

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In order to explore the psychological aspects especially about the anxiety and defense mechanism in “The Bell Jar” novel by Sylvia Plath, it is crucial to include the review of related literature and theoretical frameworks that provide understanding of psychological approach and the essential parts related to this research.

2.1 Psychological Approach

Psychology explores how humans interact with their surroundings. Psychology focuses on understanding human behaviour and relationships in their environment (Lewin, 1935). In this research, the author will be using the psychological approach as the approach to analyze this novel. The psychological approach in literary research focuses on psychology-related aspects of the text. This research will be conducted using the psychoanalytic approach by Sigmund Freud, one of the studies of psychological approach.

Psychoanalysis is a system of psychological theory and therapy and a treatment of mental disorder. The mental is divided into two levels, the conscious and the unconscious. The unconscious refers to the desires and instincts that are not in our own awareness but influences our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Often, we are aware of our own behaviors but we are often unaware of the mental process that

drives the behaviors. kids as they age develop an interest towards their hobbies but they may not be able to understand the reason that the interest is developed. (Feist, 2018)

The unconscious mind is locked behind the conscious, it cannot be accessed by the conscious, making it difficult to determine its existence. Freud believed that its existence could only be established indirectly. Freud believes the unconscious explains the dreams, tongue slip, and repression as human experience. Dreams are a series of unconscious materials. Freud felt that childhood memories might manifest in the memory once human reach adulthood and it will happen without recalling the memory (Freud, 1917).

Conscious perception is one of the two sources from which the contents of the preconscious are drawn. What a person perceives is only momentarily conscious; as soon as their attention is diverted to another idea, it quickly enters the preconscious. These ideas, which alternate rapidly between conscious and subconscious thoughts, are frequently less tense and more like conscious visualization than unconscious urges. (Freud, 1933)

Consciousness, a minor concept in psychoanalytic theory, refers to mental aspects in consciousness at any given time. It is the only level of mental existence that we have direct access to. Ideas can enter awareness from two separate routes. The first comes from the perceptual aware system, which perceives external inputs.

According to Freud (Freud, 1933), our awareness is influenced by what we see via our senses, as long as it is not threatening.

2.2 Provinces of the Mind

In the theory of psychoanalysis, Freud structured the mind into three parts: the id, the ego, and the super ego.

2.2.1 The Id

The id, the unconscious psychological area at the core of personality, the id seeks pleasure by fulfilling basic needs. It has no direct touch with reality but is continually working to decrease stress. The id supports the pleasure principle since its main purpose is to seek pleasure. A newborn child is an example of an id free of ego and superego constraints, seeking pleasure without concern for anything else. The id is primal, chaotic, inaccessible to awareness, unchangeable, amoral, irrational, unorganized, and full of energy for seeking the pleasure of fulfilling desires. The id functions through the main process and seeks pleasure without care for anything else. The id requires a secondary process for survival and to interact with the outside environment. (Freud, 1933)

2.2.2 The Ego

Developed from the id during infancy, the ego, or I, is the only aspect of the mind that interacts with reality. Under the guidance of the reality principle, it matures into the executive or decision-making branch of the

personality. The conscious, preconscious, and unconscious mental phases are the three times the ego may make decisions. It has to find equilibrium between the irrational demands of the id and superego and the external environment. The ego employs defensive and repressive processes to protect itself and responds to outside influences in a predictable manner. Freud distinguished between the ego and the id, stating that infants learn to identify themselves from their environment. The ego is unable to survive by itself so it borrows energy from the id. The origin of the ego is when children get punished for bad behavior and get rewarded for good behavior. (Feist, 2018)

2.2.3 The Superego

The superego stands for the moral and ideal aspects of personality. It lacks independent vitality and arises from the ego, but its pursuit of perfection is unreasonable. The conscience and the ego-ideal are the two subsystems that make up the superego. A fully formed superego evaluates its own behavior while suppressing sexual and aggressive urges. When the ego transgresses moral standards, guilt results, but inferiority complexes are caused by the ego-ideal. The superego has an unreasonable pursuit of perfection and is not concerned with ego satisfaction. (Freud, 1923)

2.3 Anxiety

According to Freudian dynamic theory, anxiety is a felt, unpleasant state that is accompanied by a physical sensation that warns someone of upcoming danger. (Freud, 1933). While the id, superego, and outside world are involved in three types of anxiety: neurotic, moral, and realistic anxiety, the ego can cause or experience anxiety. Realistic anxiety is caused by the outside world, moral anxiety is produced by the superego, and neurotic anxiety is caused by dependence on the id.

