



An Analysis Of MIA Hall Psychological Conflict In Gayle Forman Novel If I Stay

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ABSTRACT

This thesis Entitled An Analysis Of MIA Hall Psychological Conflict In Gayle Forman Novel If I Stay. This thesis discusses the conflict experienced by Mia as the main character in the novel *If I Stay*. This story tells about a young girl named Mia who faces conflict in her life. The most influential conflict in her life is psychological conflict. In this story, Mia faces two choices since her coma. She had to choose to live or die. This study focuses on the psychological conflicts experienced by Mia, and the self-defense mechanisms that Mia uses in resolving her psychological conflicts. This research uses library based and qualitative research as methods. Then, a psychological approach in the form of a defense mechanism is used to find out Mia's defense mechanism to resolve her conflict. As a result of this analysis, the most dominant conflict is psychological conflict. Psychological Mia's conflict is a conflict with herself in a coma. She was confused about whether to live or die. It makes her anxious. So, she overcomes her anxiety by some kinds of defense mechanism. They are denial, repression, reaction formation, fantasy, and displacement.

Keyword

Psychological Conflict, Choice, Defense Mechanism

INTRODUCTION

At this time, the presence of literature undergoes evolutionary changes. Some of these facts can be justified by the increasing numbers of authors who produce literacy and not to mention the ones who briefly explore their imagination and ideas above the reality in social life. Several literary critics have affirmed this statement by recognizing literary works as the creation of human creativity and can be discovered in spoken and written text. The literary works spawn from the author's life experiences. Sehandi asserted that literature is the expression of language as a product of creativity through imaginative works which display mystical expression and human aesthetic experience within language. Literature is commonly associated with real-life experiences, both concerning humans and nature but not limited to myths or surreal occurrences in the real world.

In literature, humans are never excluded from the activities of imagination and creativity. As Luxemburg (1992:5) said that literature defines as the piece

of creation acquired purely from the human mind and cannot be considered an imitation. Therefore, a literary work is created by authors through events that often occur in people's lives, such as psychological perspective. This problem is relevant to human behavior in life. One of the fields of study in psychology that studies this topic is psychoanalysis. One of the psychoanalysis forms was developed by Sigmund Freud. Psychoanalysis is concerned with the function and mental development of a person. Psychoanalysis indicated the structures of problems that harm one's personality. It emerges from the composition of the Id, Ego, and Super-ego. Clark in Minderop (2010: 24) explained the id reveals the authentic intention of the life of the individual being to appease itself. Secondly, the Ego demands settlements to ponder in accomplishing every expectation. Lastly, Super-ego pertains to constraining human desires or satisfaction. In conclusion, in the literature that includes psychological phenomena, the psychological aspect arises through the characters assembled in the story. Some literature applies to psychoanalytic theory, such as poetry, drama, short stories, novels, and other works.

One form of literary works that covers elements of psychoanalysis is novels. Wellek and Warren (2013: 255) said that they are viewed as a historical archive, the real-life story, and the history of humankind. In addition, Minderop (2010-78) stated that novels are the literary forms that reflect reality, and the perpetrator is considered a character. In conclusion, the novel is the representation of the society conceived by the author through the problems experienced by the actors in the novel.

One of the inquisitive novels to discuss is *If I Stay*, written by Gayle Forman. In this novel, Mia Hall has experienced various conflicts. Gayle Forman presented the title *If I Stay* to make readers wonder about what things will happen in Mia's next life if she decides to stay and survive, whether her life will return to normal like before or vice versa she had to suffer from all the things that happened to her at that time, and in this study, the author wants to discuss more about the psychological conflict the main one is Mia Hall, the heroine. The novel *If I Stay* narrates the story of a talented seventeen-year-old girl known as Mia. She lives with her parents (Dad and mom) as well as her younger brother (Teddy) as an amicable family.

Mia is a seventeen-year-old high scholar. She is blessed with a friend who she treasures the most named Kim and a partner called Adam Wilde. Mia Hall has it all: a beautiful appearance, a well-disposed household, a boyfriend who cherishes her the most, and a promising and potential future full of choices, including music school. However, in an instant, it was all gone from her. It happened when Mia and her family had a very tragic car

accident while traveling to visit her family's house. As a result of the accident, Mia Hall is overtaken between life and death, and it is difficult for her to make decisions in her life. The decision to keep pursuing an unknown future, such as her dream of attending the famous Juilliard music school and living with the man she loves or choosing to die with her mother and father as a happy past in her life.

