

DEFENCE MECHANISM OF THE MAIN CHARACTERS IN “WUTHERING HEIGHTS” BY EMILY BRONTE: PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH

Golan Hasan

golan.gh51@gmail.com

Universitas Internasional Batam

ABSTRACT: This research is about defence mechanism of the main characters of *Wuthering Heights* novel written by Emily Bronte. This research used psychology of literature approach to analyse the characters of intrinsic element of this fiction. It describes and identifies psychology of the main characters; *Heathcliff* and *Catherine*, by using the theory of *Sigmund Freud* (1961) which is divided into three psychic zones *id*, *ego* and *superego*. Thus, this research focuses on the plication of defence mechanism into the main characters of the novel *Heathcliff* and *Catherine* which described in the novel. In this research, the author applies qualitative method to analyse the novel and to find out the description of defence mechanism in *Heathcliff* and *Catherine*.

Keywords: three psychic zones, defence mechanism, psychological approach, *Wuthering Heights*

Literature is a term used to describe written material and most commonly refers to work of creative imagination. Literature is believed to be about 6.000 years old and the oldest pieces of literature are texts from about 500 years ago from Egypt which is originally come from long narrative poem known as Epic before generally used to describe novel. There are five main types of literature that public commonly known of. They are poetry, drama, prose, nonfiction and media. These five genres of literature are the most familiar in society, and the most typical variety of literature is prose which includes novel, short story and essay.

For this research, the author choose novel as the main object of the research. Every novel includes the writer’s unique writing skills to show the wonderful events in their novels. Each novel has characters to point out the story. Novel also imitates like a mirror of reality that represents real life even though some novels use fiction character where the aspect or the component in the novel become the term in literature known as life-likeness whereas the reader can resemble to the characters’ emotion and action.

Characters in a novel typically consist of a good and/or a bad people. The good character in a novel is remembered in terms of the good things they do, like their achievement or sacrifices. The bad ones are usually extraordinarily evil and are remarkable character. These two types of characters are also found in the novel “Wuthering Heights” which is written by Emily Bronte. She and her other two sisters: Charlotte Bronte and Anne Bronte, are also famous literature works authors. Under pseudonyms as “Ellis Bell”, Emily wrote “Wuthering Height “her only published novel in 1847. The complex novel explored two families—the Earnshawsand the Lintons. Each of the characters reacts differently in every situation and problem they face. The author analysed how the characters react when they fell threatened and fell overwhelmed. According to Sigmund Freud (1961), who was famous for his psychoanalysis theory in literature, the most behaviour are caused by the characters’ thoughts, ideas and wishes in their brain but they are not easily accessible by the conscious part of the mind. This theory of psychoanalytic of Freud informs that there are three aspects influences human behaviour i.e.: *id*, *ego* and *superego*.

Additionally, a recent scholar, Snowden (2006) in his study mentions that *id* helps people to achieve their desire which is driven by an instinct. The other is *ego* helps people to meet their desire by ignoring the reality. Then, the *super ego* is the boundary of the *id* and the *ego*. It functions to judge the right and wrong things. In order to deal with the problem or anxiety, Freud stated that the ego employ’s arrange defence mechanism. The defence mechanism operates themselves from anxiety feeling of being threatened or when the id or superego is demanding too much or without people conscious control.

In this novel, Wuthering Heights tells us that what caused madness is love, sometimes in an unhealthy way which is happened in the life of Heathcliff and Catherine, two characters of the novel. The harness of the social class was in early era: when Heathcliff defended himself due to his the only love of life leave him for the reasons of upper social class and wealth. The harness also happened when Catherine, Heathcliff lover, decides to leave her lover to marry another man because she longs for upper social class and wealth. By using a novel entitled *Wuthering Heights*, the author intended to conduct an analysis of defence mechanism (is, ego, and superego) by the main characters of the novel by applying the theory of Sigmund Freud on the basis of psychological approach.

LITERATURE

In illuminating the literature for his study, the author conducted a perspective approach in order to decide if the aspects of his study are worthy or adequate to be undertaken. One of the most used perspective approaches is *psychological approach*. In fact, psychology and literature have a close relation. In one hand, psychology refers to the human behavior patterns. On the other hand, literature explores the way how human behave to deal with problems and environments in their life (Patrick, 1985).

