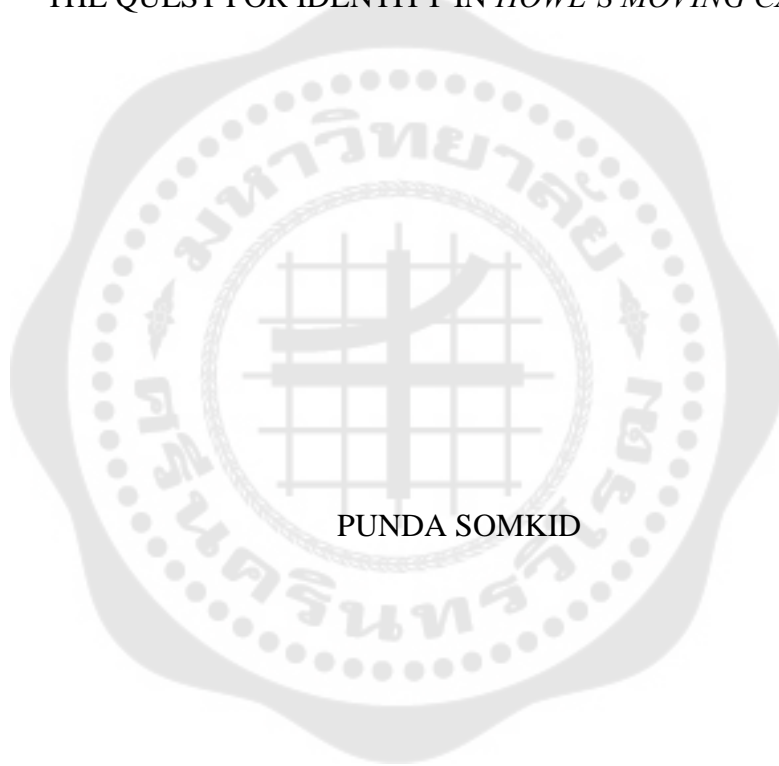การค้นหาอัตลักษณ์ในนวนิยายเรื่อง *Howl's Moving Castle*
THE QUEST FOR IDENTITY IN *HOWL'S MOVING CASTLE*

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GRADUATE SCHOOL Srinakharinwirot University
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การค้นหาอัตลักษณ์ในนวนิยายเรื่อง *Howl's Moving Castle*

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THE QUEST FOR IDENTITY IN *HOWL'S MOVING CASTLE*

PUNDA SOMKID

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This research aimed to explore the effects of the quest of the main character in terms of identity development and to investigate the influence of experiences on changing of self-perception. The concept of James Marcia on the identity status and the concept of the hero's journey from Joseph Campbell were used as frameworks for analysis.

The findings revealed that the quest of the main character, Sophie, affected her identity, enabling her to develop from her diffusion status or an under-developed identity, to identity achievement status or a well-developed identity. The experiences gained on this quest helped shape the self-development of the main character. These experiences broadened her perspectives of life and deepened her understanding of herself. This personal growth, obtained through experiences, consisted of confidence, assertiveness and maturity. Furthermore, the experiences from the quest changed her self-perception. Sophie started with a negative image of herself; however, she gradually developed positive thoughts and accepted herself. The findings also verified that self-searching and experiences are important for the development of children.

Keyword : Quest, Identity, Identity Status, The Hero's Journey

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Enabling children to develop their identity and to realise their capabilities during adolescence is essential since these qualities influence the children's lives and their decisions. First, children with a well-developed identity can further develop their abilities if they know what they are capable of doing. According to James Marcia, individuals with a well-developed identity have a sense of their own strengths and weaknesses and know their uniqueness ("Identity in Adolescence" 109). Children who acknowledge their strong points know what they can do best and continually challenge the limits of their ability. An individual's own self-awareness is critical for improving one's ability to make future life choices, such as career planning (Downing 181). Second, children with a well-developed identity do not let their role in society destroy their own selves. Adolescents with a strong identity know their social roles and maintain their true identity, regardless of social pressure ("Ego"). If children have a strong sense of personal identity, they will not lose their beliefs, goals or values due to the influence of their environment. Finally, children with a well-developed identity know what they want for their lives; therefore, they do not have to depend on other people's opinions to choose what is good for their future. According to Erik Erikson, these children are neither preoccupied, nor overly concerned, with other people's opinions (*Identity and the Life Cycle* 120). For adolescents, being independent provides the freedom to make decisions to do what they want, broadening their opportunity to explore the world freely without the indecisiveness due to attachment.

Fostering a child's mindset during adolescence is important because adolescents learn about their identity and their role as a member of society during this period. In his theory of psychosocial developmental stages, Erikson stated that adolescence is the developmental period for identity, and role confusion may occur when adolescents try to find their self and their social roles (*Identity: Youth and Crisis* 155). According to a research study on neuron systems, the sense of self is developed mostly during adolescence (Sebastian et al. 441). Thus, fostering self-awareness and an ability to cope with social problems is important during this growth period. Having a well-developed sense of self, or a positive sense of identity, has a long-term effect on one's life; therefore, supporting self-development in adolescence is invaluable. According to Douglas Kleiber and Carol Kirshnit, life experiences—including daily activities and communication—influence the identity development process, since experiences provide the opportunity to test skills, to evaluate one's outlook and perspective and to explore different identities (195-196). To develop a sense of identity, children must explore society through playing and interacting with other children. Their experiences of interactions in the society help develop their understanding and perspective on the environment and themselves, while also acknowledging their roles in the society.

Facilitating identity development among young adolescents is considered necessary in educational field; however, the present education system cannot satisfy this condition. Jerome Bruner stated, 'A system of education must help those growing up in a culture find an identity within that culture' (42). He believed that awareness of oneself and other people's selves is important for the education system, and education should cultivate children's self-awareness. Unfortunately, the education system tends

to concentrate on only academic achievement. Athapol Anunthavorasakul, a faculty of education instructor at Chulalongkorn University, stated that Thai education focuses solely on academic learning for examination; thus, students will graduate without self-realisation ("(ทิ้ง)ปริญญาใบนั้น [(Discard) That Degree]"). For example, the current trend for Asian parents is investing heavily on academic education and cram schools in hopes of ensuring their children's good grades (Breitenstein). This trend results in less attention to extracurricular activities; furthermore, the parents' emphasis on academic results leads children to spend less time on hobbies, activities and communication with others, which are essential for helping to develop their identity. Thus, if education cannot provide enough possibility to develop identity, it is important to cultivate children's identity awareness through other means, particularly for adolescents, who are in the peak period for the cognitive development of one's sense of self.

Besides learning through education and through communication between peers, literature can be an excellent tool to educate adolescents and to develop their sense of self. According to Martha Crippen, literary texts can be used as an intermediary to nurture readers' positive thinking and perception, enabling them to develop a positive self-attitude and confidence. Furthermore, experiences gained from reading literature have a significant impact on the adolescents' emotional, psychological and intellectual growth, which relates to their identity development (Alsup 8-9). Children can gain emotional experiences and develop problem-solving skills from a character's reaction to different events and then apply them to their daily lives. Fiction stimulates social experiences, which helps improve the readers' perception of other people and their society (Mar and Oatley 181). Understanding

their relationships to people and the society helps adolescents know their identity and strengthens their role in the community. The interactions between literary characters expands and deepens the children's understanding of differences in society; therefore, the children can accept and tolerate the differences between themselves and other people.

One children's book that portrays identity development and can educate children on developing identity is *Howl's Moving Castle*, which is the first book of the Howl's Castle series written by Diana Wynne Jones. The Howl's Castle series includes three fantasy books: *Howl's Moving Castle, Castle in the Air* and *House of Many Ways.* The first book was published in 1986 and later adapted into an animated film in 2004, and it is considered one of Jones' notable works. *Howl's Moving Castle* won second place in the Boston Globe–Horn Book Awards and later received the Phoenix Award.

Howl's Moving Castle is an adventure story set in a fantasy world, and it is a journey to understand and accept the character's own self. The story is told by a female protagonist, Sophie Hatter. Sophie inherits a hat shop from her father; however, even though she is unsatisfied with her current condition, she does not dare abandon her family job and follow her dream. Her journey starts when she is cursed to be an old woman. Sophie ventures to break the curse and must confront her fears and difficulties, including the legendary evil wizard, Howl. In the end, Sophie develops from a timid person who follows others' directions to a confident person who can choose her own direction in life and who accepts who she is.

