

## CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains seven points consists of the Background of the Study, Identification of the Study, Scope of the Problem, Research Question, Objective of the Study, Significance of the Study and Sequence of the Writing.

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Personality is the characteristics, patterns of behavior, and ways in which individuals act, think, and respond to personal situations and those around. According to Allport (1937), personality is a dynamic self-ability within an individual of a psychophysical system that can uniquely adapt to the environment. Talking about personality, of course, all of that exists in everyone without exception.

A person's personality can be derived from any influence. A person shapes society, but personality is shaped by society in individual development (Yessetova et al, 2020). The impact of the society environment closest to the individual is the family. The formation of personality has a huge impact, because the family is the first place where someone grows and develops.

From a sociological view, the family is the smallest social circle in society. There is a concept of personality psychology present in the family. It studies individual behavior in the physical and psychological environment in the family setting. Therefore, if wants to see individual behavior in family life, of course, it cannot be separated from the problems that arise in the family (Gunadarsa in Nuroniyah, 2023). Talking about parenting in family is not merely a one-way process where parents shape the child. It is an interactive relationship between parent and child, shaped by the culture and social institutions surrounding the child's upbringing (Sunyoto et al, 2022).

In addition, the theory expressed by Alfred Adler states that birth order determines a person's personality and lifestyle. Focusing on the first child, they can influence the development of their siblings through their interactions and influence. The issue of the firstborn child being considered a crucial role in sibling relationships is currently a big topic of discussion. This view is in line with the theory put forward by Linda Blair's Theory, a psychologist who emphasizes that birth order influences personality formation through social experiences and roles played within the family. She asserts that although there are common characteristics associated with each

ence of birth order must be understood in the context of other  
 uring styles, family stability, and life experiences. For example,  
 t caregiving is viewed as a cultural practice typically handed  
 ers (Asriana and Ramdlaningrum, 2025). Fukuya et al (2021)  
 ture, the firstborn child is often seen as the heir and expected  
 possibilities, creating significant emotional pressure and moral



This is what makes the first child usually have a complex personality. The influence of unique dynamics in the family on social roles forms complex characters formed in the first child. This was also explained by Patricia W. Linville about the concept of self-complexity. According to Linville (1987), self-complexity reflects the diversity of aspects of the self that are developed for meaningful aspects of a person's life, such as being a friend, a child, and even a parent.

This is reflected in the main characters in *The Railway Children* written by Edith Nesbit on 1906. The first printing of this book was published by Wells Gardner Darton & Co as the first UK edition. It is an excellent example of this timeless and increasingly rare children's classic, which was famously adapted into the 1970 film directed by Lionel Jeffries. This popular children's novel tells the story of three siblings Roberta (Bobbie) as the first child, Peter as the second child, and the youngest Phyllis. Nesbit's works are related to family because literary works are not merely imaginative stories without meaning, but also reflections of real life shaped by the experiences of writers during certain periods in the past (Arafah, 2022).

Initially, they lived a comfortable life in London with their parents until their father was mysteriously taken away by the authorities. This left the three siblings without a father role for a long time. Sadly, they are forced to move into a simple cottage near the railway tracks in the countryside. Focusing on Roberta's character as selected, she becomes someone who takes on many roles when they move near the railway. When her father left, she became the mediator for her two younger siblings and became a substitute for her mother's role when her mother was sick. The complexity of Roberta's character can be seen in the way she deals with challenges, her role in the family, and her emotional state throughout the story.

In the field of psychology, Wellek and Warren in Ahmadi (2015:2) explained that the study of literature through psychological approaches can be accomplished in four key areas. Focusing on psychological principles within the literary work is the most commonly applied in literary analysis. Based on the explanation, personality, when applied to literary works, is in the characters. Literature as a valuable idea of human thought is intended as a reflection of human life with its characters and norms. Character and Characterization are very important elements in seeing the character's personality. It is in terms of the style, speech, and behavior of the character. In addition, psychology and literature are both useful for studying the mental state of others. One difference is that psychology in literary works is studied imaginatively, while psychology studies humans in real terms (Roekhan in Aminuddin, 1990).

It is used as an example and knowledge for the first child. Therefore, the writer decided to analyze the characteristics of personality based on Blair's theory

the interaction between family members is portrayed through the research entitled "Complexity of the Selected Main Character in Nesbit's *The Railway Children*".



## 1.2 Identification of the Study

The writer finds some issue points after reading *The Railway Children* by Edith Nesbit which are outlined below:

1. The influence of birth order on the personality of Roberta, Peter, and Phyllis.
2. The influence of fatherless in sibling life in novel *The Railway Children*.
3. The personality complexity through Roberta's character in novel *The Railway Children*.

