

TRIS'S EGO DEFENSE MECHANISM IN NEIL BURGER'S *DIVERGENT* MOVIE SCRIPT 2014 : A PSYCHOANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to analyze the ego defense mechanism found in the main female character in the *Divergent* movie script directed by Neil Burger. *Divergent* is an interesting movie, telling about five factions in the life of humans. This concept makes the audience imagine what if the five factions exist in the real world. This movie presents anxiety experienced by Tris as the main female character. Tris is a divergent person, characterized as having more than one nature. With this characteristic, her life is threatened by the society around as she is considered 'dangerous'. The research only focused on the defense mechanism employed by Tris to cope up with the anxiety in her life. This research used qualitative methods to reveal Tris' anxiety and her defense mechanism based on a psychoanalytical theory by Sigmund Freud especially that of anxiety theory. The findings show that Tris undergoes two types of anxiety in this movie script, realistic anxiety and moral anxiety on which to perform featuring five types of ego defense mechanisms, namely Displacement, Reaction formation, Sublimation, Repression, and Regression.

Keywords: *psychoanalysis, anxiety, ego defense mechanism, divergent*

1. INTRODUCTION

In this study, the researcher discussed the ego defense mechanism of the main female character in *the Divergent* movie script. *Divergent* is a 139 minute-movie released in 2014 under the direction of Neil Burger. This movie was adopted from Veronica Roth's best-seller novel (2011) with the same title. The researcher chose the movie because it is interesting with the visualization of action and romance from the novel. As well, it has some great effects, so the audience can imagine what if the five factions exist in real life. This movie tells us about the society classified into five factions (erudite, abnegation, dauntless, erudite, candor, and amity) in which each faction has a specific and unique personality. 'Erudite' is a faction that values knowledge, 'abnegation' valuing selflessness and helping other people, 'dauntless' valuing bravery, 'candor' valuing honesty, and finally 'amity' valuing peace. A person naturally has only one faction, but some special persons have two or more factions. Such special persons are then called 'divergent'. Beatrice Prior or nick-named 'Tris' is the main character in this movie. She is one of the persons that have more than one faction. Although Tris is a divergent person, no one knows about it. She tried to hide this fact from other people

including her parents. This is an interesting characteristic to analyze due to her uniqueness, strength, and difference from other people.

This study would be focusing on what anxiety experience by Tris and how she copes with her anxiety by using an ego defense mechanism. This research would use psychoanalysis theory by Sigmund Freud, especially anxiety theory. Based on the Sigmund Freud theory, The defense mechanism is an unconscious behavior or subconscious so that individuals feel they are getting something that is needed even though the reality is not there. Another meaning of defense mechanism is a person's desire to don't accept anything he doesn't want though the reality is there. Under certain conditions, a defense mechanism is something that is very neglected in a person. Besides that, naturally, the defense mechanism is something that existed early in life. A defense mechanism on the principle emerges in a person when confronted with situations that cause anxiety. People tend to hide negative things in him. This situation is not beneficial in the development of one's personality. In this research there are two statements of the problem as follow:

1. What anxiety does the main female character experience in *Divergent* movies?
2. How does the main female character use defense mechanism to cope her life in *Divergent* movie?

2. THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

In Freud's view, the human is driven towards tension reduction, to reduce feelings anxiety. Anxiety is an aversive inner state that people seek to avoid or escape. It arises out of a conflict among the id, the ego, and the superego. Humans seek to reduce anxiety through defense mechanisms.

The researcher founds some research that discusses anxiety and ego defense mechanism. The first research entitled "Jilly's defense mechanism as seen in Phyllis A. Whitney's *The singing stone*" by Khairul Fuad from the State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta (Fuad,2014). This research discusses how the major character reflects his anxiety. The research used a psychoanalytic approach, employing a qualitative method. And the result of this research gives the conclusion that Jilly suffers three types of anxiety: neurotic anxiety, moral anxiety, and realistic anxiety. Jilly also used defense mechanisms to cope with it, she used repression, regression, denial, and projection.

