

Defense Mechanism to Overcome Anxiety in *Violet Evergarden Volume 2* by Kana Akatsuki

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Abstract:

This study aims to analyze the role of Defense Mechanism in reducing the anxiety in the novel Violet Evergarden Volume 2 by Kana Akatsuki. There are two purposes for this research. The first is to identify the type of anxiety in the novel. Second, Defense Mechanism work overcome the anxiety in the novel. The theory used in this research is Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis, particularly Mechanism Defense and Anxiety. The method used in this research is qualitative descriptive. The researcher found that the factors causing the anxiety were classified into 3 types, namely moral anxiety, realistic anxiety, and neurotic anxiety. To overcome the anxiety, the characters use Ego Defense Mechanism as a form of self-defense. The types of defense mechanisms that the researchers found were suitable for overcoming the anxiety in the novel were Repudiate of Fact, Eradicate the mistakes of the past, Transfer negative emotion into beneficial activity, Dispersion of Negative emotions, and Contradictory behavior. The researcher found that the anxiety felt by the characters came from themselves and others, by using the Defense Mechanism the characters could relieve the anxiety they felt.

Keywords: *defense mechanism, anxiety, Violet Evergarden Volume 2*

INTRODUCTION

In this research the researcher chooses the object Novel as object research, the novel is *Violet Evergarden Volume 2* by Kana Akatsuki. This work has won the grand prize in the fifth Kyoto Animation Award's novel category in 2013, the first-ever work to win a grand prize in each of the three categories (novel, scenario, and manga). The novel has been adapted to Animation, with 13 episodes in January 2018. The series was awarded Best Animation at the 2019 Crunchyroll Anime Awards. Kana Akatsuki's work has now been made into a film that will air in 2020.

A novel is a work of fiction built by building elements, namely intrinsic elements, and extrinsic elements. A novel is also defined as an essay in the form of prose which contains a series of stories of a person's life with other people around him by highlighting the character and nature of the actor. (Nurgiyantoro, 2010, p.10) The researcher understands that stories that have complex plots are often seen in many novels and trigger readers to keep reading until their curiosity is satisfied. The storyline is presented by the author in their way, and the characteristics that distinguish writing from other writers are what makes the storytelling look more interesting and unique.

In the novel, there is a plot that evokes emotion which describes human emotions in real life as such as anger, sadness, happiness, guilt, and even anxiety. Anxiety is an emotion that makes humans and all living creatures in this world feel unpleasant feelings that constantly getting worse. Such overwhelming anxiety could lead an individual to stress that can affect health. Any situation that threatens the comfort of an organism is assumed to give birth to a condition called anxiety. Various conflicts and forms of frustration that hinder the progress of individuals to achieve goals is one source of anxiety. The threat can be in the form of physical, psychological, and various pressures that cause anxiety. This condition is followed by feelings of discomfort that can be characterized by the terms worry, fear, unhappiness that we can feel through various levels. (Hilgard et al via Minderop, 2013, p.28)

To reduce the pain from the anxiety people do various ways according to their needs. If anxiety is difficult to be relieved, many people often relieve this anxiety by forgetting and denying it, which is part of the defense mechanism. Defense mechanism is a manner in which we think or behave in particular ways to protect and defend ourselves. Defense mechanism is an attempt to overcome anxiety by using methods that deny, falsify, distort reality and that impede the development of personality. (Hall, 1954, p.85). Therefore, from a variety of ways to relieve anxiety, a defense mechanism is a method to defend ourselves from unpleasant memory or even situation. The way defense mechanisms overcome anxiety is a very interesting topic for the researcher to study as it discusses the consequences of human response towards unpleasant situations and feelings. The researcher is interested to elaborate this matter in a theoretical manner in order to emphasize that unpleasant feelings in the human mind should not be underestimated and overlooked.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The researcher used Sigmund Freud's theory of psychoanalysis as a reference in this study. The researcher will analyze the anxiety that characters felt in *Violet Evergarden Volume 2* by Kana Akatsuki. In the research, the researcher applies Sigmund Freud's defense mechanism theory as the basis of the analysis. In this theory, the researcher also identifies each type of Sigmund Freud's theory.

Theory of psychoanalysis was first proposed by Sigmund Freud as the Father of Psychoanalysis. The theory of psychoanalysis relates to the function and mental development of humans, According to Freud (in Kasschau, 2003), "psychological disturbances are due to anxiety caused by hidden conflicts among the unconscious components of one's personality."(p.494). Psychoanalysis is a medical method of neurological patient treatment that Freud used to treat his patients. One job of the psychoanalysis, therefore, is to help make the patients aware of the unconscious impulses, desires, and fears that are causing the anxiety. Psychoanalysts believe that if patients can understand their unconscious motives, they have taken the first step toward gaining control over their behavior and freeing themselves of their problems.