This study aims to explore how Sophie develops her identity throughout the story. The researcher will investigate the quest's effects on the main character's

identity development and will examine how the experiences influence the character's self-perception. The researcher is interested in each event Sophie experiences and how this process influences her identity changes.

The Purposes of the Study

The purposes of the study were as follows:

1. To study the effects of Sophie's quest on her identity development.

2. To investigate the influence of experiences on change of self-perception.

Significance of the Study

The researcher conducted this research in consideration of its benefits to promote the importance of children's literature and identity development in children. First, this research was aimed at giving entertainment of an adventurous story. Second, this research persuaded and convinced readers to realize the importance of self-searching and cognizance of one's potentials.

Scope of the Study

The research focuses on studying the effects of the main character's quest to find her own identity development and to investigate the influence of experiences on her perception of herself.

Definition of Terms

1. **Quest** is a journey to seek for the truth or the answer to a question, and it can be either physical or mental journey.

2. **Identity** is an individual's perception of oneself and awareness of oneself as a unique individual which is different from other people's selves. It also refers to the individual's roles in the society.

Research Procedures

The procedures of the study were the following:

1. The researcher studied related literature, taking the following into consideration;

1.1 Concept of the quest and the hero's journey, based on the hero's journey pattern by Joseph Campbell.

1.2 Concept of identity and related theories. This study focuses on identity status theory by James Marcia.

1.3 Related studies on the identity development of the characters in varied novels.

2. The story was analyzed as follows;

2.1 Campbell's template of the hero journey was used as a framework to analyze the identity development. Significant events in each stage were listed in chronological order.

2.2 Sophie Hatter's identity growth was analyzed by using Marcia's identity status framework. Procedure in this stage answered what events affected Sophie's identity development.

3. Findings were reported in chapter three.

4. Discussion and conclusion were written based on the findings, and suggestions for further study were proposed in chapter four.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter consists of three parts. The first part is quests and the hero's journey. It describes concept of the quest, the hero's journey template, the role of the quest as a mental journey, effects of gender on encountered quests, and Maureen Murdock's view on the heroine's journey. The second part is about identity, including concepts of identity from varied theorists, identity and social roles, and James Marcia's identity status theory. The third part is the related studies on identity formation.

Quests and Hero's Journey

A quest refers to an attempt to search for an answer to a question. The word 'quest' comes from the Latin word "questare", which means to seek or inquire (Howard 2). According to *Cambridge Dictionary*, the quest is "a long search for something that is difficult to find, or an attempt to achieve something difficult" ("Quest" 1164). A quest is the search for truth, and the objective tends to be both a symbol and a material object (Stableford 337). Thus, to embark on a quest is to seek something unexperienced, and the individual performing the quest will not know if the objective is right or wrong until it has been found(Auden 40; Timmerman 91)(Auden 40; Timmerman 91) . To achieve the objective, the knowledge-seeker must venture through obstacles, and this action is the quest's plot.

While quests may have numerous plots, the one most commonly used in a narrative story is the journey, which consists of various trials from the beginning to

the end. In a narrative story, a quest is designed to reveal "some ideal, forbidden, lost, or otherwise unreachable state or condition" (Murfin and Ray 446). To obtain the goal, the character must pass more than one challenge. According to Carol Pearson and Katherine Pope, each stage of the quest includes trials that obstruct the protagonist from successfully completing the quest (qtd. in LaGrone 6). Rachel Blau DuPlessis defines the quest plot as a "goal-oriented search with stages, obstacles, and 'battles,' which in general involves self-realization, mastery, and the expression of energy" (200). Therefore, the adventure cannot be completed with just one obstacle. The story's core quest must consist of many trials that represent the ladder steps necessary to reach the quest's goal.

Tales with a quest, adventure and obstacles have appeared since ancient times, and the psychological interpretation of myth considers the hero as an archetype who seeks self-realisation. Tales featuring a heroic figure and his adventures to conquer evil were prominent in Greek and Roman mythology (Handerson 110). For example, the tale of Hercules, who must overcome 12 trials to prove himself. In terms of psychology, the hero myth is the adventure to self-consciousness and self-realisation, and the trials the hero encounters are clues to self-growth (112). The first archetype in Carl Jung's archetypes theory is the hero archetype, which describes an individual who overcomes obstacles to obtain the goal of self-realisation. The quest is a solo adventure, and "The hero's main feat is to overcome the monster of darkness: it is the long-hoped-for and expected triumph of consciousness over the unconscious" (Jung "The Psychology of the Child Archetype" 167). Later, Joseph Campbell followed Carl Jung's concept of archetypes to build a pattern of the hero's journey for all the world's mythologies.

A common pattern for the hero's journey, or the monomyth, consists of three major acts. Campbell proposes a separation-initiation-return cycle for the hero's adventure:

> The hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder (x): [the hero encounters] fabulous forces … and a decisive victory is won (y): the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man (z). (Joseph Campbell 23)

Other theorists have used different names for the stages; however, the three main acts remain nearly universal (Million 315; Pearson and Pope 247). Starting from a familiar environment in the community, the hero (either willingly or forced) departs because a calamity occurs. The hero must go through a rite of passage and encounter trials. At the end, the knowledge gained from the quest's trials is brought back to solve the problems that caused the journey. From the beginning to the end, the journey can be seen as a cycle (Rollings and Adams 110; Flotmann 130).

According to Campbell, the first act of a hero's quest starts with leaving the usual environment to encounter new experiences: "The hero can go forth of his own volition to accomplish the adventure ... or he may be carried or sent abroad by some [harmless or harmful] agent" (Joseph Campbell 48). Heroic characters must leave their comfort zone, original state or circumstance to expand their viewpoint and mindset.

In the second act, the character confronts trials that must be overcome to reach the desired goal. The significance of all trials, whether big or small, is vivid when the results are accumulated and used to solve the character's problems. Experiences from

each trial and each event are used to eventually help the character unravel a tangled knot of problems: "Different passages contribute to the meaning of the story and derive their meaning from the whole … The structure of a story is such that it integrates the different parts into a meaningful whole" (Widdershoven 131). Trial solutions may be used as a trigger or stimulation that leads to the character's further development.

In the third act, the hero returns to society with the elixir gained from the adventure. Campbell described this stage as the hero bringing back power to benefit others (30). The hero's return also represents the last quest: attempting to readjust to society. In contrast to the departure, which may not have been voluntary, the hero must decide to return to the ordinary world (Buckingham 22). Reuniting with the community is a challenge and will determine the hero's future. The return demonstrates the hero's freedom to live with others and to accept the way things are: "[The hero] does not mistake apparent changelessness in time for the permanence of Being, nor is he fearful of the next moment (or of the "other thing"), as destroying the permanent with its change" (Campbell 209). The hero, now completely self-realised, chooses how to live and has full consciousness of who he is and what he wants.

In literature, a quest requiring the protagonist to understand his own self or to seek self-knowledge can often be found in coming-of-age novels or the Bildungsroman genre. These stories show the main character's maturation and understanding of his place in society (Wahlstrøm 15), while the quest is used to explain the protagonist's psychological development process ("Bildungsroman"). For example, Frodo Baggins, the lead character in J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, travels for years and overcomes severe obstacles to finish his duty.

Encountering hardships and deepening relationships with his fellows, Frodo gradually changes from a shy young man who doubted himself to a brave man who knows who he is.

On a deeper level, a quest, as an inner journey, helps the character advance his intellectual growth. The journey to complete the quest also represents the potential for discovery and personal change (Gherardi 35; Bainbridge and Pantaleo 100). The quest's journey is a symbol for identity formation and adaptation, since life is being "subjectively structured by a sequence" (Habermas and Bluck 750). A part of the hero's quest is the inner journey to search for identity (Stuttaford xix). Understanding and acquiring a sense of self occurs through solving problems and through gaining experience during the adventure. Thus, because the quest reflects the inner journey, the hero's quest is an adventure in which the character seeks knowledge within himself and learns to find solutions through the metaphor of fighting evil.

While the obvious fruits of a difficult quest are the elixirs or boons obtained, the hero also acquires other treasures, including the experiences gained along the way. The ultimate goal of the hero's journey is to obtain self-knowledge, freedom from negative emotions and freedom to live as he chooses (Campbell 205). To reach such a goal, the character learns to overcome obstacles by experiencing failure:

> [H]eroes accept their own imperfections and use negative experiences as opportunities to learn and grow. They then utilize their acquired knowledge in future encounters on their quests. For example, an individual that acts out of pride may suffer setbacks in his quest until he learns that he must rely on others to find success. Once he learns a lesson,

he often triumphs in his task and earns the label of "hero" due to his
newfound understanding. (Harris 4)

Solutions gained from experience help the character pass trials, and these lessons
become permanent knowledge for the character. In addition, the experience benefits
the character in promoting empathy and in perceiving others as well as himself. These
experiences help broaden the character's attitudes towards his surroundings. Thus, the
quest's true value may rest in the experiences the character has accumulated and
learned along the journey.