## 1.3 Scope of the Problem

The writer found three problems that can be analyzed in this novel as mentioned. Among the three problems found above, the writer decided to focus on identifying complexity personality of Roberta as the first child and main character, leader of their siblings, and substitute head of the family.

## 1.4 Research Question

Based on the problem identification, the writer lists the research questions as follows:

1. What are the characteristics of Roberta as the first child in Nesbit's *The Railway Children* based on Blair's Theory?
2. How are the interactions of Roberta and the other main characters in Nesbit's *The Railway Children* that strengthen Roberta's character as the first child?

## 1.5 Objective of The Study

Based on the research questions, the writer determined the following research objectives:

1. To mention the characteristics of Roberta as the first child in Nesbit's *The Railway Children* based on Blair's Theory.
2. To outline the interactions of Roberta and the other main characters in Nesbit's *The Railway Children* that strengthen Roberta's character as the first child.



### of the Study

study are expected to be useful for theoretical and practical. Additionally, this study aims to enhance readers' comprehension of the

novel while also offering additional insights into psychoanalysis. This study also is aimed to contribute to the development of literary science.

In practical purposes, by delving into the psychology of children, parents can gain a better understanding of their offspring, particularly the eldest child. For readers of this research, it can heighten their interest in appreciating literary works.

### **1.7 Sequence of the Writing**

This study comprises five chapters. On chapter one contains Background of the Study, Identification of the Study, Scope of the Problem, Research Question, Objective of the Study, Significance of the Study and Sequence of the Writing. Next, in chapter two mentions previous researches relevant to this research and the theoretical background of the research which are structuralism and theory of personality.

In chapter three, the writer outlines the methodology employed for data collection and analysis in this study. Next, chapter four focus on the researcher delves into the findings and engages in discussions related to the research. And lastly, chapter five provides the key findings of the overall research, leading to a summary, along with valuable recommendations for next researchers.



## CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, the writer discusses about Literature Review, which consist of Previous Related Study, Structuralism Approach, and Theory of Personality.

### 2.1 Previous Related Studies

In previous related study, the writer finds several studies that relate to this writing. The writings in question contain the same literary work *The Railway Children*, approach and theories used by the writer. It founds several studies that are relevant to the research topic by Ibrahim (2014), Anshori (2016), Yusmalia (2023), and Ariska et al (2024).

There is a study from Ibrahim (2014) in *Ethical Value in Nesbit's The Railway Children*. This study found four ethical values in the novel, which are Honesty, when they admit their mistake about the coal they stole from the station. The second is Courage, when the main character saves a baby on a burning boat, then Generosity when they help their sick mother. The last is affection, when they take the initiative to celebrate the birthday of one of the train officers. It used a structuralism approach and discusses the concept of ethical and moral values academically. Ibrahim used a concept of Ethical Values by Solomon, that is built through perception as a man living with good and bad experiences in life. The difference between the two of these researches is the issue discussed, which is about ethical values. While the similarity is using the same approach and the same object, such as novel *The Railway Children*.

Anshori (2016) in *The Empowerment of Children in Edith Nesbit's The Railway Children* aims to describe enablement of children who can cope with life at their young age. His research focuses on looking at events in the novel that show the empowerment of the main character seen from thoughts, actions, and feelings. The findings of this study are divided into three categories, such as Empowerment, Action Empowerment, and Feeling Empowerment. In addition, his research is analyzed inductively using qualitative content analysis by obtaining data accuracy using four criteria, which include credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. The similarities of this research are the object of the novel and focus on the main character, but the difference is that the writer sees the complex personality of the main character, namely Roberta as a family member.



Yusmalia (2023) in *Kompleksitas Kepribadian Tokoh dalam Novel Pulang (Teori Johari Window) dan Implikasinya dalam Pembelajaran* discusses the complexity of Bujang's character in the novel *Pulang* using Johari window theory. The theory consists of four windows, namely Open Area and Unknown Area. That theory technique tries to unknown to oneself but known by others and tries to open things

that are known by oneself so that they are understood by others. The data in Yusmalia's study were analyzed using content analysis technique. The final step of this analysis is to identify the implications for learning in high school. The results showed that there were 66 data reflecting personality complexity, consisting of: Open area: 44 data excerpts, Blind area: 4 data excerpts, Hidden area: 17 data quotes, Dark area: 1 data quote. Research on the complexity of the character's personality in the novel *Pulang* by Tere Liye has implications for literary learning. This is mentioned in the context of the Kurikulum Merdeka, this research can support learning objectives to understand the content of fiction books read at the Junior High School (SMP) level. The issues discussed are similar to those in this study, which is the complexity of personality on a character. However, the difference is between the object of the novel and the personality theorist used.

