

## CHAPTER II

### INTRINSIC ELEMENTS

In this chapter, the researcher explains the intrinsic elements of *A New Life* novel, including theme, plot, events, conflicts, climax, characters and characterization, setting, and the novel's point of view.

#### 2.1 Theme

A theme is the main idea or the main point in a story. Because the theme is the story's essential development, it must represent the whole part of the story (Nurgiyantoro, 2009).

*A New Life* is a children's novella about the immigrant experience of two young children. The novel focuses on Hamza and Khadija, two children's characters in the novel, from Khadija's point of view. The plot of the novel focuses on Hamza and Khadija, who, along with their parents, left their hometown and migrated to another country. Both characters face new situations and try to fit into their new surroundings.

During their first week at their new school, Khadija is busy making friends with her fellow immigrant classmates, while Hamza feels like he has been looked at like a fool and cannot make friends with anyone. However, Hamza once had an experience like this during the first week of school. Since then, Hamza and Khadija have become friends and have been able to play with other children. After a few years, they officially become Canadian citizens. They can do anything like the Canadians and eventually move to a new house that is way much better than their old flat.

## **2.2 Plot**

A plot represents a causal relationship between events and is not just a chronological sequence. It can also be a reflection or journey of the characters' actions, thoughts, emotions, and attitudes in response to the challenges they face (Nurgiyantoro, 2009).

Based on Nurgiyantoro (2009), the plot development depends on events, conflicts, and climaxes. These three plot-defining elements are closely related and the interest of the story depends on these three elements.

### 2.2.1 Events

Events are transitions from one scene to another within the narrative in the story. In his book, Nurgiyantoro (2009) also wrote that events can be divided into three: functional, links, and references. Functional events determine or influence the development of the plot. The arrangement of functional events is the core of the story of a related work of fiction. In this way, the presence of these events is related to the rationale of the story and is a necessity, which means that if a functional event is left out, it will make the story distinctive and, indeed, less coherent (Nurgiyantoro, 2009, p. 118). It can be seen on page 24-25 below

“In the afternoon I am pulled out of the class with two other girls. One girl is about my colour and the other is much darker. We go to a special teacher named Mrs. Baker to learn to speak English.” (Khan, 2009, p. 24-25)

A linking event serves as a hook for important or functional events, such as moving from one environment to another or from a scene to another. Different from the functional event, the

presence of a linking event does not affect the rationale of the story. At the very least, the reader can still understand the whole story with or without the linking event. Because the linking event commonly serves as an interlude and out as little events that connect between functional events (Nurgiyantoro, 2009, p. 118). It can be seen in page 17 below.

“I can’t wait to see our new home. I’ve seen pictures of houses in North America on TV. They’re always clean and stylish.

But the house that Abugee has set up for us isn,t even a house. It’s an apartment, just a few rooms. And the furniture is used and has scratches and dents.” (Khan, 2009, p. 17)

A reference event is an event that does not directly affect or relate to the development of the plot. Reference events refer to other components relating to characterization issues or the atmosphere surrounding a character's internal self. In this case, it is not the important plot point of the story, but rather shows the personality and mood of the characters in the story (Luxemburg in Nurgiyantoro, 2009, p 119). For example, certain events occur in

a character's mind as he or she experiences certain important events described in the story. The events mentioned foreshadow something that will happen, but do not cause it to happen (Nurgiyantoro, 2009, p. 119).

It can be seen on *A New Life* novel, page 37 below.

“We haven't even taken our coats off when Amigee says “What have you done?” She's staring at Hamza. Did she find out about the fire alarm?” (Khan, 2009, p. 37)

In *A New Life* novel, the events begin with Khadija and Hamza's father moving abroad, and then his family follows him sometime later. It can be seen in the novel, page 12, chapter 1.

“Abugee has to bend down to kiss my grandmother. Daddiami rubs the top of his head. And then he's gone, to set up a house for us in Canada.” (Khan, 2009, p. 12).

The children are starting to enter a new school, and their father is waiting for his university degree from Pakistan to be

approved, so that he can apply for a new job as a teacher while being a taxi driver.

“On our first day of school I get up extra early. I clean my teeth and brush my hair and put on some socks.” (Khan, 2009, p. 19)

“He’s waiting to get his university degree from Pakistan approved. So many rules and regulations, he says. And he has to go to school to improve his English so he can be a substitute teacher, even though he was a principal back then in Pakistan.” (Khan, 2009, p. 46).

When the time flies, Khadija is in fifth grade and struggles with too much homework from her teacher. Khadija and her family finally became Canadian.

“Years have passed, and things have changed. We got our citizenship papers at a special ceremony with a judge and everything.” (Khan, 2009, p. 60).

From the data above, we can see that Khadija and her family finally received their citizenship in a special ceremony hosted by the government with a judge and everything.