The 2nd research entitled “Voldemort’s Anxiety and Defense Mechanism in Rowling’s Harry Potter and The Half-Blood Prince and Harry Potter and The Deathly Hollows: A Psychoanalysis Study” by Brigitta Arsilia Wibiana, Yogyakarta State University (Wibiana, 2018). This research is aimed to identify the kinds of anxiety experienced by Voldemort and the causes of the anxiety and to reveal Voldemort’s defense mechanisms to overcome his anxiety as well as its impact on himself and the society. This research used psychoanalysis theory. And the result of this research shows that Voldemort as a villain and tyrant also experiences various anxieties which are caused by his childhood experience and human drive. To overcome his anxieties, Voldemort forms several defense mechanisms. However, his excessive defense mechanisms eventually lead to other problems not only for himself but also for society.

All the researchers above have some similarities with this research. They discuss with the same focuses theory it is Psychoanalysis theory especially theory of anxiety. To analyzing Tris Prior's characteristics in 'a movie entitled *Divergent*', the researcher uses the psychoanalysis study. The researcher uses psychoanalysis theory by Sigmund Freud, especially anxiety and ego defense mechanism theory. To analyze the characterization of the main female character, the researcher would be to analyze the anxiety and ego defense mechanism theory by Sigmund Freud. Here is more explanation about the kinds of anxiety and defense mechanism. There are three kinds of anxiety :

1. Neurotic Anxiety

Neurotic anxiety is an anxiety about the things that exist in the shadow of a person because of her/ his previous experience. A person may have neurotic anxiety because of his/ her experience and anxiety punished by his or her parents as a child.

2. Moral Anxiety

Moral anxiety is the result of a conflict between the id and superego. According to Feist, moral anxiety is conflict result between ego and superego. This anxiety is the fear of an individual's conscience, The person will do something contrary to the desires of the superego.

3. Realistic Anxiety

Realistic anxiety comes from fear of danger from the external world, real, objective sources of danger in the environment. This anxiety leads people to think about how to face the danger and take action on it.

Moreover human also has strategies to face the pressure. Freud said that strategies used by human as a defense mechanism. Here, the principal of defense mechanism includes repression, reaction formation, displacement, fixation, regression, projection, introjections, sublimation (Feist, 2008: 35).

1. Repression

Repression press ideas, instinct, memory, and thought that can cause anxiety to get out of consciousness. Repression is the basic defense mechanism because it involved in each other.

2. Reaction formation

Reaction formation is a defense mechanism that pushes away threatening impulses by overemphasizing the opposite in one's thoughts and words.

3. Displacement

Displacement carried out by transferring to other targets. Displacement involves taking out our frustrations, feelings, and impulses on people or objects that are less threatening.

4. Fixation

Fixation is the cessation of normal development at a certain stage, because the development of the sequel is very difficult, causing frustration and anxiety are too strong.

5. Regression

Regression is a defense mechanism when a person back to a lower level and less mature in adaptation. Regression is returned to an earlier, safer stage of one's life to escape present threats.

6. Projection

Projection is an attempt to blame others about their failures, difficulties, or desire that is not good.

7. Introjection

Introjection is a defense mechanism when a person enters the positive qualities of others into his/ her ego.

8. Sublimation

Sublimation is a defense mechanism to prevent or relieve anxiety by changing is into human behavior that is acceptable and appreciated by society.

The researcher used Sigmund Freud's theory because the researcher wanted to analyze anxiety and defense mechanisms, Sigmund Freud theory is a match for analyzing this research.

3. METHOD

In this research, the researcher uses qualitative descriptive methods to reveal The main character's anxiety and defense mechanism. This study uses library and online research in the process of collecting the data. The main data is from the movie itself and the movie script of the *Divergent* movie with English subtitles. To support this research, the researcher also collected the data from articles, journals, that related to Sigmund Freud's theory especially in the theory of anxiety. In collecting the data the researcher uses the following steps :

1. First, the researcher watched *Divergent* carefully.
2. Second, the researcher took notes and collecting data to find the anxieties and defense mechanisms that use by the character.
3. Third, the researcher selected the relevant data with the problem of the research and rejecting the irrelevant data that does not support the topic of this study.