Every literary work has lot of characters. The personality and emotion of each character is unique and interesting to be discovered through the conflict of the story in the literary works, including a novel. Decision that every character made in facing her or his problem as well as the consequence of the action will make the novel more fascinating. In doing so, the psychological approach is used to analyze the characters of the Wuthering Heights novel.

Psychological Theory

Freud (1961) argues an important idea that human personality develops more than one aspect. He, further, creates a mind topographical model in which he explained the mind's structure and function features. By resembling the human's mind to an iceberg, he describes three levels of the human mind. The psychology structures are broken down into three parts: the *id*, *ego* and *superego*. These three parts emerge at different stages of people's live. Although the personality comprises unique features in each part, all together interact and form as a whole. Every part of the psychology structures contributes in a relative way to humans' behaviour. Figure 1 represents Freud's three parts of psychology structures configuration.

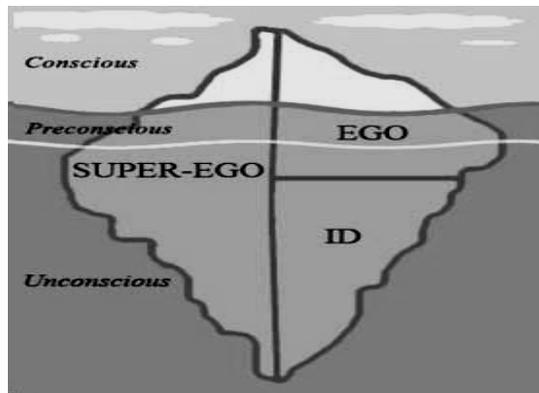


Figure.1. Freud's *mind* comparison to an iceberg

Id

The basic and natural component of personality is Id. It has all the personality present biological components since birth, such as the instincts of sex instinct and aggressive instinct. The id responds directly and immediately to the humans' instincts in the manners of impulsive and. The newborn child personality is all id and later on develop ego and super-ego. In its function, it remains immature throughout human's life, and still remain the same through time or experience of the humans' life. Because it operates within the unconscious part of the mind, the id is not affected by reality, logic, or the world. The id also requires sudden enjoyment and if this exists in a human life, there will be pleasure sensation.

However, when id is rejected, the individual will get tension or anxiety. Hence, it functions on the basis of the pleasure principles and ignoring the consequences of immediate satisfaction in fulfilling the wishful desire. The id develops in primary layer of humans' thinking processes: primitive, illogical, irrational, and fantasy oriented. These thinking processes have no comprehension of objective reality, selfish, and wishful in nature.

Ego

The ego is *'that part of the id which has been modified by the direct influence of the external world'* (Freud, 1961:25). The ego is developed in order to facilitate the unrealistic id and the external real world. It is the personality decision making component. Comparing to id which is chaotic and totally unreasonable, the ego works by reasons. The ego functions on the basis of: (1) reality principle; (2) working out realistic ways; and (3) compromising or postponing satisfaction to avoid negative consequences of society in satisfying the id demands. It puts a great concern not only to social realities and norms, etiquette but also rules in deciding how to humans' behave. Similarly, the ego also seeks pleasure and avoids pain just like the id. However, the differences are the ego concerns with devising a realistic strategy to obtain pleasure. It does not differentiate right or wrong. It is good simply if it achieves its end. The ego stays on, blaming the id for the excuses and claiming the credits at the end as if the action were its own.

To give details image of the ego, Freud made the analogy of the id being a horse while the ego is the rider. The rider on horseback has control of the strength over the horse. It means the ego has power to control the id. When the ego cannot use the principles in reality, then the anxiety happened. Nevertheless, the defence mechanism will activate to assist in eliminating the anxiety, so that the individual will feel better. The ego develops in secondary layers of thinking process. It is towards problem solving of rational, realistic,

and orientated thinking. A solution will be found out when an action plan does not work, and this will be repeated every time the failure exists. Via mastery of the ego, humans can control their impulses and also demonstrate their self control, also known as reality testing.