### **2.2.2 Conflicts**

Conflict is a dramatic event that commonly refers to two fights and implies counter-action (Wellek and Warren in Nurgiyantoro, 2009). It is generally categorized into two main types: external conflict and internal conflict.

Internal conflict occurs within a character, which means that it is a conflict that humans experience with themselves. It can occur due to the conflict between two desires for different choices, choices, expectations, or other problems (Nurgiyantoro, 2009, p. 124).

In a *A New Life*, internal conflict occurs when Khadija feels like the dragon in a book comes true and she wonders if it happened to everyone or just to her.

“The dragon flew over the mountain and saw a witch on the other side.”

Again the words vanish and I see a dragon and a witch on a broomstick.

Does this happen to everyone, or is it just me? I read it again and this time I don't stop.” (Khan, 2009, p. 45).

Nurgiyantoro (2009) stated in his book that external conflict can also be categorized into two categories: physical and social conflict. Physical conflict is characterized by a character's problem with the natural environment. Meanwhile, social conflict commonly arises because of problems with other characters or problems related to human relationships.

An example of social conflict that happens in *A New Life* novel is when Hamza tries to chase the bullies, who call out Khadija and say that she is stinky.

“Hamza starts marching towards them. I pull at his shirt saying, “Just ignore them.”

But he won't. He chases them down and there's a fight. It's two against one, but Hamza still beats them." (Khan, 2009, p. 49-50).

Khadija also experiences a social conflict when she visits her friends' flat, Margarita and Rada, which is unexpectedly smaller and have different smell than hers.

"It's true that our home is much shabbier than in Pakistan, but even here there are those who have it worse. Margarita's apartment is a lot like ours, but it's much smaller. And it smells different...Rada's house smells different too. (Khan, 2009, p. 50-51).

The physical conflict occurs when Hamza and Khadija rush into their bedroom when their parents are returning home after meeting with their teacher.

"We rush into the bedroom. Lights out, try to get to bed. Ow! I bumped my shin!" (Khan, 2009, p. 39)

### **2.2.3 Climax**

Climax is a component of the conflict. In any story, regardless of the type, when a conflict reaches the breaking point, it leads to the climax (Nurgiyantoro, 2009).

The climax occurs in the fifth chapter, page 55 when Khadija and Hamza are older. Khadija is now in the fifth grade and is struggling with her homework. She also meets new kids at school who have come from distant countries. The kids appear nervous and scared, which reminds Khadija of how she once felt, prompting her to be kind to them. During this time, Abugee earns his teaching certificate, and Amigee decides to support him until he secures a full-time job as a teacher, which leads to him quitting his job as a taxi driver.

In the conclusion, as years pass and circumstances change, Hamza and Khadija's family receive their citizenship papers and officially become Canadians. They gain the same rights and privileges as any other Canadian citizen.

Nurgiyantoro (2009) wrote on his book, *Teori Pengkajian Sastra*, that a plot has another stage: situation stage, generating circumstances stage, rising action stage, climax stage and denouement or resolution stage.

**a. Situation**

In this stage, the characters are introduced, and the framework of the plot is established. This stage is the beginning of the story, which becomes the foundation or reference for continuing the story to the next stage (Nurgiyantoro, 2009, p. 149). This stage can be seen in chapter 1 of *A New Life* novel.

#### **b. Generating Circumstances**

Nurgiyantoro (2009) stated that conflict or conflict-triggering events begin to appear in this stage. Therefore, this stage is the beginning of the development of conflict in the story that will develop into the next stage.

“That kid from his class says something to him again. There are words written on the little box in white letters. Hamza stands in front of it with all the other kids jostling past him and reads “P-U-L-L.” Pull. So he does.

Immediately a different bell starts ringing. It’s very loud and urgent and the teachers look scared. The mean kids laugh.” (Khan, 2009, p. 33)

### **c. Rising Action**

The conflicts that occurred in the previous stages of the generating circumstances become more intense, and the events that lead to the conflict become more tense. As explained in the conflict points above, internal and external conflicts arise. Furthermore, conflicts and clashes between interests, issues, and characters become increasingly inevitable until the climax (Nurgiyantoro, 2009, p. 149-150).

“Hamza starts marching towards them. I pull at his shirt saying, “Just ignore them.”

But he won't. He chases them down and there's a fight. It's two against one, but Hamza still beats them.” (Khan, 2009, p. 49-50)

### **d. Climax**

The climax stage here is no different from the climax stage mentioned before. Burhan Nurgiyantoro (2009) states in his book that the climax of a story is experienced by the protagonist, who acts as the perpetrator or victim of a major conflict. The rising

action and climax stage usually correspond to stages 1 and 2, which are the situation stage and the generating circumstances stage

“The school calls home and Hamza gets in trouble. Abugee yells at him, telling him he’s throwing away his chances. Amigee looks sad. Hamza just sits there and listens. He doesn’t tell them it was all because of me.

