



## Generalized Anxiety Disorder as Accentuated in Ann Beattie's *Shifting*

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### ABSTRACT

Generalized anxiety disorder is an anxiety disorder commonly experienced in excessive worry by some people with trauma. In the short story entitled *Shifting* written by Ann Beattie, Natalie is worried about her marriage because Natalie thinks that Larry's mother will not approve of their marriage, this is because Natalie is rarely accompanying Larry. Then, how are generalized anxiety disorders accentuated in Ann Beattie's *Shifting*? In analysis, the main character in this story is over-worrying that makes herself being different in the view of the others. The language that she knows has been over consumed that she has been swallowed by the language itself. In conclusion, the short story indicates how any disorder may come from any small worry. If the worrying is not finished, it could be piled up and be shaped into further anxiety that disturbs life of being individuals and parts of societies

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Literary works are a form of human creation of an imaginative and fictitious picture of the world. In literary works, many social problems and even psychological problems are found in the characters in literary works. Problems in literary works reflect the conditions of the world at the time the literary work was created. Literary works not only describe aesthetics, but other aspects of life that add broad insight to the readers (Pujimahanani, et al., 2023; Sarmi, et al., 2023). In its functional aspects, such literature could also be used as a tool for disseminating educational insights and information about what is happening in the world.

Psychological problems such as anxiety are also depicted in literary works. The anxiety experienced by characters created using reflections of society in the real world (Annasai, et al., 2023; Sarmi, et al., 2023). Work that is imaginative but has an impact, namely knowledge of the problems that occur, thus giving the reader an idea of psychological or other problems. Based on imagination and creation, literary works are created by authors based on incidents or problems in the author's environment (Annasai, et al., 2023; Salsabila, et al., 2023). In this sense, it is clear that accentuations of such characters could be fragmented in individual, social, or even cultural sense depending on perspectives of the utterances and other intrinsic elements of those fictions.

Anxiety is a mental disorder in individuals that causes fear for unknown reasons. The term of anxiety is quite problematic nowadays. It could be such a disorder that people usually experience every day (Stein & Sareen, 2015; Wittchen & Hoyer, 2001). However, it could also be such illness that may affect both physical and psychological aspects fundamentally. Anxiety that appears for no reason which is often experienced by some people has an impact on the individual's behavior. Unusual behavior appears in the direction where the anxiety appears (Pujimahanani, et al., 2023; Sarmi, et al., 2023). Fear without a clear reason is the most common form of anxiety that some individuals often experience because of an object or problem in their life.

Excessive anxiety often occurs in several situations, such as when socializing. Anxious behavior will get worse with external and internal pressure and worrying about all the problems experienced by the individual (Stein & Sareen, 2015; Wittchen & Hoyer, 2001). It is not possible that individuals who live alone will also feel excessive anxiety even though they do not live with a family or a large community. Psychoanalysis also argued that anxiety is an unpleasant feeling related to the feeling that danger is coming. In this case, anxiety is meant as a certain cause of humans' defense mechanism of various external threats.

Individual characters experiencing excessive anxiety or what is called Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) will experience behavior and reactions that are unusual and deviant from situations in social life (Stein & Sareen, 2015; Wittchen & Hoyer, 2001). The character of GAD in individuals will change behavior that should flow naturally with life and turn it into behavior that deviates from the environment that should not occur. Deviant behavior is a form of anxiety about their life, anxiety about being afraid of mistakes about what they do and anxiety about choices in society. This disorder is commonly associated with depression, alcohol and substance abuse, physical health problems, or all these factors (Besharat, et al., 2019).

