

Based on criteria and symptoms above, the writer will try to analyze what are the symptoms that develop in Melinda after the exposure to traumatic event that lead her to suffer from PTSD.

Sigmund Freud: Defense Mechanism

Defense mechanism is the strategy or mechanism occurs when the ego operates to defend itself against anxiety (Schultz 58). It is a mechanism that a person uses to cope with threats or conflict. When someone confronts a conflict or threat, she/he feels anxious and insecure. These feeling then triggered the defense mechanism to work, because defense mechanism is a natural reaction that works automatically when needed. According to Ewen (2003) most defense mechanisms work unconsciously, enabling the main goal of self-deception (23). In accordance with this, Melinda Sordino as the main character in *Speak* is found performing these mechanisms in order to cope with her psychological problems.

Looking back to the history, in 1900 until the publication of Ego and Id, the defense concept was particularly prominent in its relation to urges. Freud's focus had been on inner psychic reality, especially unconscious impulses, because the external reality has less important in his theory. During this period, the function of defense was seen as resistance to release the urges (Cramer 5). The theory of defense was developed by Freud along with another

scholar, Anna Freud, who is also his own daughter. According to Cramer (1991), the systematic theory of defense mechanisms was first presented in *The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defense* by Anna Freud published in 1936. In her book, she conformed her father's views on the defense function. She proposed that defense against painful feelings and defense against the urges underlie similar reasons and both also serve the same intention. Defense mechanisms prevent the ego from anxiety and guilt in those cases (5).

As written by Schultz, Freud claims there are several types of defense mechanism. It is rarely for us to use only one of them, we normally do several defense mechanisms at once (58). Freud divided them into the following:

1. Repression, is the act of removing something from conscious awareness. This is the kind of unconsciously forgetting the existence of something that makes us uncomfortable or sick. It is the most basic defense mechanism that often used.
2. Denial, is denying the fact that traumatic event has occurred.
3. Reaction formation, is a defense that express opposite impulse to against the irritating impulse that truly drives someone.
4. Projection, is a defense against disruptive impulse by associating it with others.
5. Isolation, is a defense that unconsciously separating the threatening emotions from related memories.

6. Rationalization, is reinterpreting our behavior to appear more rational and acceptable.
7. Displacement, is finding a substitute object to satisfy an id impulse when the object is unavailable.
8. Sublimation, involves changing or moving the id impulses by transferring instinctual energy into the behavior that socially acceptable.

Based on numerous types of defense mechanism above, the writer will try to examine which are used by Melinda to overcome her problems.

1.8. Methods

1.8.1. Data Collection

In collecting the data, the writer applies library research method. The data consist of two sources. The first one is primary data, which is a novel titled *Speak* (1999) by Laurie Halse Anderson. The second one is secondary data that are obtained from books, articles, and journals that discuss about related topics to this research. In conducting this research, the source of the data was read carefully and repeatedly in order to get deeper understandings about the story, then taking notes on important parts. The next step is finding and determining the topic, issues and problems that occur in the novel to be analyzed.

1.8.2. Data Analysis

In this research, the writer applies psychoanalytic literary criticism proposed by Sigmund Freud in order to analyze the psychological aspect of the main character, Melinda Sordino. The research starts by analyzing the primary data by looking at two elements. The first one is the intrinsic elements of the novel. The second one is analyzing the extrinsic element, which is the character's psychological side. To find the symptoms of Post-Traumatic Disorder (PTSD) develops by Melinda, the analysis based on criteria of PTSD symptoms that classified by American Psychiatry Association. Then, the analysis on defense mechanism will be based on defense mechanism theory by Sigmund Freud. The analysis is supported by some references that related to the topic.

1.8.3. Presentation of Result

The result of this analysis is presented in the form of qualitative method. In *Research Methodology* (2004), Kothari stated qualitative method deals with qualitative phenomenon or case, for example, having interest in analyzing human behavior or why someone act in certain behavior. Then, the research is conducted to find the motives behind that (3). Therefore, the analysis is organized

based on the writer's interpretation. The explanations are presented in the form of descriptive text since those consist of sentences, not in the form of numbers. This research also includes some opinions and thoughts from other researches, as well as provides evidence and quotations from the novel.

