

VOLDEMORT'S ANXIETY AND DEFENSE MECHANISM IN ROWLING'S HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF-BLOOD PRINCE AND HARRY POTTER AND THE DEATHLY HALLOWS: A PSYCHOANALYSIS STUDY

KECEMASAN DAN MEKANISME PERTAHANAN VOLDEMORT DALAM HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF-BLOOD PRINCE DAN HARRY POTTER AND THE DEATHLY HALLOWS KARYA ROWLING: PENELITIAN PSIKOANALISIS

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Abstract

This research is based on Freud's psychoanalysis theory to analyze J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* and *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. This research has two objectives: 1) to identify the kinds of anxiety experienced by Voldemort and the causes of the anxiety; 2) to reveal Voldemort's defense mechanisms to overcome his anxiety as well as its impact on himself and the society. This research is under qualitative research. The data for the analysis are expressions taken from the novels related to Voldemort's anxiety and defense mechanism. Several steps in analyzing the data were: reading, describing, categorizing, and interpreting the data. The results of the analysis show that Voldemort as a villain and tyrant also experiences various anxieties which are caused by his childhood experience and human drive. To overcome his anxieties, Voldemort forms several defense mechanisms. However, his excessive defense mechanisms eventually lead to other problems not only for himself but also for the society.

Keywords: psychoanalysis, anxiety, defense mechanism, Voldemort, *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini berdasar pada teori psikoanalisis oleh Freud untuk menganalisis *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* dan *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* karya J. K. Rowling. Penelitian ini memiliki dua tujuan: 1) untuk mengidentifikasi jenis-jenis kecemasan yang dialami Voldemort dan penyebabnya; 2) untuk mengungkapkan mekanisme pertahanan Voldemort dalam mengatasi kecemasannya dan juga dampaknya bagi dirinya sendiri dan orang lain. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif. Data penelitian berupa ekspresi yang diambil dari kedua novel yang berhubungan dengan kecemasan dan mekanisme pertahanan Voldemort. Langkah-langkah dalam menganalisis data adalah: membaca, mendiskripsikan, mengategorikan, dan menginterpretasikan data. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa Voldemort sebagai seorang penjahat dan tirani juga mengalami berbagai kecemasan yang disebabkan oleh pengalaman masa kecil dan naluri manusia. Untuk mengatasi kecemasannya, Voldemort membentuk beberapa mekanisme pertahanan. Namun, mekanisme pertahanan yang berlebihan membawanya pada masalah lain bukan hanya bagi dirinya sendiri tetapi juga orang lain.

Kata kunci: psikoanalisis, kecemasan, mekanisme pertahanan, Voldemort, *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*

INTRODUCTION

Anxiety is an unavoidable impulse that each person has to face. Even a power-holder cannot avoid to experience anxiety. However, it is a normal impulse; it will be abnormal if the anxiety takes over people's concern in their lives. There are so many things that can provoke the emergence of anxiety such as poverty and inferiority. To deal with the anxiety, people seek happiness, peacefulness and self-satisfaction such as wealth and power. Ironically, the growth of wealth and power can lead people to experience other anxiety.

The anxiety impacts someone's behavior and action. The inability to control this symptom can cause disturbance in his/her life or at worst cause anxiety disorder. Moreover, for a power holder, it will affect not only his own life but also others'. To overcome the anxiety, people unconsciously forms their own defense mechanisms. The defense mechanism is necessary for people to protect themselves from the anxiety so that they can live a balanced life. However, inappropriate defense mechanism can lead people to additional problems; it leads them to be abnormal.

The problems related to anxiety and defense mechanism can be found in any kinds of literature (novel, short story, and poem) through the characters in it. Lord Voldemort, a villain character in *Harry Potter* series by J. K.

Rowling, also has problems related to anxiety and defense mechanism. Voldemort's inability to control his anxiety and defense mechanism provokes him to do evil deeds which affect his personality and other people's lives.

This research aims to: 1) to identify the kinds and causes of Voldemort's anxiety; 2) to reveal the ego defense mechanisms in Voldemort's psyche. Therefore, Freud's psychoanalysis theory specifically on the discussion upon anxiety and defense mechanism is applied.

Freud's psychoanalysis theory explains that anxiety and defense mechanism are closely related to the unconsciousness and the structure of personality (the id, ego, and superego). The structure of personality plays a significant role in the interpretation of abnormal behavior. Freud claimed that the id acts according to the pleasure principle seeking immediate gratification of all needs, wants, and desires (Siegfried, 2014). The ego is the component of the psyche that ensures the impulses of the id are expressed in a way that is acceptable to the real world (Siegfried, 2014). The superego is responsible to pursue idealistic goals and perfection (Lapsley and Stey, 2011: 1). It is the source of moral censorship and of conscience.