Super-Ego

The super-ego combines the society values and morals. The super-ego is gained from parents and other people in family or community. It engages in the age of 3-5 years old or known as the phallic stage of psychosexual development. The super-ego controls the id's impulses, especially those which society forbids such as sex and aggression. It also functions to persuade the ego become more moralistic goals rather than simply realistic ones to strive for perfection.

The super-ego is divided into two systems: the conscience and the ideal self. The conscience has a power to punish the ego via causing feelings of guilt. When the ego becomes the cause of the id's demands, the super-ego turns individual feels guilt. The ideal imaginations are the way how people supposed to be, becomes other people aspirations in career, the way how to treat other people properly, and the way how to behave as a member of appropriate society. Behaviour which fails to represent the ideal imaginations will be punished by the super-ego through guilt as well. However, when people behave appropriately and feel proud of it, the super-ego will reward them via the feeling ideal itself. In fact, when the ideal self is in too high standard, regardless whatever the person does, it will causes failure. The ideal imagination and proud are, obviously, shaped in childhood from parental values and how children were raise.

Defence Mechanism

In his works, Sigmund Freud also pointed out some ego defences. The "I" position, as the ego, takes place in the centre with very powerful forces in human's reality. The super-ego takes the position as human deals with the society while the human's biology represents by the id. If a conflict or problem happened on behalf of the poor ego, human will feel threatened and overwhelmed. In order to handle the raised conflict and problem, the ego will activate a range of defence mechanism. The defence mechanism is used by humans to protect themselves from guilt or anxiety feelings. It develops because humans get threatened or their id or super-ego is getting too demanding. The ego unconsciously uses the id and/or the super-ego to protect humans when their mind sends warning to against a stressful condition in their life. Consequently, the defence mechanisms result both healthy and unhealthy consequences, it depends on the condition and regularity of the mechanism

type as used. In short words, the defence mechanisms are psychological strategies in psychoanalytic theory which activate by human's unconscious mind in order to manipulate, deny or distort unpleasant realities in the forms of anxiety and unacceptable impulses, as well as human's schema maintains.

Types of Defence Mechanism

Sigmund Freud has categorized some types of defence mechanism. These mechanisms are out of humans' conscious control. The unconsciousness uses one or more the defence mechanism to protect humans' mind against stressful condition in their life. The ways to defence itself is different in one human to another.

Repression

Repression is the ego unconscious mechanism in order to keep thoughts of disturbing or threatening thoughts become conscious. Repressive works to buying a painful feeling or thoughts from awareness. For example, a wife refuses to drive a car even though it causes the family much disorganization. A result of her repression is that her husband has to take her everywhere.

Denial

Denial acts to protect the humans' external situations from awareness. This happens when the situations are too many to be handled and the human rejects or does not accept the unpleasant reality. For example, a smoker refuses to admit that smoking is not good for his or her health, and a man who has been a drunk driving outlaw for several time but he or she does not believe that he or she has an alcohol problem.

Regression

Regression happens when human is faced with stressful conditions so his or her mind travels back to psychological time which drives more childish or primitive behaviour. For example, a teenager will have giggle out of control when being introduced to the opposite sex, and when a college student and her or his roommate have to get into an argument so she or he moves into another room.

Splitting

Splitting is when the unconscious divide everything the world as all good, all bad and no line draws in between, like a girl thinks her best friend cannot be counted because he forgot his lunch date with her.

Displacement

Displacement is channelling a thought or feeling from the original sources to something or someone else. For instance, a subordinate who is frustrated or disappointed by his or her superior will beat up a family member at home.

Reaction Formation

Reaction formation goes beyond denial and behaves in opposite way from what he/she actually feels like a woman who is really angry at her boss and would like to quit her job may instead be overly kind and generous towards boss and express her desire to keep working there forever.

Rationalization

Rationalization is justifying ones behaviour by substituting “good”/acceptable reason and providing excuses lies breed lies and take the mind further from the truth for example, a man’s intense rage can be redirected into the form of participation in sport like boxing or soccer.