Everyone has experienced anxiety, but GAD sufferers often worry about many things, they even worry about things they should not be thinking about. GAD sufferers have anxiety that is different from people in general, generally they will occasionally feel anxious about life, but unlike GAD sufferers they will feel anxious for days, months, or even years (Besharat, et al., 2019; Terlizzi & Villaroel, 2020). This difference often has a negative impact on the

physical and psychological health of GAD sufferers. Even though it is in quotation marks "generalized" but judging from the effects and impact of this mental problem on life, GAD can be said to be very complex and complicated. It could be categorized as a disease that is difficult to control and has complex and significant impacts. If it is not treated immediately, it is possible that it will impact sufferers for a very long time.

Females are at greater risk than males, this may be caused by female hormones, especially those that fluctuate throughout the month. The hormone testosterone may also play a role, as men have more testosterone and this can relieve anxiety. Meanwhile, the disorder is correlated with being unemployed or a housewife or having a chronic medical illness (Crocq, 2017; Newman & Erickson, 2010). GAD is frequently associated with comorbid depression and other anxiety and somatoform disorders. Significant GAD-specific disability occurs even when comorbidity is not present (Besharat, et al., 2019).

GAD is an issue that inspires writers to describe the situation at that time. Ann Beattie describes her work entitled *Shifting* in such a complex way that it makes the reader understand what happened during the creation of this work (Beattie, 1977). Beattie talked about the identity crisis in the middle class in the 60s. Her works prove that literary works are a medium that plays a role in conveying messages, or even describing the situation at that time. Literary works containing narrative and fiction can represent images at that time. Beattie devoted all her thoughts and expressions to produce complex works and provided knowledge about various disorders through literary works (Beattie, 1977; Terlizzi & Villaroel, 2020).

*Shifting* tells the story of the life of a husband and wife who live with simplicity, but this simplicity sometimes triggers feelings of anxiety (Beattie, 1977). Feelings of anxiety are depicted in several characters such as Larry's mother who feels excessively worried about Larry's happiness when he marries Natalie. Larry's mother does not agree with their marriage even though in the end they get married. Another excessive anxiety also occurs in the character Natalie, namely Larry's wife. Natalie's anxiety occurred when, before visiting Andy, who had returned from serving the country in Vietnam, Natalie was worried that something bad would happen to Larry in Vietnam (Beattie, 1977). After Larry and Natalie arrived at Andy's house, Larry agreed with Natalie and did not go to Vietnam, because Andy returned home with many wounds and several missing body parts.

This paper would like to expose the matter of GAD in the short story of *Shifting* written by Ann Beattie. The story is interesting to be analyzed since it directly shows the psychological condition of people in matters of worsened anxiety. The story is simple but the characteristics done are quite complex regarding the plots and the settings as well. By analyzing GAD in this short story, further discussions on how a character bears psychological anxiety could be explored in matters of literary analysis.

## 2. METHODS

By using qualitative method, online and offline scripts are used to explain correlations between Ann Beattie's *Shifting* and matter of Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) alongside literary and cultural studies ideas. The data analysis includes obtaining sources, reading sources carefully, comparing with other issues, quoting into paper, and writing down in reference lists. The following analyses include how the short story shows disorders among relationships of the people.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Relevance of Generalized Anxiety Disorder to Literature Work

Shifting is a literary work from the 1970s that discusses anxiety in a complex way. In this work, Ann Beattie wants to provide knowledge to her readers about how GAD is described and how to overcome it. The GAD in this story is described as complex through characters such as Natalie, Andy, and Larry. GAD is one of the common mental problems in the world, so to provide knowledge about GAD, literary works have an important role, by using language that is easy to understand but complex by symbolizing, or narrating psychological data and turning it into narrative form. The author, through literary works, describes existing problems such as mental disorders, society and culture, so that they can be studied and provide understanding to the author (Sari, et al., 2023; Terlizzi & Villaroel, 2020). In general, literary works are not far from depicting human character, personality, and self (Endraswara, 2013).