The ego is driven by the id and confined by the superego; it sometimes struggles to bring harmony among the forces and influences working and acting upon it, causing it to break

out in anxiety (Siegfried, 2014: 3). In psychoanalysis approach, anxiety is defined as a state of tension which motivates human to do something, to save him/her from a coming or experiencing danger (Rajeus, 2002: 1). There are three kinds of anxiety stated by Freud—neurotic, realistic, and moral anxiety. The anxiety is also related to human's instincts, life and death instinct, and children experiences. Based on Freud's concept of childhood experiences, anxiety and drives, Tyson (2006) states that anxiety reveal human's core issues: fear of intimacy, fear of abandonment, fear of betrayal, low self-esteem, insecure or unstable sense of self, oedipal complex, and fear of death. These fears determine human's behavior in destructive ways.

In order to overcome the anxieties, people unconsciously form defense mechanisms. Defense mechanisms are all the products of the ego in defending itself, blocking the impulses and distorting them into a more acceptable and less threatening form (Boeree, 2006: 7). There are some types of defense mechanism such as repression, rationalization, projection, reaction formation, displacement, denial, regression, sublimation, introjection, and intellectualization.

Repression is the unconscious blocking of unacceptable thoughts, feelings, and impulses. "Repressed memories" are memories that have been unconsciously blocked from access or view (Grohol, 2016). Rationalization

is putting something into a different light or offering a different explanation for one's perceptions or behaviors in the face of a changing reality (Grohol, 2016). Projection is the misattribution of a person's undesired thoughts, feelings or impulses onto another person who does not have those thoughts, feelings or impulses (Grohol, 2016). Displacement is the redirection of an impulse onto a substitute target; for instance, when a person's displeasure is directed toward some object other than the source of the displeasure (Boeree, 2006: 9). Denial is the refusal to accept reality or fact, acting as if a painful event, thought or feeling did not exist. Introjection is a defense mechanism in which someone takes other person's personality characteristics into his/her own, because by doing so can solve some emotional difficulty (Boeree, 2006: 10).

Although each type of defense mechanisms differs in particular ways in which they function, they share the same purpose—protecting individual from experiencing excessive anxiety, and protecting the self and self-esteem (Cramer, 2009: 1). However, there are people who use defense mechanisms over the limit of reasonableness to mask his/her excessive anxiety. When it occurs, it will cause an unbalanced personality within oneself.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research used qualitative research design since qualitative research is characterized by its aims which related to comprehend some aspects of social life, and the data for analysis was in the form of words rather than numbers (Patton and Cochran, 2002: 2). According to Anderson (2006: 3), qualitative research is more subjective than quantitative research; qualitative research tends to be exploratory and open-ended. That is why this research is under qualitative research.

The data of the analysis were taken from Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* and *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. The data are in the forms of words, phrases, and sentences related to Voldemort's anxiety and defense mechanism.

There are several steps that the researcher accomplished in collecting the data for the analysis: 1) close or comprehensive reading, 2) note-taking, 3) data interpreting, 4) describing and categorizing the data.

Then, in analyzing the data, the researcher follows several steps: 1) Organizing and preparing the data; 2) Reading through all the data; 3) Giving a description; 4) Categorizing the data; and 5) Interpreting the meaning of the descriptions; and 6) Conducting peer debriefing to measure the trustworthiness of the data.

THE RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings and discussion are divided into two major parts. The first part is the analysis of the kinds and the causes of the anxiety experienced by Voldemort. The second part is the analysis of defense mechanisms applied by Voldemort in dealing with his anxiety.

The Kinds and Causes of Voldemort's Anxiety

1. Kinds of Anxiety

The problematic anxieties experienced by Voldemort are neurotic and moral anxiety. For the neurotic anxiety, the anxiety of death is Voldemort's greatest anxiety.

“There is nothing to be feared from a body, Harry, any more than there is anything to be feared from the darkness. Lord Voldemort, who of course secretly fears both, disagrees. But once again he reveals his own lack of wisdom. **It is the unknown we fear when we look upon death and darkness, nothing more.**” (Rowling, 2005: 566)

It clearly shows that Voldemort experiences neurotic anxiety because what Voldemort fears the most is the unknown. Voldemort's enormous anxiety of death leads him to live abnormally. Voldemort's anxiety of death are closely related to the anxiety of abandonment and the anxiety of intimacy. It can be seen in the sentence “...*He fears the dead. He does not love.*” (Rowling, 2007: 721). This short datum clearly shows that Voldemort's anxiety of death causes him to get rid of his emotional feelings

for others. Another neurotic anxiety arising from the greatness of one's domination as portrayed by Voldemort is the anxiety of losing power.

