

EMOTIONAL DEFICIT IN PAUL HARDING'S *TINKERS*

THESIS

*Submitted as a Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements to Obtain
Strata One (S1) Degree*



By:
NOVARIANTI
72771 / 2006

Advisors:
Dra. An Fauzia Rozani Syafei, M.A.
Muhd. Al-Hafizh, S.S., M.A.

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF LANGUAGE AND ARTS
STATE UNIVERSITY OF PADANG
2012

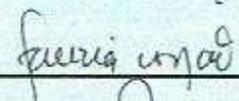
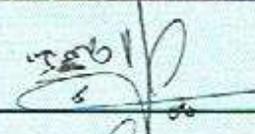
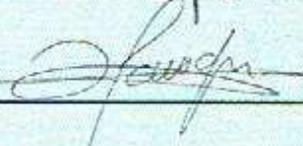
HALAMAN PENGESAHAN LULUS UJIAN SKRIPSI

Dinyatakan Lulus Setelah Dipertahankan di Depan Tim Penguji Skripsi
Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni
Universitas Negeri Padang

Emotional Deficit in Paul Harding's *Tinkers*

Nama : Novarianti
NIM/BP : 72771/2006
Program studi : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris
Jurusan : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris
Fakultas : Bahasa dan Seni

Padang, Juli 2012

Tim Penguji		Tanda Tangan
Nama		
1. Dra. An Fauzia R. Syafei, M.A.	Ketua	()
2. Muhd. Al-Hafizh, S.S., M.A.	Sekretaris	()
3. Dr. Hj. Kurnia Ningsih, M.A.	Anggota	()
4. Delvi Wahyuni, S.S., M.A.	Anggota	()
5. Havid Ardi, S.Pd., M.Hum.	Anggota	()

ABSTRAK

**Novarianti. 2012. “Emotional Deficit in Paul Harding’s *Tinkers* (2009)”
*Thesis, FBS UNP***

Skripsi ini merupakan analisa novel yang berjudul *Tinkers* (2009) karangan Paul Harding. Masalah yang diangkat dalam analisis ini ialah defisiensi emosional. Tujuan dari penganalisaan ini adalah untuk mendapatkan jawaban sejauh mana novel *tinkers* memperlihatkan bentuk-bentuk defisiensi emosional yang dialami oleh karakter. Disamping itu juga, analisis ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui sejauh mana tokoh (*character*), konflik, dan latar (*setting*) mendukung penafsiran tersebut, dengan menggunakan perspektif *depersonalization* dari Stein dan Simeon. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa tokoh utama dalam novel tersebut mengalami defisiensi emosional (*emotional deficits*). Bentuk dari defisiensi emosional itu terdiri dari dua. Yang pertama adalah kesulitan tokoh dalam mengidentifikasi persepsi emosional. Hal ini dapat dilihat dari kesulitan tokoh dalam mengenali suaranya, ceritanya, wajahnya, membedakan bagian tubuh dan hidupnya dengan jam dan juga dalam mengidentifikasi ayahnya sendiri. Yang kedua yaitu kesulitan tokoh dalam mengidentifikasi memori emosional. Tokoh tidak bisa mengontrol ingatan-ingatannya sehingga semua ingatannya tersebut menjadi kacau dan membuat beberapa ingatan masa lalunya hilang. Tokoh juga tidak bisa membedakan antara kenyataan dengan imajinasinya.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Bismillaahirrahmaanirrahiim. In the name of Allah, The Bessneficient, The Merciful. *Allhamdulillaahirabbil'alamiin*, praise are only due to Allah, lord of the universe who has given the writer love, blessing, 'a drop' of knowledge, ideas, health, strength and protection in completing this thesis entitled **“Emotional Deficit in Paul Harding’s Tinkers (2009)”**. Greetings and shalawat are also sent to the last prophet, Muhammad, the leader and the greatest man in the world.