Gender may influence the quest a character encounters. Rachel Brownstein
commented on the differences between the traditional hero and heroine:

The paradigmatic hero is an overreacher; the heroine ... is
overdetermined. The hero moves toward the goal; the heroine tries to be
it. He makes a name for himself; she is concerned with keeping her good
name. (qtd. in Mandelker 48)

These statements are a conventional view, since women also has their own quest.
According to Campbell, women are seen as the reward after the journey not the one
that goes on the journey (qtd. in Murdock 1); however, similar to the hero, the heroine
must also pass trials to achieve her goal. Besides, protagonists of both genders walk
different paths due to the ideal gender types. For traditional myths, the hero or a
masculine figure is set to go on a journey and departs from the mother to return to the
mother afterward, while the heroine or a feminine figure is set to be the hero's goal or
supporter. Jung stated, "The hero is the ideal masculine type: leaving the mother, the
source of life, behind him, he is driven by an unconscious desire to find her again, to
return to her womb" (Symbols of Transformation 389). However, the ideal feminine

type (with traits of unconditional love, devotion, and caring) is set as an image of the hero's feminine side, and this is considered the heroine's role. This value binds the heroine's path in the traditional myths to be a supportive sidekick for the hero or to be the goal of the hero's journey. On the other hand, contemporary and modern novels portray that both the hero and the heroine must overcome obstacles through adventure; however, the social impact on gender still influences the heroine's journey, making it more social than the hero's journey, which sees the hero as an outcast from society. For men, the quest's journey is to become isolated from the community and then to return as a leader after achieving the goal; however, for women, the journey is to conquer the trials through creating bonds with other people (Head 229). Stages in the heroine's journey consist of incorporated aspects to the hero's journey; nevertheless, the aim of the quest is "to heal the internal split between woman and her feminine nature" (Murdock 1). Women's goals of the quest are "to fully embrace their feminine nature, learning how to value themselves as women and to heal the deep wound of the feminine" (2). Thus, women's quest is strongly related to relationship between women and women's inner selves. Furthermore, both genders start their adventures in different ways, since culture limits women's mobility and restricts them to achieve goals within society. Despite the different journeys and the various trial conditions, the goal for both heroes and heroines is personal growth.

Concept of Identity

While various definitions exist, identity is most often defined as one's perception of being a unique self that is sometimes influenced by society. Ruthellen Josselson defines identity as "the stable, consistent, and reliable sense of who one is

and what one stands for in the world" (10). According to Van der Werff, identity is "the combination of essential psychic qualities which characterize and differentiate the person" (qtd. in Bosma et al. 8). For Morwenna Griffiths, identity is a collection of experiences, and the whole construct can be changed by adding new experiences (2). Patricia Miller described this term as an understanding and acceptance of oneself and the society (*Theories of Developmental Psychology* 159). Thus, identity is strongly related to the individual's society.

Identity plays an important role in an individual's life, for it indicates social roles and frames the individual's thoughts about oneself and the society. George Herbert Mead stated that the main mechanism to form one's identity is role-taking, since the individual divides the self into 1) 'Me', which is the identity valuation built from social interactions; and 2) 'I', which is the individual's unique self-altering to match the said valuation (qtd. in Cronk). According to Michel Foucault, since identity is the result of discourse and discursive practice, the individual in authority uses various techniques (such as propaganda, norms and tradition) to frame and construct the other individual's wills and actions (Parker and Aggleton 186; Coupland 113-114). Roles are a fruit of social norms, shaping the individual's views of what he should or should not do.

Identification is strongly connected to society, for an individual is part of society and society influences every aspect of the individual's life. Identity formation is connected to "the individual's mode of being in society, involving both the public projection of identity and its private [life] experience" (qtd. in Maclean et al. 1626). Erving Goffman categorises identity into personal and social identity by viewpoints and performances. The individual's thoughts and feelings about oneself is ego

identity; the image of the individual from other people's viewpoint is personal identity; and the image of the individual from fitting into society is social identity (qtd. in Lawler 8-9). Charles Cooley, an American psychologist, argues the individual cannot be separated from society, and the individual's life is a part of the society (qtd. in "Charles Horton Cooleys Concept of the Lookingglass Self and Its Applications" 86). In his Looking Glass Self theory, Cooley contends an individual's self-consciousness comes from reflecting upon interactions with others and the other people's opinions towards the individual. Identification is viewed as the repeated procedure of reflecting upon the individual's self after comparing it to other people's selves. According to James Marcia, identity formation involves "a synthesis of childhood skills, beliefs, and identifications into a more or less coherent, unique whole that provides the young adult with both a sense of continuity with the past and a direction for the future" ("The Ego Identity Status Approach to Ego Identity" 4). Thus, environmental influences may change one's identity because identity is the result of social discourse, which is flexible according to situations.

In conclusion, identity is an individual's sense of self, which separates each individual from others. The sense of self involves images of the individual's self that are created from interactions with society. Furthermore, society determines and influences the individual's roles, and the society also reflects the individual's identity. The individual's self-perception can be altered due to the interactions between the individual and the society and due to the individual's subsequent readjusted sense of self and values. Among the theories of identity formation, Marcia's identity status theory clearly shows how society impacts the individual's identity through influencing the individual's determination in each identity status.

Marcia's Identity Status

James Marcia, a Canadian psychologist, developed his identity status theory from Erik Erikson's identity crisis, and he claimed that a change can occur many times throughout one's lifetime. In Marcia's theory, change in identity can occur whenever an individual revaluates his sense of self (Stephen et al. 284; Grotevant 203). Marcia mentions that identity formation occurs through the accumulation of experiences and the commitment to choices, not merely following role models to fit within society, as argued in Erikson's theory.

The essential variables used to determine identity statuses are exploration, or crisis, and commitment. Exploration refers to the period of search and discovery to find suitable ideals for oneself (Marcia "Ego Identity Status: Relationship to Change in Self-Esteem, "General Maladjustment," and Authoritarianism" 119). Commitment is the degree of an individual's action and expression of self-worth (sense of one's own worth as a person), beliefs or ideals (Jane Kroger, and James E. Marcia and Marcia 33-34). According to Marcia, identity can be categorised into four statuses by the degree of exploration and commitment:

1. *Identity Diffusion*: Identity diffusion is the least developed status. An individual in a diffused status does not make a commitment upon his values or beliefs, nor does he perform an exploration. This includes the individual that thinks about making a move but does not take any action. In this status, the individual can be either carefree or dissatisfied with present conditions. Also, the individual does not know his distinctiveness from others and relies on external sources for personal evaluation (Marcia "Identity in Adolescence" 159). This individual is easily influenced and

changes to fit within the group (Miller "Theories of Adolescent Development" 23). For example, students choose their major subject based on their parents' or peers' opinion, even if the major is not in accordance with their proficiency.

2. *Identity Foreclosure*: An individual with the identity foreclosure status commits to roles or future goals without exploring other options. In limiting the possibility of exploring and finding the ideal situation, the individual with a foreclosure identity fixes his mind to a pre-set goal. Julian Rotter defines behaviours in foreclosure status as having "low freedom of movement [with] the achievement of superiority through identification" — which Marcia mentioned as "a description for one who is becoming his parents' alter ego" (qtd.in Marcia "Development and Validation of Ego Identity Status" 558). The individual accepts the ideal, which may be decided by parents or peers, without question. He is determined to inherit his parents' job because he is told to do so. Foreclosure status also applies to individuals who determine their future but do not have actual experiences related to their goals. For example, young patients inspired by good medical treatment may decide they want to be a doctor and later attend a medical school.

3. *Moratorium*: An individual with the moratorium status explores alternatives without making a commitment. This status may continue for years or develop into identity achievement. Moratorium is a pre-stage to achievement status (Jane Kroger, and James E. Marcia and Marcia 34). Exploration in this status is equal to experimenting with different choices to discover one's ideals. For example, students attend various courses to determine whether they should continue further study or shift to other subjects.

4. *Identity Achievement*: Contrary to identity diffusion, identity achievement is the most advanced identity status. A series of commitments are made after exploring identity. An individual with this identity status knows what he wants to do and freely acts without relying on external sources. Marcia states that identity achievement status, or a well-developed identity, "gives the individual a sense of one's strengths, weaknesses and uniqueness" (qtd. in Hendry and Kloep 42).

