

**ANALYSIS OF ANXIETY AND DEFENSE MECHANISMS DEPICTED IN  
CRAIG THE MAIN CHARACTER IN THE NOVEL *IT'S KIND OF A  
FUNNY STORY* (2006) BY NED VIZZINI**

**A FINAL PROJECT  
Presented as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement  
To Obtain the *Sarjana Sastra* Degree  
In English Literature**



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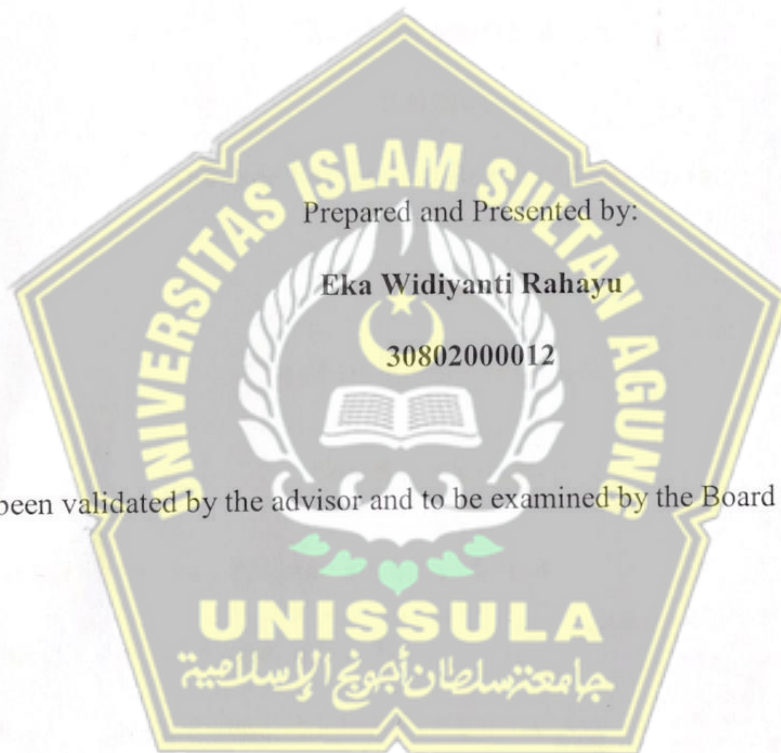
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## STATEMENT OF WORK ORIGINALITY

I hereby declare honestly that the thesis I have written does not contain the work or parts of the work of others, except those cited in quotations and bibliography, as it should be in a scientific work. If my statement in the future is not valid, I absolutely agree to accept academic sanctions in the form of revocation of my paper and the degree I obtained from the paper.

Semarang, June 4<sup>th</sup> 2024



Eka Widiyanti Rahayu

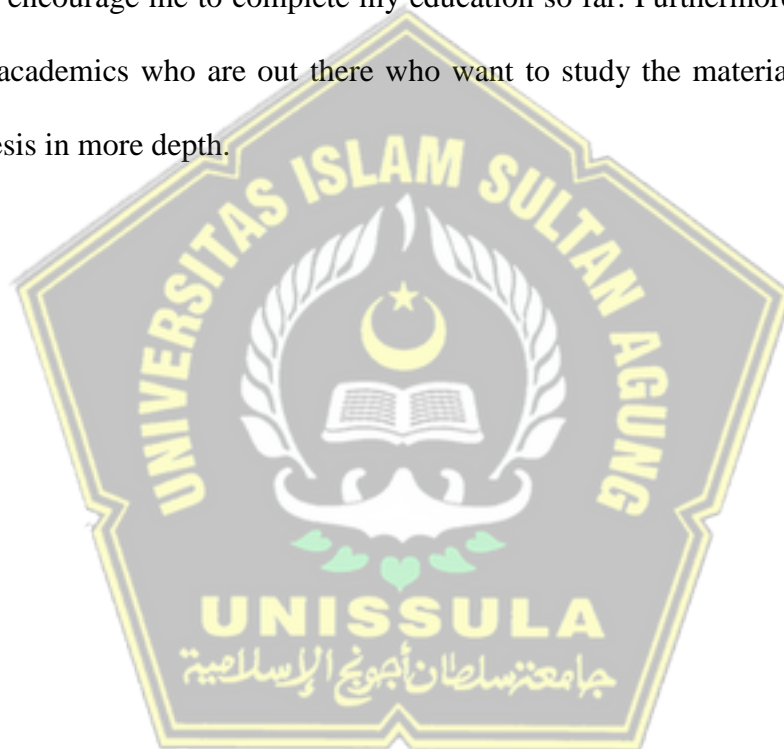


## **MOTTO**

”Where you are, don’t forget to take a pray”

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to myself who has succeeded in achieving one of his dreams. Likewise, I dedicate this thesis to mama, papa and my younger brothers who always encourage me to complete my education so far. Furthermore, I dedicate it to the academics who are out there who want to study the material discussed in this thesis in more depth.





## ABSTRACT

**Rahayu, Eka Widiyanti. 30802000012.** Analysis of Anxiety and Defense Mechanisms Depicted by Craig in the Main Character of the Novel *It's Kind of a Funny Story* (2006) by Ned Vizzini. Final Project English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Language and Communication Science. Sultan Agung Islamic University Semarang. Advisor: Destary Praptawati, SS, M.Hum.

The novel *It's Kind of a Funny Story* by Ned Vizzini is the subject of analysis in this study. The aim of this study is to analyze the anxiety experienced by Craig, the main character, and to examine how Craig alleviates his anxiety using Sigmund Freud's theories of anxiety and defense mechanisms.

The method used in this study was descriptive qualitative. The primary data for this analysis was taken from the novel *It's Kind of a Funny Story* (2006), consisting of dialogues, monologues, and narratives. Additionally, secondary data was drawn from various journals, articles, book reviews, and previous studies related to this study. The steps required to analyze the data include reading the novel, identifying relevant data, and categorizing the data.

The results of this study revealed two main findings. First, Craig experienced anxiety, specifically neurotic anxiety and moral anxiety. Second, Craig employed defense mechanisms to reduce his anxiety, namely rationalization, displacement, and reaction formation.

**Keywords:** *Anxiety, Defense mechanism, Sigmund Freud, It's Kind of a Funny Story Novel*

## INTISARI

**Rahayu, Eka Widiyanti. 30802000012.** Analisis Kecemasan dan Mekanisme Pertahanan yang digambarkan oleh Craig Dalam Karakter Utama di Novel *It's Kind of a Funny Story* (2006) Karya Ned Vizzini. Skripsi Program Studi Sastra Inggris Fakultas Bahasa dan Ilmu Komunikasi. Universitas Islam Sultan Agung Semarang. Pembimbing: Destary Praptawati, SS, M.Hum.

Novel *It's Kind of a Funny Story* karya Ned Vizzini adalah objek analisis pada penelitian ini. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kecemasan yang dialami oleh Craig sebagai tokoh utama dan menganalisis bagaimana Craig mengurangi rasa kecemasannya dengan menggunakan teori kecemasan dan mekanisme pertahanan oleh Sigmund Freud.