ANXIETY

Anxiety is a feeling that comes from discomfort, worry and guilt. Anxiety is caused by the conflict between the id's powerful impulses and the modifying forces of the ego and superego, Anxiety is used by the ego as a sign of imminent danger. This statement is based on Freud's definition regarding Anxiety (In Schultz, 2009) as below;

"Anxiety is a signal that impending danger, a threat to the ego, must be counteracted or avoided. The ego must reduce the conflict between the demands of the id and the strictures of society or the superego. According to Freud, this conflict is ever present because the instincts are always pressing for satisfaction, and the taboos of society are always working to limit such satisfaction." (Schultz & Schultz, 2009, p.61)

Based on this statement, the researcher understands that anxiety is a warning to the ego for the dangers that will come, the threat must be immediately mitigated or avoided so that the danger can be resolved as soon as possible. Humans must have felt anxiety that comes from various situations, but anxiety is not the same as fear because anxiety can come without a cause. However, in this study, the anxiety caused comes from feelings of regret and sadness which make anxiety arise and affect a person's behavior. Freud suggests three types of anxiety: namely realistic anxiety, neurotic anxiety, and moral anxiety.

Reality Anxiety

Reality anxiety means fear of danger from the outside world, and level of these feelings is proportional to the real threat level. According to Freud (in Feist, 2008), "Objective anxiety (reality) is a realistic response when a person feels danger in an environment. Realistic anxiety, is closely related to fear. It is defined as an unpleasant, nonspecific feeling involving a possible danger." (p.34). For example, we may experience realistic anxiety

while driving in heavy, fast-moving traffic in an unfamiliar city, a situation fraught with real, objective danger. However, realistic anxiety is different from fear in that it does not involve a specific fearful object.

Neurotic Anxiety

According to Freud (in Feist 2008), Neurotic anxiety is defined as apprehension about an unknown danger. The feeling itself exists in the ego, but it originates from id impulses. People may experience neurotic anxiety in the presence of a teacher, employer, or some other authority figure because they previously experienced unconscious feelings of destruction against one or both parents. During childhood, these feelings of hostility are often accompanied by fear of punishment, and this fear becomes generalized into unconscious neurotic anxiety. (p.34)

Moral Anxiety

Moral anxiety, stems from the conflict between the id and the superego. According to Freud (in Feist, 2008), “After children establish a superego—usually by the age of 5 or 6—they may experience anxiety as an outgrowth of the conflict between realistic needs and the dictates of their superego. Moral anxiety, for example, would result from sexual temptations if a child believes that yielding to the temptation would be morally wrong. It may also result from the failure to behave consistently with what they regard as morally right, for example, failing to care for aging parent.” (p.34). When you are motivated to express an instinctual impulse that is contrary to your moral code, your superego retaliates by causing you to feel shame or guilt.

DEFENSE MECHANISM

The defense mechanism occurs because of the urge or feeling to find a replacement object. In modern life, defense mechanisms are used to solve problems of anxiety that humans feel resulting from inner human conflicts or environmental influences. By observing behavior and knowing the causes and what is felt by the individual, it is possible to adjust the appropriate mechanism to alleviate the anxiety that is felt. According to Freud (in Feist, 2008), state that,

“.. Although defense mechanisms are normal and universally used, when carried to an extreme they lead to compulsive, repetitive, and neurotic behavior. Because we must expend psychic energy to establish and maintain defense mechanisms, the more defensive we are, the less psychic energy we have left to satisfy id impulses. This, of course, is precisely the ego’s purpose in establishing defense mechanisms—to avoid dealing directly with sexual and aggressive impulses and to defend itself against the anxiety that accompanies them” (Feist, 2008, p.34-35).

Based on statement above, the researcher understand that defense mechanism has been used universally and unnoticed. Always maintaining a defense mechanism also limits the id's desire to seek satisfaction. Therefore, the Ego has to avoid excessive emotions felt by the id with its limitations to satisfy itself. Defense mechanism as a form of problem-solving,

there are several types of defense mechanisms. In this research, the researcher found 5 defense mechanism that work to overcome anxiety based with the data that have been found, that is Denial, Undoing, Sublimation, Displacement and Reaction Formation.

Sublimation

According to Freud (in Feist, 2008), one mechanism—sublimation—helps both the individual and the social group. Sublimation is the repression of the genital aim of Eros by substituting a cultural or social aim. The sublimated aim is expressed most obviously in creative cultural accomplishments such as art, music, and literature, but more subtly, it is part of all human relationships and all social pursuits. (p.38).

Based on the statement above, the researcher understand this kind defense mechanism have positive effect, rather than act out in ways that may cause harms to others and ourself, Sublimation allows someone to channel that inappropriate energy(anxiety) into things that are beneficial. For example, when someone feel anxiety they using sublimation as their defense it can channel to something like singing, exercise, and many more to relieve anxiety.