One's identity status can change at any time, and an individual is not required to experience every status. Harold D. Grotevant suggested that developmental position and circumstance influence willingness to explore, while life events affect recommitments (209). Roles and beliefs, such as gender roles and the varying social expectations of individuals from different social classes, impact the individual's identity. In terms of life commitment, important life events trigger reconsideration and lead to the possibility of altering one's commitment. Marcia claims that a well-developed identity structure is flexible, enabling it to adapt to the changing society and relationships ("Identity in Adolescence" 160). While an individual does not have to experience each status, one's status may change due to crisis and/or commitment levels. For example, an individual with foreclosure status may never experience diffusion status, such as an heir of a bakery shop who is expected since birth to inherit a baking career and becomes determined to do so. The heir may later acknowledge that his/her abilities and interests are to be a writer or a swimmer, which triggers a shift from foreclosure status to moratorium status while the individual decides what to do in the future.

Gender influences identity development. A society, particularly in a patriarchal system, binds women to their community. The social system does not

support women to freely explore and follow their ideal goals, since they are expected to take less risk and to follow their parents' footsteps (qtd. in Dececco and Jensen). Oppressed women who are obedient and submissive tend to have diffusion and foreclosure statuses, for they strongly rely on the opinions of others. Linda B. Hopkins' research showed that women with moratorium and identity achievement statuses had a higher level of ego development and a more mature thinking style than the other two statuses (qtd. in Tzuriel 147). Ruthellen Josselson suggests that relativity can be considered another variable along with exploration and commitment (qtd. in De Reus 108). Using one's relationship with parents as a measurement, Josselson stated that women with a diffusion identity are isolated and distance themselves from their parents. Women in the foreclosure status have a strong commitment to their parents, while women with a moratorium status are struck between autonomy and loyalty. Lastly, since a secure family base and healthy relationships support a woman's exploration, women with the identity achievement status strike a balance between being themselves and connecting with their parents.

Related Studies on Identity Formation

There are many studies concerning the identity formation of characters in various novels. First, Lee Ann De Reus, in *Exploring the Matrix of Identity in Barbara Kingsolver's Animal Dreams*, analysed Codi Noline's identity development by using Marcia's identity status framework. The results showed the outcast female protagonist begins with a diffused identity status, searches for her identity and later grows into a woman with an identity achievement status who is capable of committing to herself and to other people. The identity development process occurs

through a series of events, starting when Codi returns to her hometown, acknowledges her roots and confronts her problems. Major events drive Codi's identity formation process forward, as the concept of self is connected to existence over time.

In addition, Finn-Henning Johannessen, in *Alice in Wonderland: Development of Alice's Identity within Adaptations*, used discourse theory to compare the main protagonist's identity development between the original text and three adaptations. She explored how the discourses, including language, discursive articulations in the form of exposition and bodily experience, shape Alice's identity. The results showed that all versions maintain significant elements and events important for the character's identity development. While keeping the theme about Alice's development, the adaptations portray a modern perspective that is different from the original text's Victorian feminine ideal.

Furthermore, Andrew W. Davis, in *Constructing Identity: Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality in Nella Larsen's Quicksand and Passing*, examined and critiqued two African-American female characters' identity construction with race, class, gender and sexuality and the stereotypes portrayed in the novel. Both novels show that the female protagonists struggle through social racism and misogyny to obtain sexual autonomy. In concluding the results, Davis argued that the portrayal of the female characters went against the existing stereotypes, and it represented the actual society that denies women autonomy.

In *The Journey of Black Woman From Self–Hatred To Self-Love: A Study of Alice Walker's The Color Purple*, Anjali Abraham portrayed the main character's development from a negative to a positive sense of self with the assistance of female bonding. She stated that the sexism and racism in society directly influenced Celie's

mind; thus, she grew up to be a submissive and abused woman. Relationships with other women help Celie to positively reinvent herself. Celie had surrendered to the role of an underdog, lesser wife until she learns from other black women the potential to freely live as an equal human being. Empowerment from sisterhood bonding helps Celie to gradually gain self-respect and self-love.

In *Identity Formation in Fadia Faqir's Novel My Name Is Salma*, Andrew Onyango examined the Muslim character's identity formation in the Western postcolonial context and analysed the exiled main character's urge to understand herself and her place in society. The study's results showed the formation of the Muslim character's hybrid identity, which combined her Muslim heritage and the West's modern culture.

Orasa Rodbamroong, in *The Negroes' "Quest for Identity" in James Baldwin's Fiction*, analysed African-American people's identity change through a quest's causes, means and results. First, Rodbamroong found three main causes that made African-Americans dissatisfied and frustrated with their circumstances: their physical appearance, poor economic conditions and social inequality. Second, the African-American characters used two means to complete the quest: either being aggressive or passive towards white people. Finally, the quest's results shaped the African-American characters into 1) a successful group who is satisfied and willingly accepts their situation in society or 2) an unsuccessful group who gives up on fate, holds grudges and/or cannot accept their situation.

Many previous works have studied the identity development of numerous literary characters, and most characters gradually develop through important events and relationships; the experiences gained provoke their sense of identity–who they are

and what they want to be. However, the quest's influence on identity development in *Howl's Moving Castle* has not been studied. Therefore, the researcher proposes examining the female protagonist's identity development throughout her quest.

CHAPTER 3

AN ANALYSIS OF SOPHIE'S IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

In this chapter, the cycle of the hero's journey and the theory of identity status are applied to analyze identity development of Sophie Hatter, a female protagonist in *Howl's Moving Castle.* Since the development of identity status occurs with turns of events, important events affect Sophie's viewpoints and her identity statuses. This chapter is categorized into three acts chronologically: the ordinary world and departure, initiation, and return. The researcher concentrates on events and Sophie's identity based on Marcia's identity status theory.

1. The Ordinary World and Departure

Sophie's quest cannot start without the original world as the beginning of the story. "The Ordinary World allows us to get to know the Hero and identify with him [or her] before the Journey begins" (Vogler 2). The ordinary world of Sophie is her hometown, the Market Chipping in the kingdom of Ingary, where she lives with her family. Sophie family consists of five members, Sophie's father, Fanny the step-mother, Lettie as the second sister, Martha as the third sister, and Sophie as the first sister. Her family business is a hat shop, which her father as a hat maker and the step-mother as a shopkeeper. Sophie and her sisters' duty is to learn at a school; however, when their father deceases, the three sister have to left the school and take a job as the step-mother determined. That is when the story begins.

Sophie's ordinary world, a community with a strong local belief and social expectations, causes her to become an aimless and obedient person. According to

Campbell, the ordinary world reflects a character's old self because the setting influences the character's identity (qtd. in O'Shea 79). Like Campbell's idea, Sophie's ordinary world has effect on her identity. Sophie, a member of the Hatter family, lives in a market town in a wizardry country. In this society, beliefs and myths play an important role in daily life. It has influences on her identity development. At the beginning of the story, Sophie is in the diffusion status—an individual who does not have self-determination and who allows others to make decisions for them. There are two main reasons behind her identity development: household responsibility as the eldest child and the local belief about this child's fate.

Sophie's aimlessness shows through her ignorance of her future life path because of her household responsibility. An individual with a diffusion identity status is not eager to explore other possibilities in life outside a familiar environment (Marcia "Development and Validation of Ego Identity Status" 552). In *Howl's Moving Castle*, Sophie cares only for her current responsibility as the eldest daughter. She shows no interest in researching her future career, and due to her devoted father, she does not think about her future. Sophie focuses only on taking care of her siblings and is not seeking other possible life goals until she makes a startling realisation:

> … [Sophie] very soon realized how little chance she had of an interesting future. It was disappointment to her, but she was still happy enough, looking after her sisters and grooming Martha to seek her fortune when the time came. (Jones 2)

Sophie lets other people determine her future, and she concentrates solely on her responsibility as the eldest sister, which is taking care of the younger sisters. When

the two little sisters argue on what they want to do in the future, Sophie still does not show any interests or opinions. Sophie shows no desire to inherit the shop nor to practice being a hat maker (2-3). With a dim future ahead, she does not have any interest in other subjects. Her aimlessness, letting her life become as other people pleased, results in an ignorance of her possible abilities.