Metode yang digunakan pada penelitian ini adalah deskriptif kualitatif. Data utama yang digunakan untuk menganalisis penelitian ini diambil dari novel *It's Kind of a Funny Story* (2006) berupa dialog, monolog dan naratif. Lalu, data sekunder yang digunakan untuk menganalisis penelitian ini diambil dari beberapa jurnal, artikel, resensi buku, penelitian sebelumnya yang berhubungan dengan penelitian ini. Adapun langkah-langkah yang diperlukan untuk menganalisis data, adalah membaca novel, mengidentifikasi data, dan mengelompokan data.

Dari hasil penelitian ini ditemukan dua hasil. Pertama, Craig mengalami kecemasan, yaitu: kecemasan neurotik dan kecemasan moral. Kedua, Craig menggunakan mekanisme pertahanan untuk mengurangi rasa kecemasannya, yaitu: rasionalisasi, pengalihan, pembentukan reaksi.

**Kata kunci:** Kecemasan, Mekanisme Pertahanan, Sigmund Freud, Novel *It's Kind of a Funny Story*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

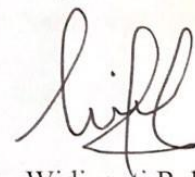
In the name of Allah, the most gracious and the most merciful. I would like to express my gratitude to Allah subhanahu wata'ala who has given me extraordinary blessings and gifts so that I can complete this final project. I realize that I could not complete this final project without motivation, assistance, and support from various parties, either directly or indirectly. Therefore, I would like to express my gratitude to the following people:

1. Trimanah Sos., M.Si as the Dean of the Faculty of Language and Communication Sciences.
2. Destary Praptawati, S.S., M.Hum as the head of the English literature department as well as my advisor who always gives support and is patient in guiding me until finally I can finish this research.
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I realize that my thesis is far from perfect and still needs input and criticism. Despite its shortcomings, I hope this thesis can provide benefits and be an inspiration for researchers.

Semarang, June 4<sup>th</sup> 2024



Eka Widiyanti Rahayu

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Study

There are many broad meanings of literature in our lives. According to Learning and College, any written work is considered literature in the widest sense. The word's etymology is Latin *litaritura/litatura*, which means "writing formed with letters." However, other definitions also include texts that are spoken or sung. More narrowly put, it is writing of literary value. Poetry and prose, as well as fiction and non-fiction, can be used to categorize literature (1). Based on the explanation above, it means that literature is not only in written form but can also be sung, spoken, staged, or expressed through various other art media. for example, it can be like drama or film. Film and literature are different but have similar goals in creating greatness in human imagination and understanding. Both film and literature collaborate to drive the progress of human civilization, complementing each other. Like letters and sounds in human communication, both letters and sounds have unique and irreplaceable roles (Nagnath, 2).

Human life is always connected to literature because it is inspired by human experience. Literature is not only to be enjoyed, but the benefits of its content can also be deciphered. There are various theories commonly used to analyzed the success of literary works, and one of them is through the lens of psychology. According to Coon and Mitterer, psychology is "the scientific

study of behavior and mental processes." Despite having numerous sub-disciplines and theoretical viewpoints that differ in their approaches, purview, and areas of concentration, the current practice of psychology applies scientific rigor to the study of human behavior in both applied and academic contexts (1).

The psychology in English literature, or any other literature can shed light on the reasons behind people's actions, thoughts, and behaviors (Ayesha, 285). The principles of literary psychology are to understand the motivations, states of mind, and behaviors of characters portrayed in literary works. It involves understanding the psychological states of characters, such as tendencies, internal conflicts, emotions, and motivations that are reflected in the stories written by authors. This method allows us to respond to and understand fictional characters in a more in-depth way, as well as to gain a broader understanding of human life as a whole.

Many famous scientists in the field of psychology have contributed to the development of psychological theories. Sigmund Freud, is one of the important figures in the history of psychology because of his major role in the development of the theory of psychoanalysis. Freud is best known for his theory of the human mental structure consisting of the id, ego, and superego as well as the concept of the unconscious. He also built complex theories on Oedipus, defense mechanisms, and psychoanalysis, which helped understand the unconscious aspects of the human mind.

The misalignment between the unconscious desires of the id, the demands of reality faced by the ego, and the moral standards applied by the superego can cause psychological tension referred to as anxiety. Freud also has another theory, namely anxiety and defense mechanism. "Anxiety is a tense and unsettling anticipation of a threatening but formless event; a feeling of uneasy suspense" (Rachman, 3). It means anxiety the emotional response that arises when an individual feels threatened, although the threat may not be clearly describable or tangible. An unpleasant feeling of tension is produced by anxiety, creating a description of the way individuals respond to events perceived as potentially harmful, although their exact nature may be elusive. It is important to recognize anxiety, understand its causes, and learn how to manage it so that it does not interfere with daily life. Three categories of anxiety were proposed by Freud: moral anxiety, neurotic anxiety, and reality anxiety (Schultz and Schultz, 57).

Anxiety is an emotional response to threat, often stemming from a conflict between conflicting desires within the unconscious mind. Freud argued that individuals tend to use defense mechanisms, unconscious strategies that the ego uses to reduce anxiety arising from such unconscious conflicts. To the best of its ability, the ego responds to the demands of reality, the id, and the superego. However the ego has to protect itself when the anxiety gets too much. It accomplishes this by unintentionally suppressing the urges or reshaping them into something more palatable and non-threatening. These methods are referred to as "ego defense mechanisms." (Boeree, 8).

Repression, reaction formation, displacement, fixation, regression, projection, introjection, and sublimation are among the main defense mechanisms that Freud recognized (Feist and Feist, 41). All of these mechanisms serve as ways to reduce anxiety, but if defense mechanisms overused, they can hinder mental health and healthy personal development. Freud saw these mechanisms as a form of self-protection, although their overuse can have a negative impact.

The discussion of anxiety and defense mechanism was chosen because there is a lot of anxiety found in various places and situations. Anxiety and defense mechanism are interesting because they can provide an understanding of the various types of anxiety that a person experiences. Additionally, this study explains the defense mechanisms used by individuals when they feel threatened. This discussion is important because everyone must have felt various anxieties in various situations.

This study discusses specifically about anxiety and defense mechanism contained in the novel *Its Kind of a Funny Story* (2006). The novel was released in 2006 by Ned Vizzini. The novel depicts the experiences of a teenager named Craig who experiences severe mental distress, including symptoms of depression and anxiety. The novel shows how Craig feels severe pressure from a competitive school, family expectations, and his own demands. Craig experienced excessive pressure from social and academic expectations. The film highlights how anxiety can affect individuals, even at a young age like Craig, and how difficult it can be to deal with such immense pressure. It also highlights the importance of social support and therapy in



overcoming mental health issues. In addition, the novel *Its Kind of a Funny Story* (2006) was chosen because no one has ever analyzed it using the anxiety and defense mechanism theory.

There are several studies in the field of literature that discuss Sigmund Freud's anxiety and defense mechanism. There are several titles of research that discuss anxiety and defense mechanism, the first, "Anxiety and defense mechanism of Arthur Dimmesdale as reflected in *The Scarlet Letter* Novel by Nathaniel Hawthorne" by Ika Novianti (2020). This study discusses the anxiety and defense mechanism of John Green's main character in the film *Turtles All The Way Down*. As for another study that discuss anxiety and defense mechanism, namely, "Anxiety and defense mechanism in Jeannette Walls' *The Glass Castle*" by Arimbi Putri Dewanti (2023) this study also discusses Anxiety and defense mechanism in the main character in the novel.