According to Carl Gustav Jung, literature is a forum for exploring the writer's subconscious mind in its entirety, thus giving rise to the writer's subconscious values (Endraswara, 2013). Referring to Carl Jung's quote, the author creates a character that is not just a mere fiction, but also becomes an image of the author's self which is buried deep within. In creating characters, the writer uses himself as a reference and relates it to the environment around the writer (Endraswara, 2013). The author provides an overview of issues that occur in his environment or within himself. Like the GAD that exists and is depicted in Ann Beattie's work *Shifting*. Ann Beattie became a writer who studied herself and middle-class society at that time, not only exploring mental or mood problems such as GAD, Ann Beattie also wrote to provide a depiction of the identity crisis in the 1960s.

Short stories employ short and complex narratives so that they provide brief directions to the reader. Works of art have characteristics that have elements of beauty in their creation or aesthetic value and are very complicated and complex (Sari, et al., 2023; Terlizzi & Villaroel, 2020). So that the result of complicated and complex thinking and a combination of aesthetic values, creates works that can provide knowledge to readers

This short story entitled *Shifting* by Ann Beattie has a complex plot and characters, such as a very complete depiction of the characters of Larry, Nattalie, and Andy. Natalie, who has an anxiety disorder about herself which arises from her family and even her environment, is also described in detail. Andy is a former civil servant who returned home because of a war incident that resulted in the loss of several of his body parts due to the war in Vietnam (Beattie, 1973), Andy's depiction is very complex how GAD emerged in him which was caused by traumatic factors that emerged because of the impact of the war. being in Vietnam happened. Larry is worried about his good friend Andy who can only lie in bed at his mother's house for a long time and wants to take him for a walk to make Andy feel a little relieved (Beattie 1977). The description of the character, which includes character and personality, is explained briefly and complexly, not only the depiction of character, but the depiction of GAD and the factors that cause it are also described in a very complex way, and what the impact of GAD is.

According to WHO, many sufferers have obstacles when they experience these symptoms, such as a lack of knowledge about what GAD is and how to overcome this problem. So, with this, literary works become a medium for disseminating psychological knowledge through fiction and narrative. If quoted from Carl Gustav Jung regarding the unconscious aspect and its relationship to literary works, he said that this would be a good medium for channeling subconscious thoughts and hidden aspects within oneself (Sari, et al., 2023;

Terlizzi & Villaroel, 2020). Thus, literary works created by a writer provide an overview of what happened when the literary work was created, so that this can describe the forms of problems that exist around the writer's environment or even the problems that exist within the writer.

Literature is often considered unimportant; this is because in literary works there are elements of fiction that build and participate in the creation of literary works (Fara, 2023; Terlizzi & Villaroel, 2020). Literature is created not just as fiction, but there are deep things that underlie a writer or creator of literary works to write their work. Literary works become a tool to represent all the problems the author experiences in his life (Fara, 2023; Terlizzi & Villaroel, 2020). Literature that was considered unimportant has become something very important, considering the significant role of literature in life. Literature contains a lot of knowledge and information about what happens in the author's environment. Indeed, this is important, considering that the audience does not live in the same environment as the author's environment. Literary works will give readers a satisfying experience, including a terrible experience (Fara, 2023 ; Terlizzi & Villaroel, 2020).

Experiences, whether terrible or not, don't just appear out of thin air, but there is something that underlies them and provides a reason for writing them so that they become a complex literary work, a literary work that tells all forms of existing information (Fara, 2023; Stein & Sareen, 2015). By understanding the dialogue, sentences and behavior of the characters, this provides knowledge of what is depicted in the work, such as observing GAD or other mental problems. Characters in a literary work actually have their own character, traits and even personalities, of course the problems faced by these characters (Fara, 2023; Stein & Sareen, 2015).

In literary works, GAD can be explained through dialogue spoken by characters, or sentences acted out by the narrator. If the dialogue does not reveal the characteristics of GAD, then the role of the narrator is to reveal and explain what mental problems are being experienced by the characters in the work. Like the problems experienced by Larry's mother who was worried about Larry's happiness when he married Natalie (Beattie, 1977). The depiction of GAD that emerged was carried out by Beattie as the writer through dialogue conducted by Natalie and Larry's mother, and with the support of the narrator who explained the problems that were occurring in the dialogue.