In analyzing the data, the researcher uses the following steps, as follows :

1. The researcher understanding the Psychoanalysis theory by Sigmund Freud focusing on the theory of anxiety.
2. The researcher classified the type of anxiety and the ego defense mechanism used by the main character in '*Divergent*'
3. The researcher made the conclusion based on the result of the analysis.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The first finding of this study is to answer the question: What anxiety does the main female character experience in *Divergent* movies?

In this research, the researcher found that there are two types of anxiety experienced by Tris' character in '*Divergent*', they are moral anxiety and realistic anxiety.

4.1 Types of anxiety

4.1.1 Moral Anxiety

According to Feist (2008), moral anxiety is a result of failure to behave consistently with what they regard as morally right. The moral anxiety terms is a conflict between ego and

superego. The ego is an aspect of personality that is related to reality. While the superego tries to make the ego act in an idealistic and moral manner.

A person's ego makes a wish that needs to be fulfilled, while the superego has a role to remind a person's mind about the moral value that people believe, also about believing what is wrong and what is right to do. This anxiety is the fear of an individual's conscience, The person will do something contrary to the desires of the superego.

The first moral anxiety reflected by Tris occurs when she shocked about Al's died, and she blames herself, as evidence by the following citation :

Tris: It's my fault that he's dead.

Four: No, it's not because of you. He made his own choice. He would have been factionless, he was not going to pass the final test. (01:27:58,106 --> 01:28:15,789)

From the dialog above Tris was afraid because Al was died because of her, Al killed himself with jumped into the chasm. Al was afraid because Tris's scores are in the up of him. So, Al tries to kill Tris but it is failed because Four came and save Tris. Al feels sorry for it to Tris but Tris very angry and disappointed in Al. According to the meaning of moral anxiety, Tris do something contrary she is angry with Al, she does not believe that Al tries to kill her, but Al is her best friend, So Tris is also sad to hear Al's died.

The second moral anxiety is when Tris killed Will. Tris shoots Will with the gun because her situation is threatened, Will is under control by Dauntless and Erudite, Will want to shoot Tris and Tris try to aware him but she can not, and finally, she shoots him to save herself as evidence by the following citation :

Tris: Will! Will!

[under the influence of the drug, Will doesn't respond and suddenly shoots]

Tris: Will! Will, stop! Stop!

[Will continues to shoot]

Tris: Stop!

[Tris reluctantly shoots back and kills him]

Tris: Okay. (01:53:11,618 --> 01:53:25,498)

From the dialog above Tris does not have other choices. She will die or she must shoot her friend. Tris shows moral anxiety because she does another way by shooting Will her friend and she cried because she killed him.

The last moral anxiety occurs when Tris afraid that all the Dauntless is under simulation by Erudite. The Dauntless ordered to kill all Abnegation as evidence by the following citation :

Tris: They don't know what they're doing, they're under simulation. We need to wake them up, I need to get to Dauntless.

Marcus: It's a fortress. It's not going to happen.

Tris: I can get us in there. (01:57:41,321 --> 01:57:55,199)

According to the dialog above Tris is afraid, that there will be more Abnegation will be killed by Dauntless. And all the Dauntless become a killer. So, Tris wants to go to Dauntless headquarters to stop it. This is moral anxiety because Tris did not want Dauntless to be a killer by killing Abnegation and it is violating moral and contrary to conscience.

4.1.2 Realistic Anxiety

Realistic anxiety is an anxiety that comes from fear of danger from the external world, real, objective sources of danger in the environment. This anxiety leads people to think about how to face the danger and take action on it.

Tris experiences this realistic anxiety when Tris feels scared to take a test to determine to what faction she belongs as evidenced by the citation below :

Tris: Today I take the test. I'm scared it'll tell me I'm not Abnegation, that I have to leave my family. But I'm even more scared that it'll tell me to stay. For my brother Caleb it's easy.(00:05:22,088-->00:05:38,302)

The utterance above clearly shows 'realistic anxiety'. The word 'scared' by the sentences "... I'm scared it'll tell me I'm not Abnegation..." it shows a fear. Tris feels afraid to take a test because it will tell where she belongs. The rules bring anxiety to Tris, If she is not Abnegation she has to leave her family because of faction over blood. Faction is a division of status according to one's personality. Each faction is equal and has only one distinctive social function. Tris is coming from the Abnegation family, her father is a Council in Abnegation. Abnegation is a public servant, dedicated to helping displaced people.