Different from previous studies that analyzed anxiety and defense mechanism, the novel *Its Kind of a Funny Story* (2006) has never been analyzed using anxiety and defense mechanism theory. This study is interesting to be discussed because it will provide more knowledge about anxiety and defense mechanism in the surrounding environment. Based on the explanation above, this study is entitled *Analysis of Anxiety and Defense Mechanisms Depicted in Craig The Novel It's Kind of a Funny Story (2006) By Ned Vizzini*.

## **B. Problem Formulation**

1. What kinds of anxiety experienced by Craig in *It's Kind of a Funny Story* novel (2006)?
2. What defense mechanism does Craig employ to cope with his anxieties in *It's Kind of a Funny Story* novel (2006)?

## **C. Limitation of the Study**

Based on background of the study above, this study focuses on the types of anxiety and defense mechanisms, namely neurotic anxiety and moral anxiety. The defense mechanism focuses on rationalization, displacement, reaction formation seen in *It's Kind of a Funny Story* novel..

## **D. Object of the Study**

Based on the problem formulation above, there are several objectives in this study, namely:

1. To find out what kinds of anxiety experienced by Craig in *It's Kind of a Funny Story* novel (2006)?
2. To explain defense mechanism used by Craig in order to cope his anxiety in *It's Kind of a Funny Story* novel (2006)?

## **E. Significance of the Study**

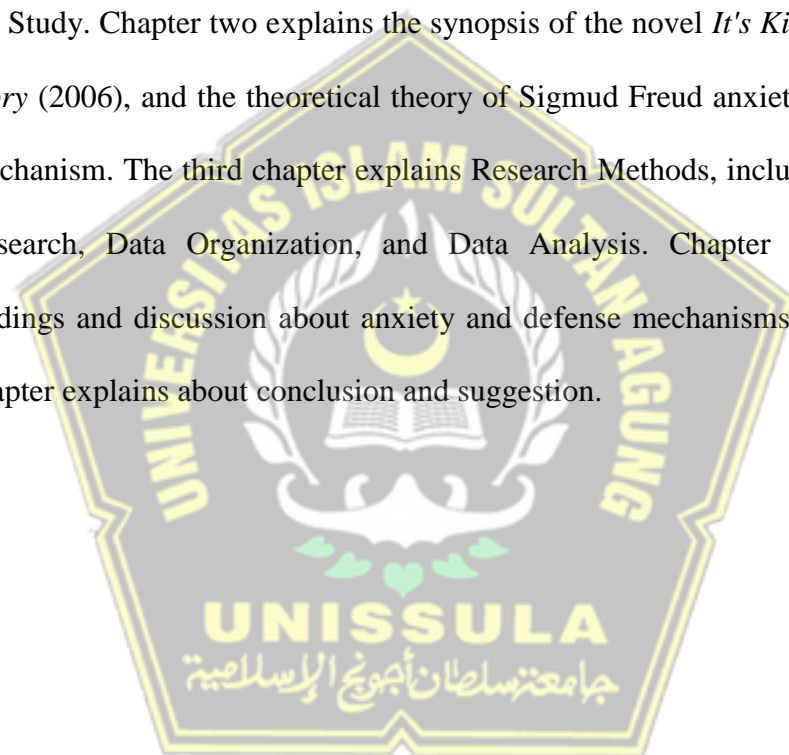
The following hopes that this study has benefits for readers:

1. This study will help understand Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis theory, especially about anxiety and defense mechanisms.
2. This study can provide new insight into analyzing literary works related to psychological approaches, especially for English Literature students at the

Faculty of Language and Communication Sciences, Sultan Agung Islamic University.

#### **F. Organization of the Study**

This study was basically structured into five chapters, the first chapter explains Background of the Study, Problem Formulation, Limitations of the Study, Objectives of the Study, Significance of the Study, and Organization of the Study. Chapter two explains the synopsis of the novel *It's Kind of a Funny Story* (2006), and the theoretical theory of Sigmud Freud anxiety and defense mechanism. The third chapter explains Research Methods, including Types of Research, Data Organization, and Data Analysis. Chapter four explains findings and discussion about anxiety and defense mechanisms. And the last chapter explains about conclusion and suggestion.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEWS OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter is a review of related literature, it contains a synopsis of *It's Kind of a Funny Story* novel and theory anxiety defense mechanisms by Sigmund Freud

#### A. Synopsis

*It's Kind of a Funny Story* novel by Ned Vizzini did not win any major awards. However, it won accolades from critics and readers for its honest and empathetic portrayal of mental health issues, especially among teenagers. Despite not winning any major awards, the novel has had a significant impact in opening up the dialog about mental health among young readers.

*It's Kind of a Funny Story* is a novel that depicts the struggles of a teenage boy named Craig Gilner. Craig is under immense pressure at his competitive school and also suffers from the burden of high expectations from his mother and father. The anxiety he experienced was palpable and felt through the feelings in his mind that were constantly intertwined with fears about his future. Craig felt very pressured by the expectations placed on him. His mind was always filled with worries about impending failure, how he had to succeed to achieve his goals, and thinking about how others would judge him. His anxiety reflected in his constant ruminations about whether he was good enough, how far he could go to achieve his parents' expectations, and his thoughts about how others would view him.

When Craig was on the verge of a major change in his life, his anxiety increased significantly. The feeling is similar to the ever-increasing burden of not only having to succeed at a highly competitive school, but also having to meet the high expectations of various aspects of his environment, including his family and his friends.

The uncertainty about his future, the feeling that failure would always lead to devastating consequences, and the weight of expectation on his shoulders were all causes for Craig's anxiety. His mind became the place where his anxieties about the future and his inability to fulfill expectations haunted him constantly, as well as bringing about a tremendous feeling of mental distress for him.

He was trapped in a cycle of anxiety that felt like it was making him depressed, especially when Craig could no longer deal with the pressure. The ever-growing burden made Craig afraid and unable to cope with his own stress problems. Finally Craig decided to go to the mental hospital alone, without telling his parents, When he arrived at the mental hospital Craig went straight to the Emergency Room then met a nurse and explained what his purpose was to come to the mental hospital, after Craig explained his purpose then he had to wait in the waiting room until his name was called to be examined, while in the waiting room Craig also met one of the patients named Bobby he was one of the patients at the mental hospital then they got acquainted and talked a little. Not long after Craig's name was called to be examined by Dr. Mahmoud after being examined, Craig was finally escorted to his room by the nurse.

Upon Craig's arrival at the psychiatric hospital, he faced considerable discomfort. Initially Craig experienced panic and confusion because he was in an environment that was very different from what he had originally imagined. Craig felt trapped among people with different mental illnesses and he felt lonely in the early days of his arrival at the hospital, Craig felt that he was anxious and unsure whether his decision to seek help at the psychiatric hospital was the right choice for him.

During his adjustment to this new environment, Craig also often felt anxious and doubtful. He was worried about how others would perceive him, as well as anxious with the fear of failing again or not being able to heal himself. These anxious feelings made Craig feel restless and it was sometimes difficult to find comfort.