Reaction Formation

According to Freud (in Feist, 2008), One of the ways in which a repressed impulse may become conscious is through adopting a disguise that is directly opposite its original form. This defense mechanism is called a reaction formation. Reactive behavior can be identified by its exaggerated character and by its obsessive and compulsive form (p.35). This kind defense mechanism occur when someone try to hide their true feelings, and show opposite behavior that different from the original feelings. For example, people use reaction formation when they meet someone that they hate, and treat them with friendly manner because they know that they need to hide those feelings.

Displacement

According to Freud (in Feist, 2008), in displacement, people can redirect their unacceptable urges onto a variety of people or objects so that the original impulse is disguised or concealed. Freud used the term “displacement” in several ways. In our discussion of the sexual drive, for example, we saw that the sexual object can be displaced or transformed onto a variety of other objects, including one’s self. (p.36).

Based on the statement above, displacement is defense mechanism that taking out our frustrations and feeling to another person or object that less dangerous. For another example, husband getting angry at their child and spouse because he frustrated getting yelled by his boss at work or throwing an object to his anxiety.

Denial

According to Freud (in Schultz, 2009), The defense mechanism of denial is related to repression and involves denying the existence of some external threat or traumatic event that has occurred. For example, a person with terminal illness may deny the imminence of

death. Parents of a child who has died may continue to deny the loss by keeping the child's room unchanged. (p.59).

Based on the sentence above, denial is defense mechanism that deny something that make someone feel anxious. This defense mechanism is proposed by Anna Freud which involves a refusal to accept reality, thus blocking external events from awareness. This defense mechanism occurs in situation where accepting the fact or reality is too much to handle, that is why deny those fact is a way to relieve anxiety.

Undoing

According to Freud (in Boumeister, 1998), Defined as the literal attempt to alter the past, undoing is impossible and hence pathological. One may, however, see a more normal and less extreme version of the same response among people who experience uncontrolled ruminations about past events, especially if these ruminations are characterized by strong or vivid counterfactual thoughts about how things might have gone differently. (p.1096)

Based on statement above, undoing is defense mechanism when we act on an idea or impulse that we later regret, we may adopt a defense mechanism of attempting to "undo" that action in order to protect the ego from feelings of guilt or shame. For example, A person may intentionally push past someone in a shop, but realizing that the person was frail, feel guilty with regards to their behavior. They may try to undo their action by apologizing or offering to help the person.

Repression

According to Freud (in Feist,2008), the most basic defense mechanism, because is it involved in each of the others, is repression. Whenever the ego is threatened by undesirable id impulses, it protects itself by repressing those impulses; that is, it forces threatening feelings into the unconscious (p.35). Based on statement above, repression is defense mechanism that involves keeping certain thoughts or feelings out of conscious awareness in order to protect oneself from painful memory. Repression cannot suppress memory for too long, therefore certain memories that you want to forget can be recalled.

Projection

According to Freud (in Feist, 2008), when an internal impulse provokes too much anxiety, the ego may reduce that anxiety by attributing the unwanted impulse to an external object, usually another person. This is the defense mechanism of projection, which can be defined as seeing in others unacceptable feelings or tendencies that actually reside in one's own unconscious (p.37). Based on statement above, projection is defense mechanism that taking out our unwanted attitude or behavior that cause anxiety to other people. For example, a girl hates her own mother, but she understands that feeling is wrong, so she changes 'I hate her' to 'She hates me'.

Regression

According to Freud (in Feist, 2008), once libido has passed a developmental stage, it may, during time of stress and anxiety, revering back to that earlier stage. Such a reversion is

known as regression. Regressions are quite common and are readily visible in children (p.36). Based on statement above, Regression is defense mechanism that rever back to earlier stage where there is nothing will bring danger to oneself. In the face of severe stress or challenges to the extreme, a person might try to overcome their anxiety with cling to immature and inappropriate behavior.

Introjection

According to Freud (in Feist, 2008), Whereas projection involves placing an unwanted impulse onto an external object, introjection is a defense mechanism whereby people incorporate positive qualities of another person into their own ego (p.37). Based on this statement, introjection is defense mechanism that trusting the values or standards of others as their own. For example, following someone's dress style who looks fashionable then following it and saying that it is his style of dress.

