

DEFENSE MECHANISM IN THE PLAY *MR BAILEY'S MINDER* BY

DEBRA OSWALD (2005)

A THESIS

Submitted as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement to Obtain Strata One (S1)

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TIARA RIFTA

16019016/2016

ADVISOR:

LENI MARLINA, S.S, M.A

NIP: 198207182006042004

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND ARTS

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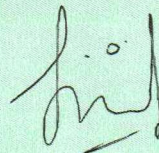
HALAMAN PERSETUJUAN SKRIPSI

Judul : Defense Mechanism in the Play *Mr Bailey's Minder* by Debra Oswald (2005)
Nama : Tiara Rifta
NIM : 16019016/2016
Program Studi : Sastra Inggris
Jurusan : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris
Fakultas : Bahasa dan Seni

Padang, September 2023

Disetujui oleh,

Pembimbing



Leni Marlina, S.S., M.A.
NIP. 19820718.200604.2.004

Mengetahui
Ketua Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris



Desvalini Anwar, S.S., M.Hum., Ph.D.
NIP. 197105251.998022.002

HALAMAN PENGESAHAN LULUS UJIAN SKRIPSI

Dinyatakan lulus setelah dipertahankan di depan Tim Penguji Skripsi
Program Studi Sastra Inggris Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris
Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni Universitas Negeri Padang
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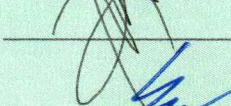
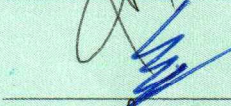
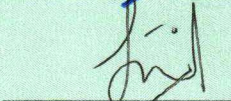
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(2005)

Nama : Tiara Rifta
NIM : 16019016/2016
Program Studi : Sastra Inggris
Jurusan : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris
Fakultas : Bahasa dan Seni

Padang, September 2023

Tim Penguji

Tanda Tangan

1. Ketua	: Devy Kurnia Alamsyah, S.S., M.Hum. :	
2. Sekretaris	: Desvalini Anwar, S.S., M. Hum., Ph.D :	
3. Anggota	: Leni Marlina, S.S., M.A. :	



UNIVERSITAS NEGERI PADANG
FAKULTAS BAHASA DAN SENI
JURUSAN BAHASA DAN SAstra INGGRIS

Jl. Belibis, Air Tawar Barat, Kampus Selatan FBS UNP, Padang, Telp/Fax: (0751) 447347

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Nama : Tiara Rifta
NIM/TM : 16019016/2016
Program Studi : Sastra Inggris
Jurusan : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris
Fakultas : Bahasa dan Seni

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Ketua Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris

Desvalini Anwar, S.S., M.Hum., Ph.D.
NIP. 197105251.998022.002

Saya yang menyatakan,



Tiara Rifta
NIM. 16019016

ABSTRACT

Rifta, Tiara .2023. Defense Mechanism in the Play *Mr Bailey's Minder* (2005) by Debra Oswald. Thesis. Padang: English Department. Faculty of Languages and Arts. Universitas Negeri Padang.

Human life will never be separated from problems and tests. Sometimes, there are problems and tests cause anxiety, discomfort, fear, and uneasy feeling. The strategies that can be used to deal with unpleasant situations are called defense mechanism. The defense mechanism does make a person forget the unpleasant feeling, but actually the effect of this feeling of comfort is only temporary. The research aimed to analyze the defense mechanism issues faced by the character Leo in the drama "*Mr Bailey's Minder*" (2005) by Debra Oswald in the past. Defense mechanism referred to an old man who had been abandoned by his family. The character had used defense mechanisms to deal with his anxiety and problems in his life. This analysis was related to the psychoanalysis theory by Sigmund Freud in the past. The theory was based on interpreting the text and context of the drama. The data were in the form of quotations. The result of the study showed that the character had used defense mechanisms in the analysis, referring to how the defense mechanisms used by the antagonist were not effective in helping him overcome anxiety and problems in his life. He had a different character at the beginning of the story and at the end of the story towards his death. In the initial phase, he had used several defense mechanisms such as denial, projection, regression, and displacement. At the end of his life, the character had used the sublimation defense mechanism as his last defense mechanism. Sublimation had been the only defense mechanism that could get him out of the problems in his life and had started to make peace with the shortcomings that existed in him

Key words: *Deense Mechanism*

ABSTRAK

Rifta, Tiara .2023. Defense Mechanism in the Play *Mr Bailey's Minder* (2005) by Debra Oswald. Tesis. Padang: Jurusan Bahasa Inggris. Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni. Universitas Negeri Padang.