“When they’re done and he’s promised not to fight again, he comes into our room. “Are you okay?” I say.” (Khan, 2009, p. 50)

#### **e. Resolution**

The last stage is the resolution stage. The culminating conflict is resolved, tensions are alleviated, and any solutions to conflicts, sub-conflicts, or additional conflicts (if there are any) are presented, then the story ends.

“He shrug. He’s going to hop into his bed but then turns and says, “You know you really should take a bath every day. You kind of smell.”

It hurts my feeling when he says that. But I decide to listen and now I make myself take a bath every single day. It makes a big difference.” (Khan, 2009, p. 50)

### 2.3 Character and Characterization

Characters in a story are the individuals created by the author to support the narrative and express the story's themes. Characterization refers to how these characters are described and developed through their actions, dialogue, thoughts, and interactions with others. According to Cixous and Cohen (1974), characters are crafted by the author and designed to allow readers to connect with or understand them as relatable "personages." The term "personages" refers to characters created by the author to feel like real people, allowing readers to relate to them and understand their emotions and actions in the story.

In fiction, Burhan Nurgiyantoro (2009) divides characters into two categories: **main characters** and **additional characters**. Main characters appear most frequently in the story, play important roles in the narrative, and are closely tied to the central conflicts

and themes. On the other hand, additional characters have less presence in the plot but still contribute to the story by supporting the main characters or representing specific aspects of the narrative's environment.

Analyzing both major and additional characters is essential because it provides a deeper understanding of the story's themes, conflicts, and resolutions.

### **2.3.1 Main Characters**

In *A New Life*, Hamza and Khadija are the main characters whose struggles and growth drive the narrative. However, their development is influenced by additional characters like their parents, teachers, and peers, who provide support, guidance, or challenges that shape their experiences. These interactions between characters show themes like adjusting to change, staying strong in tough times, and the important role of family and community in helping someone grow. Hamza and Khadija are central figures in the novel and appear in most events.

#### **a. Hamza**

Hamza is described as a fifth-grade student who is also the firstborn son in his family. In chapter one, he was the one who did not like the idea of moving to Canada from Pakistan. However, he had no choice but to follow his parents. It can be seen on the scenes below.

“Why do we have to go?” says Hamza.”

“Hamza runs up the stairs and slams the door to his room. Hamza’s lying face down on the bed. Is he crying?” (Khan, 2009, p. 12-13).

Hamza struggles a lot in his first week, as he is older than Khadija and his classmates seem pretty unwelcoming to him. The language barrier between them makes the situation more terrible for him. The language barrier and Hamza’s classmate’s attitudes are two of the most significant factors that affect his feelings of inferiority.

#### **b. Khadija**

Khadija, Hamza's younger sister, approaches the move to Canada with excitement and optimism, which is very different from Hamza's reluctance. Initially, she views their relocation as an adventure, looking forward to a "new land, a new country, and a new home." Her enthusiasm is shaped by the TV news she watches, which gives her high expectations about their new life. This optimistic perspective is also influenced by her young age, making her more adaptable to change. As Daddiami wisely explains, "It is easier to move the young plant than the older plant":

"A NEW LAND. A new country. A new home. How exciting! But Hamza doesn't think so." (Khan, 2009, p. 11).

The scene above shows Khadija's monologue in which she expresses her enthusiasm about moving to Canada.

Despite her enthusiasm, Khadija struggles with the language barrier in Canada, which makes it challenging to communicate with her peers. However, because she is

younger and more open-minded, her classmates are generally kinder to her compared to Hamza's experience. Her ability to quickly make friends like Rada and Margarita reflects her adaptability in a new environment.

Khadija's optimistic attitude helps her overcome challenges that might otherwise seem overwhelming. For example, during her interactions with Rada and Margarita, they bond over their shared experiences as immigrant children, making her transition to a new culture less isolating.

Khadija's characterization portrays her as a symbol of adaptability and positivity, contrasting Hamza's more hesitant approach to their new life. Her perspective shows how age, personality, and outlook differences influence how children face and adjust to significant changes.

### **2.3.2 Additional Characters**

The additional characters in *A New Life* novel are Abugee, Amigeer, Daddiami, Rada, Margarita, Mrs. Baker, Mrs. Shankar,

Mr. Oyoung, and Mrs. Korczak. The additional characters appear only briefly, and some are also mentioned just once.

**a. Abugee**

Abugee, the father of Hamza and Khadija, is a supporting character who plays an essential role in his family's journey and his children's personal growth. Although he doesn't appear as often as the main characters, his words and actions show how much he influences his children's development and ability to adapt.