Lastly, there is research from Ariska et al (2024) entitled "*Prinsip Individual Alfred Adler Pada Tokoh dalam Novel Azzamine Karya Sophie Aulia: Kajian Psikologi Sastra*". This study aims to describe the individual principles of the characters in Alfred Adler's individual principles. The results showed that the characters in the novel *Azzamine* by Sophie Aulia who have individual principles are the principle of superiority, the principle of inferiority, the principle of self-consistency, the principle of social interest, the principle of lifestyle, and the principle of creative self. The difference from this research is in objects used because this research discusses popular literary works published in 2022. The similarity is using the personality theory based on Alfred Adler.

## 2.2 Structuralism Approach

The word structuralism originated from the Latin *structura* meaning installation and construction, and the affix -ism, used to denote a system, doctrine, or practice. In the academic application of the theory, structuralism as quoted by Merriam Webster is a method of analysis, applicable to literary texts or political systems, associated with cultural anthropology and emphasizing recurring patterns of thought and behavior, is known as structuralism.

Historically, the theory of Structuralism has a long and varied history and has developed dynamically. Structuralism was introduced by Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) in the early 20th century. He was a Swiss linguist renowned for his groundbreaking contributions to the study of linguistics and language. He is widely regarded as one of the pioneers of modern linguistics, his work greatly influenced



around the world. Because of its dynamic, this theory was also criticized by Barthes and Julia Kristeva. They interpret structural language codes of literary texts. From these language codes, literary texts can be viewed objectively.

In literary objectification, the instrumental aspects are considered. A literary text of literature will focus on the narrative dimension of the literary text. Structuralists always deal with narrative. Regardless of its various

forms, narrative has certain structural features, such as plot, setting and characters. This means that narrative opens up a wide space for structural criticism (Tyson, 2006:220).

Referring to the discussion above, a literary work definitely has a structure in it. Dinneen and O'Connor in Saragih et al (2022) view that intrinsic elements are regarded as the core components that exist within the structure of a literary work. These elements are essential, as they form the foundation of the work itself. Without intrinsic elements, a literary work cannot be constructed or function effectively. According to Eagleton (1996), intrinsic elements as components that make up a literary work include character, plot, setting, and theme, which collectively form the internal structure of a literary work.

### 2.2.1 Characters and Characterization

Characters are important element in literature and narrative that helps shape the story and draws the reader into the world created by the author. Characters are fictional individuals or entities that are part of the story. They can be humans, animals, or even objects that have human traits. Characters are important elements in a story because they act, speak, and react to events that occur in the plot.

According to Nurgiyantoro (2018:15), the characters in novels are often described in depth, including aspects such as physical characteristics, social circumstances, behavior, traits, and habits. Both directly and indirectly, the relationships between characters are also shown. All of this gives a clearer and more concrete picture of the characters. Therefore, characters in novels often leave a deep impression on readers.

The character has to be informed of the reason related to the action in the scene. In novels, characters often act as agents of change. Their actions drive the plot forward, create conflict, and help reveal the story's theme. Through their dialog, actions, and thoughts, characters provide readers with information about the story, background, and plot. In addition, characters also give depth and new dimensions to the conflict in the story. They can be the cause, the target, or even the resolution of the conflict. In addition, character education appears in the story through the characters' actions and challenges, shown directly in words or indirectly through the plot (Arafah et al, 2024).

Characterization is the building of characters in a story. It involves creating consistent and complex characters through narration. The goal is to create



lively and convincing to the readers. Nurgiyantoro (2018: 166) of characterization is to establish and depict characters within

ers a clear and vivid understanding. tion ensure that readers feel real and convincing, thus lvement in the story. Additionally, there is a classification of works in terms of the role or level of importance of the characters works, there are characters featured continuously who dominate

most of the story. There are also characters who only appear once or several times in the story, it called main and peripheral character.

### **1. Main Character**

The main character is the center of a story who has the most important role and the main focus of the storyline. The novel character depicts the main character's personality (Arafah et al, 2023). The main character usually directs the plot of the story. This means that all events in the story are related to the main character because the main character is told the most and is always in contact with other characters. His existence determines the development of the plot as a whole as a perpetrator, or who is subjected to important events and conflicts (Nurgiyantoro, 2009: 177).

The main character in a novel can be more than one. It's just that the level of importance is not always the same. The main character also often faces conflicts or challenges that become the core of the story. The resolution of the conflict determines the ending of the story. In many stories, the main character experiences character development, psychologically, emotionally, and socially.