Sublimation

Sublimation, just like displacement, takes place when the mind works to displace the emotion into constructive activity rather than destructive one. For example, a man’s intense rage can be redirected into the form of participation in sport like boxing or soccer.

Undoing

Undoing means is trying to reverse a thought or feeling by performing an action that signifies an opposite feeling than the original thoughts or feeling. For example, a parent may buy his or her children a lot of gifts to make up for not spending time with them.

Review of Previous Study

The topic of character analysis has been a favourite and interesting topic since the last decades. Some researchers had this topic as the focus of their research. The theory of defence mechanism of this research has been conducted by some other researchers in different topic and object. The following section reviews the previous studies of some authors.

Firstly, Nessie (2011) in her thesis entitled “*The Unconscious Mind of a Psychopath in Patrick Susskind’s Perfume: The Story of Murder*” analysed the psychological problem of the characters in that novel. She discussed the character of Grenouille’s toughness and action who was rejected by his own family and his neighbourhood. His unconscious minds during his teenage time have caused him to become obsessed with scent. He did murders to fulfil his desire of his psychological problems, which is called as psychopath. The data of this thesis was collected from the novel Perfume itself. The theory to analyse the data used Sigmund Freud’s psychological approach. Using a qualitative descriptive method, the result revealed that the life experience of Grenouille was really unpleasant which caused and obsessed him to kill some virgins just to collect their body scent.

Secondly, an analysis from Simma (2009) entitled "*An Analysis of Defence Mechanism used by the Main Characters in Mark Twain's: The Adventure of Huckleberry Finn and the Prince and the Pauper*". Simma's analysis also used the defence mechanism in Sigmund Freud's theory. This study unveiled that both Huckleberry Finn and Edward Tudor, the main characters, used some defence mechanism, i.e.: repression, suppression and rationalization. These mechanisms were taken because the main characters had realistic and moral anxiety. The moral anxiety of the characters was from their family and society backgrounds. These happened as their family were unable to meet the main characters' desires which turned into their anxiety. The results revealed that both main characters' defence mechanism was related to their selves-adjustment. However, both Hucklberry and Edward Tudor could adjust their satisfactory levels; so that they could live peacefully in their society by having their defence mechanism reduced their anxiety.

Finally, a study of Sartika (2013) analysed the psychological conflict of the main character in "*Black Swan*" film by Andres Heinz. In her study, Sartika conducted library research method to collect the data from books and other available sources like internet. The main character was analysed under psychological approach by Sigmund Freud. There were some intrinsic aspects of the film being analyzed: conflict and characters. They were used to support the overall analysis. Moreover, the extrinsic aspects, like setting of location and time, were also analyzed as they were important in psychological analysis for the character in the story. The results indicated that in Black Swan the intrinsic analysis revealed the main character was a beautiful ballerina whose personality was changed because of the characters around her. The extrinsic analysis of the story's settings mentioned that mostly the location setting were in apartment, theatre and ballet practice room.

Furthermore, the social settings of the film also dominated with the life of the main character who lived for a participating in a world competition to obtain a better reputation. The main conflict came up between the main character herself and the other characters. According to the psychoanalysis approach, it was concluded that the reasons of the conflict was triggered by the pressure from other characters toward the main character. This, then, caused the main character suffered from her anxiety. Another psychology conflict happened internally in the main character with her. It was also triggered by the same conflict like with other characters, the pressure from the main character herself who was unable to give her best performance when she acted as a Black Swan in the world competition. The character impacted to solve her conflicts by facing the hallucination she suffered.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The author analysed the characters' action to solve the problem and categorize them to the types of defence mechanism. The data were collected from the primal source "Wuthering Heights" by Emily Bronte and the results were presented using qualitative descriptive method.

The object of the research was novel "Wuthering Heights" by a famous author, Charlotte Bronte's sibling, Emily Bronte. The book first published in 1847 under the pseudonym "Ellis Bell". It revolves around the assonate and destructive love between two of the central characters. Although Wuthering Heights received neither critical praise nor any local popularity during its initial publication, the reading public has changed substantially and both critical and popular opinion praise Emily Bronte's singular work of fiction. The only work from the excellent author, apart from the violent characters and harsh reality, the audiences are both more understanding and accepting of the use of unsavoury of human life literature.