However, as time went on and he interacted with people at the psychiatric hospital, Craig began to find support and understanding. Although there was still a sense of anxiety, he learned to cope with these feelings in various ways, from talking to others, to expressing himself through art, to finding pleasure in the activities done with the people there. This helped Craig to ease his anxiety and begin the process of mental recovery.

## **B. Related Literature**

This study discusses anxiety and defense mechanisms using sigmund freud's psychoanalysis theory.

## B.1 Anxiety

Anxiety is a feeling that is experienced directly and deeply. We can call it an affective state, although we don't fully understand what affective means. As a feeling, anxiety is definitely not pleasant, but this is not the only component of anxiety. Not all unpleasant feelings are anxiety. There is a wide range of other unpleasant feelings such as mental tension and sadness. Anxiety has specific features that distinguish it from all other unpleasant feelings (Freud, 11). Anxiety is something that often happens around us, especially when we are afraid because of uncertainty, threats, or situations that make us feel uncomfortable or worried about future events, anxiety can occur anywhere and anytime. Many psychologists discuss anxiety, one of them is Sigmund Freud. Freud created a model of personality that included the id, ego, and superego, and he re-examined the way anxiety arises. Freud designed this model to say that our personality is shaped by the conflict between the id, ego, and superego, and anxiety arises when there is this conflict and the need to keep unacceptable thoughts and feelings from surfacing into our consciousness (Sweeney and Pine, 5).

Freud's concept sees anxiety as a congenital condition, but can also increase over time. Freud considered primary anxiety to be part of a person's early experiences. Other types of anxiety, such as fear, are considered different from primary anxiety simply because of their source.

In other words, anxiety itself is considered an important element in Freudian theory, although its causes can vary (Strongman, 2)

Freud defines anxiety as a condition that is felt and affective in nature, accompanied by physical symptoms that warn people of impending danger. Anxiety itself is always felt, although this discomfort is often vague and difficult to pinpoint (Feist and Feist, 33). According to Freud, defines that there are three kinds of anxiety that can occur, namely reality anxiety, neurotic anxiety, and moral anxiety (Schultz and Schultz, 57).

### **B.1.1 Realistic Anxiety**

Realistic anxiety is a form of anxiety that arises in us when we feel worried or afraid of something potentially harmful. Realistic anxiety occurs when the ego perceives a threat or danger that comes from the outside world. That is, realistic anxiety is a reaction to a real and identifiable external threat, which causes the ego to feel the need to be alert and ready for the potential danger (Freud, 267). In other words, The initial type of anxiety, which is the root of all other anxieties, is reality or objective anxiety This involves fear of real-world dangers. For example, most of us fear fires, hurricanes, earthquakes and other disasters. We run from wild animals, fast cars, and burning buildings. (Schultz and Schultz, 57). In addition, according to Feist and Feist, anxiety caused by unpleasant and unspecific feelings involving possible danger can also be referred to as realistic anxiety (34). According



to Strongman, “neurotic anxiety is free-floating and not necessarily attached to real objects” (as cited in Pack, 2). This suggests that realistic anxiety is an emotional reaction to an actual threat and can be seen in reactions to situations that may be dangerous.

### **B.1.2 Neurotic Anxiety**

Neurotic anxiety is described as worrying about an unknown threat. The thoughts themselves exist within the ego, but are sourced from the id drive (Feist and Feist, 34). Moreover, according to Schultz and Schultz, in the conflict between instinctual gratification and reality, neurotic anxiety arises in childhood. Children are often punished for openly displaying their sexual or aggressive desires. Therefore, anxiety is caused by the desire to satisfy certain id impulses. This neurotic anxiety is an unconscious fear of being punished for impulsively displaying id-dominated behavior. Note that the fear is related to what might happen as a result of satisfying the instinct, not to the instinct. It is a conflict between the id and the ego, which initially has some basis in reality (57). According to Boeree, neurotic basically comes from the Latin word meaning nervous, so it can be interpreted as nervous anxiety. It was this type of anxiety that attracted Freud's attention, and we generally refer to it as generalized anxiety (8). One example of neurotic anxiety is when we are on the road and feel anxious when we see the police, even though we have not done

or broken anything. Individuals suffering from neurotic disorders have several symptoms, such as emotional instability, guilt, and a tendency to act negatively towards certain things.

### **B.1.3 Moral Anxiety**

Moral anxiety is the feeling we experience when the threat comes from our superego, not from the outside, physical world. It is actually just another term for feelings like shame, guilt, and fear of punishment. (Boeree, 8). As for Schultz and Schultz, the conflict between id and superego causes moral anxiety. In essence, it is the fear of one's morals (58). That is, moral anxiety arises due to a conflict between instinctual drives (id) and internal moral norms (superego), which actually reflects the fear of violating ethical principles and individual conscience. For example, a worker may feel morally anxious if asked to do something that violates the company's ethics or values. This can occur due to pressure to comply with orders and fear of violating moral principles.

### **B.2 Defense Mechanisms**

People often look for ways to reduce or overcome emotional discomfort such as feelings of anxiety. One method that is usually used is a defense mechanism. Anxiety becomes a symbol that there is danger approaching, a related threat to the ego that needs to be overcome or avoided. The ego must balance the conflict that occurs between the urges of the id and the demands of society or the superego (Schultz and Schultz,

58). In accordance with Freud's view, the ego can be compared to a battleground where the forces of the id and superego are constantly at odds. Although most of the ego's functions take place in consciousness, some of its processes are unconscious and aim to keep the individual from anxiety arising from the demands of the id and superego (Ryckman, 41). Defense mechanisms are ways that the mind uses to reduce feelings of anxiety that are being experienced to control anxiety so as not to become excessive, Freud also describes various mechanisms commonly used by humans such as, sublimation, denial, displacement (Freud, 111).

The concept of defense mechanisms is central to psychoanalysis theory (Cramer, 525). Freud argued that defenses must always exist, to some extent. All actions are motivated by instinct, and all actions are defensive, or defending against anxiety. The intensity of the struggle present in your personality may change, but it never stops (Schultz and Schultz, 58). These defense activities are performed on the patient with the aim of avoiding painful feelings and impacts (Cramer, 525). Using defense mechanisms can also provide temporary psychological comfort or protection from conflict or difficult feelings, but if defense mechanisms used excessively or as the only way to deal with problems, it can have a negative effect on mental health. Ultimately, it is important to build healthier introspection and emotion management skills to recognize and deal with internal conflicts in an effective way. According to Freud, The principal defense mechanisms identified by Freud include repression,

reaction formation, displacement, denial, regression, projection, rationalization and sublimation (Feist and Feist, 35).

### **B.2.1 Repression**

Repression is the most basic defense mechanism and is included in all other defense mechanisms. Whenever an unwanted impulse threatens the ego, the ego represses the impulse in other words, the ego forces the feeling into the unconscious (Feist and Feist, 35). In other words, the ego pushes the feeling into the unconscious. This process happens automatically, serving the purpose of maintaining mental harmony and protecting feelings that are not consciously acceptable from surfacing, reducing the potential for internal problems.

