

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher explains the background of the research, the research question, the research topic, the scope and limitations of the research, the implications of the research, and definitions of key terms.

### **A . Research Background**

Literature is the shape of human expression that can be expressed through language, whether it be through writing or poetry, and that encompasses aesthetics, human experience, ideas, and reflections on daily life. Hasanah (2025) states that Literature does more than entertain it prompts readers to ponder the complexities of human experience, social conventions, and everyday moral conflicts. It also mirrors society, revealing how people grapple with justice, love, sacrifice, and other abstract values. As time goes by, literature is no longer limited to written texts such as poetry, novels, or drama, but has also expanded into modern media such as film.

A movie is a form of art that generally depicts a person's life story, fictional stories, or biographies that serve as entertainment for the public. Usually, films depict themes such as love, life, politics, and violence. Film is understood as an audiovisual narrative text: plot, characterization, point of view, and symbols intertwine with cinematic codes, cinematography, editing, and sound design to tell while simultaneously shaping viewers' cognitive and emotional responses. Cutting (2016) stated that cognitive and psychonarratological research shows that the common narrative pattern setup complication development climax correlates with the dynamics of audience attention.

Anggraeni and Weda (2022) states that the movie is an art form steeped in literary qualities. As a mass communication medium, it plays a key role in mediating reality, including representing social life. It blends social, psychological, and aesthetic phenomena, and takes shape as a document composed of narrative, visuals, text, and music. This synthesis makes the film multidimensional and complex. Each character depicted in a film has a physical and spiritual aspect to support the storyline, even though they are fictional. Each character has a different personality, and the relationships between these characters often give rise to various forms of conflict, whether between individuals, between groups, or internal conflicts that cause psychological problems within the characters.

Abdullah (2023) states that the main character, or protagonist, plays a central role in a film because they are the primary focus of the plot and are most involved in various events. As a character who continuously interacts with other characters, the protagonist is the primary driver of the story and the focal point of conflict that shapes the narrative's development. It is through these characters that the storyteller presents the traits, values, and psychological dynamics he wishes to convey. Research on main characters confirms that changes in the protagonist's character, particularly in terms of inner conflict and psychological transformation, not only enrich the plot but also create dramatic tension. Devi and Utami (2022) in their study showed that the protagonist's interactions with other characters through dialogue, facial expressions, and gestures in the film *Gie* shape the main character as a figure who is assertive, strong-minded, and sensitive to social injustice. Furthermore, Maulidya (2022) examines the personality structure of Euis in the film

Keluarga Cemara through a Jungian psychoanalytic approach, highlighting how aspects of the psyche, such as feelings, intuition, and thoughts, reflect Euis's personal identity and social background.

Psychoanalysis is an approach to understanding the personality, motivations, and inner conflicts of characters in fictional works using psychological theories. This analysis highlights how a character's actions, dialogue, and experiences reflect the mental processes and drives that shape their behavior. Tyson (2014) explains that a psychological approach helps uncover hidden motivations and emotional dynamics of characters, while Guerin et al. (2020) emphasize that fictional characters are built on human behavior and therefore can be analyzed psychologically. Therefore, psychological character analysis is an important method for understanding the depth and development of characters in a narrative.

Research into psychological character in film is crucial for education because films can concretely depict the development of human personality, emotions, and motivation, making it easier for students to understand psychological concepts in a practical way. McDonald (2016) says that film serves as an effective pedagogical tool because it presents representations of roles, conflicts, and character development, which can enhance students' analytical skills. Furthermore, Tan and Frijda (2020) explain that the audience's emotional involvement with film characters helps learners develop empathy and social understanding through affective responses to the characters' conflicts. This finding is reinforced by research by Ahmad and Rahman (2021), who found that analyzing main characters

in films can strengthen students' critical thinking, interpretive skills, and moral sensitivity in the context of media literacy learning.

From an educational psychology perspective, Jhangiani and Tarry (2019) state that film characters serve as behavioral models that reflect the interaction between personality and the environment. Therefore, they can be used to teach concepts of motivation, self-development, and emotional dynamics. Meanwhile, Özdemir and Korkmaz (2023) demonstrated that the use of film in learning improves students' emotional literacy, helps them understand others' perspectives, and fosters empathy through observing characters' inner struggles. Thus, research into psychological character in film not only contributes to theory development but also supports modern educational goals that emphasize social emotional learning, character, and a deeper understanding of human behavior.