In this thesis, the writer would like to expresses sincere gratitude to Dra. An Fauzia Rozani Syafei, M.A. as the first advisor, and Muhd. Al-Hafizh, S.S., M.A. as the second advisor for their valuable ideas, suggestions, motivations and patience in guiding her during writing this thesis. Then, a special appreciation is also expressed to Dr. Kurnia Ningsih, M.A., Delvi Wahyuni, S.S, M.A., Havid Ardi, S.Pd. M.Hum. as the examiners that have given their great ideas and suggestions to the completion of this thesis.

Furthermore, the writer would like to thank to her academic advisor Drs. Saunir, M.Pd. for his guidance and motivation during the academic years in this faculty. Then, thank is addressed to Dr. Kurnia Ningsih, M.A. the head of the English Department, Dra. An Fauzia Rozani Syafei, M. A. as secretary of the English Department as shared interesting and valuable knowledge, all of the lecturers of English Department who also shared interesting knowledge, gave her suggestion and motivation in accomplishing this thesis. Moreover, the writer also

thanks to all of the administration staffs who helped her in administrations matters.

Finally, a grateful thank goes to her adored parents; her father (Mahdonal) and her mother (Desnita Fatma), for their pray, love, care, support, inspiration, passion, and motivation in the whole of their life. Next, the writer also thank to her biggest family of H. Abdl. Adjis Radjo Sampono, alm. for their pray and support, Mami Eri Sasri, S.Pd.I, Mr. Roni Putra, S.Si, Nola Eka Nita, and the family of English literature of UNP especially Refi, Mulfi, Nana, Meira, Adek, Dela, Nelda, Kak Zia, Wening, and Sari, for the facility, ideas, and times. As a great appreciation, thank you very much for all people that helped the writer in writing this thesis, may Allah bless you all.

Padang, June 2012

The Writer

NOVARIANTI

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRAK	i
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	ii
TABLE OF CONTENT	iv
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION	
1.1. Background of the Study	1
1.1.1 Emotional Deficit	4
1.1.2 The Brief of Paul Harding	5
1.1.3 Tinkers	7
1.2. Problem of the Study	8
1.3. Purpose of Study	8
1.4. Previous Study	8
1.5. Theoretical Framework	10
1.6. Methodology	12
CHAPTER II DISCUSSION	
2.1 The Difficulty in Identify Emotional Perception	14
2.2 The Difficulty in Identify Emotional Memory	20
CHAPTER III CONCLUSIONS	28
BIBLIOGRAPHY	30

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

There are many factors that influence human personality or character development. Those factors are different values, norms, imitation, identification, suggestions, and acculturation. The process appears within the environment such as family, school, workplace, and public area. They offer the positive and negative effect to someone personality. The positive effect of environment makes a good impact on someone personality. However, there are many factors that make the character personality cannot build well. Some of them are genetics illness, unpleasant environment, and childhood trauma. They cause the negative impacts in human development. It can influence human physic or psychology. One of psychological effect is emotional deficit where someone unable to identify his or her emotional perception and memories.

Emotional deficit emerges because of childhood trauma. Childhood trauma is the negative factor that able to disturb someone personality since it is affected by the disappointment. According to Stein and Simeon (2009),

Early trauma or childhood interpersonal trauma can causes depersonalization. Emotional misuse was the most significant predictor of depersonalization symptoms and disorder, whereas combined emotional and sexual abuse are the main predictor of general dissociation.

The quotation above describes that, the trauma experienced by children makes them suffers from dissociations. One of them is depersonalization.

Emotional misuse or emotional abuse is the act of ignoring, acting cruel,

isolating, rejecting, and scaring another person. It can lead to ultimately winning control over the victim. If it is combined with sexual abuse, it is not only causes depersonalization but also other dissociation. Someone who ever experience the disappointment will be hard to build his believe toward another person or himself. As an example, a child is accidentally bitten by her father when his father's epilepsy emerges. He is disappointed and mad at his father who hurt him. This bad experience manipulates his life until he is adult.