### **B.2.2 Denial**

Denial leads to a person's refusal to see something unpleasant event or unpleasant in reality externally. For example, when we are told that a loved one has passed away, we may go into denial. Having a sense of disbelief allows us to control the shock and assimilate it in a slower and is less painful way (Ryckman, 43). At first, Freud defined denial as a defense mechanism as a refusal to acknowledge disturbing aspects of the external world as well as the presence of disturbing psychological (internal) events, such as thoughts, memories, or feelings (Costa, 1045).

### **B.2.3 Displacement**

People can shift the id drive to another object if the required object is not available. This term is called displacement. For example, young children who hate their parents or adults who hate their boss may spread their hatred to other people (Schultz and Schultz, 60). Moreover, According to Ewen, “displacement involves the transfer of feelings or behaviors from a dangerous object to one that is less threatening” (22). It means that displacement is a psychological defense mechanism in which a person redirects feelings or behaviors that may be related to objects or situations that are considered dangerous or threatening, by performing displacement a person tries to reduce emotional distress or discomfort that may arise from objects or circumstances that are considered dangerous. For example, someone in a very long traffic jam may not be able to scold the other driver. Instead, when the person gets home they may take their emotions out on the people at home or by damaging things around them.

### **B.2.4 Sublimation**

Sublimation involves transforming the id urges. Instinctual energy is diverted into other channels of expression that are deemed acceptable and valued by society. For example, sexual energy may be transferred or sublimated into artistic creativity

(Schultz and Schultz 60). In Addition, according to Cohen, “Sublimation is the channeling of unacceptable feelings, desires, and impulses often of a sexual or aggressive nature into positive, socially approved activity” (5275). Sublimation allows individuals to divert emotional energy that may come from sexual or aggressive urges into positive activities so that it can be accepted by the community environment. For example, redirecting our emotional feelings into something positive such as painting, exercising, cooking, studying, working. This can relieve emotional distress and assist in psychological balance as the individual directs emotional energy that is difficult to express directly into positive and beneficial physical activity.

### **B.2.5 Regression**

Using regression as a defense mechanism, a person copes with stress by acting childlike, immature, or inappropriate for their age. They regress to an earlier stage of development, such as when over-dependence or temper tantrums were normal (Costa, 4346). This regression occurs in response to stressful or unpleasant situations where one faces challenges or conflicts at a more advanced level of development. For example, An adult who experiences significant stress in their working relationship or job may show regression by behaving as they did when they

were a child, such as crying or demanding more attention from others.

### **B.2.6 Projection**

Projection is a psychological defense mechanism used by a person to hide or deny harmful impulses within themselves. It works by unconsciously attributing unwanted impulses or thoughts to other people or objects around them (Ewen, 22). According to Ryckman, “when a person protects the ego by attributing his or her own undesirable characteristics to others, we might infer that projection has taken place” (44). In other words people tend to see or assume that undesirable characteristics in themselves are actually possessed by others. This can help person maintain a positive image of themselves, but at the same time creates distortions in the objective assessment of others. For example, people who have feelings of guilt about certain actions may think that others around them always see them in a negative way, when in fact the thoughts are mostly coming from themselves.

### **B.2.7 Reaction Formation**

The concept of reaction formation means transforming an unacceptable social urge into its opposite. The following example can be used to apply this concept to self-esteem protection: Individuals act in ways that show they have an

unacceptable trait in response to the fact that they have the opposite trait. For example, hostility or intolerance may be reciprocated by going out of their way to show themselves as peaceful or tolerant (Baumeister, 1985). Moreover, according to Feist and Feist, “One of the ways in which a repressed impulse may become conscious is through adopting a disguise that is directly opposite its original form. This defense mechanism is called a reaction formation” (35). It means that one way that repressed impulses can become conscious is by adopting a disguise that directly contradicts their original nature. In other words, a person may change or exhibit behaviors opposite to the original impulse that may not be socially or morally acceptable. For example, someone who feels jealous may try to show very positive feelings of friendship as a disguise for his or her true jealousy

### **B.2.8 Rationalization**

According to Ryckman, “Rationalization is the justification of behavior through the use of plausible, but inaccurate, excuses” (44). It means that rationalization is an attempt to justify one's behavior by using reasons that seem reasonable, but these reasons are not always accurate or in accordance with reality. someone who rationalizes tries to provide logically acceptable justifications for their actions or



decisions, even though the reasons may not fully reflect the truth or the true motives behind the behavior. According to Knoll, rationalization is useful to get people away from forms that may be difficult to accept by using other reasons that are more recognized by society for one's actions (4302).



## CHAPTER III

### RESEARCH METHOD

#### A. Type of Research

This study required a method to find and answer the problems in a study. This was an important part of finding answers and knowing the results. A qualitative descriptive method was used in this research, which was in accordance with the study objectives. “Qualitative research aims to understand some aspects of social life, which usually uses words rather than numbers as data for analysis” (Patton and Cochran 3). That means qualitative methods did not use numbers or quantitative data. this method relied more on text or writing as the main source of research data. Instance of such texts took various forms such as novels, film scripts, poems, or short stories. By using qualitative methods, research is more focused on an intensive understanding of the context, meaning, and characteristics of the research subject.

#### B. Data Organizing

##### B.1 Data Collecting Method

In the process of collecting data, there were four steps that were carried out if you want to analyze the novel namely, reading the novel, identifying the data, classifying the data, and reducing the data.

##### B.1.1 Reading the Novel

Reading the novel *It's Kind of a Funny Story* (2006) several times was the first step in collecting data. The main purpose was

to gain a general understanding of the story. For example the ability to define the characters, understand the themes, conflicts, and plot of the novel, and find the points that author needed for analysis.

### **B.1.2 Identifying the Data**

After doing the first and second steps, namely reading the novel several times, the next step was to identify data to find important data and note or highlight points related to anxiety and defense mechanisms experienced by Craig. The data used for identification in the novel were dialogues and monologues related to the topic being analyzed.

### **B.1.3 Classifying the Data**

The next step was to collect all the identified data, the data were sorted according to the problem formulation, the purpose of classifying the data was to make it easier for author to analyzed the data, and answer the existing problem formulation. This method of grouping usually contained excerpts of dialog and monolog in the novel, a column on the page in novel, in the next column contained references and comments.