The aimlessness causes Sophie to have no idea who she is and what she is capable of besides sewing and caretaking. According to *Play and Exploration*, an individual can acknowledge his expanded capabilities through exploration and experimentation (4). This idea contradicts Sophie's situation because she only knows her current ability due to other people's opinions and due to her limited life experiences as the eldest sister. Sophie thinks she is capable of only sewing and caretaking. She knows about her sewing ability because her stepmother, Fanning, complimented her handmade clothes. Sophie thinks she is good at caretaking because she can handle arguments between her two siblings and because she grew up acting as their babysitter (Jones 2-3). However, she does not know her capabilities outside her role as a daughter and sister. Sophie's aimlessness limits her routine to housework and to taking care of her younger siblings, preventing her from exploring other fields and discovering her true abilities.

The local belief regarding eldest children also influences Sophie's identity, and it is one of the reasons that leads Sophie to be obedient when her parents choose her life's path. The story starts with the myth that the eldest should not go on a journey to seek fortune:

In the land of Ingary, … it is quite misfortune to be born the eldest of

three. Everyone knows you are the one who will fail first, and worst, if

the three of you set out to seek your fortunes (1).

This belief's origin involves the concept of allowing the eldest to inherit the family business; however, the belief strongly influences Sophie's thinking and her way of life. After the death of her father, Sophie's stepmother establishes future plans for the three daughters according to the local belief: the eldest daughter inherits the shop, the second daughter works at a pastry shop to meet people and have a chance to get married and the youngest daughter goes to study magic to prepare for her fortune journey. Believing in the local prophecy and always listening to other people's instructions, Sophie obediently agrees with Fanning's decision. Sophie's initial obedience eventually leads to her transformation from the diffusion status to the foreclosure status.

An individual with a foreclosure identity devotes to one goal without exploring other possibilities (Marcia "Development and Validation of Ego Identity Status" 552). This definition perfectly describes Sophie. Since the community believes the eldest should not seek adventure; even if Sophie wants to try something new and exciting, she still thinks that being a hatter is suitable for her. She accepts this future since her stepmother, as well as the local belief, expects her to have this career (Jones 8). The eldest must take over the family business, and Sophie establishes this as her goal.

However, living a lifestyle that contrasts Sophie's true self leads her to lose confidence. Sophie suffers from being an obedient child, and she unconsciously expresses her suffering through a lack of confidence. Jane Fisher, a professor of

Women's Health at Monash University, stated that a lack of confidence shows through negative thoughts about self and social isolation (qtd. in "Social Connectedness, Confidence and Wellbeing" 10), and this is clearly portrayed in Sophie's case. First, Sophie's negative thoughts appear both indirectly, such as how she dresses, and directly, such as her opinion of herself. She feels her life is dull, her appearance is that of "an old maid" and her hair is "a reddish straw color", which does not match any hat in the shop (Jones 15). The negative word choices regarding her appearance reflect Sophie's viewpoint towards herself, and this belittling attitude leads to lose confidence. She feels shame at being herself. These examples show Sophie is not satisfied with her life. Her negative thoughts on her appearance decrease her confidence and make Sophie isolate herself from other people.

Second, Sophie's social isolation stems from a lack of social interaction and intimate relationships with others. Low self-confidence can appear as a lack of communication skills (Rosenberg and Owen 409). For instance, "… [Sophie] felt isolated and a little dull. The workshop people […] treated her as someone apart who was going to inherit the business someday" (Jones 11-13). She secludes herself at the back of the shop sewing hats, and she later talks with the hats more than she talks with other people. Sophie reduces her participation in social activities, and most of her conversation partners are objects. Sophie always has excuses for isolating herself from the community and her family members: busy with the shop, no time, too exhausted, her sister lives too far to visit (16). These excuses are used to cope and to avoid communicating with other people.

With prolonged social isolation, Sophie later develops symptoms of social anxiety. Social isolation is significantly relevant to social anxiety disorder (Meltzer et

al. 6). Sophie is accustomed to social isolation, and her confidence is lost to the point that she starts to show anxiety when she goes out. She feels scared when travelling to visit her sister at the bakery, which is located in her hometown. Sophie's anxiety worsens her condition, and her actions cause decreased confidence, isolation and increased anxiety before the cycle repeats. Thus, living up to social expectations does not always lead to happiness. She feels bad about herself and gradually develops fear when communicating with other people.

However, the story cannot move on from a starting point without the call to adventure. To discover one's true self, the hero must distance himself from the community that influences the hero's thinking and way of life (Campbell & Moyers 152; Porter & Mistler 364). Such act is a call to adventure. The hero may or may not set out on the adventure at first (Campbell 54-55). Sophie's call to adventure has to be occurred two times, for the first call is denied, before venturing from her ordinary world. The first call to adventure is when Sophie realizes her situation as being exploited by her step-mother. The development cannot occur if the person does not acknowledge the problem and have the will to change (Williamson 55-56). Anyways, the drive from her realization is not strong enough for her to make an adventure, and Sophie has to be pushed the second time by the curse to be an old woman by the evil witch.

For her identity status, a chance to break free from Sophie's unsatisfied life in the foreclosure status cannot occur without the call to adventure. Being driven out of the hometown, or comfort zone, forces the hero to struggle for a better life and provides a chance to discover one's self and to gain wisdom and insights (Palmer 73).

Thus, the call to adventure signals the end of the foreclosure status and begins the moratorium status, the period of exploration.

The first call to adventure is Sophie's acknowledgement of her own problems and her desire to change. Sophie starts to realise her own problems when her little sister brings them to light during a conversation. Sophie waits until May Day to visit her sister. When they meet, Sophie's sister states that Sophie's condition is worse than before her sisters had left home: "[You prove] you are alright by not coming near here for months, and then turning up in a frightful grey dress and shawl, looking as if even *I* scare you!" (Jones 26). The sister also mentions Sophie's unpaid job and her slave-like obedience to their stepmother. Sophie had never thought of it as a problem and refuses to accept the idea:

> [Fanning] knows how dutiful you are. She knows you have this thing about being a failure because you're only the eldest. She's managed you perfectly and got you slaving away for her. I bet she doesn't pay you. (27)

The sister's words reflect that letting other people lead Sophie's life can harm Sophie's self. This event triggers Sophie to recognise her problematic situation and to consider change. Now, she has a drive to change through acknowledging her problem. She starts to doubt her stepmother's actions and tries to bargain for her rights.

Nevertheless, the first call to adventure fails because of Sophie's obedience to her stepmother. Her obedience prevents her action and destroys her intention to change. According to Jane Kroger and Kathy E. Green, discontent with life's current values destabilises foreclosure status (486). Sophie starts to doubt her parent's decision. She considers her sister's advice and asks Fanning for a salary. However,

Fanning's influence, as the representative of the family's decision, overpowers Sophie's opinion regarding her life path. Fanning always makes decisions for Sophie, and when she claims that Sophie should wait for her answer, Sophie cannot do anything. Instead of insisting for her rights when Fanning postponed her answer, Sophie's loyalty towards her parent causes her to suppress her desire and to make an excuse that, with or without salary, it is her duty to be the hatter (Jones 30-31). Foreclosure status traits, such as obedience and responsibility, still chain Sophie to her ordinary world. Even when she doubts Fanning's decision, Sophie is chained to the idea that being the hatter is her obligation: "Maybe I *am* being exploited, … but someone has to do this or there will be no hats at all to sell" (31). However, doubting her stepmother's decisions causes Sophie to be uncertain regarding her loyalty towards family, and the chains she held start to make her suffer. While Sophie craves for interesting events in her boring life, she cannot go on an adventure yet because of her responsibility as an heiress. Thus, the first call, or the drive to make a change from her acknowledgement of her problem, fails because of her loyalty towards her family. However, Sophie's loyalty, as well as her foreclosure status, is shaken.

The second call to adventure starts when Sophie is cursed to be an old woman. The Witch of the Waste, or the evil witch, curses Sophie to be an old woman because she believes Sophie stole her lover. This curse drives Sophie out of her ordinary world. The new status of being the old woman breaks the chains of family responsibility, for being old means being free from the social expectations of youth: working or marriage (Settersten & Ray 19). Sophie feels satisfied with her old appearance, and she even believes being an old woman matches her true self more than her original youthful appearance (Jones 36). When Sophie has an old appearance,

she does not belong to her original world anymore; thus, nothing can prevent Sophie from seeking her fortune. She no longer waits for advice from other people. This is the threshold in which Sophie crosses from her foreclosure status to her moratorium status, a period of exploration.

Her journey then starts when she receives the curse. "When a woman decides to break with established images of the feminine ... She puts on her armor, mounts her modern-day steed, leaves loved ones behind, and goes in search of the golden treasure" (Murdock 32). Likewise, Sophie discards her original feminine form of a young girl to be an old woman, leaving her hometown alone to seek for her solely goal--a way to lift the curse. The story moves from the first act to the second act from this point onward.