Emotional deficit also influenced by the environment. Emotional deficit is a lack of emotional reactivity. It is caused by the unwholesome environment. Moreover, the most dominant environment factor is family. It is the first environmental factor that will determine the development of someone personality. A child who was raised in a family that tends to cover all the problems enforced this child to understand some experiences based on his limited knowledge. It could lead him to have emotional deficit, as Dugas (1898) says, *it refers to a state in which there is the feeling or sensation that thoughts and acts avoid the self and become strange*. In other word, the people with psychological deficit experiences alienation of personality. They do not know about whom they are and what they want. They cannot solve their problem and make decision for their life. They tend to follow someone identity who is close to them. They also lose some memory of their childhood because they are forced to grow fast than their age. Finally, they have a tendency to remember the bad memories of their childhood.

Emotional deficit is one of depersonalization symptom. According to Baker, et al (2007), symptom of depersonalization can be seen in five levels. First, is emotional that affect feeling, moods, and numbness. Second, is cognitive that influence thoughts, beliefs, meanings, images, attention and memory. Third, is physical that involve the *bodily changes, sleep patterns, and numbness*. Fourth, is behavioral that can be seen through *what someone do more or less of things that he or she avoid of*. The last, is environmental *situations, relationships, work, and home*. It perceives that emotional deficit is almost experienced by the sufferer of depersonalization.

Referring to emotional deficit, there is a famous name that suffered from depersonalization that also experiences emotional deficit. She is a new age writer and teacher of spiritual enlightenment, Suzanne Segal. She is known for her sudden experience of depersonalization. Segal relapsed into the uncomfortable state of constant anxiety she had first experienced as a kind of emotional deficit. At this point, she returned to explore psychological themes from her childhood that includes recovered memories of abuse and persistent migraines. She has written some books based on her experience as a model case of the dissociative disorder condition known as depersonalization disorder (DPD). They are; *Collision with the Infinite: a Life beyond the Personal Self*, The books *Feeling Unreal: Depersonalization Disorder and the Loss of the Self* and *Stranger to My Self: inside Depersonalization; the Hidden Epidemic*. Segal tells about her experience during depersonalization attack in her books. She also combines her experience with her believe,

Buddhism. In 1997, Segal's health began rapidly deteriorating and she was diagnosed with a malignant brain tumour and died two months after it.

The phenomenon of emotional deficit in people's life is a very interesting issue to be explored. This phenomenon can be found in literary works since it is a reflection of the reality of human being. The novel *Tinkers* (2009) written by Paul Harding exposes this issue. Emotional deficit in this study deals with how character in the novel experiences emotional deficit as the impact of trauma in his childhood. It is signed by the difficulty in identify emotional perception and memory.

1.1.1 Emotional Deficits

There is a term that needs to be clarified in this analysis. It is emotional deficit. Emotional deficit according to Dworkin (1992) commonly associated with schizophrenia also has a flavour of desynchronise. Additionally, according to Bungener, Jouvent and Delaporte (1998), emotional deficit combines a lack of emotional initiation and reactivity, affective monotony, and anhedonia. According to Baker, et al (2007), emotional deficit means the failure in defensive response. It includes how someone feels, moods, and numbness. Moreover, in this study, emotional deficit means the failure in defensive emotional response. She or he has the difficulty in identify emotional response such as emotional perception and memory.

1.1.2 The Brief of Paul Harding

Paul Harding was born in 1967 in Iowa City, California. He grew up in the north shore of Boston in the town of Wenham, Massachusetts. Now, he lives near Boston with his wife and two sons. He took six years to complete his degree in the University of Massachusetts Amherst, where he majored in English. Although he took a long time to get his degree, nowadays he taught writing in Harvard University and the Iowa Writers' Workshop where he got Masters of Fine Arts.