Mia has suffered various struggles in her life such as a conflict between Mia and herself as well as her characters within the novel. Conflict is a social predicament that frequently arises at any time and place, and also conflict cannot be secluded from human life (Sehandi: 124). In this case, conflict is not always negative, but there is a positive value where conflict can strengthen relations in the community. In literary works, conflict can affect the characters' lives stories. In general, conflicts in literary works are branched into two, namely internal conflicts and external conflicts. Internal conflict is a conflict that internalizes within the inner character. It is generally called psychological conflict without being affected by others (124). External conflict is an issue that occurs because of the outwards circumstances that influenced the character. Mia is the main character who can influence the reader to enter into her life and feel what she feels by shedding tears. This novel brings out various emotions of the readers with its heartfelt story. This novel is tragic yet hopeful, romantic, thrilling, and ends with an uplifting story about memories, music, life, and love. Therefore, there are several reasons why the author chose this novel because the main character in this story is very inspiring and has an intriguing character. In addition, this novel is one of the novels that contain psychology experienced by the main protagonist, namely Mia Hall. She can induce the reader into all the events and changes that occur in her life. Therefore, the writer intends to analyze the psychological conflict of the main character through her personality depicted by Forman in the novel *If I Stay*

RESEARCH METHOD

To obtain the answers for the research problems, the researcher adopts library research method. Library research is a method applied for gathering information and data from the books and other resources provided by the library. This method is used to discover additional sources and references to assist the analysis. The additional resources cited by the researcher are books, journals, articles, thesis, and websites.

This study also employs descriptive qualitative research to examine the outcome through words and sentences. The descriptive qualitative method is a

method of displaying the facts, situations, occurrences, and variables that occurred while conducting and presenting the research. Hamidi (2008:3) defined qualitative research as the observation of individual or group activities and social settings. The qualitative descriptive methodology refers to study that is based on empirically observed facts and events in a person. The goal of this study is to make the data correlate with the actual fact.

The analysis, according to Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), consists of three simultaneous activities: data reduction, data presenting, and data summary. The following are the three lines that will be analyzed further: Data reduction/selection: the process of conceiving, abstracting, and transforming root data that arose from field notes.

- Data reduction/selection: the process of concerning, abstraction, and transformation of root data appeared from notes written in the field.
- Data Presentation: a presentation as a group of arranged information giving the possibility of summarizing and taking action
- Data Summarizing: it is one of the most essential steps in conducting the research. This is a process to know the outcome of the study. After all collected data were identified, classified, analyzed based on the of type slang words proposed by Partridge and the function of slang words proposed by Yanhong, then the data were concluded in this research, the source of the data are primary and secondary data. Based the description that already mentioned before, the researcher uses library research and descriptive qualitative method combined with Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory in order to to obtain Mia's psychological conflict and to identify the kind of self-defense that is used by her in dealing with the psychological conflict.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Psychological Conflict that Mia Faces in *If I Stay* Novel

From the following quotation, it shows that Mia is extremely in love with Kim and wants to hug her because she tells him about Mia's accident and bring Adam to visit Mia in the hospital. In this condition, she knows that Mia really needed Adam to give her support in order to make her come back to life as soon as possible. At this time, Kim must do something to make Adam go to visit Mia due to the fact that Adam was playing a show in Portland. Besides Adam, Mia also has a best friend named Kim. Their friendship happened since they are in the senior high school, even up till now they still become a best friend.

I know that Kim's telling me this to try to keep me alive. She probably doesn't realize that in a weird way, her remark frees me, just like Gramps's permission did. I know it will be awful for Kim when I die, but I also think about what she said, about not being scared, about jail being easy compared to losing me. And that's how I know that Kim will be okay. Losing me will hurt; it will be the kind of pain that won't feel real at first, and when it does, it will take her breath away. And the rest of her senior year will probably suck, what with her getting all that cloying your-bestfriend's-dead sympathy that will drive her so crazy, and also because really, we are each other's only close friend at school. But she'll deal. She'll move on. She'll leave Oregon. She'll go to college. She'll make new friends. She'll fall in love. She'll become a photographer, the kind who never has to go on a helicopter. And I bet she'll be a stronger person because of what she's lost today. I have a feeling that once you live through something like this, you become a little bit invincible (Forman 69).

Kim is a best friend who loves Mia so much, more than any other friend. She didn't want to lose Mia as her best friend. She wanted to accompany her to provide some support because it would be very hurt for Kim if she died. There are times when Kim tries to talk to Mia, tells several nostalgic stories about their lives, about something that happened when she was in a coma. Even though she actually knew all the stories that Kim was telling, she couldn't talk to her. She said this to try to keep her alive. She cannot live without her beloved family, and on the other hand she still has many beloved people who love her and want her to stay alive and move on with her life. And in the end, Mia decided to return to her body when Adam visited and accompanied her to restore her spirit and then she decided to stay alive.

Yo-Yo Ma continues to play, and it's like the piano and cello are being poured into my body, the same way that the IV and blood transfusions are. And the memories of my life as it was, and the flashes of it as it might be, are coming so fast and furious. I feel like I can no longer keep up with them but they keep coming and everything is colliding, until I cannot take it anymore. Until I cannot be like this one second longer. There is a blinding flash, a

pain that rips through me for one searing instant, a silent scream from my broken body. For the first time, I can sense how fully agonizing staying will be. But then I feel Adam's hand. Not sense it, but feel it. I'm not sitting huddled in the chair anymore. I'm lying on my back in the hospital bed, one again with my body (Forman 74).