### **2. Peripheral Character**

Peripheral characters in literary works or stories are characters who have a supporting or complementary role to the storyline, conflict, or development of the main character. Although not the main focus, additional characters serve to enrich the story and give depth to the story.

Peripheral characters help move the story or support the main character/antagonist in carrying out their role. The presence usually does not directly affect the main plot, but contributes to the atmosphere or details of the story. Peripheral characters can serve to make the narrative more realistic. Usually, they do not undergo significant character changes throughout the story.

#### **2.2.2 Plot**



fluence of events that shape the story. Stanton (2007:26) states  
 ource of events in a story. Plot structure includes the storyline and  
 e main events, actions, and conflicts that occur in the narrative.  
 hape the overall storyline and engages the reader by creating  
 nd resolution.

Gustav Freytag proposed a theory that every plot can be segmented into five parts: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution. Initially, Freytag formulated this concept to analyze the structure of plays, which were typically divided into five acts during his time. However, this five-tiered “pyramid” model is not limited to plays; it can also be applied to dissect the plotlines of various narrative forms such as novels, short stories, films, and TV series. Here is the five parts of plot as exposition, raising action, climax, falling action, and resolution.

1. *Exposition.* Exposition serves as the beginning segment of the plot. It is in this phase that the audience is acquainted with important background details, such as the characters and their interrelationships, the setting which includes the time and location of events, and other related concepts, specifications or historical background. In the context of a five-act play, exposition is generally presented in the first act.
2. *Rising Action.* The rising action begins with what is often referred to as a "trigger incident" or "complication". This is the event that triggers a dilemma or conflict for the characters, which sets off a series of increasingly consequential events. Some critics consider rising action to be the most important segment of the plot, as without rising action, the climax and resolution of the story would not occur.
3. *Climax.* The climax of a plot serves as the crucial moment of the narrative, where exposition and rising action continue to develop. This climax is the moment of maximum tension or conflict. Although climaxes are sometimes referred to as crises, they do not necessarily signify negative events.
4. *Falling Action.* While the rising action consists of the sequence of events that pave the way to the climax, the falling action is the series of events that occur after the climax, culminating in the resolution, a signal that the narrative is nearing completion. In a five-act play, the falling action usually occurs during the fourth act, which ends with the resolution.
5. *Resolution.* The term 'resolution' denotes a plot segment that addresses unresolved issues and reveals the final outcome of the story's events. During the resolution phase, the author resolves any remaining questions about the fate of the characters, and may even provide a glimpse into the lives of the characters after the resolution of the story.



defines setting as a description of place, time, and ambience that or the unfolding of a story or event. The setting is an important lling because it helps create atmosphere, realism, and context d events in the story. Just like human life, events or scenes

certainly occur at any time, place, and even in any situation. Based on the explanation above, there are several types of settings in literary works.

1. *Setting of Place.* The setting place in a work of fiction refers to the location where events take part. It can represent the real world or an undefined area that requires the reader's interpretation. Undefined settings usually involve a general description of a place, such as a village, river, or road, without specific details. Works often incorporate various locations as part of the setting.
2. *Setting of Time.* The time setting raises the question of when events occur in a story. Usually, writers write directly such as the hour or day when an event in the novel occurs. The time setting is also often associated with certain moments in factual time, which may relate to historical events. When encountering this, it must be able to interpret the narrative by considering the time period in which the story is set.
3. *Setting of Society.* Social setting means looking at the aspects of social life depicted in a work of fiction. This can be seen from the behavior, habits, customs, traditions, worldview, mindset, and attitudes of the people in a particular place. This setting is often shown through the naming of characters, the use of language or can even relate to the setting of time and place.

#### 2.2.4 Theme

Staton and Kenny in Nurgiyantoro (2007:67) explain that a story has conceived meaning. Theme is the core of the story that the writer wants to convey to the reader. The presence of a theme can help direct the storyline and strengthen the meaning of the events that occur. Although often not expressed directly, readers can capture themes through actions, dialog, and character development in the story.

Themes can be moral messages, conflicts, or issues that are relevant to everyday life. Theme is general, broader, and abstract and can be determined based on other intrinsic elements. It must support the clarity of the content that the literary work wants to convey. Therefore, to determine a theme, the entire literary work must be read and understood not only based on certain parts of the storyline.

### 2.3 Theory of Personality



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ic thing that resides in humans. According to Haslam and Smillie is closely related to character and temperament. From a active, the influence of personality is characterized by an al differences and an approach that sees humans as whole , and feel. Personality tends to be stable and enduring, rather kle as mood. In addition, personality includes broad and general

patterns in a person's behavior, thus providing an overall picture of who they are, not just behavior in a particular situation. Although personality may seem simple when referred to as individual differences, this understanding turns out to be quite complex (Haslam and Smillie, 2022:10).