As explained above, the role of literature is very important, considering that literary works contain all the information needed to study problems in the world. The author uses narrative form to describe ongoing events so that it is easy for readers to understand. Literature provides awareness of the problems and experiences therein (Fara, 2023; Stein & Sareen, 2015). Literary works can be a medium for disseminating issues regarding mental problems that occur, and the characteristics of these mental problems. This of course makes it easier to find and dig up information about mental problems. Literary works that are full of information created through problems and events that occur in the author's environment are of course important, and make literary works have elements of disseminating information and knowledge to their readers.

### **Generalized Anxiety Disorder in Ann Beattie's *Shifting***

In general, Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) is a disorder of unstable moods such as depression, sadness and worry. Until now, the exact symptoms of GAD have not been discovered, but the characteristics of it can arise from anxiety in life and a depressive atmosphere that suppresses the character (Besharat, et al., 2019; Newman & Erickson, 2010). The symptoms are also clearly seen in Beattie's short story. The idea is intertwined among the characters in which all of them may have different fears, guilt, and even suspicions towards

another person. The following are the quotations and the analyses of reflections of GAD in the story of *Shifting*:

*"Larry's mother was very anxious to stay on close terms with her son, and she knew that Natalie didn't like him very much". (Beattie, 1977)*

Larry's mother was very worried about her son's happiness when he married Natalie. The anxiety shown by Larry's mother is GAD, which is excessive anxiety about her child. GAD sufferers will carry out deviant actions such as being prejudiced against other people, thinking that other people really hate them even though the truth of that prejudice is not yet clear (Beattie, 1977). Larry's mother thinks that Natalie hates him and Larry's mother feels that it is right. Larry's mother's concerns give rise to prejudice against Natalie, Larry's future wife.

People with that exact disorder will carry out unusual actions and can lead to more dangerous actions such as threatening, killing and remembering (Besharat, et al., 2019). GAD sufferers will feel that people who make them anxious need to be monitored and stalked, and as if the GAD sufferer is right (Crocq, 2017; Newman & Erickson, 2010). In fact, the lifetime prevalence of anxiety disorders is 26 percent for men and 60 percent for women, this means that about 1 in 4 men and 4 in 10 women will experience an anxiety disorder at some point during their lives (Huang & Zhao, 2020; Terlizzi & Villaroel, 2020).

*"He thought his parents were wonderful people, and Natalie liked them in a way, too, but she said their timing was perfect, their care full of smiles. They were afraid that he would marry her. Eventually, he did." (Beattie, 1977)*

Natalie really likes her family and thinks that her family really cares about her, and thinks that Larry's family is an extraordinary family (Beattie, 1977). This is in sharp contrast to Larry's mother's statement that Natalie did not like him, even though Larry's family hoped that Larry would not marry Natalie, Larry eventually married her. The negative prejudices that arise in GAD sufferers will get worse if they do not know the truth for sure, but excessive anxiety in GAD sufferers will find it difficult to believe the truth. Anxiety is a symptom that can be called a feeling of "worried" (Crocq, 2017; Newman & Erickson, 2010).

*"She had told him not to go to Vietnam-told him that he could prove his patriotism in some other way and finally, after she and Larry had made a visit together and she had seen Andy in the motorized bed in his parents' house, Larry had agreed that she needs not go again." (Beattie, 1977)*

Natalie's feelings of worry are about Larry who will go to Vietnam again to serve the country and show a sense of patriotism. Natalie's worry is that if Larry goes to Vietnam again, something bad will happen to him (Beattie, 1977). After talking about Larry going to Vietnam again, they finally saw Andy lying on the bed in serious condition with several body parts missing from stepping on a mine. The anxiety experienced by Natalie had an impact on Larry, who wanted to serve the country and show his sense of patriotism.