2.3.1 Neurotic Anxiety

Fear of unknown danger resulting from id impulses in the ego is known as neurotic anxiety. Previous experiences with destruction against parents can cause someone to experience neurotic anxiety when authority figures are present. During childhood, neurotic anxiety is commonly experienced as it is often accompanied by fear of punishment. (Feist, 2018)

2.3.2 Moral Anxiety

Anxiety that results from the struggle between the ego and superego is known as moral anxiety. Children may become anxious when their superego's demands clash with their realistic needs, usually around the age of five or six. When children failed to do what they think is morally right as taught by their parents, they experience moral anxiety. (Feist, 2018)

2.3.3 Realistic Anxiety

Like other anxieties, realistic anxiety is a type of anxiety that involves an unpleasant, vague feeling about potential danger. Realistic anxiety is connected to real life events. For example, we may feel realistic anxiety when traveling in a foreign city and stuck in heavy traffic, when (Feist, 2018).

Anxiety can take on different forms, including realistic, neurotic, and neurotic anxiety. It acts as a warning system for upcoming danger, enabling the ego to remain vigilant for any indications of danger. Because the defense mechanism serves as a protective mechanism against the pain of anxiety, they play a valuable role in shielding the ego from that pain. The complexity of anxiety emphasizes how crucial it is to comprehend and effectively manage it.

2.4 Defense Mechanism

Freud's defensive mechanisms idea, illustrates how excessive usage of defense mechanism can lead to obsessive, repetitive, and neurotic behavior. (Freud, 1926). Defense mechanisms, such as repression, reaction formation, displacement, fixation, regression, projection, introjection, and sublimation, are essential for avoiding sexual and aggressive impulses and coping with anxiety.

2.4.1 Repression

Repression is the ego's primary defense mechanism for resisting unwanted desires. Repression happens when the ego sends unwanted feelings into the unconscious. Repression of unwanted feelings and impulses often lasts

for a lifetime in the unconsciousness. When children experience aggressive acts, they develop anxiety towards it; this leads the children to repress the impulse. Repressed impulses might stay unconscious, make their way into consciousness in unmodified form, or manifest in modified forms, such as physical symptoms or nightmares. (Freud, 1926)

2.4.2 Reaction Formation

Repressed impulses can become conscious through reaction formation, a defense mechanism that disguises its original form. Reaction formation can be seen in people who exhibit obsessive behavior. (Freud, 1926). An example of reaction formation that happens often is when a person likes a girl; he might try to bully her instead. This behavior is due to the feeling of like still exists unconsciously. The boy is confused as to how he should react and what he is supposed to do. This feeling is then concealed and disguised in another form.

2.4.3 Displacement

Response formations are restricted to a single individual or object, whereas displacement is the redirection of unwanted impulses into different individuals or objects (Freud, 1926). Displacement happens the anxiety suffered by someone cause them to redirect the unwanted impulses that causes their anxiety onto another a variety of people or objects. For example, a person who is having a bad day might redirect their feelings of stress or anger onto their family or their friends.

2.4.4 Fixation

Psychological development usually occurs in a continuous way and with various stage of development. However, this process of psychological development is usually met with stress and anxiety. Fixation happens when the ego is faced with extreme stress or anxiety; the ego decides to stay in the current stage of development rather than moving to the next stage. According to (Freud, 1917), fixation refers to the libido's attachment onto the earlier stage of development. For example, when someone develop oral fixation during their childhood, they continue to seek oral fixation in other forms such as thumb sucking or smoking.

2.4.5 Regression

Regression is a defense mechanism where the libido reverts to an earlier stage of development; this reversal is due to extreme stress and anxiety suffered by the individual (Freud, 1917). Regression include returning to a previous development stage where the libido felt safe of stress and anxiety. Regression is often seen in children and adult. One of the simple examples of regression is when an adult suffers extreme stress and anxiety; they might decide to return home to their mother. Regression is similar to fixation; the difference is that in regression usually lasts temporarily but fixation lasts for a long time or might even be permanent.