From the start, Abugee is shown as the one who decided to move the family to Canada. He wants to give his children better opportunities, even though the move is not easy for everyone. This reflects his role as a caring and responsible father, as seen in the scene below

“My father puts down his suitcase and touches Hamza’s cheek.

“For the schools, the opportunities. I’m doing this for you.

Now give me a hug.” (Khan, 2009, p. 11).

Before the move, Abugee showed his love for Hamza and Khadija by teaching them about their heritage. He would take them on trips around Pakistan, visiting historical sites and sharing stories about their culture, which helped the children feel connected to their roots:

“Abugee liked taking us places when we lived in Pakistan. We drove all over the country. He liked the old places best. He would teach us history as we looked at the beautiful buildings the Moghuls had built.” (Khan, 2009, p. 23).

The scene above shows how Abugee often takes Hamza and Khadija to go on a trip. Because he likes old places, he will go to the old places and teach Hamza and Khadija about the history of the beautiful old buildings they see.

After moving to Canada, Abugee continues to support his children emotionally. He helps them understand their new environment, which is different from their past environment, because now they live in a diverse neighborhood and face different challenges. For instance, when Khadija asks why her

friend's mother is so protective, Abugee explains it gently, showing his understanding and empathy as it seen in the scene below.

“Finally, Abugee says, “Some people have come from places where there was war. Maybe they’re just glad to be safe for a while. And maybe they are too scared to let their children out of their sight. It takes time to adjust.” (Khan, 2009, p. 53).

Although Abugee does not appear in every chapter, he is portrayed as a loving and wise father who wants the best for his family. His actions and advice help Hamza and Khadija navigate their new life and understand the changes they are going through. Abugee's character shows how a parent's guidance and support can make a big difference during difficult transitions.

#### **b. Amigee**

Amigee, the mother of Hamza and Khadija, plays an essential role in supporting her children as they adjust to their

new life in Canada. Although she does not appear as frequently as the main characters, her actions show her dedication to helping her family adapt to their new environment.

One of Amigee's key moments occurs in chapter two, where she takes Hamza and Khadija to their new school to register as students. This action demonstrates her role as a practical and supportive parent, actively guiding her children through the early stages of their transition, as can be seen in the scene below.

“The very next day, Amigee takes us to the school to register.” (Khan, 2009, p. 18).

The scene above shows that Amigee is the one who takes Hamza and Khadija to their new school to register. Amigee's care and encouragement are further shown on their first day of school, a significant and potentially overwhelming experience for Hamza and Khadija. Her gestures of affection and gentle advice

highlight her nurturing nature, as can be seen in the scene below.

“Amigee bends down to hug and kiss us. ‘Be good,’ she says, mostly to Hamza. Hamza nods and Amigee stands up straight and walks to the big front door. She looks back at us only once and then leaves.” (Khan, 2009, p. 20).

While Amigee's appearances in the story are limited, they are impactful. Her character represents the emotional foundation of the family, providing reassurance and stability during a time of uncertainty. By handling practical responsibilities, like registering her children at school, and offering emotional support, Amigee proves to be as important to the family's adjustment as Abugee. Her actions show the quiet strength of a mother who ensures her children feel prepared to face a new reality, even when challenges arise.

**c. Daddiami**

Daddiami plays the role of Hamza and Khadija's grandmother. She appears only in chapter one. In chapter one, because Hamza is crying, Daddiami wisely explains to Hamza and Khadija why they should not be sad about moving to another country at such a young age, using plants as an example.

“When a plant is young, it is easy to move,” Daddiami says. “It takes time, but eventually, it gets used to its new place. New roots will grow, and new leaves will sprout. It’s difficult to move a mature plant and you cannot move a plant that is old. You’ll only kill it. It will miss the soil it grew up in and die of homesickness.” (Khan, 2009, p. 13).

From the scene above, it can be seen that Daddiami refers to a person as a plant. She says that when a plant is young, it is easy to move. She refers the plant to Hamza and Khadija because they move to another country when they are still young. She also adds that when people move out from their

home country when they are already old, it will just kill them with homesickness.

**d. Rada**

Rada is a Somalian. Along with Margarita, she is one of Khadija's classmates. In this novel, Rada has more dialogue than Margarita. Rada is described as a child who lives with strict parents. One of the highlights of Rada is when Khadija visits her flat, which is shabbier than Khadija's. The flat looks smaller because it is filled with two families, Rada's and her uncle's. It can be seen in the scene below.

“Her uncle's family has one bedroom, and her mother and father and baby brother have the other.” (Khan, 2009, p. 51).

**b. Margarita**

Margarita is Nicaraguan, and she only has one dialogue, which can be seen on page fifty-three of this novel. She is an immigrant child along with her parents, and she also takes the

same English class with Khadija and Rada. It is shown in the scene below.

“Margarita takes a big bite and says, “Rotis and tortillas are practically the same thing.” (Khan, 2009, p. 53).

