

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of Study

Psychology in literature has long been used by literary critics to analyze and interpret literary works. It originated a long time ago, marked by, according to Childs and Fowler (2006:190) “Aristotle’s series of attempts to account for the effects of tragedy and his deployment of the term catharsis (psychological or mental purification (Dastmard, et. al. 2012:9420)).” Since then, it had been developed in such a way that the focus point of Psychology in literature also evolved. According to Fard (2016:334) Psychology in literature or Psychology Literary Criticism “[...] view(s) works through the lens of psychology.” It sees literary works based on characters inside the literary works, or the author of literary works itself (Fard. 2016). It marks the evolution of its main points that has been used until nowadays; the main points of Psychology Literary Criticism are to apply psychological approach and theory to the literary works to unfold psychological understanding about the literary works. What makes Psychology can be implemented in literature does not happen by chance. It is the nature of literary structure and psychology that met on the crossroad. Considered by many, literature is the reflection of its author’s soul. It is the notion that still holds in critics’ ideas along with new notions about literature that must be seen through within, especially characters in literary works (Goksen. 2015). This statement was further approved by Amelia (2016) that said the meaning of literature is located within its structure. Thus, the correlation between literature and Psychology is evolved to Psychoanalysis Literary Criticism.

Psychoanalysis as a lens to analyze literary works focuses on the meaning beyond the text context. According to Wolfreys. (2001:98) “Both literary criticism and psychoanalysis engage in the interpretation of texts the former explicates or comments on texts which have been crafted and (usually) published [...] Both disciplines thus seek for a meaning beyond the immediately apparent context of the texts, both seek an enhanced understanding [...]” As the text itself describes the particular character as the center point of the story, thus the meaning beyond context in literary works is within the character itself. That in the end will give understanding about the literary work and its psychological dimension like Emir (2019:159) said: “A literary work benefits from psychology in terms of successfully presenting characters, expressing their moods, and bringing the reader into the psychological dimension of human reality.” In other hand, as Ogden and Ogden (2013:13) stated in their book “[...] literature conveys particular feeling states, and that these emotional states of mind can be heard and understood in the same way that feeling states can be heard and understood when they are spoken by a patient (the subject of analysis in psychoanalysis), or by any other person.” So, it can be concluded that because the subject of analysis in psychoanalysis in literature is the character inside the story, therefore the meaning beyond the apparent context of literary works can be seen through analyzing the character.

One of the most influential psychoanalysis theories, used in both psychology, and literature, was proposed by Jacques Lacan (1901-1981). His theory was influenced by Freudian psychology theory in which the human psyche, which was defined by Defermos (2014:1239-1240) as “[...] a property of the most highly organized forms of matter that emerged and was transformed in a long natural and cultural history

[...] The psyche serves to overcome the system of fixed responses of subjects and their orientation in complex environments.”, which is divided into two: unconscious and conscious parts (Balconi. et. al. 2017). His theory, Lacanian Psychoanalysis theory, is focused on human psychology development and in relation to their surroundings. That development is influenced by language and its limit towards his theory of psychoanalysis. According to him, everything comes from language and every being also comes from it. (Lacan. 1991). In his theory, there are three register orders which took up three different eras of development; first is imaginary order, second is symbolic order, and real (Parker, and Vanhule. 2014). His first work of imaginary order according to Parker and Vanhule (2014:1041) “focuses on the consequences of an imaginary mode of relating to the world. At the basis of this relation, he proposes that an identificatory structure can be found in which the ego is captured by an ideal image.” In the second era of his teachings, as Parker and Vanhule (2014:1042) explained “Lacan discusses psychoanalysis in terms of language-based structures. During this time, he attentively studied Freud’s texts and brought these in a dialogue with works of structuralists like the linguists Ferdinand de Saussure and Roman Jakobson or the anthropologist Claude Lévi Strauss and with continental philosophers like Hegel.” In his later development theory, according to Parker and Vanheule (2014:1042), “Lacan embraces the new idea that some aspects of being are Real and cannot be grasped via language.” Real in this sense is the thing that is forever left out from imaginary, and symbolic. It is the foundation of all real-world phenomena through which symbolic work (Bailly. 2012). Together, they become the main pillar in his psychoanalysis theory.