Kehidupan manusia tidak pernah lepas dari masalah dan ujian. Terkadang, ada masalah dan ujian yang menyebabkan kecemasan, ketidaknyamanan, ketakutan, dan perasaan tidak nyaman. Strategi yang bisa digunakan untuk menghadapi situasi yang tidak menyenangkan disebut mekanisme pertahanan. Mekanisme pertahanan memang membuat seseorang melupakan perasaan tidak menyenangkan tersebut, namun sebenarnya efek dari perasaan tersebut hanya bersifat sementara. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis isu-isu mekanisme pertahanan yang dihadapi oleh karakter Leo dalam drama "*Mr Bailey's Minder*" (2005) karya Debra Oswald. Mekanisme pertahanan merujuk pada seorang pria tua yang ditinggalkan oleh keluarganya. Karakter ini menggunakan mekanisme pertahanan untuk mengatasi kecemasan dan masalah dalam hidupnya. Analisis ini terkait dengan teori psikoanalisis oleh Sigmund Freud. Teori ini didasarkan pada interpretasi teks dan konteks drama. Data yang digunakan berupa kutipan. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa karakter ini menggunakan mekanisme pertahanan yang dalam analisis ini mengacu pada bagaimana mekanisme pertahanan yang digunakan oleh karakter antagonis tidak efektif membuatnya mengatasi kecemasan dan masalah dalam hidupnya. Dia memiliki karakter yang berbeda pada awal cerita dan pada akhir cerita menjelang kematiannya. Pada fase awal, dia menggunakan beberapa mekanisme pertahanan seperti penyangkalan, proyeksi, regresi, dan pemindahan. Pada akhir hidupnya, karakter ini menggunakan mekanisme pertahanan sublimasi sebagai mekanisme pertahanan terakhirnya. Sublimasi adalah satu-satunya mekanisme pertahanan yang dapat membantunya keluar dari masalah dalam hidupnya dan mulai berdamai dengan kekurangan yang ada pada dirinya.

Kata kunci: Mekanisme Pertahanan

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Human life will never be separated from problems and tests. Sometimes, there are problems and tests cause anxiety, discomfort, fear, and uneasy feelings. When experiencing an unpleasant event, human's mind will consciously or unconsciously try to overcome the situation. The strategies that can be used to deal with unpleasant situations are called defense mechanisms. This strategy can help someone from unwanted feelings and conditions. According to Freud in Theory of Personality (2009: 61), defense mechanisms are strategies the ego uses to defend itself against the anxiety provoked by conflicts of everyday life. Defense mechanisms involve denials or distortions of reality. Defense mechanisms are tactics employed by the ego to safeguard itself from the anxiety triggered by the clashes of everyday existence. These mechanisms encompass refusals or alterations of reality. Without realizing it, a person performs defense mechanisms in everyday life, such as diverting anxiety in a more positive way or in a negative way.

Defense mechanism is a mechanism that humans use to protect themselves from things they do not want or avoid. Defense mechanism can be seen as something positive if people are able to divert their energy to something positive. However, defense mechanisms can also lead a person to unhealthy psychological conditions. The defense mechanism does make a person forget

the unpleasant feeling, but actually the effect of this feeling of comfort is only temporary. Defense mechanism is human habits that occur under the control of the human unconscious. In fact, most people are not aware of the defense mechanism strategies they use.

“Defense mechanisms are unconscious or subconscious behaviors so that individuals feel they are getting something they need even though in reality there is none. Another meaning of defense mechanism is a person's desire not to accept something he doesn't want even though the reality is there” (Sanyata, 2009:36).

Related to the drama *Mr Bailey's Minder* by Debra Oswald (2005), it reflects that Leo is an old man who battles to survive the effects of alcohol. In the drama, the character has alcohol related dementia that makes his condition become so bad. He becomes chronic obstructive airways diseases, and chronic alcoholic hepatitis. He does not leave the house anymore, except for visits to medical specialists. He is only interested in art. Art is a subject that is very dominated by Leo. He is a very famous Australian artist with his paintings. He has been married five times. He has eight children from his five wives, but no one wants to take care of him.