He began his carrier not as a writer but as the drummer of a rock band Cold Water Flat and spent time touring with this band in the US and Europe. When he had time off from touring with the band, he signed up for a summer writing class at Skidmore College in New York because he loves reading especially the 19th century novels and admires Karl Barth and John Calvin. By pure chance, his teacher was Marilynne Robinson and she taught him about the Iowa Writers' Workshop writing program. There he studied with Barry Unsworth, Elizabeth McCracken, and later Marilynne Robinson. He realized some people he admired most were profoundly religious and he likes studying about theology, so he spent years for reading theology. Because of that, he considers himself as a modern New England Transcendentalist.

Tinkers is his first published novel which had been rejected by some publishers for almost 5 years. However, it won the 2010 Pulitzer Prize after being published by Bellevue Literary Press. It is nonprofits publisher affiliated with New York University's School of Medicine. Since its

publication in January 2009, *Tinkers* has sold 15,000 copies. That is a great achievement where the last time a small publisher won the fiction Pulitzer in 1981 for John Kennedy Toole's *Confederacy of Dunces*, released by Louisiana University Press. There are many approval received by Harding in this novel. One of them is from Marilynne Robinson.

Tinkers is truly remarkable. It achieves and sustains a unique fusion of language and perception. Its fine touch plays over the textured richness's of very modest lives, evoking repeatedly a frisson of deep recognition, a sense of primal encounter with the brilliant, elusive world of the senses. It confers on the reader the best privilege fiction can afford, the illusion of ghostly proximity to other human souls.

Robinson approves Harding's way of writing. His story is full of tough live experience and evokes the reader to appreciate his story. He is able to come closer into human soul and describes it beautifully and cleverly. Besides his novel, he also published a couple of short stories. One of them is "Miss Hale," is one of the hundred honourable mentions in Best American Short Stories.

His works are inspired by his family story where some of his family members suffer from psychological illness. Started from his grandfather who is suffering from Alzheimer and in the earlier of his life, Harding must be struggled from epilepsy. His debut novel entitled *Tinkers* is inspired by his grandfather and his experience. He observes how his grandfather went on his life while people surround him assume that his illness is a curse from the

God. Besides examining his grandfather mental illness, he analyzes another family member psychologically in facing his grandfather illness too. He also adds his works with dissociative experiences when the epilepsy attacks him. Together with Alzheimer and epilepsy, Harding also describes depersonalization indirectly. They experience dissociate with the real world when the illness attack them. In another words, *Tinkers* can be identified as psychological fiction because it describes some psychological illness facing by some characters. It shows that Paul Harding is a brilliant writer who can write the real family experience and pictures some mental illness cleverly with his melancholic and poetic way of writing.

1.1.3 Tinkers

Tinkers (2009), written by Paul Harding, exposes emotional deficit. Emotional deficit is the failure in defensive emotional response. In this novel, emotional deficit is represented by protagonist, George. It occurs because the epilepsy that attack his father which makes him trauma. This includes the difficulty in identified emotional perceptions and emotional memory.

The character experiences the difficulty in identified emotional perceptions. It can be seen through his thought and actions. He experiences multiple personalities as if someone has replaced his place for years. He does not recognize his voice, story, and his face. He experience anxiety. He scares when he thinks about the epilepsy and when the clocks wound down.

The character experiences the difficulty in identified emotional memory. It can be seen through his way of thinking. He cannot remember his memories. He loses a part of his memory. He cannot solve his trauma. He cannot concentrate. He cannot differentiate between reality and imagination.

1.2 Problem of Study

This analysis is focused on emotional deficits in a character. Therefore, the research questions are:

1. How far does the whole novel expose emotional deficits?
2. To what extent do the fictional devices; character, setting and plot (conflict), support emotional deficits in this novel?

1.3 Purpose of Study

This study is intended to disclose emotional deficits in the novel *Tinkers* (2009) written by Paul Harding. This is also going to find out how characters, setting, and conflicts, give contribution in disclosing emotional deficits.

1.4 Previous Study

The analysis about the novel *Tinkers* (2009) that focuses on emotional deficit has not been found yet. However, there are several studies in journal that can give contribution and inspiration in analyzing this novel.