Lacanian psychoanalysis is quite unique in the way he postulated that the process of psychoanalysis is always in influence of subject and analyst interaction in the process of analysis. (Evans. 2006) Thus, the immediate objective of Lacanian psychoanalysis itself is to seek recognition of the subject so that the cause of his/her symptom can be brought to the realm of meaning by the subject dialogue between his/herself and the analyst. Lacan (1991:3) further explained that “The ideal of analysis is not complete self-mastery, the absence of passion. It is to render the subject capable of sustaining the analytic dialogue, to speak neither too early, nor too late.” When the subject was able to create a dialogue between him/her, and the analyst, the subject’s ability to speak for him/herself can be tracked down. In doing so, the subject can put detailed history of him/herself. Or in another explanation, the very objective of Lacanian psychoanalysis, as Lacan (1991:12) is to get “[...] the complete reconstitution of the subject's history [...].” Further, he explained “[...] the subject relives, comes to remember, in the intuitive sense of the word, the formative events of his existence, is not in itself so very important. What matters is what he reconstructs (Lacan. 1991:13).” The three register orders he constructed (Imaginary, Symbolic Order, and Real) are the foundation of the human psyche and for the subject to be able to reconstruct his/her, the analyst must put it into dialogue and see it through those orders.

Against those backdrops, Lacanian psychoanalysis must be used to analyze the literary work in order to get what was beyond the text itself so that the psychological reality can be clearly understood. As the literary work itself is limited by the plot, and story it contains, great attention must be placed on the flow of the story in which the character might present itself within it. Because the character exists by its words

in the story, and represents itself with words, psychoanalysis can only be conducted by taking those words into dialogue, essentially reconstructing the history of the character's psyche. On the other hand, as the story moves within the flow of plot, and so does the way the character represents itself, reconstruction of character's psyche is dependent on it (Defermos. 2014). Taking all of those into consideration, the Lacanian psychoanalysis will be a useful theory and tool to understanding the meaning of literary work beyond the text.

*The Catcher in The Rye*, a novel by Jerome David Salinger has become this paper's main subject of analysis with several unique reasons behind it. The story of this novel is about the events of *Holden's* two days after he has been expelled from his school. During this journey, *Holden* reveals his psychological trait when he encounters many people in his spare time. His sloppy life gave the impression that there must be something wrong in his life. It was enforced with the fact that when he interacted with something he despised, he chose to remain silent and only expressed it through his thoughts. As a result, he acted differently from his thought. He must have something in his psyche that prevents him from doing that thing, because there were almost no reasons for him not to do it. For example, when he talks to his friend, *Stradlater*, about his ex-girlfriend, without hesitation he punches his friend's face. It shows the inconsistency within his mind, and action. In addition to that, *Holden* reveals himself throughout the story with words that represent his actions, and behaviors. That means, in order to understand what is going on; the psyche must be scrutinized first by analyzing how the character, *Holden*, constructs his history through the words he said in the novel. In other way, hence, the use of Lacanian psychoanalysis as the main theory is chosen because this theory focused

more about the character psychology that has been cemented into the actions, and behaviors that embedded within his words throughout the entire story. As such, it will give an explanation about his psyche according to the Lacanian psychoanalysis orders, especially the symbolic order including the unconscious, and desire structure, metonymy and metaphor, and signified, and signifier.

Against that explanation, this research will be conducted according to the question, and objectives that have been created according to it. The urgency of this research is found in the fact that understanding the psyche of the character is the only way to understand literary work, especially this novel. While the novel itself might be old, being published in 1948, it still manages to become one of the novels that defined what it is really like to be a teenager. Thus, in analyzing the character's psyche, it will give a better recognition of what was happening in the teenager's life. Furthermore, in line with that, in understanding a character's psyche, the better appreciation and comprehension of unique psychological traits of character in literary work can be more alive than ever. This in the end will give the same result in understanding the very nature of the human psyche.

## **1.2. Formulation of the Problem**

In this research, a problem has been formulated according to the background of this research. The following problem is the focus point of this research:

How is the portrayal of Holden's psyche depicted in Salinger's *The Catcher in The Rye* according to Lacanian Psychoanalysis?

### **1.3. Research Objective**

The following objective was formulated by the writer based on the problem that has been constructed. The objective is:

To reveal Holden's psyche through the eyes of Lacanian Psychoanalysis as depicted in his actions, words, and narration about his surroundings, and himself in the novel *The Catcher in The Rye* by J. D. Salinger.

### **1.4. Uses of the Study**

The nature of this research presented itself with two uses. There are theoretical and practical uses.

The theoretical uses of this research are located in its explanation of character psyche in literary work, and its knowledge it provides for future research in the same field. It includes Lacanian psychoanalysis theory as a tool to analyze literary work.

The practical uses of this research are to provide society with a new view of Lacanian analysis in understanding literary work, and to give greater understanding that the fictional character of literary work is based on the actual person. Therefore, it also will give greater understanding of a real person's psyche.

### **1.5. Scope of Study**

This research focuses on to reveal how the character's psyche is portrayed in the novel *The Catcher in The Rye* by J. D. Salinger by applying Lacanian psychoanalysis theory.