2.4.6 Projection

Projection happens when an impulse causes anxiety and stress; the ego will try to reduce the anxiety caused by the impulse by attributing it to another individual or object. According to (Freud, 1915), projection refers to seeing the unacceptable feelings and tendencies that is actually our own in others. This means an individual attributes their own tendencies that they find unacceptable to another person so they are free from the anxiety of having such tendencies. For example, a company manager who is incompetent might accuse their co-workers of not doing the work right.

2.4.7 Introjection

The defense mechanism “introjection” occurs when people absorb other people's attributes which their ego thinks is good into their own ego. Absorbing other people's attributes raises raises their feeling of worth and self-esteem. According to (Freud, 1926), the Oedipus complex serves as a prototype of introjection. Freud believes that all children go through the oedipal stage where the young child starts to absorb their parents' behaviour, values, and beliefs. An example of introjection is when a person starts to idolize another person or a star, they start to adopt their behaviour and life styles.

2.4.8 Sublimation

Sublimation is a defense mechanism where the ego substitutes the unwanted impulses to socially acceptable impulses. According to (Freud,

1917), sublimation helps both the individual and the society. When a person suffers anxiety, their ego changes this impulse caused by the anxiety into a socially acceptable impulse. For example, a person who suffers aggression at their workplace might redirect this feeling into reading books. This helps the individual to both manage their personal pleasure and social accomplishment.

2.5 Previous Studies

In attempt to find more related literature and theoretical framework, the researcher has read some previous studies. After reading the some previous studies, the researcher has found some studies that is related to this research.

The first study found is entitled “Analysis of Amir's defense mechanisms projected upon his bereavement in *The Kite Runner*”. In this study the researchers discuss the bereavement of Amir, the main character of *The Kite Runner*, and analyzes the defense mechanisms projected toward the bereavement. This study uses a psychological approach to identify and analyze Amir’s bereavement and defense mechanisms. (Mahardhika et al., 2023)

The second study entitled “Defense Mechanism in The Character of Hardin Scott Reflected in *Anna Scott’s After*”, in this research, the author discovers that the first character employs denial, projection, rationalization, isolation, aggressor identification, and displacement. The first character uses this defensive system to

mold him such that worry does not arise; hence, the primary character develops a self-defense mechanism. (Shelah & Marsih, 2022)

The third study entitled “Rachel Gerhardt's anxiety and defense mechanism portrayed in Ruth Ware's *The Turn of The Key*”. Because it applies psychoanalytic theory and seeks to explain how the subconscious expresses itself, particularly the defense mechanism, this study takes a psychological approach. Rachel has three different kinds of anxiety, according to the analysis: realistic anxiety, neurotic anxiety, and moral anxiety. (Mulia & Pramesti, 2023)

The fourth study entitled “Anxiety and defense mechanism of the main character in *"The Black Cat"* short story”. In this research the author used the same theory as the researcher which is the psychoanalysis theory by Sigmund Freud to analyze the short story. (Andriana & Kasprabowo, 2020)

The fifth study entitled “Anxiety and Defense Mechanism of Arthur Dimmesdale As Reflected in “*The Scarlet Letter*” novel by Nathaniel Hawthorne. This study clarified Arthur Dimmesdale's nervousness, the male character in Nathaniel Hawthorne's novel *The Scarlet Letter*. The primary objectives of this study were to use Sigmund Freud's theory of personality to explain Arthur Dimmesdale's anxiety. The anxieties depicted in the novel are the same anxieties that Arthur Dimmesdale experienced throughout his life when he felt awkward and guilty about coming clean to Puritan society about his adultery. In addition, he

sentenced his partner Hester Prynne to an isolated life of exile for seven years. (Novianti & Permatasari, 2020)

The sixth study entitled “Anxiety and Defense Mechanism as A Means of Constructing Psychological Thriller in Hawkins’ *The Girl On The Train*”. The results of the research show there are three kinds of anxiety and six kinds of defense mechanism. Moreover, the results prove that those anxieties and defense mechanisms become a means of constructing psychological thriller since they make the characters suffer from psychological problem and become unreliable narrator, create plot twist, and make the novel become thrilling. (Hetami & Purwanto, 2019)

The seventh study entitled “Anxiety and Defense Mechanism of Joy Newsome in *Room Movie*”. In this research it was found that Joy Newsome experienced moral anxiety and realistic anxiety. To overcome her anxiety, Joy used several types of defense mechanisms. Those defense mechanisms are repression, reaction formation, denial, displacement, regression projection and fantasy. (Putra et al., 2023)

The eighth study entitled “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*”. 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. (Wibiana, 2018)

2.6 Theoretical Framework

In this research, the data used for this study is "The Bell Jar" novel by Sylvia Plath. The researcher adapted the psychoanalysis theory of Freud to analyze the defense mechanism of the main character in the novel because of anxiety.

