MEKANISME PERTAHANAN DIRI DALAM DRAMA EUGENE O’NEILL
LONG DAY’S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT

SELF-DEFENSE MECHANISMS IN EUGENE O’NEILL’S LONG DAY’S
JOURNEY INTO NIGHT

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Abstrak


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Abstract

Self-defense mechanism is an unconscious process that protects the individual from anxiety through the perversion of reality. The aim of the research was to describe the types of self-defense mechanisms in drama Long Day’s Journey into Night and reveal the implementation of characters’ mechanisms in solving the conflict. The research employed a descriptive qualitative method with a psychoanalysis approach with Sigmund Freud’s theory of self-defense mechanisms and structure of personality. Data sources were primary and secondary data. The primary data were taken from Eugene O’Neill’s Long Day’s Journey into Night, and secondary data were from the books, journals, articles, and some sources from Internet. The research indicated that there were several types of self-defense mechanisms used by the characters in the drama. In the four acts of the drama, the characters mostly use denial, projection, rationalization, regression, and displacement to defend themselves. The characters in the play always used many types of self-defense mechanisms to solve their conflict. The characters were arguing the same conflicts again and again because nothing ever got resolved. They fought, but often hide the most important feelings. Conflict could be resolved directly, but the characters used self-defense mechanism to solve the conflict.

Keywords: Long Day’s Journey into Night, psychoanalysis, self-defense mechanisms.
INTRODUCTION

Human beings have mind or soul that makes them different from other creatures and it is used by the human beings to control their life. Human can feel, memorize, and think by using their mind or soul which is known as psyche, and it can be studied in a specific discipline which is called psychology. Furthermore, psychology takes the important role in literature, because the composition of literary work in its story could not be apart from the psychological aspect. It can be concluded that all psyche problems and conflicts that human faced in their life can be existed in the literary work.

According to Freud (1923), our personality develops from the interactions among what he proposed as the three fundamental structures of the human mind: the id, ego, and superego. The id (German: das Es, Latin: It) was the most primitive structure, functioned unconsciously, operated on the pleasure principle, and sought instant gratification of basic physical needs and urges. Bartens (2006), says that when the child is uncomfortable, in pain, too hot, too cold, or just wants attention, the id speaks up until his or her needs are met. The ego (German: Das Ich, Latin: I) was less primitive, functioned in partial consciousness, operated with reason on the reality principle, and regulated the id by satisfying urges only when appropriate. According to McLeod (2008), the ego develops as it successfully resolves crises that are distinctly social in nature. These involve establishing a sense of trust in others, developing a sense of identity in society, and helping the next generation prepare for the future. The superego (German: Über-Ich) was the most modern structure, functioned consciously, operated on the moral principle, and regulated the id based on social learning and issues of morality. According to Freud in Fromm (2009), in a healthy person, the ego is the strongest so that it can satisfy the needs of the id, not upset the superego, and still take into consideration the reality of every situation. Not an easy jobs by any means, but if the id gets too strong, impulses and self-gratification take over the person’s life. If superego becomes too strong, the person would be driven by rigid morals, would be judgmental and unbending in his or her interactions with the world. People will learn how the ego maintains control as you continue to read.

Grohol (2013), states that self-defense mechanisms are one way of looking at how people distance themselves from a full awareness of unpleasant thoughts, feelings and behaviors. While, according to Alwisol (2009), self-defense mechanism is a defense strategy played by the ego which is owned by an individual to fight against id impulses and the pressure of super-ego on the
external reality. According to Huntington et al (1961), the list of self-defense mechanisms is huge and there is no theoretical consensus on the exact number. In fact, some 44 different defenses have been described. However, some of the major self-defense mechanisms described by Sigmund and Anna Freud are eight types in *Psychologists & Their Theories for Students* by Krapp (2004). Each mechanism emphasizes the roots of mind that deal with humans’ present conditions and these can be particularly recognized within humans’ life conditions and strengths.

Play often illustrates human life phenomenon and presents various problems faced by them. According to Reaske & Christopher (1966), play is a work of a literature or a composition which delineates life and human activity by means of presenting various actions and dialogues between a group of characters. Then, Hoeper et al (1994), states that play is closer to fiction than poetry. Plays are fictitious both in the factual sense that their plots are generally untrue and the figurative sense that they intend to convoy general thrust. Like novel, a play always tells a story. A play cannot be purely lyric, descriptive, or argumentative, although each of these modes of expression has a place in drama. Instead, it begins like a typical short story with an introduction to the characters, the situation, and the setting.