Even though in the end Larry did not go to Vietnam again because he saw Andy who was badly affected by the war, Natalie's excessive worry is a reflection of a GAD sufferer. Worry is a characteristic of thoughts and fears that are not well controlled, resulting in negative impacts (Crocq, 2017; Newman & Erickson, 2010). Seeing Andy in a wheelchair made Natalie's anxiety increase but the anxiety finally disappeared when Larry decided not to go to



Vietnam. The anxiety declined when Larry saw Andy who was full of injuries and sitting in a wheelchair because he was out of Vietnam (Beattie, 1977). Although the anxiety here is only described a little, it is clear that Natalie's concern is if Larry really goes to Vietnam.

*"Larry's parents blamed him for Larry's not being happy. His mother could only be pleasant with him for a short while, and then she would veil her criticisms by putting them as questions. "I know that one thing that helps enormously is good nutrition," his mother said. "He works so hard that he probably needs quite a few vitamins as well, don't you think?" (Beattie, 1977)*

The questions asked by Larry's mother were a form of sarcasm and a means of blaming Natalie, because Larry's mother did not like Natalie (Beattie, 1977). She always blamed Natalie. Larry's mother is very worried about her son who is married to Natalie. This worry arises as a result of something bad happening because of thinking about something unpleasant that the individual will experience (Crocq, 2017; Newman & Erickson, 2010).

*"He came to her door at noon, as he had said he would. He had on a long maroon scarf, which made his deep blue eyes very striking. She had only seen him from her window when her car carried the paper in to the old lady. He was a little nervous. She hoped that it was just the anxiety of any teen-ager confronting an adult." (Beattie, 1977)*

Natalie, who is depicted as a young married woman, is nervous about her first driving lesson. He just hoped that his nervousness was just an anxiety that often occurs in people his age. Anxiety is an unpleasant symptom that can take the form of worry, anxiety, and fear of future events (Huang & Zhao, 2020; Terlizzi & Villaroel, 2020). The restlessness or nervousness experienced by Natalie is a symptomatic reaction to GAD, where she feels excessively anxious about the upcoming event, namely learning to drive.

Anxiety that occurs usually arises from confused thoughts, restlessness, and lack of self-confidence. Anxiety is basically an event that appears suddenly, so that when a character experiences something even small or trivial, the character will automatically become anxious and worry about the situation that will come (Huang & Zhao, 2020; Terlizzi & Villaroel, 2020). Natalie's concern is whether she can learn to drive a manual car or not, as her husband Larry said that Natalie cannot learn mechanical systems easily, she needs to work hard to learn mechanical systems (Beattie, 1977).

*"She didn't learn about mechanical things easily." (Beattie, 1977)*

As in the sentence above, it is when Larry thinks about Natalie not being able to learn anything about mechanics smoothly. Natalie was worried if what her husband said would really happen to her, and Natalie was very nervous about that situation (Beattie, 1977). When the man who wanted to teach Natalie to drive a manual car came to Mrs. Larens, Natalie just kept quiet and watched from the window of her house. Mrs. Larens is Natalie's elderly neighbor and Natalie's old car is parked in Mrs. Larens.

*"If he came home early, he would find out that he was taking lessons, and he didn't want him to know." (Beattie, 1977)*

Natalie does not want Larry to know that she is learning to drive a manual car, even though Larry is not against her learning to drive. Natalie's old car was left to her by her grandfather, but Larry insisted on selling the car (Beattie, 1977). Natalie, who did not want to sell the car, tried to learn to drive the car. Natalie studied with a man named Michael whom she knew from Mrs. Larens.