**c. Mrs. Baker**

Mrs. Baker really has an important role even though she appears only in chapters two and four. She is described as the one who helps foreign students, including Hamza and Khadija, speak English. She is also portrayed as someone who is gentle, talks nice and slow, and always gives her students a chance to think of how to answer.

“We go to a special teacher named Mrs. Baker to learn to speak English. From the first moment, I love Mrs. Baker. She’s so gentle. She talks nice and slow, and she always gives me a chance to think of how to answer.” (Khan, 2009, p. 25).

From the scene above, we can see that Khadija goes to a special English teacher named Mrs. Baker, she and her friends go to her to learn how to speak English.

**d. Mrs. Shankar**

Mrs. Shankar is described as someone who helped Amigee when she struggled with the English language, even though her accent also sounds strange. Mrs. Shankar also helped Hamza and Khadija fill out all the forms they needed to register at the school. It can be seen in the scene below

“By the time Mrs. Shankar has helped us fill out all the forms, classes have already started.” (Khan, 2009, p. 20).

**e. Mr. Oyoung**

Mr. Oyoung is a teacher for the fifth graders. This is evident in chapter five when Khadija becomes a fifth grader after years, which appears in the scene below.

“I’m in grade five now, and it’s my turn to have Mr. Oyoung as my teacher.” (Khan, 2009, p. 55)

**f. Mrs. Korczak**

Mrs. Korczak is Hamza and Khadija's neighbor; she has only one scene when Amigee asks her to look after Hamza and Khadija because she and her husband will meet with Hamza and Khadija's teacher. It can be seen in the scene below.

“Amigee calls Mrs. Korczak from next door to look after us.”

(Khan, 2009, p. 37)

**2.4 Setting**

The setting is the place, time, and social circumstances in which the events of the story take place. Events usually have a specific time and place. In simple terms, a story's scenario and screenplay can be said to be a picture of clues and references (Fiska, n.d.)

**2.4.1 Setting of Place**

*A New Life* takes place mainly in Canada. In chapter one, it takes place in Hamza and Khadija's house where they say goodbye to their father, who go to Canada first to set up their house there.

“Abugee has to bend down to kiss my grandmother. Daddiami rubs the top of his head. And then he’s gone, to set up a house for us in Canada.” (Khan, 2009, p. 12)

Chapter two, takes place at Canada’s airport which can be seen in page 15 where they were waiting in line with their passport.

“There’s so much to look as we wait in line with our passport. The people are so tall and so white. And they’re dressed do stylishly, their hair clipped neatly.” (Khan, 2009, p. 15)

The second place is takes place at Hamza and Khadija’s new school which can be seen in the page 18 below.

“The very next day, Amigee takes us to the school to register. She struggles to speak English, but the lady at the desk goes over to an office that has a sign on the door and calls, “Mrs. Shankar!” (Khan, 2009, p. 18)

Chapter three mostly takes place in Hamza and Khadija's school, as the title suggests: School Days. This can be seen on page 28, where Khadija looks up for Hamza in the schoolyard.

“When we get out into the yard the kids are running and screaming, bouncing balls and skipping rope.

Where’s Hamza? There are so many children, it’s hard to see him. He’s not by the sandbox, not by the grassy field.” (Khan, 2009, p. 28)

The fourth chapter takes place in Hamza and Khadija’s flat where they make too much noise while their father is trying to sleep, it can be seen in the text below.

“Today, Hamza and I make too much noise when he’s trying to sleep. He yells at us and then stomps back to bed.” (Khan, 2009, p. 47)

The second place in the fourth chapter takes place at the library, where Abugee takes them after they makes too much noise and ask to go to a library.

“Not just books! Knowledge! This is why we came here. This will help us to make a better life. This library contains all the best

information you can find. And it's available to everyone in the land, both rich and poor. And it's free." (Khan, 2009, p. 47-48)

The third place in the fourth chapter takes place in Khadija's friend's flat.

"After I bug Rada for a long time, she finally gets permission for me to visit. Rada's house smells different too." (Khan, 2009, p. 51)

The last chapter titled *Now for The Rest of Canada*, takes place in their new house after officially become Canadian. It can be seen in the data below.

"We have a house now with a veranda that Daddiami would love, we put some plants on it, just like she did in Pakistan." (Khan, 2009, p. 61)

#### **2.4.2 Setting of Time**

The time setting of *A New Life* novel is when Hamza is in fifth grade and Khadija is in third grade. Khadija's monologue shows that they are new to the school.

“We go to Hamza’s class first because it’s closer. They put him in grade five.” (Khan, 2009, p. 21)

This novel also has a different time setting in the last chapter when Khadija is in the fifth grade.

