

**ANXIETY AND DEFENSE MECHANISM
IN “THE SILENT PATIENT” NOVEL BY ALEX
MICHAELIDES: A PSYCHOLOGICAL
APPROACH**

THESIS



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**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE
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PUTERA BATAM UNIVERSITY
2025**

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**Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Sarjana Sastra (S1)**



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DECLARATION OF THE THESIS ORIGINALITY

I, Miftah Salsabila with NPM 211210010

Hereby declare that the term paper entitled:

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Is the real work of myself and I realized that this thesis has never been published in other media before, partially or entirely, in the of mine or others.

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The thesis has been examined on the date as indicated below

Batam, 18th July 2025



**Afriana, S.S., M.Pd.
Supervisor**



Universitas Putera Batam

ABSTRAK

Kecemasan adalah respons psikologis yang disebabkan oleh trauma, ketakutan, dan ketidakamanan emosional. Mekanisme pertahanan diri merupakan strategi psikologis tak sadar yang digunakan individu untuk mengurangi kecemasan dan mengatasi konflik batin. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis jenis-jenis kecemasan dan mekanisme pertahanan diri yang tercermin melalui perilaku tokoh-tokoh dalam novel *The Silent Patient* karya Alex Michaelides. Penelitian ini menggunakan teori psikoanalisis Sigmund Freud, khususnya teori kecemasan dari Feist et al. (2021) dan teori mekanisme pertahanan diri dari Schultz dan Schultz (2017). Metode yang digunakan adalah kualitatif, dengan teknik studi pustaka berdasarkan Bowen (2009) dan teknik penyorotan data berdasarkan Leavy (2017). Peneliti menganalisis data menggunakan metode deskriptif analisis dari Ratna (2020). Data disajikan dalam bentuk deskriptif dengan menggunakan kata-kata dan kalimat. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ketiga jenis kecemasan: neurotik, moral, dan realistis dapat ditemukan dalam cerita. Selain itu, delapan jenis mekanisme pertahanan diri juga ditemukan, yaitu represi, penyangkalan, pembentukan reaksi, proyeksi, regresi, rasionalisasi, pengalihan, dan sublimasi. Aspek psikologis ini ditunjukkan melalui tindakan dan konflik batin tokoh-tokoh seperti Alicia, Theo, Christian, Gabriel, Paul, dan Vernon.

Kata kunci: kecemasan, mekanisme pertahanan, analisis psikologis

ABSTRACT

Anxiety is a psychological response caused by trauma, fear, and emotional insecurity. Defense mechanisms are unconscious psychological strategies used by individuals to reduce anxiety and manage internal emotional conflict. This research aims to analyze the types of anxiety and defense mechanisms as reflected through the characters' behaviors in *The Silent Patient* novel by Alex Michaelides. The research applies Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, especially anxiety theory from Feist et al. (2021) and defense mechanism theory from Schultz and Schultz (2017). The method used is qualitative, with library research based on Bowen (2009) and data collection using the highlighting technique from Leavy (2017). The researcher analyzes the data using descriptive analysis from Ratna (2020). The data are presented in descriptive form using words and sentences. The findings show that all three types of anxiety: neurotic, moral, and realistic are experienced by the characters. In addition, eight types of defense mechanisms are also found, including repression, denial, reaction formation, projection, regression, rationalization, displacement, and sublimation. These psychological aspects are shown through the actions and inner conflicts of the characters Alicia, Theo, Christian, Gabriel, Paul, and Vernon.

Keywords: anxiety, defense mechanism, psychological analysis

MOTTO AND DEDICATION

MOTTO

**“All that I am, or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother.”
(Abraham Lincoln)**

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my beloved parents, Ibu dan Ayah, especially to my Ibu, who has always been my number one source of strength and love. Wherever I go and whoever I become, your prayers and sacrifices are the reason I have made it this far.

I also dedicate this work to every reader. Thank you for taking the time to read what I have written. May this thesis bring something good, helpful, or meaningful to you on your own journey.

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The researcher realized that this thesis is far from perfect. Therefore, the researcher will always welcome criticism and suggestions with pleasure. With all the limitation, the researcher also realized that this thesis would not complete without help, guidance, and encouragement from the various parties. Moreover, the researcher would like to say thanks to my beloved father and mother for the love inspiring and blessing given me endlessly in taking this undergraduate program. The researcher also wishes to express the gratitude and appreciation to Afriana, S.S., M.Pd. as the thesis supervisor and academic advisor who has contributed the ideas, motivation, and time in arranging this thesis.

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Batam, 18th July 2025



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
TITLE PAGE	i
SURAT PERNYATAAN	ii
DECLARATION OF THE THESIS ORIGINALITY	iii
APPROVAL PAGE	iv
ABSTRAK	v
ABSTRACT	vi
MOTTO AND DEDICATION	vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	viii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	xi
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Research	1
1.2 Identification of the Problem	7
1.3 Limitation of the Problem	7
1.4 Formulation of the Problem	8
1.5 Objective of the Research	8
1.6 Significance of the Research	8
1.7 Definition of Key Terms	9
CHAPTER II REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	11
2.1 Psychological Approach	11
2.1.1 Anxiety	12
2.1.2 Defense Mechanism	13
2.2 Previous Research	16
2.3 Theoretical Framework	24
CHAPTER III METHOD OF THE RESEARCH	26
3.1 Research Design	26
3.2 Object of the Research	27
3.3 Method of Collecting Data	28
3.4 Method of Analyzing Data	30
3.5 Method of Presenting Research Result	31
CHAPTER IV RESEARCH ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS	32
4.1 Preliminary Analysis	32
4.1.1 Plot	32
4.1.2 Characters	35
4.1.3 Setting	40
4.1.4 Point of View	41
4.1.5 Theme	41
4.2 Research Analysis	43
4.2.1 Types of Anxiety	43
4.2.2 Types of Defense Mechanism	56
4.3 Findings	75
CHAPTER V CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	79

5.1 Conclusion.....	79
5.2 Recommendation.....	80
REFERENCES.....	82
APPENDICES	
Appendix 1. Data Source	
Appendix 2. Curriculum Vitae	
Appendix 3. Research Letter	

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 2.1 Theoretical Framework.....	25