The second anxiety comes when Tris is depressed because she feels she is weak in Dauntless. Dauntless is a Faction dedicated to courage, bravery, strength, and fearlessness. Dauntless are protectors, soldiers, and police. Tris is afraid if she did not pass the test to be dauntless and then she will be factionless as evidence by the following citation :

Tris: I'm never going to make it.

Christina: Yes, you are.

Tris: I'm the weakest one here.

Christina: Then you'll be the most improved.

[Christina smiles at her]

Tris: You're a Candor, you're not supposed to lie.

Christina: I was Candor. And I'm not lying. (00:38:17,061 --> 00:38:49,693)

From the citation above, Tris talks to Christina about her feeling. She feels weak and is also afraid if she does not pass the test. According to the realistic anxiety theory, Tris anxiety comes from fear of danger in the environment, Tris is afraid if she becomes factionless and kept away from the environment.

Meanwhile, the next realistic anxiety occurs when Tris visit Tori, Tori is a woman that tests her to determine the faction. Tris tells Tori about her anxiety. Then Tori tells Tris about her brother that he is also Divergent. He was killed by Dauntless leadership after all dauntless people know that he was Divergent. Tris feels scared after hearing this because she will end up like Tori's brother, as evidence by the following citation:

Tori: My brother, he was like you. During the second stage, he got good fast. Last day of the simulations one of the Dauntless leaders came in to watch him. The next morning we found his body at the bottom of the chasm. They got rid of him.

Tris: Who did?

Tori: Dauntless leadership. You can't let them find out about you.

Tris: And what if they already know?

Tori: Then you're already dead. (01:24:12,547 --> 01:24:39,072)

This is again realistic anxiety because Tris feels in danger from her environment. Based on the definition of anxiety, anxiety comes from the real threat or threats in the environment in a person's life. From the citation above, it is clear that Tris feels anxiety from real treats in the environment because she is Divergent. She feels scared as she thinks that what happened with Tori's brother will seemingly happen to her even when it is only her worry.

4.2 Defense Mechanism of The Main Character

The second finding of this study is to answer the question: How does the main female character use the defense mechanism to cope with her life in *Divergent*?

In this research, the main character used some ego defense mechanisms to cope with her anxious feeling. A defense mechanism is strategies to face the pressure. Freud said that strategies used by humans. in this study, the researcher found 5 kinds of defense mechanisms that used by Tris's caractere namely, Displacement, Reaction formation, Sublimation, Repression, and Regression.

4.2.1 Repression

Repression press ideas, instinct, memory, and thought that can cause anxiety to get out of consciousness. a person will usually express his feelings by thinking more about something positive to get rid of his anxiety.

Repression occurs when Tris try to relax herself to come to the test to determine her Faction, as evidence by the following citation :

Caleb: Just relax, Beatrice. Take a deep breath and trust the test.

Tris: Trust the test. The test will tell me who I am, where I belong. Am I smart? Kind? Am I honest? Selfless? Or brave? (00:05:58,058 --> 00:06:21,514)

From the dialog above, Tris feels nervous, and to reduce her nervous she tells herself that it is a rule, so she will know where she belongs. This is clear repression because Tris presses her thought that can cause anxiety, Tris presses her thoughts and try to think that it is the rule. So, she must take the test to determine her faction.

4.2.2 Reaction formation

Reaction formation is a defense mechanism that pushes away threatening impulses by overemphasizing the opposite in one's thoughts and words. someone hiding feelings or motives that occur at the same time shows the opposite.

Reaction formation occurs when Al died and Tris blamed herself and she going away and asked Four to leave her alone, as evidence by the following citation :

Four: Tris!

Tris: Leave me alone.

Four: I'm sorry about Al.

Tris: It's my fault that he's dead.

Four: No, it's not because of you. He made his own choice. He would have been factionless, he was not going to pass the final test. (01:27:58,106 --> 01:28:15,789)

According to the dialog above, Tris blamed herself concerning Al's death. Al died because he was afraid of failure in the Dauntless' test, and therefore he belonged to a factionless category. It shows reaction formation because actually in this situation she is angry and disappointed with Al but she does the opposite, she feels sad because he is still her friend.