“I’m in grade five now and it’s my turn to have Mr. Oyoung as a teacher. He’s nice but gives us way too much homework.” (Khan, 2009, p. 55)

#### **2.4.3 Setting of Social Circumstances**

In *A New Life* novel, Hamza and Khadija live in a neighborhood where people have migrated abroad, like their family. The friends of Khadija who lives in the same building as her also take the same English course with Mrs. Baker.

“On the way home I see Margarita and Rada walking ahead. They turn right into the walkway of our building. It turns out that Margarita lives on the fifth floor and Rada’s on the eleventh.” (Khan, 2009, p. 25)

## 2.5 Point of View

Point of view in fiction is about who tells the story or from whose position the events and actions are viewed (Jaenudin, 2015). Point of view is the way or perspective an author uses to present the characters, actions, attitudes, and various events that make up a fictional story for its readers (Abrams in Jaenudin, 2015).

The point of view of the story itself can be divided into two types: the first person with the pronoun “I” and the third person with the pronoun “She/He”. According to Jaenudin (2015) point of view is important because it has a psychological relationship with the reader. Readers need a clear perception of the story’s point of view, as their understanding of fictional works in the form of novel is influenced by the clarity of the point of view.

*A New Life* novel, is tells the story about young children immigrating to a new country and doing anything good to improve their language skills to blend well with their new environment, which is very different from their hometown. The perspective presented in terms of the story, events, and scenes of *A New Life*

novel is a first-person perspective with “I” as the subject of the story represented by Khadija.



## **CHAPTER III**

### **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

In this chapter, the researcher focuses on analyzing the factors that influence the character development of Hamza and Khadija. The theory used in this research is Alfred Adler's theory of personality. In Alfred Adler's theory of personality, four elements are highly likely to affect the character development of both Hamza and Khadija: feelings of inferiority, striving for superiority, social interest, and lifestyle.

#### **3.1 Feelings of Inferiority**

All individuals was born differently, either physical or abilities. The feelings of inferiority or low self-esteem comes up due to the differences between individuals which can trigger their feelings to strive for superiority (Normaningtyas and Wulandari, 2021). Low self-esteem or inferiority is the state of not being good or not as good as someone or something else. It is a feeling of worthlessness resulting from psychological or social inadequacy or imperfect physical condition. Feelings of inferiority arise when an

individual wants to compete with the strength and abilities of others (Jaenudin, 2015). An inferiority complex can be an obstacle to achieving what a person desires. However, it is not uncommon for an inferiority complex to be an encouragement or motivation to make someone better.

In *A New Life* novel, Hamza and Khadija are siblings who immigrated to Canada from Pakistan. During their first few weeks at school, Hamza and Khadija felt worried about their new school because of the unwelcome look from their new schoolmates and due to their lack of English skills.

“Hamza whispers, “They look like they want to eat me.” (Khan, 2009, p. 21).

The author of this novel also explicitly describes how the feeling of inferiority affects them because of their English skills.

“That feeling of not being able to swim and hardly being able to touch the bottom is kind of how I feel as I try to learn English.” (Khan, 2009, p. 24).

Hamza and Khadija also felt that many students at their new school looked down on them because these students owned and used expensive-looking stuff that they did not have.

“He says, “These people with their fancy clothes and their expensive shoes and the way they looked down their noses at you because you don’t have those things yet.” (Khan, 2009, p. 28-29).

Even though Khadija said that some of her friends are nice to her, Hamza still thinks that the students look down on him and his sister.

“Not everyone’s like that. Some of them have been nice to me.”

“That’s because you’re only in grade three. Wait till you get to my age. Then you’ll see the way they really are.” (Khan, 2009, p. 29).

From the data above, it can be seen that Hamza feels that the students at his school look down on him and his sister. Even though Khadija said that some of them were kind to her, it still did not change Hamza's opinion of these students.

Hamza's feelings didn't stop there. He was even more convinced that the students thought he was lame after they invited him to play but didn't give him a chance to bat, and his team told him to stay out in the field. He even thought they looked down on him and his sister just because they were poor, as found in the following data.

“The girl frowns and points to the outfield. Hamza crosses his arms and leans against the side of the school.

“See?” Hamza says. “They’re never going to let me bat. Did you see the way those guys looked at me?” I nod. It wasn’t very nice. Maybe Hamza is right.

He says, “They think we’re poor, just because we don’t have fancy stuff like they have. They think we are not as good as they are.” (Khan, 2009, p. 30).

From the data above, Hamza has many assumptions that tend to be bad. Having assumptions that tend to be bad is one of the characteristics of feelings of inferiority that must be avoided.

Hamza felt that the students looked down on him and his sister during their first week of school. Hamza was not allowed to bat the ball, and Khadija also realized that they were not welcoming her and her brother because they did not seem to have stuff like the others. Hamza. Even when Khadija said that they can purchase those things right now, saving money is more important than the stuff. They need to wait, as found in the following data.