Alone amongst the dead he stormed up and down, and they passed before him in vision: his treasures, his safeguards, his anchors to immortality — the diary was destroyed and the cup was stolen: **What if, what if, the boy knew about the others? Could he know, had he already acted, had he traced more of them? Was Dumbledore at the root of this? Dumbledore, who had always suspected him; Dumbledore, dead on his orders; Dumbledore, whose wand was his now, yet who reached out from the ignominy of death through the boy, the boy** — (Rowling, 2007: 549-550)

This datum shows how serious is Voldemort's anxiety of losing what he has achieved. The Horcruxes, which make him immortal, and the most powerful wand to kill "the boy" are in danger. It arises a conflict within Voldemort. It makes him furious, yet he is scared and anxious.

Moral anxiety will arise when a person is doing something wrong or doing something against social norms. This anxiety is often experienced by a tyrant as portrayed by Voldemort. His biggest anxiety as a tyrant is the betrayal of people who follow him.

To tell Snape why the boy might return would be foolish, of course; **it had been a grave mistake to trust Bellatrix and Malfoy**: Didn't their stupidity and carelessness prove how

unwise it was ever to trust? (Rowling, 2007: 551)

The fear of betrayal makes him unable to trust anyone. Voldemort is aware about the uprising that might happen from the people he oppresses. He knows that all cruelty and evil deeds he has done will provoke rebellion of people who can no longer stand his oppression.

2. The Causes of the Anxiety

There are some causes behind every anxiety that people experience. In Voldemort's case, the causes are related to his childhood experiences and human instincts. Voldemort's childhood experiences play a big role in his character development. The abandonment he experienced during his childhood causes him to fear the intimacy with other people.

"Well, we named him just as she'd said, it seemed so important to the poor girl, **but no Tom nor Marvolo nor any kind of Riddle ever came looking for him, nor any family at all**, so he stayed in the orphanage and he's been here ever since." (Rowling, 2005: 266)

This is a painful experience for him, being abandoned by all of his family since he is born. The abandonment causes him lacks of sympathy to others. Furthermore, he turns into an egocentric person who never understands the power of love and never knows how to love others.

"He never had gold there when he was younger, because **nobody left him anything...**" "I think **he would have envied anyone who had a key to a Gringotts vault**. I think he'd have seen

it as a real symbol of belonging to the Wizarding world....” (Rowling, 2007: 491)

The other Voldemort’s childhood experience causing his anxiety is poverty. Since no one ever gave him money, wealth or any possession, he is motivated to gain wealth and power which later he successfully achieves. Nevertheless, it leads him to an anxiety of losing his power.

Another cause of Voldemort’s anxiety is the existence of human’s instincts (life and death instinct). Thornton (in Ridgway, 2006) states several forms of life instinct including narcissism, love, sadism, and masochism. Among those forms of life instinct, the two dominant instincts growing within Voldemort are narcissism and sadism. The greed, cruelty, secrecy, and domination are also parts of Voldemort’s life instinct which lead him to be a tyrant.

“His powers, as you heard, were surprisingly well-developed for such a young wizard and — most interestingly and ominously of all — he had already discovered that he had some measure of control over them, and begun to use them consciously. And as you saw, they were not the random experiments typical of young wizards: **He was already using magic against other people, to frighten, to punish, to control.** The little stories of the strangled rabbit and the young boy and girl he lured into a cave were most suggestive. . . . ‘*I can make them hurt if I want to.* . . .’” (Rowling, 2005: 276)

It shows that Voldemort gets the pleasure from hurting and humiliating other people. He is a brilliant and superb wizard among his peers. Therefore, people follow him and become his “men”. When he realizes that he has power over them, he uses his power to punish and control them. It leads him to become a tyrant who never hesitates in doing such cruel deeds to those under his oppression. However, the anxiety of rebellion emerges within Voldemort and becomes his concern.

The other Voldemort’s life instinct which provokes his anxiety is narcissism. He loves and values himself more than anything and anyone in the world. The expression “*His pride, his belief in his own superiority, his determination to carve for himself a startling place in magical history....*” (Rowling, 2005: 504) clearly states how Voldemort has a high estimation of himself. It makes him thirsty for fame and power. This narcissism finally brings Voldemort to the belief that nothing is valuable other than himself.