In this study, researcher analyzes the psychoanalysis of the main characters in the film *The Creator*, directed by Gareth Edwards, presenting deep psychological and moral conflicts between humans and AI entities in the context of war and empathy. The film places its main conflict on the character of Joshua, an agent assigned to hunt down an AI weapon of mass destruction, which turns out to be a simulated child named Alphie. This encounter triggers a deep inner conflict in the main character. His main motivation, triggered by personal trauma over the loss of his wife, which is suspected to have been caused by AI, clashes with the reality that the enemy he faces is a creature that shows innocence and humanity.

This study uses Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory to reveal Joshua's psychological journey. Freud's theory emphasizes the role of the unconscious,

defense mechanisms, and the dynamic interaction between the id, ego, and superego in shaping human behavior.

There are some other researchers who have also explored the psychoanalysis of a character in the movie. Abdullah (2023) analyzed the study to examine the portrayal of psychoanalysis in the main character of the film *Fight Club*, directed by David Fincher. The focus of the research is on the main character's dialogues throughout the movie, as language serves as a medium of communication and expression. This study applies Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory as its analytical framework. The findings indicate that 22 instances of psychoanalytic elements were identified in the character's behavior and speech, categorized into three components: the id (12 instances), the ego (3 instances), and the superego (7 data). The id was found to be the most dominant aspect of the character's personality. Additionally, the researcher discovered 10 conflicts experienced by the protagonist, comprising 7 external and 3 internal conflicts with external conflicts being the most prevalent in the film.

Fitriani (2019) this study aimed to examine the main character in Todd Phillips' film *Joker* using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, which includes the concepts of the id, ego, and superego. The result of this study shows that the main character's id reflects his pessimistic thoughts about life's injustice and the negative treatment he receives from his surroundings. This represents the pleasure principle, which operates through primary process thinking. His ego is shown in his actions of killing those he perceives as wrongdoers an expression of the reality principle that seeks to fulfill the id's desires through secondary process thinking.

Meanwhile, his superego appears in his intention to preserve good people's lives, embodying the moral principle that aligns with ideal standards shaped by societal and parental rules.

Afkarina (2019) This study examined the personality structure and developmental factors of the main character in *Moana* through the lens of Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, supported by Creswell's descriptive qualitative method. The analysis identified eleven relevant data excerpts drawn from Moana's dialogues, actions, and narrative situations. These data demonstrated the interplay of the id, ego, and superego within Moana's character. The findings reveal that the ego functions as the dominant component in regulating the impulses of the id, although there are several instances in which the ego is unable to fulfill the id's demands. Such conflicts result in emotional responses, including anger, disappointment, and frustration, illustrating the tension inherent in Moana's internal psychological dynamics.

Anandi (2022) this study analyzed the main character of Todd Phillips' *Joker* using Freud's psychoanalytic theory and character typology through a descriptive qualitative method. The results of the analysis show that Arthur Fleck exhibits all three components of personality id, ego, and superego. From the twenty data found in the movie, the id appears most frequently with 7 data, followed by 5 data of the ego, and 2 data of the superego, indicating that the id is the dominant aspect of Arthur's personality. The study also found six character types displayed by the main character: a flat character at the beginning of the movie, a round character in the middle, a protagonist at the beginning, an antagonist as the story progresses, and a

dynamic character whose personality continues to change. Among these types, the round character appears most dominantly due to Arthur's constant psychological and behavioral changes throughout the narrative.

Masyhur (2023) This research examined the representation and causes of Bruce Wayne's internal conflict in *The Batman* (2022) using Freud's psychological theory, Hall's representation theory, Engler's personality theory, and Michaelson's conflict theory. Through descriptive qualitative analysis of images, dialogues, and narration, the study found that Bruce experiences several types of internal conflict. The findings show that Bruce Wayne experiences several forms of internal conflict. The first is an avoidance conflict, arising from his inability to choose between continuing to live as Batman, which gradually destroys him or abandoning the role, which would leave Gotham unprotected and in ruin. The second is a double approach avoidance conflict, reflected in Bruce's struggle to determine whether The Riddler's actions and methods contain elements of truth or justification. Finally, an approach avoidance conflict emerges when Bruce faces the choice of giving up his identity as Batman or continuing his mission as a way to honor his father's legacy.