In this case, the researcher analyzes Eugene O’Neill’s *Long Day’s Journey into Night*. *Long Day’s Journey into Night* O’Neill's own autobiographical family play. The play is widely considered to be O’Neill’s masterwork. The play focuses on a dysfunctional family trying to cope with the serious problems, including drug addiction, moral degradation, fear, guilt, and having dream of the past and a happy life. The Tyrone family is fragmented and each of its members to some degree is alienated from the past. From the previous studies, there was none of research which lifted up the self-defense mechanisms in the play. Most of the research concerned on the other aspect of the play, such as the role of the religion, the autobiography of the writer, and the disharmony of the family in the play.

Furthermore, the researcher attempts to analyze the self-defense mechanism of the character in the play by using psychoanalysis approach and applying theory of Sigmund Freud's self-defense mechanisms. This research aims to explain the types of self-defense mechanisms in drama Long Day's Journey into Night and to describe the application of characters’ mechanisms in solving the conflict. Hence, the researcher decides the title of this thesis is *Self-defense mechanisms in Eugene O’Neill’s Long Day’s Journey into Night*. 
METHODOLOGY

Types of Research

The researcher uses descriptive qualitative method. Descriptive qualitative method provides an accurate portrayal of characteristic of particular individual, situation, or group. This research means of discovering new meaning, describing what exists, determining the frequency which something occurs, and categorizing information. In this research, the method which is used to find out the self-defense mechanisms used by the characters in Long Day’s Journey into Night.

Source of Data

This research uses the general sources called primary and secondary data. Primary data is the main data collected and analyzed as the object of the research. The primary data in this research is the play The Long Day’s Journey into Night published by Yale University Press in 1956, consisted four acts. Secondary data is some literatures or some relevant information that will support the research. The secondary data that will be used by the researcher are some references that have correlation to the topic of the research, collected from other sources, such as books, thesis, electronic articles, video spark notes, encyclopedia, videos, journals, dictionaries.

Method of Collecting Data

The researcher tends to use library research method. Library research method allows the researcher to find out and to collect some literatures or data from various researches by reading the text, articles, which are considered relevant to this research. By collecting the data, the researcher does not only used library research, but also noting after reading, and finds out the data through internet.

Method of Analyzing Data

In this research, the researcher uses method of data analysis to support the analysis. In analyzing the play, the researcher uses self-defense mechanism theory through the characters depicted in the play. Self-defense mechanisms enable the mind to reach compromise solutions to conflicts that it is unable to resolve.

FINDINGS

As has been explained previously, the researcher attempts to analyze the self-defense mechanisms in the play. After reading the play, the researcher finds that there are several types
of self-defense mechanisms, such as repression, reaction formation, projection, regression, denial, rationalization, displacement, identification, suppression, and fantasy. The description about them can be seen in the following quotations.

**Repression**

Freud explained repression as an involuntary removal of something from consciousness. The Tyrones fight, but often hide the most important feelings. They always said to forget the problem or change the subject so they do not have to deal with it.

Jamie : What's all the fuss about? Let's forget it.
Tyrone : Yes, forget! Forget everything and face nothing! It's a convenient philosophy if you've no ambition in life except to – (O'Neill, 1956: 21)

**Reaction Formation**

Reaction formation is one of the odder defense mechanisms, as it entails behaving completely contrary to how one truly feels. It is defined as behaving in a way that is exactly the opposite of one’s true feelings. When Tyrone told Mary not to upset about Edmund condition, she said that she is not upset. She says something that opposite with what she feels.

Tyrone : But you mustn’t let it upset you, Mary. Remember, you’ve got to take care of yourself, too.
Mary : I’m not upset. There’s nothing to be upset about. What makes you think I’m upset? (O’Neill, 1956: 16)

**Projection**

A common form of projection occurs when an individual, threatened by his own angry feelings, accuses another of harboring hostile thoughts. It is attributing one’s own thoughts, feelings, or motives to another. Every character in Long Day’s Journey into Night always accuses another family member of their own feeling. They always blame one and another.