Method of collecting data was the way used to obtain data (Creswell, 2012). In this research, the author used the literature studying method, by reading and studying books that are closely related to the discussion of the problem in order to obtain various theories and references that support analyzing data. There were two data sources of this study: First, the primary source, the source of collecting data is primarily from the novel chosen by the author: Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte. Second, the secondary source, the secondary source was the approach. In this research, the author used psychological approach, and the other sources were related books, articles and journals.

Analysis

Analysis means to break something down into its component part so that it can be understood (Creswell, 2012). In this research data are analysed and organized into categories so that others might come to understand the reality the researchers are try in to represent. The ultimate goals of research were to the finding to make effective. The Ultimate goal of research is to use the findings to the finding make effective change or choices. To this end, the collection and analysis of data must be accurate and credible. It means that the data the researchers were collecting creates a fairly true picture of the bit of reality that the researchers are collecting creates a fairly true picture of the bit of reality that the researchers were observing. This helps to make the research means trustworthy or capable of being believed. There were two main elements in analysing the data. The first was intrinsic elements. The intrinsic elements

include elements of fiction. There were plot, character, set and theme and point of view. The author used these elements to analysing the data related to the problem of study. The second was extrinsic elements. The extrinsic elements were approach used and expert support. The approach was psychological approach and using the theory of Sigmund Freud as the base of study.

Method of Presenting Result Analysis

The next stage conducted after the completion of data analysis was to present the result of the data analysis. They were presented formally and informally. Formal presentation of the data was the presentation of the data by using the rules in the form of formulas, charts or diagram, tables and images. While the presentation of data on an informal basis only use words of regular expressions (Creswell, 2012). In this research, the method of presenting research result is informal way, by using qualitative descriptive which is only use words and in paragraph.

RESULTS

There were three main centered characters analyzed using the psychological approach (id, ego, and superego) as suggested by Freud (1961): Heathcliff, Catherine, and Edgar.

Heathcliff as the Symbol of Id Mind

As Freud argued that the core of *id* is to do what a human wants as the enjoyment, Heathcliff did what he wants to make he enjoy his life. He succeeded in his revenge to Catherine by luring Isabella Linton to marry him in order to take over Wuthering Heights. Moreover, Freud also argued that *id* is also illogical and inaccessible, so that it cannot be controlled by moral and law. When Heathcliff did his revenge, he did not realize and ignored all the factors of moral and laws. It was the expression of his unconscious part of his perpetuated libido. This, then, brought damage and harm which ruined his life and put him in suffers at the end.

In his childhood, Heathcliff was told as an orphan who was brought by Mr. Earnshaw and raised like his own child with other members of Earnshaw family in Wuthering Heights. As Heathcliff was abandoned by his original parents, his personality was shaped as an optimistic yet free repression person. These factors took a big portion in forming his *id* performance. Later, in his adolescences, he experienced both happy and bitter life. Happy as he found his love with Catherine, a daughter's of Mr. Earnshaw: bitter as Hindley, Catherine's brother, started insulted him after Mr. Earnshaw died. The turning point of the novel started when he was badly disappointed when Catherine

betrayed him and chose to marry other man, Edgar Linton, not him. He was trap in madness, began to develop himself to pay his revenge by away from Wuthering Heights. Marrying Isabella Linton, a sister of Edgar Linton, was one of his strategies to pay his revenge and back to Wuthering Heights as an admirable gentleman. He started interrupting Catherine's peaceful and happy life and ruining Hindley's life by deceiving him and took over Wuthering Heights. To satisfy his revenge, even after Catherine's died when giving birth to her daughter, he asked his son to marry Catherine's daughter, so that he could control Thrushcross Grange, the Linton's property. Eventually, Heathcliff succeeded in paying his cruel revenge, however, he left in lonesome and miserable died.

For Heathcliff, his *id* is his rotten fruit of repression or suppression in which he suffers most. He defeated Hindley in order to elaborate his incarnation of *id* the principles of being happy. His love to Catherine was a physic background for his revenge. He truly got what he desired for his satisfaction and life enjoyment. His revenge across the generation symbolized his *id* as an inhuman revenge in very instinct and desirable. It shows his performance of *id* as well as his primitive drives.

