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Manalu, Rini Rutcahyati

2025

# Retirees' Psychological Struggles in Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and The Sea*

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**RETIREEES' PSYCHOLOGICAL STRUGGLES IN  
ERNEST HEMINGWAY'S *THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA***

**This undergraduate thesis is submitted as partial fulfilment to obtain  
Bachelor Degree at English Department Faculty of Cultural Sciences  
Catholic University of Saint Thomas Medan**

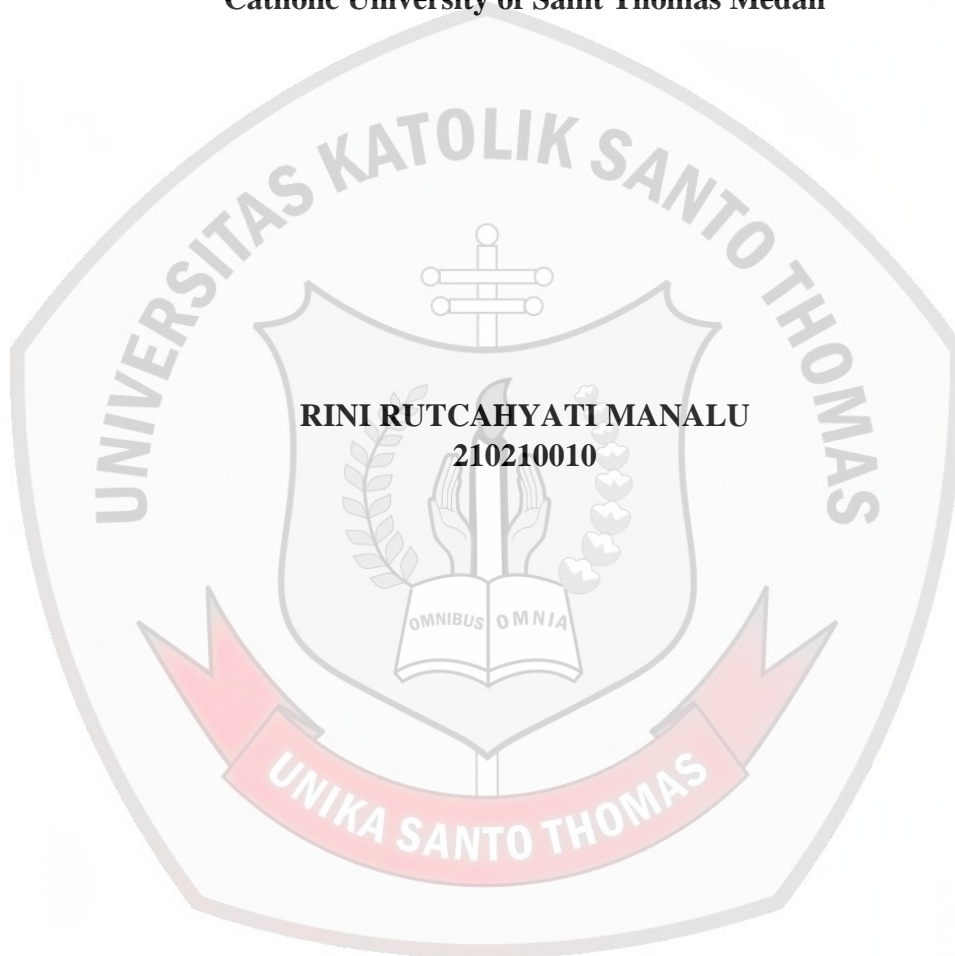


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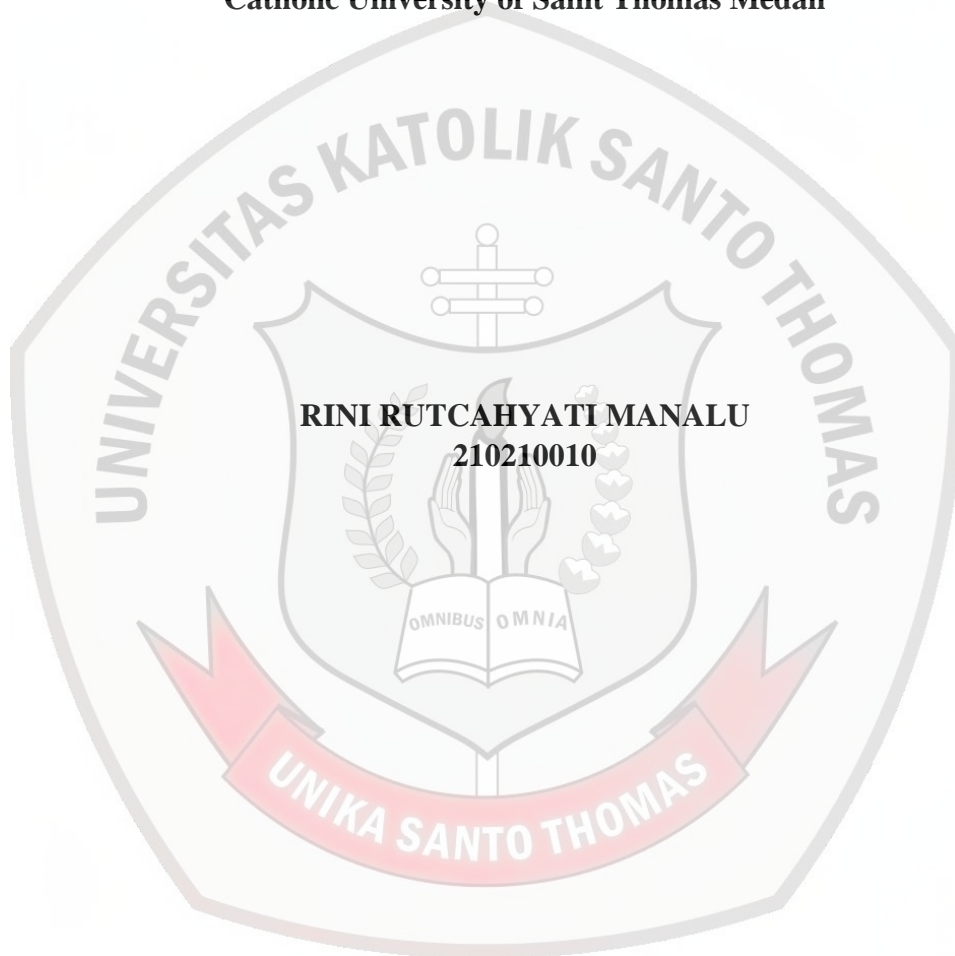