Natalie was very nervous on her first day of learning to drive. Natalie was very worried that Larry would find out that she was learning to drive (Beattie, 1977). Natalie kept it a secret and did not want Larry to know as Natalie thought that if Larry found out he would be angry. Natalie's anxiety arose when she started to want to learn to drive a manual car. This anxiety lasted for days and when she learned to drive the anxiety appeared (Beattie, 1977; Wijaya, et al., 2023). This anxiety comes from fear of being punished for violating something that he should not have done (Huang & Zhao, 2020; Terlizzi & Villaroel, 2020). The character feels that he has violated what he should not have done, namely learning to drive a manual car. He is afraid of the punishment that Larry will give him so he tries to keep it a secret that Natalie is learning to drive a manual car (Beattie, 1977).

The description of anxiety is always related to conditions that put pressure on the sufferer, GAD which means general anxiety and age can cause very severe depression (DeMartini, et al., 2019; Huang & Zhao, 2020). Generalized anxiety disorder can make sufferers more susceptible to cause abnormal hoarding behavior. Somehow, the anxiety may go on and deeper since it does not only relate to her driving ability but also her position as a woman that is bound with the husbandry system. In this case, Natalie's desire to drive is a reflection of her need to be an independent woman either.

*"She asked Larry, "How were your parents?"*

*"Fine," he said. "But I spent almost all the time with Andy. It's almost his birthday, and he's depressed. We went to see Mose Allison. "I think it stinks that hardly anyone else ever visits Andy," she said. (Beattie, 1977)*

Larry is Andy's best friend. Andy is a soldier who has a high spirit of patriotism, he fought in Vietnam to defend his country. Andy had bad luck when he stepped on a land mine on the battlefield (Beattie, 1977). He suffered very serious injuries which left him paralyzed and lying on the bed. Andy also lost several body parts such as legs and arms. Andy, who had returned home, was lying in bed at his family's house in a sad condition. Larry, as Andy's best friend, wanted to take him to see Mose Allison.

Larry thought that taking him on a trip would relieve Andy's depression. The depression that arose as a result of the war and resulted in serious injuries made Andy depressed (Beattie, 1977). He closed himself off from the outside world and socialized only with people he knew. It was very difficult when the perpetrator of depression opened himself up to the social crowd. This depression becomes increasingly serious considering the trauma experienced by the characters. It is due to depression often becomes a serious illness because it will lead to suicide (Beattie, 1977; Wijaya, et al., 2023).

In this sense, depression is an advanced form of anxiety, fear of danger in one's environment and feeling threatened by danger. This anxiety is usually referred to as realistic anxiety (DeMartini, et al., 2019; Huang & Zhao, 2020). War, which causes deep trauma, has an impact on anxiety in the character's environment. Anxiety arises because of memories of bad incidents that happened to him. When anxiety arises, there are two ways that the confident mind will act, the first is to increase self-defense mechanisms and increase thinking



about problem solving (DeMartini, et al., 2019; Huang & Zhao, 2020). The mind's response so that the thing that causes anxiety to appear is a natural thing that happens to the character.

*"She felt very depressed looking at the pictures, so she put them down and went into the bedroom. She's undressed. She looked at her body-whole, not a bad figure-in the mirror." (Beattie, 1977)*

Thoughts are fundamental in GAD sufferers, those who experience GAD tend to have negative thoughts and trigger feelings of anxiety and excessive worry (Stein & Sareen, 2015; Wittchen & Hoyer, 2001). This anxiety and worry arise from remembering bad events or happenings and is realized by thoughts of what if the GAD sufferer was at the scene or in the position of a victim. Thinking about events that have occurred and anxiety about one's condition, thoughts that realize past events related to the situation or something bad for the person with GAD. When stress increases, GAD sufferers feel that something bad will happen (Stein & Sareen, 2015; Wittchen & Hoyer, 2001).

Natalie came home with a mind full of questions and a deep sense of mental stress and depression that emerged after learning to drive (Beattie, 1977). Natalie came into the room and felt depressed because of the photo of herself which made Michael laugh.