The Ego Defense Mechanisms in Voldemort’s Psyche

1. Kinds of Defense Mechanisms

a. Repression

Repression is a defense mechanism of a person to suppress his/her own anxiety and impulse towards pleasurable instinct. Voldemort unconsciously blocks his

unacceptable thoughts and feelings which are his anxiety of death and the fact that he becomes weaker than before. This repression then provokes Voldemort to commit murders, threaten people, and create *Horcruxes* as protection from his anxiety.

b. Introjection

Introjection is a defense mechanism in which someone takes other's personality into his/her own, because it makes him/her relieve some emotional difficulty. Voldemort does introjection by being powerful and feared person like a *pure-blood* wizard who he considers as the most impressive wizard. Since he is a child, Voldemort does not have any person to rely on or to protect him. That is why Voldemort protects himself from the fear and anxiety by being extraordinary.

c. Rationalization

This kind of defense mechanism happens when people try to define the reality as they want in order to protect themselves from the anxiety of seeing themselves as deficient.

“...There have been too many mistakes where Harry Potter is concerned. Some of them have been my own. **That Potter lives is due more to my errors than to his triumphs.**” (Rowling, 2007: 6)

This datum shows how Voldemort forms rationalization to protect himself in seeing him as a deficient. Voldemort rationalizes that Harry Potter can survive due to his errors instead of admitting that Harry Potter has the

power to defeat him. He makes an excuse to protect himself from the anxiety of seeing himself as deficient.

d. Denial

Denial is similar to rationalization yet this defense mechanism is simply denying the fact the person does not want to believe.

“But nothing I have seen in the world has supported your famous pronouncements that love is more powerful than my kind of magic, Dumbledore.” (Rowling, 2005: 444)

This datum shows that Voldemort uses denial to defend his belief. Voldemort denies the fact that love which he never got and felt has its own power. He hides his lack of love by using his “kind” of magic as an excuse. Voldemort denies the fact that love is worthy and powerful instead of admitting that he is a person who needs love the most.

e. Projection

Projection is a defense mechanism which deflects the anxiety away from oneself and onto others. It projects the undesired and upsetting thoughts and feelings onto other people instead of on him/herself. Voldemort unconsciously deflects his fear onto other people as well. Voldemort's action which is a result of this defense mechanism is hiding to create fear and terror for people. In fact, Voldemort hides his body as well as his own anxiety. He is the one who has fear and anxiety.

f. Displacement

Boeree (2006: 9) says that displacement is the redirection of an impulse onto a substitute target. It happens when someone wreaks his anger on other objects or other people instead of the actual source of his anxiety. Voldemort does the same. He tries to displace his anxiety of Harry Potter into an object, which is a wand, that he thinks have the power to conquer any other. Voldemort's anxiety of defeated by Harry Potter transforms to an obsession to get Harry Potter no matter what. Then, the anxiety and obsession towards Harry Potter displaces with the wand that Voldemort believes can cover him against the loss.

2. The Impacts of Voldemort's Defense Mechanisms

As an individual, Voldemort's excessive defense mechanisms to cover his excessive anxiety affect the development of his personality and character. While as a tyrant and power-holder, his excessive defense mechanisms affect the lives of many people even if they are not directly involved with him.

Because of the defense mechanism he formed, Voldemort becomes a self-sufficient, secretive, and friendless person since he is young. These characters are attached to Voldemort until he is an adult. In order to protect himself from his anxiety, Voldemort becomes a loner and can never trust others. His defense mechanisms also affect Voldemort's mindset and belief. He regards his cruelty and

evil deeds as a greatness that he has been so proud of.

As a power-holder, whatever Voldemort does will certainly affect the lives of many people either in a good way or bad way. His extreme defense mechanism also has influence in the society's life. The worst impact is that people no longer live in a peacefulness and happiness as so many people died because of Voldemort's defense mechanism. Voldemort's defense mechanism leads him to do cruelty which cause pain and sorrow for other people.

CONCLUSION

Voldemort as a villain and tyrant experiences various anxieties. From the three kinds of anxieties stated by Freud, Voldemort's problematic anxieties are neurotic and moral anxieties. Several forms of neurotic anxiety experienced by Voldemort are anxiety of death, anxiety of intimacy and abandonment, and anxiety of losing power. While the form of moral anxiety experienced by Voldemort is anxiety of betrayal and rebellion from people he oppressed. These anxieties are caused by Voldemort's childhood experience, and life instincts (human's drive).

To overcome his anxiety, Voldemort's ego forms several kinds of defense mechanisms. Those are repression which provokes him to commit murder and threaten people who resist him, introjection by being

extraordinary to protect himself from his weaknesses, rationalizing and denying the fact he does not want to believe, projection by hiding from the mess he makes, and displacing his source of anxiety. Voldemort's ego defense mechanisms lead to other problems. As an individual, his extreme defense mechanisms affect his personality. Voldemort becomes a self-sufficient, secretive, cruel and less caring person. While as a tyrant, his defense mechanisms influence the society's life. People live in fear, vigilance, and terror because of murders as well as other cruelty committed by Voldemort.

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