2. Initiation

In the initiation act, the hero must pass a series of trials, or tests. After crossing the threshold, the hero encounters trials, meets allies, and confronts enemies (Vogler 4). Like the idea of Vogler, to lift her curse, Sophie has to pass many trials. These trials are a long road for Sophie to achieve the goal of self-realisation. The trial period is a series of contributions leading to the journey's goal: knowledge of the inner self (Widdershoven 131). According to Alan Berman et al., the exploration's objectives are to observe one's self and mind, to examine one's capabilities and to practice one's problem-solving and/or crisis management (513-514). This is the same for Sophie who must pass various trials in different roles and learn through trials and errors to become assertive, to gain confidence and to understand herself better. She must also learn to resolve crises and to make decisions. Furthermore, the exploration

performed through these roles provides Sophie with a chance to strengthen her inner self. Sophie's inner journey is an adventure to discover self, and the goal she achieves by passing the trials is her personal growth.

The first trial is to receive acceptance from the householder. After departing from her hometown, Sophie seeks help from Howl, a fearsome wizard who owns a castle. She plays the role of a cleaning lady. The purpose of this trial is to prove she is useful and to convince Howl to let her stay. She takes the role of the cleaning lady because she needs Howl to accept her existence in the castle. The goal is similar to when Sophie was at home. She needs to be something within her capability that is accepted by society, such as when she was a hatter. Her duty is what she can do well, such as cleaning a house and patching clothes. She works diligently to receive acceptance; however, she ends up causing trouble for the other people in the castle. Sophie steals the other residents' work and bothers other people for additional work. Howl even states Sophie might prefer to be a slave because all she asks for is more work (Jones 99). Howl shows Sophie that she can do what she wants while also being accepted by him. There is no need to satisfy Howl. In this role, she learns that she should do what makes her feel comfortable. She learns she does not have to push herself to satisfy other people and to make them accept her.

Her second trial is managing a crisis and reconciling her emotional experiences when dealing with Howl. In this trial, she must rely on her past experiences to manage her current problem of confronting Howl and dealing with his tantrum. According to Pim Teunissen and Tim Wilkinson, practice increases confidence when nursing students apply knowledge and skills to actual operations (205). Repeated practice enhances one's confidence and management skills. This

statement is proven correct in Sophie's case when she plays the role of Howl's caretaker. At their first meeting, Sophie notices the similarity between her stepmother and Howl. In thinking of the times she dealt with her stepmother, Sophie's fear of the wizard is decreased (Jones 95). The resemblance, from Sophie's point of view, helps her cope with someone who has power over her. Thus, when Howl makes a mess in the castle, Sophie manages the crisis with the same mindset of when she dealt with her younger sisters, who always used to throw tantrums (119-122). Sophie realises Howl throws tantrums because he is unable to manage his many problems. Understanding the cause of Howl's temper, Sophie makes him talk about his problems, and this resolves the crisis. Since she used to take care of her sisters and her stepmother, she can deal with Howl. Sophie's confidence increases due to the repeated past performances, and she can now manage her new problems by adapting her experiences with her family members and using the knowledge gained from these past experiences.

More importantly, Sophie also uses the knowledge about the cause of the tantrum to reflect on her previously unnoticed actions. Sophie used to throw a fit on her hats when she felt angry, mostly saying that the hats did not do her any good (31). The reason behind her tantrum at that time was her unhappy life, which was not directly related to the hats. She learns from dealing with Howl's tantrums that venting on other things but not confronting the problem is nothing but wasting time, as the problem remains unsolved.

Her third trial is gaining the confidence to interact with strangers. Encouragement from her companions influences Sophie's confidence when she is an old witch at the wizard's spell shop. Normally, the other castle residents play the role

of shopkeeper; however, this time, Sophie must sell items by herself. When Sophie and the unmovable fire demon, Calcifer, are at the shop and customers come to buy spells, Calcifer encourages Sophie to sell the spells with confidence, something Sophie lacks at that moment. Calcifer affirms that confidence is significant and that "[t]hose spells are mostly belief. Don't look uncertain when you give it to [the customer]" (189). After making several sales, Sophie's fear is gone, and she can act in the role of the witch, selling her own newly created spell to a customer (191). Her confidence gradually increases with each sale, and this helps Sophie improve her performance. Her past negative thoughts concerning her inability to perform tasks decrease, while her positive thoughts increase. With this enhanced confidence, she can now comfortably communicate with customers.

Her fourth trial is talking and bargaining with important people. Sophie's different reactions when she meets such people reflect her improved assertiveness. According to Margo C. Watt and Sherry H. Stewart, an individual with anxiety protects oneself from the uncertainty of an upcoming event by thinking of the worst possible outcome, called catastrophic thinking; however, the actual outcome may or may not be as bad as one thinks when actually encountering the situation (83-84). Furthermore, "confronting your fear repeatedly helps develop skills and mastery. Mastery decreases the chance of failure and therefore reduces the need to worry" (Shpancer). Sophie also decreases her worry and develops her communication skills by encountering important people numerous times. First, she meets Mrs. Pentstemmon, an old witch who is Howl's teacher, to prove that the truth is not always as bad as in her catastrophic thinking of the worst case-scenario. When Howl takes Sophie to visit his magic teacher, Sophie feels agitated: "Mrs. Pentstemmon

turned herself back toward Sophie, and Sophie felt more nervous than ever" (Jones 232). Normally, Sophie can freely communicate her opinions with her companions; however, she cannot do the same when encountering the old witch. Most of the conversations are on the old witch's side, and Sophie can only reply in short sentences. Sophie imagines the worst-case scenario, and it makes her extremely nervous when she talks with the old witch, while, in fact, the old witch is quite generous. However, this event is not a failure because she has gained experience that helps her when encountering another important person: the king.

Sophie must talk with the king twice, and each time she has different reactions due to her prior experiences. When Sophie first appears before the king, she has serious anxiety and feels bashful. "…Sophie suddenly overwhelmed by the fact that she is standing talking to the King … [a]nd she found she had forgotten every word … Howl had told her to say," even though she manages to speak something (243). Sophie cannot respond to the king in the same manner as she usually does with other people, such as the shop customers. However, with the prior experience she gained when meeting the noble witch, Sophie manages to finish her talk. Sophie is not as staggered and bewildered as the time when she had her conversation with Mrs. Pentstemmon. Afterwards, when Sophie appears before the king a second time—despite stage fright and having nothing left to say—she is assertive. Sophie even returns home from visiting the king via a royal coach and with the little princess on her lap (258-261). These experiences enable Sophie to gradually become accustomed to talking with powerful people like the king, and now she is assertive enough to even ask for a ride home. Her fear of important people disappears once she has had repeated encounters with the actual situations; she realises that the situations are

manageable and that important people are not as frightful as she imagined. Sophie proves through her collected experiences that the situation is not bad as she feared, and these experiences also accumulate to strengthen her assertiveness.

Discovering her interests and abilities is another sign of Sophie's identity development, for she can state what she wants or does not want to do—not letting other people decide what should be suitable for her. Akiko Naka suggests that people have to experience varied things to discover what they really like:

> If you ask a five-year-old kid what their favourite food is, he or she will tell you Mac and Cheese, maybe that's because they haven't tried … other food that they might potentially like. You can't just love things you've never tasted before. In order to find out what you truly love, you have to experience, you have to taste it, and then you'll know whether you like it or not. (qtd. in Techapichetvanich)

At the beginning of the story, Sophie knew only her abilities of sewing and taking care of her sisters; however, when she lives with Howl, she discovers other abilities and interests. Sophie now knows what she wants to do, and she no longer must wait for other people's instructions. This can be clearly seen in Sophie's reaction towards being a hatter and a flower gardener. First, when Howl buys an old hat shop and asks what the renovated shop should be, Sophie clearly disagrees with continuing the hat business: "Sophie found she had had enough of hats to last a lifetime" (Jones 287). She now knows herself enough that she realises she no longer wants to be a hatter. If she were still letting other people decide her career, she would have allowed Howl to continue the shop's former business—ultimately working as a hatter again. Second, when Howl turns the business into a flower shop, Sophie discovers from being a

shopkeeper that she is satisfied with planting flowers: "She grew a navy-blue rose like that, which pleased her greatly … Sophie was so delighted with it … and experimented with [other flowers]. She told herself she had never been happier in her life" (335). Sophie discovers her ability and her fondness for growing plants through experiencing the interested subject. Since she knows what she wants to do after having this experience, she no longer obeys other people's suggestions.