*"He was staring at the picture of her legs. "What's this?" he said."  
"Wow," the boy said. He laughed.  
"Never mind. Sorry. I'm not looking at any more of them."  
"She tried to think what to say, or in some way she could turn the pictures into a joke. She wanted to get out of the car and run." (Beattie, 1977)*

Natalie showed very severe anxiety and anxiety because Michael laughed at her photo. Natalie hoped to get out of the car and stop learning to drive when she experienced this (Beattie, 1977). GAD sufferers who experience severe anxiety will think about finding ways to get out of this feeling of restlessness and anxiety. Natalie has been having such anxiety all this time. Meeting Michael at first makes Natalie think of it as a challenging move. It is because she learns to drive with another man (Beattie, 1977). This is like double challenges for Natalie in which she never experienced before.

The behavior that occurs when GAD sufferers feel restless, anxious and worried is a change in the way they speak which focuses on conversation topics related to worry (Besharat, et al., 2019). Natalie thought about what to say to Michael about the photo of herself that Michael was looking at and laughed at the photo, in this way Natalie focused on straightening out what was making her feel anxious (Beattie, 1977). The anxiety comes because Natalie does not know what to laugh about. She has a different sense of joke from Michael. He is more energetic and open than Natalie. Later, this one will slowly open Natalie's mind and it is implicitly seen that they get attracted to each other.

*"She felt very depressed looking at the pictures, so she put them down and went into the bedroom. She's undressed. She looked at her body-whole, not a bad figure-in the mirror." (Beattie, 1977)*

She was so worried about the photo. When she undresses herself, it seems that her action would like to make sure of his own body. Moreover, it is also herself that she wants to check. Indeed, she must be true to society, but she doubts if she has been so true with her

own self (Beattie, 1977). The laugh of Michael is not merely a joke, but strangeness of the gaze of other people that disturbs the stability of normed self.

Generalized Anxiety Disorder in the characters in *Shifting* by Ann Beattie can be seen from the dialogue and narrative depicted, there are several characters such as Andy and Natalie who suffer from GAD and can be analyzed. Anxiety is not always a bad thing (Crocq, 2017; DeMartini, et al., 2019). With positive thoughts, the anxiety that comes can be used as motivation or encouragement to be able to overcome certain challenges or situations. What people need to be careful of is if the feeling of anxiety still appears even though the triggering factor has disappeared. It could also be when the feeling of anxiety appears for no apparent reason and interferes with activities. In this case, people should suspect an anxiety disorder (Maharani, et al., 2018; Sakur, 2022). In *Shifting*, Ann Beattie's work focuses on the GAD experienced by Natalie, but there are also several characters who are depicted as suffering from GAD.

All of the anxieties in the story indicate that being anxious is not without any reason at all. There must be a reason including individual or societal standards. Therefore, anxiety is a result of problematic situations (Crocq, 2017; DeMartini, et al., 2019). It may come and go if the cause exists or leaves. However, it may also stay and prolong deeper if it is related to trauma or any planted norms in everyday life.

The story is perfectly situated in GAD where anxiety is quite familiar for everyone. Each person may have different experiences according to their own memories and tastes. In that sense, people may have a universal understanding that anxieties are quite universally understood and embraced by people. It could also be said that the short story indicates how any disorder may come from any compiled small worries (Beattie, 1977). If the worrying is not coped up with better treatment, it could be piled up and be shaped into further anxieties that could easily disturb life of being individuals and parts of societies.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The researchers found proofs about GAD, especially in the depiction of the character Natalie. Worry, anxiety, fear, and thoughts that lead to negative thoughts are symptoms or characteristics of GAD. GAD appears to be highly prevalent, particularly among women. The disorder has a fairly chronic course and is associated with significant impairment in functioning with increased risk of suicidality. In this story, the anxieties being felt by the characters are reflections of external threats and indications. Those include war, norms of women, and even a sense of adultery.

#### 5. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. Authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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