Catherine as the Symbol of Ego Mind

Freud also mentioned that *ego* develops to mediate the unrealistic *id* and the external real world. Catherine was very happy in her early adolescences as he had Heathcliff in her life. However, her unrealistic dreams to have higher social class drove her to marry Edgar Liston instead of Heathcliff. Actually, she had two options: Edgar who was in upper-class, full civilized, gentle, and kind man; and Heathcliff who had perfect similarities with her passion and soul. Then she took society class as her consideration for catering her reality demands and existence of her ego.

Even though Catherine had happy childhood with full regulations world, her marriage to Edgar Linton put her adolescences life in painful and sorrowful as the groom was not her true love. However, she realized that choosing Heath cliff would lead her in miserable and hardworking life. That is the reason for her to perform her ego. Finally, she died with both physical and psychological torment due to her quilt feelings of her betrayal to Heathcliff. In fact, during her mistaken-chosen marriage with Edgar, she was a devoted wife because she realized she had to defend her social position. This separates her *id* in childhood to reach her ego in adolescence.

Edgar as the Symbol of Superego Mind

Freud supported *superego* as the top position in society structure because the subject stays in social forms and cultures with high standard morality. Edgar Linton in this novel was represented the regular and proper morality of a perfect behavior for his family and society. He was an educated and a truly gentleman in the ways his action, speaking, and manners which were most acceptable in his time. He, then, was taken as the superego one.

As Edgar lived in a high class and aristocrat family, it provides the background of his superego requirements. In his marriage to Catherine, he protected her like a queen, and being responsible to his family. He was a serene and calm gentleman who could deal with things in his life well, including his cross generation problems. After Catherine died, he raised their only daughter alone while dealing with his nephew, the son of Heathcliff. Therefore, his character was symbolized as a superego.

CONCLUSION

Analysing *Wuthering Heights* of Emily Bronte using psychological approach by Freud theory: id, ego, and superego penetrates the inner ways of thinking of the main characters Heathcliff, Catherine, and Edgar. The theory illuminates the conflicts of the human instincts happened in the story. Heathcliff was the *id*, a mad and inhuman, while Edgar was the *superego* a gentle, generous, and educated. They were opposite. The defence mechanism is needed to deal them. Catherine as the *ego* was mediated both of them. At the end, the approach proves that it is difficult to balance the three mind theory of Freud as they might bring physical and psychological sorrows as indicates by the characters in this novel.

REFERENCES

- Bronte, E. (1847). *Wuthering Height*. London: Thomas Newby.
- Creswell, J.W. (2012). *Educational Research* (4th Ed). New York: Pearson.
- Drew, P. (1964). Charlotte Bronte as a Critic of *Wuthering Heights*. *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 18(4), 365-381.
- Freud, S. (1961). *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. London: Hogarth Press.
- Kennedy, X. J., & Gioia, D. (2007). *Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, Drama, and Writing*. New York: Pearson Longman.
- Knellwolf, C. and Norris, C. (2001). *Literary Criticism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Nessie, A. (2011) *The Unconscious Mind of a Psychopath in Patrick Süskind's Perfume: The Story of a Murderer*. A bachelor thesis, Fakultas Ilmu Budaya, Universitas Andalas.
- Patrick, W. (1985). *The Circles of Fear and Desire: Study of Gothic Fantasy*. Chicago, USA: University of Chicago Press.
- Sartika, W. D. (2013). *Study of the Main Character of Black Swan Movies Script by Andres Heinz*. A bachelor degree thesis in Literature Major at Faculty of Humanities of Diponegoro University, Semarang.
- Simma, W. (2009). *An Analysis of Defence Mechanism Use by the Main Characters in Mark Twain's the Adventure of Huckleberry Finn and the Prince and the Pauper*. A master of art degree thesis in English Department at Srinakharinwirot University.
- Swonden, R. (2006). *Teach Yourself Freud*. New York: Mc-Graw –Hill.
- Thurschwell, P. (2001). *Sigmund Freud*. London: Routledge.