Mary : You’re to blame, James. How could you let him? Do you want to kill him? Don’t you remember my father? He wouldn’t stop after he was stricken. He said doctors were fools! He thought, like you, that whiskey is a good tonic! (O’Neill, 1956: 67)

**Regression**

Mary is living through the most complex defense, regression that is the temporary return to a former psychological state, which is not just imagined but relived. It is a defense because it carries out thoughts away from some present difficulty as when Mary flashes back to his past in order to avoid the present unpleasant realities of her present life.

Mary : At the Convent I had so many friends. Girls whose families lived in lovely homes. I used to visit them and they’d visit me in my father’s home. I was so healthy before Edmund was born. You remember, James. There wasn’t a nerve in my body. Even travelling with you season after season, with week after
week of one-night stands, in trains without Pullmans, in dirty rooms of filthy hotels, eating bad food, bearing children in hotel rooms, I still kept healthy. (O’Neill, 1956: 86-87)

**Denial**

Perhaps the simplest self-defense mechanism is denial. It is refusing to admit something has happened. It is refusal to accept external reality because it is too threatening. In talking to Jamie, Mary attempts to deceive herself with the comforting belief that Edmund is only suffering from a summer cold.

*Jamie*: It’s not just a cold he’s got. The kid is damned sick.

*Mary*: Why do you say that? It is just a cold! Anyone can tell that! You always imagine things. (O’Neill, 1956: 26-27)

**Rationalization**

Rationalization is something that every human being does, probably on a daily basis. Rationalization is defined as creating false but plausible excuses to justify unacceptable behavior. Mary is making excuse of her addiction to morphine that she is worried about Edmund’s condition.

*Mary*: Oh, James, please! You don’t understand! I’m so worried about Edmund! I’m so afraid he –

*Tyrone*: I don’t want to listen to your excuse, Mary. (O’Neill, 1956: 69)

**Displacement**

Displacement is defined as diverting emotional feelings from their original source to a substitute target. When the members of Tyrone family feel stress, angry, or lonely, they will divert it or redirect it or handle it to whiskey, whore, and for Mary to morphine.

*Edmund*: Papa! [Changing the subject.] Are we going to have this drink, or aren’t we?

*Tyrone*: You’re right. I’m a fool to take notice. [He picks up his glass listlessly] Drink hearty, lad. (O’Neill, 1956: 111)

**Identification**

*Tyrone*: Even before that when he was in prep school, he began dissipating and playing the Broadway sport to imitate you, when he’s never had your constitution to stand it. You’ve been the worst influence for him. He grew up admiring you as a hero! A fine example you set him! If you ever gave him advice except in the ways of rottenness, I’ve never heard of it! You made him old before his time, pumping him full of what you consider worldly wisdom, when he was too young to see that your mind was so poisoned by your own failure in life. (O’Neill, 1956: 33-34)

Identification is the unconscious modeling of one's self upon another person's character and behavior. Edmund grew up imitate his brother, Jamie. His father does not like it because Edmund imitate Jamie’s bad behavior, like drinking.
\textbf{Suppression}

Suppression is the conscious decision to delay paying attention to an emotion or need in order to cope with the present reality. It is the effort to hide and control unacceptable thoughts or feelings. Tyrone tried several times to control his emotion when he argued with his sons.

\textit{Tyrone} : That’s enough! You’re not drunk now! There’s no excuse – [He controls himself – a bit defensively] (O’Neill, 1956: 30)

\textbf{Fantasy}

Fantasy is focus on or belief in a more comfortable, though currently inaccurate, view of reality in order to cope with distress. Fantasy may result from the dominance of imbalanced, extreme parts that have hijacked a fragmented psyche and strongly thrust their desired ideas into the forefront of consciousness, blocking out the more realistic, but undesirable views of other parts. In the last act, Mary ultimately lost in her fantasy that she is still a schoolgirl at the Convent. When Edmund grabs her arm and told her that he has got consumption, Mary says:

\textit{No! You must not try to touch me. You must not try to hold me. It isn’t right, when I am hoping to be a nun} (O’Neill, 1956: 174).

As she sinks further and further into her fantasy, she relives her childhood at the Catholic girls' school. She forgets her family all together.