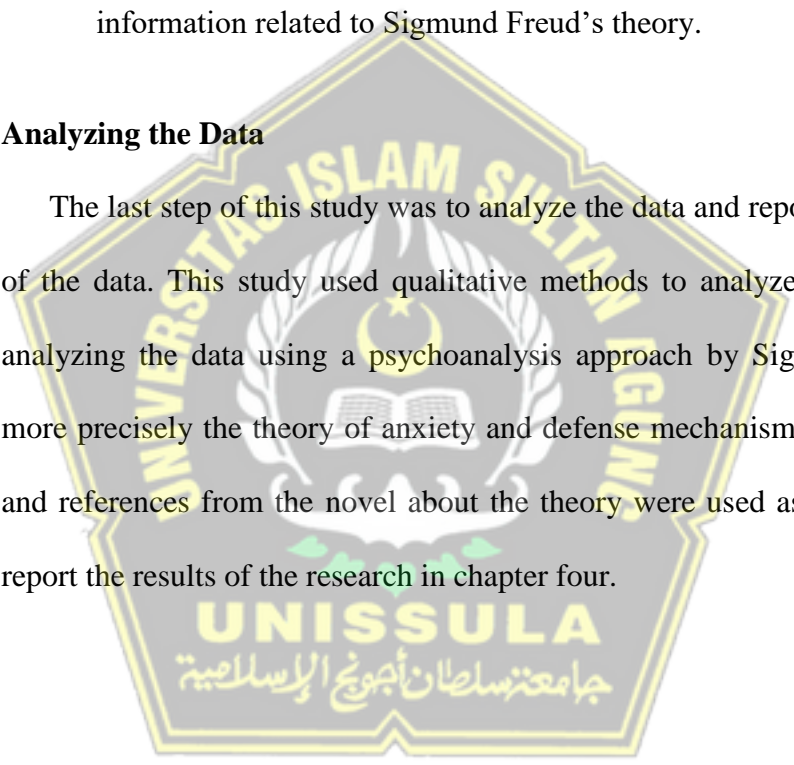
## **B.2 Type of Data**

The data in this study were divided into two types, primary and secondary data:

1. Primary data were taken from novel such as monologues, dialogues, and narratives in *It's Kind of a Funny Story* (2006).
2. Secondary data were supporting data to strengthen statements from primary data. The data could be taken from reading journals, books, and other articles that were in accordance with this research. The use of secondary data can facilitated the author in finding information related to Sigmund Freud's theory.

### **C. Analyzing the Data**

The last step of this study was to analyze the data and report the results of the data. This study used qualitative methods to analyze the data. In analyzing the data using a psychoanalysis approach by Sigmund Freud, more precisely the theory of anxiety and defense mechanism, then quotes and references from the novel about the theory were used as evidence to report the results of the research in chapter four.



## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter is to answer and discuss to the problem formulation question, this chapter has two parts namely, the first explains about the types of anxiety experienced in the novel *It's Kind of a Funny Story* and the second discusses the defense mechanisms that occurs in the novel *It's Kind of a Funny Story*.

#### A. Anxiety Depicted in the Main Character in the Novel *It's Kind of a Funny Story*

Some people must have felt anxiety in themselves, many things can cause someone to feel anxiety. Anxiety is a feeling that is experienced directly and deeply. We can call it an affective state, although we don't fully understand what affective means. As a feeling, anxiety is definitely not pleasant, but this is not the only component of anxiety. Not all unpleasant feelings are anxiety. There is a wide range of other unpleasant feelings such as mental tension and sadness. Anxiety has specific features that distinguish it from all other unpleasant feelings (Freud, 11). The quotation above explains that anxiety is something that everyone feels but sometimes it is difficult to understand and know clearly. Anxiety itself cannot be determined when the time is, it can happen anytime and anywhere. Anxiety can occur because someone feels an event that makes him uncomfortable in a certain situation.

Craig felt a variety of anxieties that made him feel very depressed, one of which was the factor of enormous academic pressure. Craig also felt

anxious about the uncertainty of his future, he felt a lot of pressure and expectations from his family, he was unsure of what he wanted from life and felt threatened by an uncertain future outlook.



### A.1. Neurotic Anxiety

Lower levels of anxiety that arise in response to stress or internal conflict experienced by a person, often resulting in feelings of excessive agitation by the person. Neurotic anxiety is described as worrying about an unknown threat. The thoughts themselves exist within the ego, but are sourced from the id drive (Feist and Feist 34).

Neurotic Anxiety is described to Craig in the novel based on the quote below:

““I’ve got to be excused,” I told my parents, and **I walked through the restaurant with that fast-walking gonna-throw-up gait—a run aching to get out**—that I learned to perfect over the next year. **I came to the chrome bathroom and let it go in the toilet. Afterward I sat, turned the light off, and pissed. I didn’t want to get up. What was wrong with me? Where did I lose it?** I had to stop smoking pot. I had to stop hanging out with Aaron. I had to be a machine. I didn’t get out of the bathroom until someone came and knocked. When I went back to my parents, I told them: “I think I might be, y’know, depressed.”” (Vizzini 105)

Neurotic anxiety is anxiety that is unknown or invisible, when Craig was at a restaurant with his family for some reasons he suddenly felt uncomfortable, you can see from the quote "I walked through the restaurant with that fast-walking gonna-throw-up gait—a run aching to get

out” the quote shows a deep and vague fear of a situation that makes Craig feel threatened or uncomfortable. The reactions that occur in him when he feels like vomiting, running, and trying to fight his way out of the situation show a strong physical response to the anxiety or distress he is feeling. Neurotic anxiety involves a non-specific fear of an unclear or unknown danger or threat. It can also be seen in the quote when Craig wonders what is happening to him "What's wrong with me? Where did I lose it?" the quote reflects vague or specific discomfort and anxiety about something that is happening or being felt.

Neurotic Anxiety is described to Craig in the novel based on the quote below:

**“My mind starts the Cycling. I know it’s going to be the worst that it’s ever been. Over and over again, a cycling of tasks, of failures, of problems. I’m young, but I’m already screwing up my life. I’m smart but not enough—just smart enough to have problems. Not smart enough to get good grades. Not smart enough to have a girlfriend. Girls think I’m weird. I don’t like to spend money. Every time I spend it, I feel as if I’m being raped. I don’t like to smoke pot, but then I do smoke it and I get depressed. I haven’t done enough with my life. I don’t play sports. I quit Tae Bo. I’m not involved in any social causes. My one friend is a screwup—a genius blessed with the most beautiful girl in the world, and he doesn’t even know it. There’s so much more for me**



to be doing. I should be a success and I'm not and other people— younger people— are. Younger people than me are on TV and getting paid and winning scholarships and getting their lives in order. I'm still a nobody. When am I going to not be a nobody?" (Vizzini 150-151).

When Craig is alone in his room then thoughts of negativity arise. It can be seen that Craig may feel anxious about an uncertain future. This shows that his mind is constantly spinning and predicting bad things that will happen in the future. This reflects the worry of the unknown, where he feels anxious about things that have not yet happened or are not certain to happen. This can be called neurotic anxiety because Craig feels anxiety that is not clear or specific.

Neurotic anxiety is also depicted in Craig as seen in the novel based on the quote below:

**“My heart is ramming now. It's beating everywhere. It hits all the spots in my body,** and I feel the blood pressuring through me, my wrists, my fingers, my neck. It wants to do this, to badoom away all the time. It's such a silly little thing, the heart. Badoom. It feels good, the way it cleans me. Badoom. Screw it. I want my heart. I want my heart but my brain is acting up. I want to live but I want to die. What do I do? I get out of bed, glance at the clock. It's 5:07. I don't know how I got through the night.” (Vizzini 155).

Based on the quote above Craig experiences neurotic anxiety the quote explains that bodily responses such as rapid heartbeat and feelings of high blood pressure reflect the body's physical response to fears that may not be specific or obvious. This means that the body can react in intense ways to situations or feelings that cannot be clearly identified. This illustrates how a person can experience excessive anxiety without any visible situation or trigger. Craig, who experiences agitated symptoms such as rapid heartbeat and feelings of high blood pressure. This can be interpreted as an excessive anxiety reaction to something that may not be directly or specifically identifiable. This shows how Craig's physical response to anxiety can be exaggerated and inappropriate to the actual situation.