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solemnly declare that this thesis entitled "**Retirees' Psychological Struggles in Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man And The Sea***" is my own work, free from plagiarism. Quotations are referenced in accordance with scientific writing ethics that apply. If it is proven that this thesis contains plagiarism deem to have violated the rules, I am willing to accept sanctions for the act in accordance with the applicable regulations.

Medan, 24 June 2025



Rini Rutcahyati Manalu

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The writer hopes that this thesis will be beneficial to the field of English Department. The writer acknowledge that this thesis is far from perfect. Therefore, instructive feedback and criticism from readers are welcomed.

Medan, June 2025

The writer,

Rini Rutcahyati Manalu

## ABSTRACT

This study explores and analyzes retirees' psychological struggles as portrayed in the novel *The Old Man and The Sea* by Ernest Hemingway. It uses a qualitative method with Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory as the main approach. The data is collected through a comprehensive and in-depth reading of the novel by identifying and marking narrative elements, character dialogues, and symbols that represent the main character's psychological condition. The data is analyzed using the Miles and Huberman technique, which consists of four stages: data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The results show that the novel reflects various forms of psychological struggles commonly experienced by individuals in old age. These struggles include identity crisis, fear of uselessness, and loneliness. The identity crisis is shown through Santiago's self-doubt after failing to catch a fish for several days, which makes him feel that he is no longer the great fisherman he once was. The fear of uselessness appears through his weakened physical condition due to aging, but he continues to try hard to prove that he still has value and purpose in life. Loneliness is illustrated through his solitary life, without a wife, children, or close friends. This study concludes that it is important for every individual to accept the reality that aging is a natural part of life. By accepting it sincerely and with full awareness, a person can live their later years more peacefully and wisely, while maintaining dignity and a meaningful sense of life.

**Keywords:** *psychological struggles, identity crisis, fear of uselessness, loneliness, retirement*

## **ABSTRAK**

*Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi dan menganalisis perjuangan psikologis para pensiunan yang digambarkan dalam novel *The Old Man and The Sea* karya Ernest Hemingway. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan teori psikososial Erik Erikson. Data dikumpulkan melalui pembacaan yang menyeluruh dan mendalam terhadap novel dengan mengidentifikasi serta menandai elemen naratif, dialog tokoh, dan simbol-simbol yang merepresentasikan kondisi psikologis tokoh utama. Analisis data dilakukan dengan menggunakan teknik Miles dan Huberman yang terdiri dari empat tahap: pengumpulan data, reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa novel ini merefleksikan berbagai bentuk perjuangan psikologis yang umum dialami oleh individu di usia lanjut. Bentuk perjuangan tersebut meliputi krisis identitas, rasa takut akan ketidakbergunaan, dan kesepian. Krisis identitas ditunjukkan melalui keraguan Santiago terhadap dirinya sendiri setelah gagal menangkap ikan selama beberapa hari, yang membuatnya merasa bahwa ia bukan lagi nelayan hebat seperti dulu. Rasa takut akan ketidakbergunaan tampak dari kondisi fisiknya yang melemah karena usia, namun ia tetap berusaha keras untuk membuktikan bahwa dirinya masih memiliki nilai dan tujuan hidup. Kesepian digambarkan melalui kehidupannya yang dijalani seorang diri, tanpa istri, anak, maupun sahabat dekat. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa penting bagi setiap individu untuk menerima kenyataan bahwa proses menua adalah bagian alami dari kehidupan. Dengan menerimanya secara tulus dan penuh kesadaran, seseorang dapat menjalani masa tuanya dengan lebih damai dan bijaksana, serta tetap mempertahankan harga diri dan makna hidup yang berkelanjutan.*

**Kata kunci:** *perjuangan psikologis, krisis identitas, ketakutan akan ketidakbergunaan, kesepian, pensiun*

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