4.2.3 Displacement

Displacement carried out by transferring to other targets. Displacement involves taking out our frustrations, feelings, and impulses on people or objects that are less threatening.

The strategy of displacement is taken when Tris tries to save herself by shoot her friends, Will. Will is unconscious because of He is affected by the serum. He wants to shoot Tris and Tris' mother, so she must protect herself with shoot Will and then Will died, as evidence by the following citation :

Tris: I killed him. I killed him. I killed him. (01:53:53,126 --> 01:53:58,197)

In this situation, Tris used a strategy of displacement to cope with her anxiety by transferring to other targets. And she shoots her friend to save her body. Tris tells Will that she regrets it, Will about it, but she does not have any choice.

The second displacement is when Tris fight with peter to enter the headquarters of Dauntless. Tris must shoot Peter, so he wants to give up and tells where is the computer that controls the Dauntless, as evidence by the following citation :

Marcus: Did you really need to shoot him?

Tris: Every minute we waste another Abnegation dies and a Dauntless becomes a murderer.

[to Peter]

Tris: Peter, let's go. (01:59:36,636 --> 01:59:46,644)

From the dialog above, Tris does not have other choices. She must shoot Peter to enter the headquarters of Dauntless, so she can stop the computer. This is displacement because to cope with her anxiety she transfers it to other people. She is transferring her anxiety by shooting Peter and asking him to bring her to the place where Erudite control the computer.

4.2.4 Sublimation

Sublimation is a defense mechanism to prevent or relieve anxiety by changing id into human behavior that is acceptable and appreciated by society (Feist, 2008:38). Sublimation happened twice in Tris' ego defense mechanism.

Sublimation happened when Tris tried to fight her confusion, worried, and sadness by practicing in every leisure time she has to pass the next test, as evidence by the following citation :

Four: You're weak. You have no muscle. You're never going to win, not like that.

Tris: That's good to know.

Four: You have to use your whole body. Keep the tension here.

Tris: Okay.

Four: Go on offense. You're fast, so you could win if you attack first.

Tris: Okay.

Four: You get into the side, you jab them in the throat.

Four: Keep working. (00:41:43,367 --> 00:42:15,464)

From the dialog above, Tris is trying to exercise because she is weak, and then Four come and give her advice. Tris trying very hard to pass the test. This is showed because Tris wants to pass the test and acceptable to be Dauntless.

4.2.5 Regression

The next ego defense mechanism is regression. Regression is a defense mechanism when a person shifts to a lower level and less mature in adaptation. Regression is returned to an earlier, safer stage of one's life to escape the present threats. Regression happened once in Tris' Ego defense mechanism.

The regression is shown when Tris come to Caleb, her brother, and tells that she is not fit in Dauntless and wants to back to Abnegation. it is very impossible to back to the last faction because the rule is when someone can't pass the test she becomes Factionless as evidence by the following citation :

Tris: I'm in trouble.

Caleb: What happened?

Tris: I'm not going to make it in Dauntless. I don't fit in there.

Caleb: You have to fit in there.

Tris: I can't.

[she pauses for a moment]

Tris: I'm, I'm, I'm just, I'm not like them.

Caleb: Who is? They're crazy.

Tris: Maybe I can go back to Abnegation.. (01:18:24,567 --> 01:18:58,166)

From the dialog above, Tris said “*Maybe I can go back to Abnegation.*” it is clear that Tris wants to give up and return to abnegation because she knows Dauntless is not fit to her. Tris is only afraid if they know that she is Divergent and they will kill her.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

In this research, the researcher found that there are two types of anxiety experienced by Tris character in *Divergent*. Namely realistic anxiety and moral anxiety. There are 3 realistic anxiety and 3 moral anxiety. Then, to cope with her anxiety Tris character used some defense mechanism. The principal of defense mechanism includes repression, reaction formation, displacement, fixation, regression, projection, introjections, and sublimation (Freud in Feist 2008:35). There are five defense mechanisms used by Tris, namely displacement, reaction formation, sublimation, repression, and regression. The researcher hopes the future researchers who are interested in analyzing this movie can discuss it deeper

to find neurotic anxiety and another defense mechanism that is not founded by the researcher in this research.

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