Neurotic anxiety is also depicted in Craig as seen in the novel based on the quote below:

““Sounds like a plan.” “Now, you have to inform your parents about where you are, because when Dr. Mahmoud comes down, he’s going to need them to sign for you.” “Ohhhhh.” “Is that going to be a problem?” “No. I can do it.” “Where are your parents?” “Like two blocks away.” “They’re together? They’re supportive?” “Yeah.” **“Are they going to be okay that you’re in here?” I sigh.** **“Yes. I’m the one who’s. .. not.” “Don’t worry, it happens to a lot of people. It tends to be related to stress. Breathe for me, Craig.”** She puts her stethoscope by my back and has me take deep

breaths, cough, the whole deal. She doesn't have to hold my balls, which is cool, because there's no door." (Vizzini 179)

Based on the quote above, Craig seems to be experiencing neurotic anxiety, a feeling of uneasiness that may be experienced by Craig. Although he stated that his parents would be fine if they knew about his situation. However, when he says "I'm the one who's not", it shows that Craig himself feels anxious. This could also be an anxiety response that may arise from the stress or internal conflict experienced by Craig. Craig may also be experiencing worry or anxiety about his parents' unpredictable response to the situation.

Neurotic anxiety is depicted in Craig as seen in the novel based on the quote below:

““Mm,” Muqtada says. “What you look for? There is nothing.” He keeps staring. I want to lie down, to get the sleep I couldn't get last night, **but something about the way my roommate is lying there makes me want to leave**, to walk around. Maybe it'll be good to be with someone like him, someone who seems worse off than me.” (Vizzini 216).

The quotation above reflects the worry and fear that Craig may feel regarding the condition or behavior of his roommate Muqtada who is lying there. Concerns may arise from uncertainty about Muqtada's condition or problems. Craig may feel worried about his friend's health or emotional

state, and may not know how to act or provide appropriate support. Fear can arise from feeling uncomfortable or unable to cope with a difficult situation. Seeing Muqtada in a vulnerable or unhealthy state made Craig feel emotionally or physically disturbed, and may have made him feel unable to cope with the situation. The anxiety seen in Craig's phrase "makes me want to leave" indicates an instinctive reaction to escape a stressful or uncomfortable situation. Craig feels unable to face or cope with the situation and so feels the urge to get away from the situation to be very strong. This suggests discomfort that may stem from rejection or an inability to deal with an unknown situation.

### **A.2. Moral Anxiety**

According to Boeree, Moral anxiety is the feeling we experience when the threat comes from our superego, not from the outside, physical world. It is actually just another term for feelings like shame, guilt, and fear of punishment (8). That means moral anxiety which is a feeling arising from an internal conflict between the moral values and standards instilled by the superego, part of the personality structure in psychoanalytic theory, and behaviors or actions that are considered as violating those standards. So, when a person feels worried or anxious about a "threat" from their superego rather than a physical threat from the outside world - this is referred to as moral anxiety. It is a reaction to a violation of the internal moral rules that are instilled in a person. Moral Anxiety is described to Craig in the novel based on the quote below:

““Right.” I chuckle. “Well, I mean, everybody’s friendly, but I feel a lot better, and **I think I’m ready to go. Maybe Monday? I don’t want to miss school.**” Also, doc, right now the phone messages and e-mails are bunching up and the rumors are flying. I just talked to this girl—and I did okay—but the Tentacles are coiled and the pressure is rising, getting ready to pounce on me when I leave. **If I’m in here too long, I’ll have that much more to do when I get out.** “We can’t rush it,” Dr. Mahmoud says. “The important thing is that you get better. If you try to leave too soon—suddenly, everything is better?— we doctors get suspicious.”” (Vizzini 255).

The moral anxiety that occurs in the quotation above is when Craig expresses his desire to leave the hospital and return to his daily life, even though Craig feels he has not fully recovered. Craig felt he didn't want to be seen as skipping school and felt guilty about leaving some of his schoolwork or responsibilities unfinished.

## **B. Defense Mechanism Depicted in the Main Character in the Novel *It’s Kind of a Funny Story***

Defense mechanism is a psychological strategy that a person may unconsciously use to protect himself from a threat that occurs. Defense mechanisms are ways that the mind uses to reduce feelings of anxiety that are being experienced to control anxiety so as not to become excessive,

Freud also describes various mechanisms commonly used by humans such as, sublimation, denial, displacement (Freud, 111).

### **B.1. Displacement**

Displacement is a psychological defense mechanism where a person diverts or transfers negative emotions arising from a situation or factor from a stressor to an object or to another activity that is less psychologically threatening. For example, someone who is experiencing anxiety caused by a problem at work can find an outlet by exercising or channeling these negative emotions into a fun hobby, so as to reduce the psychological pressure felt (Costa 1162).

Displacement is described to Craig in the novel based on the quote below:

**“I start to think practically about how I’m going to handle this. I’m taking my bike, I know that.** That’s one thing I’ll miss: riding around Brooklyn on the weekends like a maniac, dodging cars and trucks and vans with pipes sticking out of them, meeting Ronny and then locking the bikes up by the subway station to go to Aaron’s house.” (Vizzini 152).

The quotation above shows that Craig performs displacement. He starts to think about how to handle difficult situations and makes plans to ride around Brooklyn on his bicycle. As a way to respond to the anxiety situation Craig chose to divert his attention and energy into more positive activities. Like cycling around the city. This could be a way for Craig to

reduce his anxiety by diverting it to a healthy and fun physical activity. Sublimation here helps Craig to divert his emotions to something more useful.

Displacement is also depicted in Craig as seen in the novel based on the quote below:

“My heart radiates badoom, **so I stand and shuffle into the living room and pick a book off my parents’shelf.** It’s called How to Survive the Loss of a Love; it has a pink and green cover. It’s sold like two million copies; it’s one of these psychology books that people everywhere buy to get through break-ups. My mom bought it when her dad died and raved about how good it was. She showed the cover to me.” (Vizzini 155-156).

The quotation above shows Craig doing displacement, where he decides to divert his anxiety by doing something useful and productive. Craig chose to stand up and walk to the living room and picked up a book to read. This can be considered as displacement because Craig uses his negative emotional impulses to read a book that can help Craig to reduce the anxiety he is facing.

## **B.2. Reaction Formation**

According to Feist and Feist, “One of the ways in which a repressed impulse may become conscious is through adopting a disguise that is directly opposite its original form. This defense mechanism is called a

reaction formation” (35). That means reaction formation is one of the defense mechanisms that individuals use to cope with psychological conflict or reduce emotional discomfort. It often occurs without the individual's full awareness and can play a role in producing complex and sometimes ambiguous patterns of behavior. In other words, individuals may act contrary to their true feelings or impulses as a way to protect themselves from uncomfortable feelings or internal conflict. Reaction Formation is depicted in Craig as seen in the novel based on the quote below:

““Hey, Mom,” I say when I hear her groaned hello. “How are you?” “Craig! Where are you?! I just—you just woke me up and you aren’t in bed! Are you okay?” “I’m okay.” “Are you at Aaron’s?” “Uh ...” I suck air through my teeth. “No, Mom. I’m not at Aaron’s.”” (Vizzini 182)

When Craig went to the hospital he did not give permission to his parents, then Craig tried to call his mother but Craig was not honest that he was not okay, when his mother asked Craig how he was doing but Craig responded with the opposite. Thus, reaction formation occurs when Craig shows attitudes or behaviors that are contrary to his original feelings to overcome or reduce the discomfort arising from these original feelings.