3. Return

The return act is the period when the protagonist has to return to his/her ordinary world after he/she receives boons from his/her journey. It consists of the phase when the protagonist refuses to return until when the protagonist is able to live freely in his/her community. To return to the ordinary world is also to bring back the journey's treasure to help the community. It is an act of returning back to the starting point while the protagonist is grown up after passing all the trials.

> When the hero-quest has been accomplished, … the adventurer still must return with his life-transmuting trophy. The full round, the norm of the monomyth, requires that the hero shall now begin the labor of bringing the runes of wisdom … back into the kingdom of humanity, where the boon may redound to the renewing of the community. (Campbell 167)

In the same way, Sophie returns to her ordinary world in the last act, where she reunites with her family members, lifts her curse, and save her companions' life. Besides, Sophie also brings back the treasure she got from the adventure to help other people. "[T]he hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to

bestow boons on his fellow man" (Campbell 23). The boons she brings back are her acknowledgement of her ability and her confidence to do things.

At this stage, Sophie develops from the moratorium status to the identity achievement status when she returns to her community. Returning to the ordinary world is the period when Sophie must adjust herself and confront her core problem for the sake of re-joining the community. The goal of this act is the same as developing herself to achieve the identity achievement status. According to Marcia, an individual with an identity achievement status knows what he wants, how he will live in harmony with other people and what his life goal is ("Identity in Adolescence" 160). Passing the trials in the moratorium status encourages the hero to reach the identity achievement status. For Sophie to reach identity achievement status and live in the society as her true self, she must negotiate a mutual understanding with her family, accept her strengths and weaknesses, and embrace her true self.

Sophie's adjustment to the ordinary world starts when she reunites with her family members, acknowledges that they accept her the way she is and reconciles with her stepmother. Jean S. Phinney stated that the understanding and acceptance of one's origin is a trait of identity achievement (38). Even though Sophie moves back to her hometown, she still feels out of place and cannot meet with her family. Sophie fears her family cannot accept her old appearance: "She did not dare go and see [her sisters] for fear [her sisters] would not know her … She just could not bear either of her sisters to see her as an old woman" (Jones 336). Thus, when she first meets her stepmother, she pretends to be a stranger (379). However, her stepmother and later the other family members remember Sophie and feel happy to see her after being away such a long time. After meeting with her family members, Sophie is freed from her

negative thoughts. She realises her family members know about her curse and still accept and care about her (380). They were sad when Sophie had left them without notice, and they had worried about her. Sophie slowly makes peace with her old self and learns that she can fit within society while being her true self, and if not, at least her family accepts her. Sophie, who has matured and broadened her worldview, finally understands her stepmother's past actions and decisions. Sophie used to doubt her stepmother's decisions concerning her and her sisters' career paths; however, now Sophie knows that her stepmother's choice was the best she could think of at that time and that she truly loves her stepdaughters (382-383). This reunion teaches Sophie that everyone accepts her, no matter who she is. The distrust she had is gone, and she changes her attitude towards her family.

Besides understanding and reuniting with her family, Sophie must accept her strengths and weaknesses through encountering her fears by herself to develop the identity achievement status. An individual with an identity achievement status has "a sense of one's strengths, weaknesses and uniqueness" (qtd. in Hendry and Kloep 42). For Sophie, she acknowledges her strengths and weaknesses through confronting her core problem: she must face her true self, which obstructs her from returning to the ordinary world. To travel off from the castle alone is the mission she must finish to prove her development. This action represents her strengths, confidence and strong will to confront her fears without other people's support. In the past, Sophie had always left the castle with somebody else; if no one could go with her, she would postpone her travel and blame her fear on the scarecrow or her aching back: "She rather suspected that she had just made [the scarecrow] into a convenient excuse for not leaving the castle because she had really wanted to stay" (Jones 394). Now,

Sophie decides to travel alone; she accepts her weakness and her fear of confronting her problems, and she is ready to move forward. To overcome fear is to stop avoiding it and to experience it directly (Gupta 27). Her action produces different results than at the beginning of the story because Sophie's anxiety of going out alone is gone. She accepts her fear of traveling alone and overcomes it.

Furthermore, Sophie acknowledges her strength through her encounter with the evil witch. When she arrives at the evil witch's den, she does not feel anxious at all (Jones 399-403). At the beginning of the story, Sophie trembled with fear and could not talk to the evil witch. However, now she shows her confidence when she faces the evil witch. She threatens the witch by brandishing a walking stick and arguing with her (403-406). Even if she does not defeat the witch by herself at the end, Sophie shows her bravery and determination. She is capable of managing her fear without relying on other people, as she used to do in the past. Sophie knows her strengths enough to fight the evil witch by herself.

Sophie finally develops the identity achievement status by shedding her curse and helping Howl. Successfully completing all the trials makes her confident enough to confront everything with her true self. Sophie helps her two companions by breaking their contracts, reviving Howl and freeing Calcifer:

> She turned to Howl with the almost-dead black lump [Calcifer], feeling doubtful in spite of her hurry. She had to get this right, and she was not sure how you did. "Well, here goes," she said. Kneeling down beside Howl, she carefully put the black lump on his chest … and pushed. "Go in," she told it. "Go in there and work!" … Sophie tried to ignore

[the chaos surrounding] … She pushed [until Howl was revived]. (422-423)

She accepts her true potential as a witch and changes from a receiver to a giver. Her appearance, which has reverted back to her original form, no longer matters to Sophie anymore, for she ignores it and keeps helping Howl (423). Sophie does this by herself, representing the insignificance of outer appearance and her strong will to be a helper. Her inner self finally materialises through her shape-shifting back to her original appearance. Sophie leaves her old woman appearance to fully use her ability and to help Howl and Calcifer. She does this without encouragement from other people, for the outer appearance does not matter anymore when other people will accept her as who she is.

Sophie starts with negative thoughts; however, she gradually develops positive thoughts through accepting herself. According to Howard B. Kaplan, acceptance of self is relevant to an individual's thoughts of self (182). The story also portrays a change in Sophie's thoughts concerning her appearance, as they go from negative to positive. In the beginning of the story, even though Sophie was young, she viewed herself as a dull woman. She felt bad about her face and hair colour, and she thought her poor appearance did not match with any hat in the shop (Jones 15). After living with Howl, her opinions on things related to herself have gradually improved. While she used to think her hair was "a reddish straw color", she describes her hair at the end of the story as "[r]ed gold" (15, 425). This personal assessment reflects the positive change in her self-perspective. These positive thoughts prove that Sophie already accepts herself the way she is. Thus, living with Howl and passing many trials

helped Sophie develop a positive perspective, which results in self-acceptance and positive opinions of herself.

Like Murdock's idea about the quest of heroine, Sophie's return shows achievements of creating a bond and embracing the feminine nature. For women, the journey is to conquer the trials through creating bonds with other people (Head 229). Similarly, Sophie creates deep bonds with her companions and reconciles with her family, strengthens the relationship between herself and the community, and helps her companions from crisis. At the beginning of the story, Sophie's bond with her community is quite poor since she isolates herself from other people due to her anxiety. However, along the journey while encountering trials, Sophie creates strong bonds with her companions. Besides, after returning to her ordinary world, she also settles her misunderstanding with her family. Furthermore, Sophie successes to reach the women's goals of the quest. They are "to fully embrace their feminine nature, learning how to value themselves as women and to heal the deep wound of the feminine" (Murdock 2). Like Murdock's idea, Sophie learns to value herself and heals her wound of the feminine. Sophie used to think low of herself to the point of hating herself for not being feminine enough as her sisters. However, at the return act, Sophie is proud of being herself and feels positive with her own appearance. Being feminine is no longer an obstacle for Sophie.

To conclude, Sophie's journey shows a cycle of adventure which the protagonist returns to the starting point with developed character traits at the end of the story. For Sophie, the quest is her journey of identity development and bonds strengthening. She returns to her hometown with developed characteristics. Sophie is now mature, has broader perspective in life, and has confidence. She has freedom to

choose her life path and to live freely as she pleased. In term of identity, she even has

identity achievement status, considering as the well-developed identity.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This study aimed to study the effects of Sophie's quest on her identity development. This study also aimed to investigate the influence of experiences on change of self-perception. Suggestions for further studies are provided at the end of the chapter.

Conclusion

Sophie's quest affects her identity, enabling her to develop from diffusion status to identity achievement status. Furthermore, her experiences during the quest influence Sophie's positive change of self-perception, and she gradually accepts her true self. Her identity development can be categorised into four statuses in three acts, according to Marcia's identity status theory and Joseph Campbell's the hero's journey theory.