“But we’re not poor,” I say. “We had nice things in Pakistan. Don’t they know we can’t afford them right now? Abugee’s saving as much as he can. It’s just going to take time, like Ddaddiami said.”

“I’m tired of waiting.” (Khan, 2009, p. 31).

From the data above, it can be seen that Khadija said that they needed to wait and save before they wanted to purchase anything. However, Hamza said that he was tired of waiting, but still waited. Hamza was just tired of how the other students treated him and his sister just because they were immigrant.

### **3.2 Striving for Superiority**

Because people feel inferior to others, they keep trying and working hard until they reach their desired level of success. They will stop trying hard because they have reached a feeling of internal superiority (Lombardo, 2017). According to Adler, striving for superiority is an attempt to compensate for feelings of inferiority (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). The urge for superiority can manifest itself in a thousand different ways in any human being, and everyone has their own way of achieving or striving for perfection. Individuals begin life with physical weakness, which creates an inferiority complex that drives them to strive for superiority and to succeed (Jaenudin, 2015). In this case, dominance does not mean a form of power over others but rather an attempt to achieve superiority within oneself, not necessarily in competition with others.

Children who strive to express their power over the environment are always easy to recognize, as they aim to control people. They interpret all experiences as defeat and become the

“problem” children as they are constantly ignored and discriminated against by both nature and human (Adler, 1927). In *A New Life* novel, this form of the superiority of the children’s characters is shown in the following data.

“For a while Hamza and I watch the other kids play, but it gets really boring. We can’t just stand here all recess. So I ask, “Do you have Mrs. Baker for English too?”

“What a stupid question. Who else would I have? All the kids who can’t speak English have to go to her.” (Khan, 2009, p. 32).

From the data above, it can be seen that Hamza also attended Mrs. Baker's English class. For immigrants who cannot speak English fluently, like him and his sister, most of them attend Mrs. Baker's class. Hamza can achieve his superiority; he accepts the fact that he is still not fluent in communicating using the English language, so he also attends Mrs. Baker's class.

“We’re quiet for a few moments. Hamza glares at the kids playing that game then he says, “I bet they don’t know I can read. And I

even know a few words in English. I bet they think I'm stupid. I'd like to show them!" (Khan, 2009, p. 32).

The data above shows that Hamza wants to prove to others that he can read and know a few words of English and feels that he can communicate with them. Hamza also says that he can play the games they play. Hamza felt that they thought he was stupid because he was an immigrant who didn't know how to communicate in English. As shown in the following data, he wants to prove that he knows anything but goes wrong.

"Stop it!"

Hamza looks surprised.

Then Hamza stops by a little red box that's stuck on the wall. There are words written on the little red box in white letters. Hamza stands in front of it with all the other kids jostling past him and reads "P-U-L-L." Pull. So, he does. (Khan, 2009, p. 32-33).

He did not want to listen to his sister's words to stop, for his sister, they did not need to prove anything to the other students

who looked down on them. With the few English words he knew, he did something that caused his teacher to worry. Hamza did not know that the red box on the wall was a fire alarm, which should only be sounded if there was a fire. Even though it is written to pull the alarm, Hamza should have considered whether to pull it or not. The reason why Hamza pulls the fire alarm can be seen in the data below.

“That kid from his class says something to him again.” (Khan, 2009, p. 33)

We know why Hamza pulled out the fire alarm from the data above. It could be because the mean kid told him to. With this, we can see that Hamza still wants to show that he is capable and knows some words in English. Even though he has accepted his condition of not being able to communicate fluently using English, he still wants to show that he knows a little about it. Hamza does not want to be looked down upon by other students at his school.

“While I am waiting to walk home with Hamza, some bully kids call me names and say I am stinky. It makes me cry.

Hamza starts marching towards them. I pull at his shirt saying, “Just ignore them.”

But he won’t. He chases them down and there’s a fight.” (Khan, 2009, p. 49).

According to the data above, Hamza showed his superiority by fighting against the children who bullied his sister. They said Khadija stinks and makes her cry. Hamza still tried to fight the children who bullied his sister and ignored Khadija, who tried to stop him. He won over the children, as the data below shows.

“It’s two against one, but Hamza still beats them.” (Khan, 2009, p. 50).

### **3.3 Social Interest**

Adler in Jaenudin (2015) states that every human being is born with universal social interest. Social interests are part of human nature in different magnitudes and are reflected in everyone's behavior. However, it still needs to be developed and

trained. Social interest enables individuals to pursue their desires in a healthy way and keeps them from going astray. Social interest can be defined as an attitude of solidarity with humanity as a whole and sympathy for every individual in society. It manifests itself in cooperation with others for the advancement of society rather than for personal gain (Adler in Poonja, n.d.). Social interest arises when an individual experiences a sense of connectedness and continuity with others and is a highly developed and natural empathy for all people (Jaenudin, 2015). The following data show the form of social interest in the children's characters in *A New Life*.