Leo Bailey is a complicated character. In this drama, he is described as an old man who is very cynical about his life. He really hated himself. He could not come to terms with the facts he had to face. He eventually became a drinker to release his anxiety. In this drama, alcohol is poison to him. Alcohol only

relieves his anxiety in the short term. This finally makes Leo unable to escape from alcohol. He could no longer fight his addiction to alcohol. Alcohol changes a person's personality to be out of control. He becomes a rude person. He could not trust another. He became emotional. He hurt himself as well as those around him, both physically and mentally. He always feels anxious. According to Andrews et al (2018:110) Anxiety refers to a sensation of fear and concern manifested by an individual regarding an ongoing issue, leading to discomfort and impairment.

This drama shows the paradox of the relationship between father and daughter. According to Cambridge Dictionary (2023), a paradox is a scenario or assertion that appears perplexing or challenging to comprehend due to its incorporation of two contradictory facts or attributes. The father should be a leader in the family who looks after the children and his wife. Father is a role model for his children. The role of a father is needed to keep the family intact and ensure that children get an education. However, in this drama shows the opposite, it is the daughter who takes the role of looking after and protecting her father. This drama shows Leo as the first character, a father who tries to make peace with himself. Father who does not know his affection for his child tries to be able to overcome problems within him and proves that he really loves his child. In overcoming this problem, the character uses a defense mechanism.

The defense mechanism used by the character in this drama shows about ineffective defense mechanism and effective defense mechanism. The lack of precise use of the defense mechanism used makes the main character's relationship with the second character not improved. This can be seen through the relationship between the first character as the antagonist character and the second character Margo as the protagonist character. The second character has a woman named Therese. She pays her to take care of her father. She does not want to take care of her father by herself. Leo has alcohol related dementia that makes his condition become so bad. The first character does not like to see his daughter. His attitude toward her was very rude. Margo is patient enough to face Leo's rant. He always feels threatened by Margo. He thinks that she will take the property from him. He thinks that she has stolen his paintings. He does not trust his daughter. He uses defense mechanisms as proof that it was his family who did not treat him well and only wanted his wealth. He uses a denial defense mechanism to deny the fact that he is the one who disappointed his family.

This thesis focused on the character, Leo, who is an old man who has anxiety and tries to hide it by using a defense mechanism. The key concepts of this analysis are anxiety and defense mechanisms. According to the American Psychological Association (2022), Anxiety is a sentiment marked by sensations of unease, apprehensive cognitions, and physiological alterations such as elevated blood pressure. Meanwhile, in Marian Webster (2022) a defense

mechanism is a frequently involuntary cognitive procedure (like repression) that enables the potential development of compromised resolutions to individual issues. That means that people who have personal problems like anxiety use defense mechanisms as an unconscious and conscious mental process to avoid personal problems.

Related to this drama *Mr Bailey's Minder* by Debra Oswald (2005), there was also found a symbol that describes a father's affection for his child. The first character was a famous painter from Australia. Painting is one form of effort that he used to show his affection for the second character. That painting is a very precious painting to him. The painting contains an image of a girl, namely Margo. His effort in finding the painting illustrates his attempts to mend his relationship with the second character. The painting is the last defense mechanism that the main character used to overcome his problems with his child.

There are some researches who have conducted literary research on defense mechanisms. To illustrate, Zulfaisya and Hasra (2020), have studied anxiety and defense mechanisms in novels. The writer analyzes the defense mechanism of the main character in Laurie Halse Anderson's novel entitled *Speak*. This study reveals that the main character is experiencing psychological conflicts as a victim of verbal, physical and psychological bullying she got at school. The character uses defense mechanisms as strategies in overcoming her anxiety as the impact of the bullying. Pradhana (2018), has studied anxiety and defense

mechanisms in novels. The writer reveals that the first character experiences anxiety of the dead body. The defense mechanism character use succeeded to reduce her anxiety and bring into fully functioning her conscious and conscience. Tenrisanna (2018), have studied anxiety and defense mechanisms in short stories. The writer reveals that characters used defense mechanisms to fight anxiety and suspense. The characters use defense mechanisms as strategies to avoid the conflict. They tend to solve the conflict by means of a defense mechanism rather than discussing the problems.

In this thesis, the writer explains the defense mechanism used by the character. The defense mechanism used by the character was not effective in making him overcoming anxiety and solving problems. In this drama the defense mechanism brings a negative effect that makes the relationship between the main character and other characters not improve. The defense mechanism used by the first character still makes him unable to control his emotions and anxiety. One of the reasons for choosing this topic to be discussed in this thesis was because the researcher was interested in discussing human strategies in overcoming one of mental health, namely anxiety. Lots of people use the wrong way to deal with anxiety. Sometimes, the strategies used by someone in overcoming anxiety do not produce positive results but also have a negative impact.