The first analysis is written by Stella Butter (2010), entitled *Staging (Dis)Connections Between the Individual and the Mass in Contemporary Literature: From the Pathological “Mass in Person” to the Globalized Subject*. In this analysis, Butter examines literary staging of the relationship between the individual and the mass in contemporary literature by drawing on four case studies: Bret Easton Ellis’s *American Psycho* (1991), Jon McGregor’s *If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things* (2002), David Mitchell’s *Ghost written* (1999), and David Harrower’s play *Kill the Old Torture Their Young* (1998). In analyse it she uses fictional devices: characters, conflicts, and Setting. The central theme in the texts analysis is the question of how individual identity may be forged within a society marked by process of abstraction and depersonalization. Those are highlighted by the characters’ loss of narrativity, loss of identity, lost of communication and lack of social bounding. This analysis refers to Hubert Zapf about the concept of *Abstract Society* and the idea of Roland Robertson about *Globalization*. The conflict in those novels is between the individual. The isolation of the individual in the mass is emphasized by the setting of the play. Butter concluded that the discussion of the literary works above has shown the relationship between the individual and the mass ties in with key issues of contemporaneity.

The second analysis is written by Vera B. Profit (2010) entitle, *Let there be Spaces: Failure to recognize the Autonomy of Others as a Sign of Evil in Friedrich Durrenmatt’s “Suspicion”*. Profit describes that

Durrenmatt's novel deals with both geographical and historical proximity to the Holocaust. This analysis refers to M. Scott Peck's idea about *People of the Lie: The Hope for Healing Human Evil*. In this analysis, she focuses on the setting and characters. She explains that the creation of victims, who in turn can and sometimes do evolve into victimizer. It can be happened when there are failures to recognize the separateness and subsequent depersonalization of others appears in the society. Thus, the characters that are lived in a concentration camp physicians after 1945 altered their self-image. Profit concluded that both demean and dehumanize; upon further reflection, not only the object there of is denigrated, but also the victimizer. Moreover, whatever diminishes us, threatens to make us evil.

The analyses above give contribution and inspiration to the topic emotional deficit. They also enriched the knowledge about the topic. Unlike the previous study, this analysis focuses on how far does the novel reflect emotional deficit through the actions that done by the characters and supporting by the conflicts and setting in the novel.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

The analysis of this novel related to the idea of depersonalization by Stein and Simeon. Emotional deficit is one of depersonalization symptom. According to Stein and Simeon (2009), there are two main symptoms of depersonalization, emotional deficits, and cognitive deficits. However, this

analysis focuses on emotional deficits. It is characterized by difficulty in identifying emotional perceptions, and disrupting emotional memory.

It is supported by the idea of Baker, et al (2007). According to them, emotional deficit is the failure in defensive response. People with depersonalization experience an alteration in their perception or experience of the self. Their actions feel robotic as if they are an outside or become observer of their own body and mental processes. It can be identified by some actions. First, sufferers feel that their voice sound unfamiliar and their thoughts, speech, and actions are no longer feeling spontaneous. Then, an additional feeling of being cut off from the world, and even their self; for example, sufferers feel detached from their own reflection when looking in the mirror. Finally, they have significant levels of anxiety, which can manifest them self as panic attacks or a tendency to worry too much. It makes the sufferer lose his concentration and sometimes cannot differentiate between reality and imagination.

The analysis of this novel is supported by text-based interpretation. Guerin (2005) explains that text-based interpretation focuses on the work itself. The process of this analysis ignores the aspect outside the text. It means that the meaning of the whole story is found from the text by showing the interrelationship of element of the text. They are theme, characteristic, plot, and setting.

The fictional devices in revealing depersonalization in this analysis will be focused on the analyses of the character, plot, and setting. Character is

the most important elements in fiction. Roberts (2002) said that character is the fictional representation of a person. In literary works, the characters help us to understand and catch the meaning of the works. Examining the character is not only their behaviours but also through thoughts. Emotional deficit in this novel is represented by protagonist.