“But did you do something?” I ask. Hamza scowls, “No!” (Khan, 2009, p. 39).

From the data above, it can be seen that Khadija is worried that Hamza will do something that will make their parents get a call from their school teacher. Amigee even told Mrs. Korczak from next door to look after Hamza and Khadija. Khadija worried that their parents would find out about the fire alarm accident and

scold Hamza afterward. Khadija feels this concern is a form of social interest she has in Hamza.

Actually, social interest is defined not only as empathy for all members of society but also as an attitude of connection with humanity in general. Social interest manifests itself in working with others for social rather than personal progress. People's innate inferiority complex ends up shaping society.

Humans are born with universal social interests. The need for social interest is fulfilled in communication with others, which begins to develop through communication with parents in early childhood. The socialization process requires a lot of time and constant effort. Individuals are instructed to encourage and reinforce this sense of social concern for others. Through empathy, one can learn what the other person perceives as their weaknesses and try to help them. Social interest is not just about empathy. From the data below, Khadija shows her social interest when she visits her friends' apartment house.

“It’s true that our home is much shabbier than in Pakistan, but even here there are those who have it worse. ...

Margarita’s apartment is a lot like ours, but it’s much smaller and it smells different.

Rada’s house smells different too.” (Khan, 2009, p. 50-51).

Khadija shows her interest by describing her friends’ house and apartment. Margarita’s mother also gave her a delicious burrito with beans and salad inside. Khadija also figured out why Rada is always sleepy during the day.

“But how can you sleep if he’s sitting on your sofa bed?”

Rada shrugs. “We can’t. We have to wait till he goes to bed.”

No wonder why she’s so sleepy during the day.” (Khan, 2009, p. 51)

Based on the data above, Khadija knows that Rada's family lives with her jobless uncle. Rada's uncle also likes to sit on the sofa, which turns into a bed for Rada and her sister to sleep, and

watch TV until really late at night. Khadija is also interested in the fact that Rada's mother did not allow her to go outside except when she was going to school because it was too dangerous outside. The following data can be seen in the following.

“Let’s go find Margarita and we can play ball downstairs,” I say. Rada looks doubtful but she goes to her mother and asks anyway. Her mother glances at me but shakes her head. “You know it’s too dangerous.” (Khan, 2009, p. 52).

From the data above, we can see that Rada's mother did not allow her to go outside, even if it was for her daughter to play with her friends. Meanwhile, Khadija has a different opinion from Rada's mother and feels that the situation is somewhat excessive. However, her parents, Abugee and Amigee, provided her with a perspective that can be seen in the following data.

“Amigee says, “She’s right. It isn’t safe.”

Abugee says, “It isn’t that bad. There are problems everywhere.”

Amigee agrees, and they are both silent for a while. Finally, Abugee says, “Some people have come from places where there was war. Maybe they’re just glad to be safe for a while. And maybe they’re too scared to let their children out of their sight. It takes time to adjust.” (Khan, 2009, p. 53).

From the data above, Abugee and Amigee shared their perspectives about things that felt excessive for Khadija herself. Khadija's parents really became one of the factors that also influenced her and Hamza's character development.

### **3.4 Lifestyle**

According to Adler, a person's lifestyle serves as a creative force, which enables them to overcome their shortcomings, express themselves, make new decisions, and appreciate what they really need (Jaenudin, 2015). Every individual has their own goals, feels inferior, and strives for superiority. To realize these desires, each individual strives for a different lifestyle. Adler in Jaenudin (2015) explains that a lifestyle is the unique way each individual tries to

achieve the specific goals that they set for themselves in the environment they are in.

Living in society makes it necessary to follow the written and unwritten rules in an environment. Living as individuals requires that we pay attention not only to our surroundings but also to ourselves, especially with regard to personal hygiene. Things happen when we do not keep clean. One of them is body odor or stinky smell because of our frequent showers. If we do something excessively, the result will not be good, and vice versa. About showering, A few times a week will suffice. However, there is a delicate balance there. Showering too often can compromise the skin's barrier function and wash away oils and healthy bacteria. Showering too often can result in dry, cracked skin. On the other hand, showering or not washing enough can lead to body odor, acne, and even skin infections (Alba, 2022).

“Hamza takes a shower everyday now, but I still only want one twice a week.” (Khan, 2009, p. 20).

“While I am waiting to walk home with Hamza, some bully kids call me names and say I am stinky. It makes me cry.” (Khan, 2009, p. 49)

Body odor can be a nuisance to others. From the data above, it can be seen that one of Khadija’s habits is bathing only twice a week. Lack of personal hygiene, can cause unpleasant body odor, such as rarely showering.