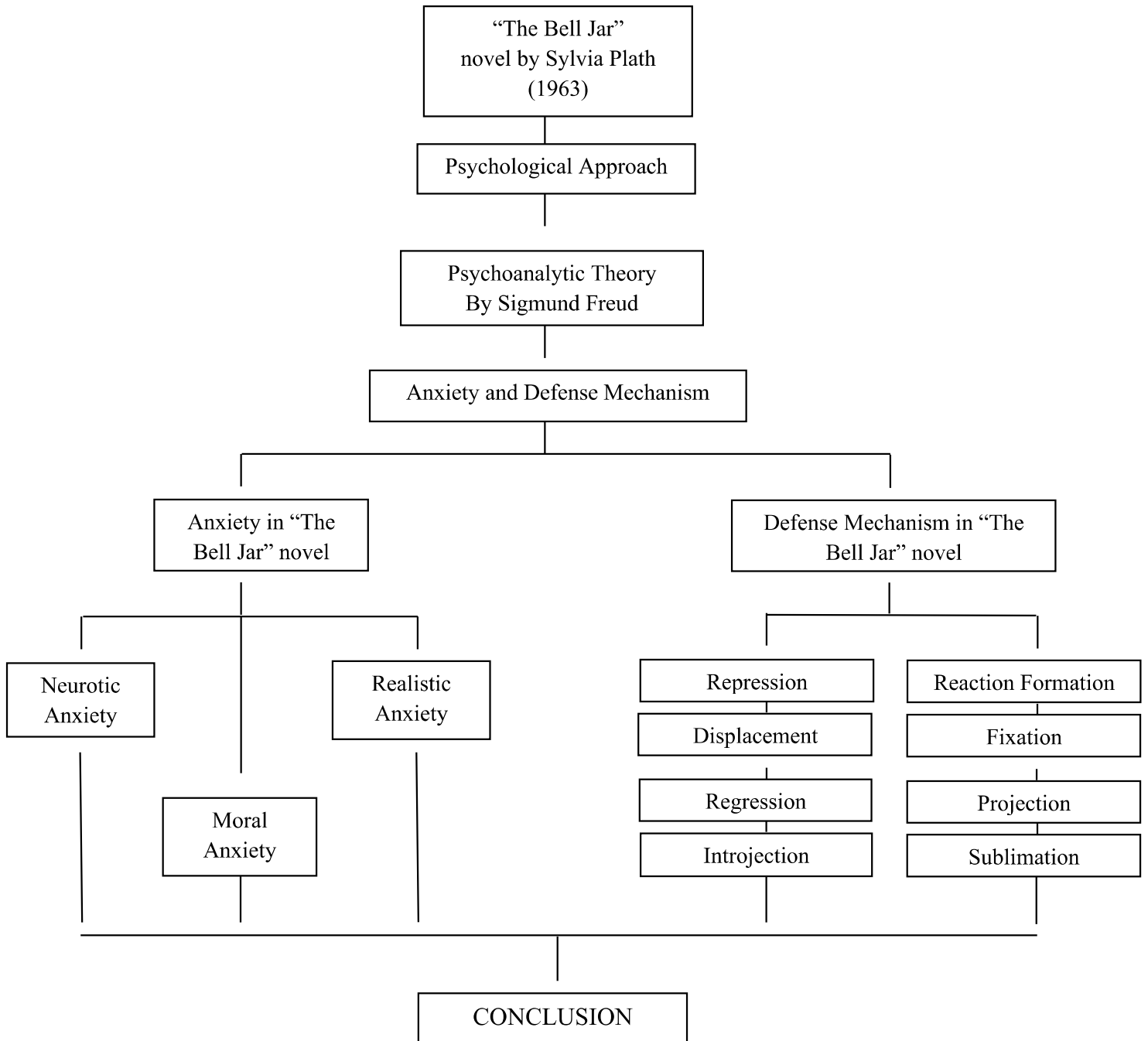


Figure 2.1 Theoretical Framework