This analysis is based on the psychological aspect of the main character in drama *Mr Bailey's Minder* by Debra Oswald (2005) by used psychoanalysis theory by Sigmund Freud, to find out inappropriate defense mechanisms used by the main character. One of the reasons defense mechanisms were chosen as a topic to be discussed in this thesis is because the researcher was interested in discussing defense mechanisms that were related to the life and personality of the individual. In this drama, the main character was a perfect example of a human who was trying to deny the fact that he did things that hurt his wife and children. His hard to come to deal with himself makes him try to ignore, hide and deny facts by using defense mechanisms. In this issue of the drama, the main character shows the continuous used of defense mechanisms ineffective. Through a deep understanding of reading the drama *Mr Bailey's Minder* (2005), the researcher reveal how inappropriate defense mechanisms were depicted in Oswald's *Mr Bailey's Minder*.

***Mr Bailey's Minder* by Debra Oswald (2005)**

Mr Bailey's Minder (2005) is a drama about famous Australian painter and chronic alcoholic by Debra Oswald. This drama is about the relationship between a father and daughter, not a good relationship, but its worst, dysfunctional.. A multitude of concepts can be portrayed by the characters within this production. Leo Bailey, a renowned artist, has succumbed to the grip of alcoholic dementia. His existence is confined to a weathered house nestled within a cliffside, where he lives in a state of inebriated seclusion. Despite his

offensive and harsh demeanor, his family has been estranged, save for his eldest daughter, Margo, who oversees his dwindling estate from afar. She, too, has been subjected to his hurtful words and malice, yet a peculiar sense of duty compels her to provide for him. In this place she once called home, she is tense, distant, and unmistakably uncomfortable. Margo endures Leo's verbal onslaughts with unwavering rigidity, her commitment barely surpassing the profound pain and humiliation inflicted by his cruel insults. Therese, a young offender, assumes the role of Leo's caretaker. Though somewhat rough around the edges, her determination to avoid returning to prison drives her to fulfill her role with determination. Over time, she manages to breach Leo's obnoxious façade, thereby discovering her own identity. Through these characters, the primary figure's life is revealed to be a product of his anxiety and employment of defense mechanisms.

According to Snodger Media (2009) *Mr Bailey's Minder* is a play by a Sydney-based playwright Debra Oswald. She initiated her writing journey during her teenage years, and her inaugural theatrical piece underwent a developmental process at the Australian National Playwrights Conference when she was 17 years old. Her award-winning youth theater production titled *Skate* embarked on a tour to Belfast in 2005. Her profound fascination lies in exploring the intricacies of familial psychology, whether genuine or substitute, and how it has the capacity to nurture, mend, and bring about a sense of completeness in an individual. *Mr. Bailey's Minder* was first published in 2005

by Currency Press Pty Ltd. It was awarded Queensland Premier's Literary Awards in 2005 for Drama Script Award (Queensland Premier's Literary Awards, 2005). He also won the Griffin Award for New Australian Playwriting in 2004.

1.2 Focus of the Problem

This research focuses on finding the best kind of defense mechanism that the main character uses to overcome his anxiety, and how defense mechanisms cannot overcome the problems faced by the first character. Anxiety is a psychological reaction that indicates something is not going well. Thus, defenses that are occurring in the way to protect people's feelings and physics can be an appropriate and inappropriate solution depending on the people who manage it.

1.3 Research Questions

There are some research questions in the drama to analyze. It can be read as follows:

1. What are the ineffective defense mechanisms used by the main character in the drama *Mr Bailey's Minder*?
2. What are the effective defense mechanisms used by the main character in the drama *Mr Bailey's Minder*?

1.4 Purpose of the Research

The purpose of the research is to know about the ineffective defense mechanisms used by the main character in the drama *Mr Bailey's Minder*, and to know the effective defense mechanisms used by the main character in the drama *Mr Bailey's Minder*. This study aims to inform the public what are the defense mechanisms people can use to protect themselves from the situations or feelings that make people feel sad, unpleasant, threatened and hurt. Also, how defense mechanisms do not effective in dealing with the anxiety in the drama *Mr Bailey's Minder*.