\textbf{DISCUSSION}

The research shows that there are self-defense mechanisms employed by the characters. The researcher uses self-defense mechanisms described by Sigmund and Anna Freud are eight types (Krapp, 2004). But the researcher also found other self-defense mechanisms, namely: identification, suppression, and fantasy. In the four acts of Long Day’s Journey into Night, the characters employed denial, projection, reaction formation, repression, rationalization, regression, displacement, identification, suppression, and fantasy to defend themselves against any anxiety and tension. On the other hand, the characters never employed sublimation.

James Tyrone employs self-defense mechanisms, which is: Repression, Reaction Formation, Projection, Rationalization, Displacement, and Suppression. He mostly employs displacement and suppression. Every time he feels anxiety or has unacceptable thought, he will employ displacement mechanism that is with drink whiskey. But he also will employ suppression mechanism every time Edmund confront him about his stinginess. Because he thinks about Edmund’s condition, so he tries to control his unacceptable thought. Mary employs almost all the
The researcher may conclude that the types of self-defense mechanisms of the characters that are found in Long Day’s Journey into Night, there were tenth types of self-defense mechanisms. The self-defense mechanisms exist at every level of characters’ unconsciousness, that is: repression, reaction formation, projection, regression, denial, rationalization, displacement, identification, and fantasy. And characters’ consciousness, that is suppression, because this mechanism happens consciously. In the fourth acts of play, the characters mostly employ denial, projection, rationalization, regression, and displacement to defend themselves. The researcher found that the characters in the play always use many types of self-defense mechanisms to solve their conflict. This conflict can be resolved directly, but the characters using self-defense mechanism to solve the conflict. In this research, the researcher analyzes the self-defense mechanisms in Long Day’s Journey into Night using Sigmund Freud’s defense mechanisms, such as: Repression, Reaction Formation, Projection, Regression, Denial, Rationalization, Displacement, and Fantasy. Mostly she employs reaction formation mechanism and denial. Every time she feels guilty about Edmund’s condition, she will employ reaction formation. And every time her family try to tell her about Edmund’s ill, she will employ denial. It is only Mary who employs regression and fantasy mechanism. Through the play, he employs repression, reaction formation, projection, and displacement. Mostly he employs projection mechanism. He blames his mother, father, and brother. He blames everyone except himself. He is cynical, bitter, arrogant, and often mean. He always sees the worst thing of people. He is by no means an old guy, but his family seems to have completely given up on him. As a result of this environment, it seems that Jamie has given up on himself too. For comfort, he employs displacement mechanism by turns to alcohol and women. Edmund employs repression, projection, denial, displacement, identification, and suppression through the fourth acts of the play. He is the only character employs identification. Since grew up, he imitates his brother, Jamie. But his parents do not like it, because they think he is a bad influence on Edmund.

The researcher found that every conflict in Long Day’s Journey into Night does not solve because the characters are able to put their awareness and their defense against every conflict. Every time there is an indication that conflict will arise, they change the subject. They tend to avoid talking about the problem, and use self-defense mechanisms to solve their conflict.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The researcher may conclude that the types of self-defense mechanisms of the characters that are found in Long Day’s Journey into Night, there were tenth types of self-defense mechanisms. The self-defense mechanisms exist at every level of characters’ unconsciousness, that is: repression, reaction formation, projection, regression, denial, rationalization, displacement, identification, and fantasy. And characters’ consciousness, that is suppression, because this mechanism happens consciously. In the fourth acts of play, the characters mostly employ denial, projection, rationalization, regression, and displacement to defend themselves. The researcher found that the characters in the play always use many types of self-defense mechanisms to solve their conflict. This conflict can be resolved directly, but the characters using self-defense mechanism to solve the conflict. In this research, the researcher analyzes the self-defense mechanisms in Long Day’s Journey into Night using Sigmund Freud’s defense
mechanisms theory. There are many types of self-defense mechanisms for the next researcher to analyze as further studies. Long Day’s Journey into Night is a classic for a reason, it portrays the dark side of a disconnected family in a way that many people will be able to connect to, if not directly to addiction issues, than certainly to communication breakdown and the ways that any family can be haunted by its past. Therefore, it is possible to make some further observations about one of them for the further studies.

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