### B.3. Rationalization

According to Ryckman, “Rationalization is the justification of behavior through the use of plausible, but inaccurate, excuses” (44). It means that rationalization is a defense mechanism in which a person justifies or explains a behavior they have done by using reasons that they think are reasonable but not all of them are true or may not match reality. Rationalization is described to Craig in the novel based on the quote below:

““You realize there are a lot of parental consent forms that need to be filled out for us to help you—” **“They’ll sign everything. They want me to get better.”** “Supportive family environment,” Dr. Booth scratched on his pad. He turned and gave his version of a smile, which was a slight affirmative, the lips barely curled, the lower lip out in front.” (Vizzini 111).

The quotation above includes Rationalization, when Craig in was in the hospital Craig responds to Dr. Booth's question with "They'll sign everything. They want me to get better." Craig tried to give a plausible reason or justification to convince that his parents would come to sign the consent form, although at first there might be doubts. But Craig tried to convince Dr. Booth.

Rationalization is also depicted in Craig as seen in the novel based on the quote below:

“I’m apparently not as impressed by this as he would like. He arches back: “We don’t keep you here until you are cured of anything; we keep you here until you are stable—we call it ‘establishing the baseline.’” “Okay, so when will my baseline be established?” “Five days, probably.” One, two, three ... “Thursday? I can’t wait until Thursday, Doctor. I have too much school. That’s four days of school. If I miss four days I will be so behind. Plus, my friends. . .” “Yes?” **“My friends will know where I am!”** “Aha. **Is this a problem?**” “Yes!” “Why?” **“Because I’m here!”** I gesture out at the hall. Solomon shuffles by very quickly in his sandals and tells someone to be quiet, he’s trying to rest.” (Vizzini 257).

The quotation above shows that Craig did Rationalization, here it may be seen that Craig did not like the doctor's decision to ask Craig to stay in the hospital until his condition stabilized. However, Craig tried to give a reason or justification for the decision. Craig gave the reason that he was worried if he had to miss four days of school and what if his friends found out that Craig was in the hospital. Craig used Rationalization to ease the discomfort of the situation they were experiencing at the hospital.

Rationalization is also depicted in Craig as seen in the novel based on the quote below:

**“there really are people who are homeless and can’t get out of bed and are never going to be able to hold a job and, in Muqtada’s case, have serious problems with temperature, all because their brains are broken. Compared to them I’m . . . well, I’m a spoiled rich kid. Which is another something to feel bad about. So, who’s worse off?” (Vizzini 216).**

Rationalization is our way of understanding or giving reasons that make the behavior more reasonable and acceptable to ourselves, this helps reduce emotional conflict or a discomfort that occurs with the action or a decision we take (Schultz and Schultz, 60). Based on the quote above, Craig reinterprets his own behavior into this comparative situation. he tries to shift his behavior that might make him feel guilty or ashamed to something more rational and acceptable to himself. in this case, Craig rationalizes to describe why he feels like a "I'm a spoiled rich kid" and relieves his bad thoughts by convincing himself that there are people who are experiencing greater difficulties than himself.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter contains conclusion and suggestion. The conclusion is related to the results of the analysis in chapter IV.

#### A. Conclusion

This study discusses the novel *It's Kind of a Funny Story* (2006) as the object of this study. The novel *It's Kind of a Funny Story* describes the anxieties and defense mechanisms experienced by the main character named Craig. Craig in the Novel *It's Kind of a Funny Story* experiences anxiety related to his academic pressure. He uses various defense mechanisms to overcome his anxieties.

An anxiety is a feeling where someone feels uneasy, anxious, worried or uncomfortable about something that will or is happening. This will cause a reaction where if someone is experiencing this, he will protect himself against something that is considered unpleasant, it is called a defense mechanism. Defense mechanisms are used by a person to reduce one's anxiety or fear. According to Freud, there are three anxieties that may be experienced by a person, namely neurotic anxiety, realistic anxiety, moral anxiety.

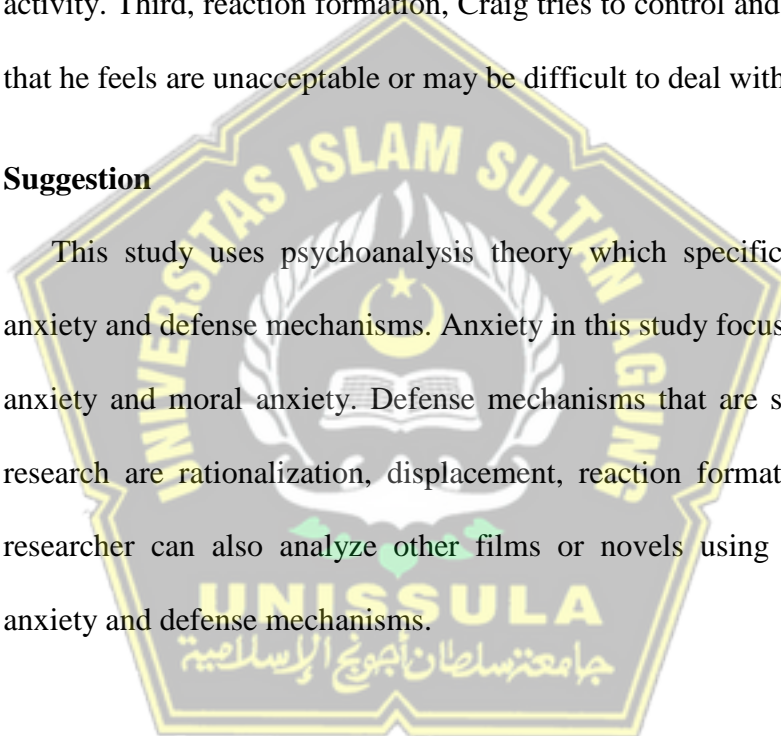
Based on this analysis, two anxieties were found, the first is neurotic anxiety which occurs in Craig is often non-specific and more of a feeling that something bad is going to happen. Although there may not be

an obvious threat. Secondly, moral anxiety, Craig was afraid that he would disappoint his parents because he could not meet their expectations.

In overcoming his anxiety Craig used three defense mechanisms. The first is rationalization Craig tries various reasons to be acceptable in his actions in order to reduce the guilt he feels. The second is displacement Craig tries to transfer the negative energy in his mind to a more positive activity. Third, reaction formation, Craig tries to control and mask feelings that he feels are unacceptable or may be difficult to deal with.

#### **B. Suggestion**

This study uses psychoanalysis theory which specifically discusses anxiety and defense mechanisms. Anxiety in this study focuses on neurotic anxiety and moral anxiety. Defense mechanisms that are specific to this research are rationalization, displacement, reaction formation. The next researcher can also analyze other films or novels using the theory of anxiety and defense mechanisms.



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