First, the story begins with a setting of the ordinary world. The ordinary world for Sophie is her hometown where she lives with her family. For the identity status, Sophie starts with a diffusion status since her ordinary world causes her to become an aimless and obedient person. The local beliefs strongly influence Sophie's thoughts and her identity. She does not explore other possibilities in life, and she only knows about her abilities related to her household responsibilities of sewing and caretaking. Meanwhile, her obedience leads her to develop a foreclosure status. Later, the story is in the departure act with the call to adventure. Sophie must be pushed forward two times before venturing from her ordinary world. Meanwhile, her identity

status is unstable when Sophie attempts to break free from the foreclosure status. Sophie's lifestyle that contrasts to her real self leads her to lose confidence, and the loss of confidence is demonstrated in her negative thoughts about herself and in her isolation from society. Sophie's chance to break free from the foreclosure status occurs with 1) acknowledgement of her problems, which creates the urge to change, and 2) the curse to be an old woman, which frees Sophie from her ordinary world.

Second, in the initiation act, Sophie has to pass many trials. These trials are a long road for Sophie to achieve the goal of self-realisation. In the initiation act, Sophie's identity shifts from the foreclosure status to the moratorium status when she starts her adventure and encounters trials. Sophie must pass varied trials and learns through trials to become assertive, to gain confidence and to discover her true potential. In the first trial, Sophie learns she does not have to satisfy other people and society for acceptance; Sophie decides to be herself when she lives with Howl. Later, in the second trial, Sophie learns from her old experiences to manage problems and to reconcile emotional experiences. She can control situations and use her experiences to reconsider her past actions. In her third and fourth trials, she realises the importance of the collected experiences: they help her deal with strangers and important people, and they also strengthen her assertiveness. In successfully passing all her trials, Sophie discovers her true interests and abilities.

Finally, in the last act of the hero's quest, the return, Sophie returns to her ordinary world. Sophie also brings back the treasure she received from the adventure to help other people. The boons she brings back are her acknowledgement of her ability and her confidence to do things. In term of the identity status, Sophie develops from the moratorium status to the identity achievement status when she returns to her

community. In this stage, Sophie must negotiate for mutual understanding with her family, accept her strengths and weaknesses and accept her true self. In the end of the story, Sophie finally develops to the identity achievement status by shedding her curse and helping her companions.

In term of feminine aspect of the quest, Sophie's return shows achievements of creating a bond and embracing the feminine nature. Sophie creates deep bonds with her companions and reconciles with her family, strengthens the relationship between herself and the community. She learns to value herself and heals her wound of the feminine. Being feminine is no longer an obstacle for Sophie.

This research suggests that experiences from a number of events are significant to a person's development. Likewise, the experiences helped shape Sophie's self-development. Such experiences boost Sophie's confidence in dealing with problems, and Sophie proves that she can solve her problems by taking action. Even though the problems are not exactly the same as the previous ones, Sophie can adapt her accumulated experiences to deal with all problems. The experiences helped Sophie to be confident enough to effectively cope with problems and to communicate with other people. Besides, the experiences also broaden her perspective in life and deepen her understanding of herself. This personal growth, obtained through experiences, consists of confidence, assertiveness and maturity.

Furthermore, the experiences provided Sophie with the necessary assertiveness to confront her fears. Sophie realises what she is capable of based on her experiences. Once aware of her capacity, she is ready to encounter the problems she had never confronted. The assertiveness comes from her awareness of her potential.

Sophie used to fear confronting her problems; however, after having enough experiences, she is assertive enough to face all challenges.

In addition to confidence and assertiveness, experiences are the key factor to help Sophie become mature. Sophie's experiences become knowledge that she accumulates through encountering difficulties in life. The knowledge gained through the adventure includes both general knowledge about her surroundings and inner wisdom about herself. Both types of knowledge are associated with Sophie's viewpoint. When Sophie gains enough experience and becomes mature, she understands people around her more than before, prioritises helping others and realises what she wants to do in the future.

The experiences also help Sophie live in the community as her true self. Sophie learns from her experiences when living with Howl; consequently, she knows how to behave and what perspective she should adopt. Social expectations play a less important role in Sophie's life because she now realises how to manage this oppression. Sophie knows from her experiences that she does not have to shoulder these social expectations and pretend to be someone else. Therefore, after collecting experiences from living with her new companions, Sophie can live comfortably in her old community.

Discussion

The findings are similar to many studies on identity development in children's literature. While facing the problems to develop oneself, a protagonist must return to his origin and reconcile with his family to obtain identity achievement status. For example, Lee Ann de Reus' "Exploring the Matrix of Identity in Barbara

Kingsolver's Animal Dreams" portrays the identity development of the main character, Codi Noline, through encountering a number of events and eventually returning to the original community. The identity development process occurs through a series of events. The process starts when Codi returns to her hometown, acknowledges her origin and handles her problems. De Reus' work describes Codi's direct confrontation of her root problem to learn self-acceptance, love and identity through experiencing significant events that affect Codi's perspectives on life. Major events push Codi towards identity formation. This same process occurs in *Howl's Moving Castle*, as Sophie must pass various events and return to accept her origin to achieve a well-developed identity.

The process of adventures and trials is similar to Finn-Henning Johannessen's *Alice in Wonderland: Development of Alice's Identity within Adaptations,* which shows Alice's adventure to seek her identity. Johannessen's research shows that all versions of *Alice in Wonderland* keep elements and events that are important to Alice's identity development. Alice alters her identity during her adventure, partly struggling to fit in with other characters in Wonderland. Alice's bodily experiences, becoming big and small, are another factor in her identity development. Johannessen's findings show that significant events are arranged in a chronological order in every adaptation, demonstrating the importance of the events' arrangement for Alice's identity development. Sophie must also pass a variety of trials before gaining the necessary experience to develop her identity. Sophie also chronologically faces a number of trials, from small ones to big ones, to become confident, to achieve problem-solving skills and to develop her identity.

Furthermore, the present study found that encouragement from Sophie's companions helped her face all her challenges. Her companions' assistance prepared her to encounter her fears and problems, and the encouragement also drove her to change in a positive manner. This concept is similar to Anjali Abraham's *The Journey of Black Woman from Self–Hatred to Self-Love: A Study of Alice Walker's The Color Purple,* which portrays the development of Celie, the main character, from a negative to a positive understanding of self due to the encouragement found in female bonding. Thus, the collocation with other women positively helped Celie to reconstruct herself. Playing a role of an underdog, lesser wife, Celie had suppressed herself; however, she learns from other black women about the potential to be liberated and to have the same rights as other people. This sisterhood bonding empowers Celie to gradually develop self-respect and love. Even if the concept of bonding is not vividly displayed in *Howl's Moving Castle*, the assistance and encouragement from Sophie's companions empower Sophie to handle her obstacles in life, helping her to pass her trials and to develop herself.

Sophie gains an awareness of her potential from the experiments throughout her adventure, and this means self-searching is important. The findings portray that Sophie broadens her world and her hidden abilities by exploring things she never did before or those things that used to scare her. Many people discover their hidden potentials and interests from things they had never experienced. According to Thomas J. Sergiovanni's nine principles of the constructivist research, students learn better by doing than by only being taught (113-134). Therefore, educators should add experimentation and exploration to the curriculum or to extra activities outside academic study. Discovering one's self significantly benefits students' identity

development, and this is particularly true for adolescent students. Reconsidering the importance of experimentation and exploration in classrooms is significant, as these processes can be used to solve identity-related problems, such as the students not knowing who they are, what they can do and how they should confront future problems. Experimentation and exploration benefit learning efficiency because students learn better when participating (Paul).

Furthermore, this study's findings show the significance of using children's literature in educating children. Children's literature, such as *Howl's Moving Castle,* can be used in the classroom to teach both identity development and problem management. The students receive second-hand experiences through reading the character's adventure. Even if the students do not take action, they can have second-hand experiences and learn through books. Thus, the research results demonstrate the benefits of children's literature as an additional learning tool for cultivating children's identity and other beneficial traits.

Suggestions for Further Studies

Identity is crucial to children's development in both body and mind. I suggest future research should examine the results of using children's literature in a classroom to cultivate students' identity. The similarities and differences between male and female characters' in identity development, based on the works of male and female authors, would be another interesting topic in the field of gender and identity development. Finally, I also suggest further research on the style of the quest that characters of different genders must confront, as well as the quest's effects on these characters.

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