When Adam visits Mia, he puts the iPod on Mia's chest and immediately puts headphones in her ears. Then Adam plays Mia's favorite Yo-Yo Ma music, when hearing the music makes Mia remember the events that happened in her life in her past. It made Mia feel very tormented by her condition and she couldn't stop herself from going back so she decided to go back. When Adam held Mia's hand, she suddenly felt the touch of Adam's hand. Adam felt a very strong grip, where Mia squeezed Adam's hand so that Adam realized that Mia had woken up from her coma. Instantly he said that he loved Mia very much and did not want to lose Mia whom he loved so much. Since being in a coma, Mia has experienced extreme anxiety. Mia's anxiety is the result of the psychological conflict she faces. The anxiety left her not knowing what to do and confused to choose whether she should choose to live or die.

Forms of Mia's Self-defense Mechanism

It is defined that self-defense mechanism is a system that create reality denial with the purpose to cope with the anxiety. It also known as ego defense mechanism since it is the ego that exhibits the action to defense itself. The defense mechanism is utilized to reject the reality which somewhat painful to bear. It is also used to protect the ego from the overwhelming anxiety.

Denial

Denial is a defense mechanism which involves a refusal to accept reality, thus blocking external events from awareness. Denial is commonly utilized by children towards the painful reality, which at the end make it less threatening. It is discussed by Mussen, Henry, and Kagan that a child who is a denial insist that an anxiety-arousing situation or event is not true, and they believe the idea that this type of denial is accurate. Denial tries to forget or to deny that the event doesn't exist in the very first place (Mussen 517). In this story, it is discovered that Mia simply cannot accept the fact of her reality. It seems just like a dream for her like how she was standing there but she saw her body in the gutter with blood from her chest and her body covered by wounds.

Repression

Repression is a major mechanism that is performed to relieve anxiety with an emphasis on impulse or desire. It is also to repress or hide feelings that are felt by the person deeply to the other people who don't know their problem (Minderop 33). In this story, it depicts how Mia tries to block her entire memories of her life due to the struggle and suffer it creates. Because once she remembered her memories, she just cannot leave and eventually will continue to remember her mom and dad who died and her lost brother. On the other side, she wants to keep all the memories of her love, Adam. This confusion leads her to uncertainty about whether to stay or go.

Reaction Formation

Reaction Formation is a term of psychological defense mechanism that displays somewhat denial traits in person who behaves in the opposite way to which he or she thinks or feels. Conscious behaviors are adopted to overcompensate for the anxiety a person feels regarding their socially unacceptable unconscious thoughts or emotions. Reaction formation occurs when a person feels urge to do or say something and then actually he or she does or says something that is effectively the opposite of what they really want (426).

Reaction formation occurs when a person feels the urgency to do or utter something and then actually he or she does or says something that is exactly the opposite of what they really want (Munsinger 426). In this situation, the person usually performs excessive behavior to show that they get along with the uncomfortable situation. Thus, in this novel, Mia uttered that she doesn't want to meet Adam. But in fact, she really needs him. She said that because if she meets Adam, it will confuse her due to the joy that happen especially when Gramps said that it is absolutely okay if she wants to go. It will break if she meets Adam. She will confuse because she very loves him and Adam make her wants to stay alive. So, she said that as her defense during that situation

CONCLUSION

After analyzing the data in this research that adopts psychological approach to analyze the psychological conflict of Mia in Gayle Forman's novel *If I Stay*, Here is the finale conclusion found in this thesis, they are:

1. In this research, the researcher analyzes the psychological conflicts happened to Mia Hall as the main character in this story. We all know that, psychological conflicts occur in a person due to problems that are in her and also her mind. The psychological conflicts experienced by Mia all occurred when Mia and her family had a car accident so that

she had to lose her father and mother who died during the accident, her brother who did not know her whereabouts and also she found herself in a coma. In a coma, Mia is confused to choose whether she should stay alive or choose to die. This makes Mia a dilemma, because on the one hand she does not want to lose her love. Mia still has people who love her like her best friend and boyfriend. She loves her lover, Adam. Adam is someone who is Mia's main reason for staying alive. On the other hand, Mia also doesn't want to lose the family she loves so much. She didn't want to lose both her parents and his brother Teddy. However, in the end Mia chose and decided to stay alive and continue her future with people who also love her. The conflict that Mia faces becomes an anxiety for her, because she doesn't know what to do and how to deal with it.

2. In overcoming the anxiety that exists within her, Mia carries out a self-defense process in which the self-defense process that Mia does consists of five forms of self-defense. The five forms of self-defense are; denial, repression, reaction formation, fantasy and displacement. The five forms of self-defense each have a function in helping Mia to overcome all the anxieties that exist in her. Repression by Mia in a way that Mia doesn't want to remember her past, a past that is full of memories with the family she loves. If she still continues to remember her past then it is not something that can help her in solving her problems. Then, the next form of self-defense is denial. This denial was made after Mia had an accident, where she couldn't believe everything that happened to her really happened, so it was difficult for her to accept the reality of her condition. All Mia does is to make her calmer by denying reality. All forms of self-defense are carried out by Mia with the aim of making her calmer in dealing with her anxiety and so that she can overcome the conflicts she faces with ease, besides that she also makes it some thing that can cheer her up for all the events that have happened to her.

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