The second device that is going to be involved in this novel analysis is plot, which is focused on conflicts. According to Bokesch (2000), Conflict is the essence of fiction that create plot. It can be identified as one of four kinds that are men versus man, man versus nature, man versus society, and man versus self. This analysis focuses on the conflict man versus self or internal conflict that the enemy is himself.

Another element that supports this study is setting which has the big influence in this novel. According to Madden (2002), setting is location and all of the aspects connected to the atmosphere that makes up the story. In other words, it shows that setting plays as one of important thing to influence the character's condition and situation. Moreover, the setting in this novel that refers to the condition of epilepsy and trauma in the past. It gives contribution to build the conflict of the story.

1.6 Methodology

The analysis of this novel is aimed at finding one of the symptoms of depersonalization. That is, emotional deficit in Paul Harding's *Tinkers* (2009). It is done through text-based approach. The meaning is explored by

analyzing the fictional devices: character, setting, and conflicts. In examining the character, it will provide the conflicts and describe feeling, thought and action of the character. Then, setting deals with the atmosphere, which creates conflict. Moreover, these elements deal with the ideas of depersonalization by Stein and Simeon (2009).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Baker, Dawn, et al. 2003. *Depersonalisation Disorder: Clinical Features of 204 Cases*. *British journal of psychiatry* (2003), 182, 428-433. Retrieved on September 16, 2011.
- Bungener, C., R. Jouvent, and C. Delaporte. 1998. *Psychopathological and emotional deficits in myotonic dystrophy*. Retrieved on July 16, 2012. <http://nnp.bmj.com>
- Butter, Stella. 2010. *Staging (Dis)Connections between the Individual and the Mass in Contemporary Literature: From the Pathological "Mass in Person" to the Globalized Subject*. *Gamma: Journal of Theory and Criticism* 18. S. 205-220. Retrieved on September 28, 2011.
- Davidson, Gerald C., John M. Neale, and Ann M. Kring. 2006. *Psikologi Abnormal*. Jakarta: PT Raja Grafindo Persada.
- Dworkin. 1992. *Cognition and Emotion*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. Retrieved on July 14, 2012. <http://ist-socrates.berkeley.edu/~kihlstrm/index.htm>
- Guerin, Wilfred L. 2005. *A handbook of critical Approach to literature Fifth Edition*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Harding, Paul. 2009. *Tinkers*. New York: Bellevue Literary Press.
- Madden, Frank. 2002. *Exploring Fiction*. New York: Addison Wesley Longman Inc.
- Minderop, Albertine. 2010. *Psikologi Sastra*. Jakarta: Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia.
- Profit, Vera B. 2010. *Let there be Spaces: Failure to recognize the Autonomy of Others as a Sign of Evil in Friedrich Dürrenmatt's "Suspicion"*. *International Journal of Arts and Sciences*. Retrieved on September 28, 2011. http://openaccesslibrary.org/images/BGS103_Vera_B._Profit.pdf
- Roberts, Edgar V. 1999. *Writing About Literature*. Brief ninth edition. New Jersey: Entice Hall.
- Schwartz, Steven. 2000. *Abnormal Psychology*. California: Mayfield Publishing Company.

Spiritualteachers Discussion Boards. 1996. "The Awakening West" *Interview with Suzanne Segal*. Retrieved on September 16, 2011.

http://www.spiritualteachers.org/segal_interview.htm

Stein, Dan J. and Daphne Simeon. 2009. *Cognitive-Affective Neuroscience of Depersonalization*. MBL Communications Inc. Retrieved on September 16, 2011.

http://www.cnsspectrums.com/UserDocs/ArticleImages/174/0909CNS_Stein.pdf

Ward, Humphrey. 1965. *Amiel's Journal; intime of Henri-Frédéric Amiel, tr.* Retrieved on September 16, 2011.

http://www.archive.org/stream/amielsjournalint00amieuoft/amielsjournalint00amieuoft_djvu.txt