According to Lundin (2015), there is one theory popularized by Austrian psychologist, Alfred Adler that explained individual psychology contains the following principles such as inferiority, compensation, superiority principle, future goal, style of life, unity of the personality, creative self-principle, order of birth, achievement and social interest. Blair (2011) said a person's personality is influenced by birth order, but this factor is not the only determinant. This is in line with Alfred Adler's thinking, which emphasizes that birth position shapes a child's social role in the family and influences how the child adapts to their environment. In Blair's view, firstborn children are typically more responsible, perfectionistic, and achievement-oriented because they are often held up as role models for their younger siblings. Middle children tend to be flexible, possess diplomatic skills, and act as mediators, though they may sometimes feel overlooked. Youngest children are often creative, sociable, and the center of attention, but may be more dependent on others. Meanwhile, only children have a higher level of maturity than their peers, but can be perfectionists and less accustomed to sharing.

Blair rejects the popular view that oversimplifies birth order theory. According to him, the impact of birth order will vary depending on whether the age gap between siblings is wide or narrow, whether parenting styles differ between children, or whether major family events such as divorce, relocation, or the loss of a family member occur. She emphasizes that the foundation of personality is formed from conception until around the age of six or seven, when children begin to settle into the school environment. This is the period that shapes how children view themselves and position themselves within their families. For Blair, birth order is an important piece of the personality puzzle, but the final outcome is still influenced by life experiences, culture, and family dynamics.

Focusing on the first child, there are many complex characters that they have. According to Blair (2011), there are seven personality characteristics possessed by the first child, as follow:

1. *Have a Strong Desire to Gain the Approval of Others.* The first child generally goes through a period where the parents' attention is completely focused on him or her. However, unlike an only child or youngest child who is born long after the previous sibling, the first child art sharing that attention when a younger sibling is born. Since ge occurs at an early age (usually before the age of four), when standing of roles in the family and a sense of security is not yet ublished, the desire for approval from others tends to last a As a result, no matter how much praise or recognition is



received, there will still be a feeling of lack and a desire for more attention.

2. *Respectful of Existing Rules and Regulations.* The first child usually wants to please people in authority, such as parents, teachers or superiors. Therefore, the first child tends to abide by the established rules and respect the values upheld by these people. As a result, they are less likely to break the law. In addition, social norms and regulations in society are more respected, as the first child considers it important to stay on the right track and be recognized as a responsible person.
3. *Taking a leadership position.* First children are used to taking on leadership roles as they are often trusted to help take care of younger siblings. They want to be in control and direct others. This ability makes them comfortable in leadership positions, whether in family, academic or professional settings.
4. *Tend to be Smart.* The first child is generally known as a good learner. They do their homework diligently, obey their teachers' directions and rarely question the rules. While children in other birth orders can also do well in school, the main difference lies in the motivation behind the achievement. First-born children study hard because they want to please their parents and teachers. Later-born children, on the other hand, tend to study because of their personal interest in the material rather than to gain approval from others.
5. *Usually organised and responsible.* First children usually have a lot of experience in assuming responsibility for others. This is because from a young age, they often observe their parents or caregivers taking care of their younger siblings. From this process of observation, first children learn how to care for others, organize households, and manage various responsibilities. In addition to observing, they are also often given the opportunity to practice these skills, as parents are likely to need their help in taking care of younger siblings. These experiences and observations provide great benefits to the first child as they grow up. Good organizational skills and the ability to take charge make others more likely to entrust them with leadership roles. Because they are used to assuming that others will need their help, first children are usually the first to offer to help when there is work to be done. They also tend to be the ones who organize and encourage others to act.
6. *Nurturing and caring.* The added responsibility of the first child to help parents in taking care of younger siblings makes them accustomed to handling tasks and time well. This carries over into adulthood, making them disciplined and structured individuals. This experience also fosters their compassion and empathy. First children are more likely than others to feel stressed and to seek psychological help. First children are prone to stress, especially as they often have greater



responsibilities, both tangibly and emotionally. This tendency can arise due to several factors such as the pressure to be a role model. The expectation to set an example for younger siblings can be quite a mental burden. However, on the positive side, first children are also more open to seeking psychological support. This can be due to higher self-awareness. First children often have better reflection skills due to their experience in leading or nurturing younger siblings. This makes them more aware when they need help. When they feel stress starting to affect them, first children tend to look for ways to cope or lighten the load.