From the previous study above, it can be concluded that studying characters in films through a psychological perspective not only enriches understanding of narrative structure but also opens up space for interdisciplinary analysis between psychology, literature, and media studies. Kihlstrom and Park (2016), stated that the audience's emotional engagement is strongly shaped by characters that display realistic and well developed psychological portrayals.

Although numerous studies have analyzed the psychological dimensions of main characters in films, this research, focusing specifically on *The Creator*, remains limited. Most existing discussions revolve around its ethical, political, or technological themes rather than the inner psychological dynamics of its protagonist, Joshua Taylor. Furthermore, previous studies often adopt a single theoretical lens, typically Freudian psychoanalysis, without integrating multiple perspectives that could provide a more holistic understanding of the character's emotional, motivational, and moral transformation. This gap highlights the need for a comprehensive psychological analysis that synthesizes the theories of Freud to explore Joshua's internal conflicts and trauma throughout the narrative. The urgency of this research is in its role of enriching the multidisciplinary domain connecting psychology, literature, and film, while enhancing the understanding of human identity, empathy, and consciousness in the era of artificial intelligence.

### **B . Research Problems**

Based on the above background, the researcher formulates the problem of research as follow:

1. How is the main character's personality portrayed in *The Creator* movie?
2. How is the conflicts that are experienced by the main character in *The Creator* movie?

### **C . Research Objectives**

Based on the research questions of this study, the researcher determines the objects of analysis :

1. To analyze the personality of the main character in *The Creator* movie based on Psychoanalysis theory developed by Sigmund Freud
2. To find out what are the conflict experienced by Joshua in *The Creator* movie.

#### **D . Significance of the Research**

This study has important theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, this research contributes to the development of film and literary studies by applying Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory to understand how characters are constructed, what motivates their actions, and how moral messages are conveyed in films. Freud's concepts help reveal the psychological dynamics, internal conflicts, and unconscious drives that shape a character's behavior.

Practically, this study can serve as a useful reference for students and researchers in literature, psychology, and media studies who wish to apply psychoanalytic theory in film analysis. It also helps readers understand how modern films portray genuine human emotions, inner conflicts, and identity formation in the context of contemporary technological and social change.

#### **E . Scope and Limitations**

This study focuses on analyzing the psychological aspects of the main character, Joshua Taylor, in *The Creator* movie directed by Gareth Edwards. The analysis is based solely on Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, which includes the concepts of the id, ego, and superego. This theory is used to explore Joshua's internal conflicts, motivations, and personality structure as presented throughout the film.

The scope of this research is limited to the main character only and does not extend to an in depth analysis of other characters, supporting roles, or their psychological conditions. Furthermore, this study does not examine cinematic elements such as cinematography, lighting, sound design, music, or editing. The data analyzed consists exclusively of scenes, dialogues, visual cues, and narrative elements that directly reveal the protagonist's psychological processes.

Therefore, this research aims to understand the psychological dimension of Joshua Taylor as reflected through his behavior, decisions, and conflicts within the storyline of *The Creator*.

#### **F . Definition of Key Terms**

To avoid misunderstanding and to provide a clear focus for this research, several key terms used in this study are defined as follows:

1. Psychoanalysis

Psychoanalysis is a psychological theory developed by Sigmund Freud that explains human behavior through the interaction of unconscious desires, instincts, and mental processes. It emphasizes the influence of early experiences and internal psychological conflicts on personality and actions.

2. Main Character

The main character, also known as the protagonist, is the central figure in a narrative who drives the storyline and experiences the primary events of the plot. This character is the focus of the audience's attention and is typically the one who undergoes significant psychological, emotional, or

moral development. In film analysis, the main character is the individual whose actions, motivations, and conflicts shape the direction of the story and through whom the themes of the narrative are most clearly expressed.

### 3. *The Creator* movie

*The Creator* (2023) is a science fiction film directed by Gareth Edwards that explores the conflict between humans and artificial intelligence. This film serves as the primary object of analysis in this study, focusing on the psychological transformation of the main character, Joshua Taylor.