Fixation

According to Freud (in Feist, 2008), Psychological growth normally proceeds in a somewhat continuous fashion through the various stages of development. The process of psychologically growing up, however, is not without stressful and anxious moments. When the prospect of taking the next step becomes too anxiety provoking, the ego may resort to the strategy of remaining at the present, more comfortable psychological stage. Such a defense is called fixation (p.36). Based on this statement, fixation is defense mechanism that failing to advance to the next stage of development. For example, and adult sucking his thumbs to reduce his anxiety.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher wants to discuss a topic on anxiety on the characters in novel *Violet Evergarden Volume 2* by Akatsuki Kana. In addition, it aims at describing the forms of anxiety that influence defense mechanism of the characters to overcome anxiety. Due that the main source in this research is the text in the novel, the researcher uses descriptive method that include observing behavior of the characters that appear within the novel. The type of this research is qualitative descriptive research. The resulting data analysis is presented in the form of description that describes and elaborates the researcher's argument in detailed explanations.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, the researcher found several types of defense mechanism that works to overcome the anxiety experienced by characters. The researcher found Repudiate of Fact, Eradicate Past Mistakes, Transfer Negative Emotions into Beneficial Activity, Dispersion of Negative Feelings, and Contradictory Behavior as an ego defense tool used by characters to overcome their anxiety that arise.

REPUDIATE OF FACT WORK IN REALISTIC ANXIETY

The defense mechanism of Repudiate of Fact is related to repression and involves denying the existence of some external threat or traumatic event that has occurred. In this study, researcher found the function of Repudiate of Fact within Gilbert and Violet which works to overcome Realistic anxiety, Moral anxiety and Neurotic anxiety. However, in this research, the researcher will focus on Realistic Anxiety.

In such circumstances, it was best to use her while maintaining her at reach, and the tool herself wished for that as well.

---It can't be helped.. in order for us.. to be together. For her to stay alive.

Even so, the insides of his eyes hurt exactly as the time he had stared directly into the sun. (p.9).

In excerpt above, Despite being afraid of Violet's abilities, Gilbert kept the girl by his side. He was afraid that Violet could injure others without his guidance and orders, even though he knew he had made a huge mistake by using it as a killing tool. The fear that Gilbert felt was Realistic Anxiety. To alleviate that fear Gilbert became Violet master, in the hope that the girl would not fall into someone else's hands. He denied his bad deeds by saying, 'It can't be helped... in order for us... to be together. For her to stay alive. ' Presuming he could do nothing but use Violet as a tool, to keep her alive.

ERADICATE PAST MISTAKES WORK IN MORAL ANXIETY

When we act on an idea or impulse that we later regret, we may adopt a defense mechanism of attempting to “undo” that action in order to protect the ego from feelings of guilt or shame. They may try to undo their action by apologizing or offering to help the person. In this study, the researcher found the function of eradicate past mistakes within Gilbert Bougainvillea which works to relieve moral anxiety and realistic anxiety

“I agree with that... for her sake, anything I can do.. in order to keep her away from the army, I have done several preparations to prevent her return. Personal connections, merits.. I devoted myself for everything to be the utmost and very best. I'm in the middle of that even at the moment. If it's to protect violet, I won't nitpick methods.” (p.185)

In excerpt above, years have passed Gilbert has finally achieved his goal. He has expanded his connections, secured higher posts, and made other preparations to prevent other superiors from returning Violet to the military. He has suffered for a long time, turning his loved ones into murderous tools and overwhelmed by a pang of intense guilt. The anxiety that Gilbert feels is moral anxiety, to overcome Gilbert's use of eradicate past mistakes as his defense mechanism. This can be seen in the following sentence, 'I agree with that ... for her sake, anything I can do ... in order to keep her away from the army, I have done several preparations to prevent her return. '. Gilbert will use various means so that Violet does not return to being a killing tool.

TRANSFER NEGATIVE EMOTIONS INTO BENEFICIAL ACTIVITY WORK IN REALISTIC ANXIETY

According to Freud, Transfer Negative Emotions into Beneficial Activity is the repression of the genital aim of Eros by substituting a cultural or social aim. The sublimated aim is expressed most obviously in creative cultural accomplishments such as art, music, and literature, but more subtly, it is part of all human relationships and all social pursuits. In this study, researcher found the function of transfer negative emotions into beneficial activity within Violet which works to relieve realistic anxiety.

“Letters can deliver words to those who are far away. There are no communication devices here. However, if I wrote a letter... and received a response, although I would not be using my voice, it would be the same as having a talk. Major might not have spare time for it. Still, i.. the fact that, I his tool, am here... to major...” (p.43)

In excerpt above, Violet waited for Gilbert's visit for a long time but the man did not come. Violet began to worry that Gilbert did not need her, so she asked Hodgins to teach her how to write so that she could send a letter to Gilbert. Violet's anxiety is realistic, it is caused by her anxiety about being abandoned. To overcome this anxiety she transfer her negative emotions into beneficial activity as her defense mechanism, it can be seen in the following sentence, 'However, if I wrote a letter .. and received a response, although I would not be using my voice, it would be the same as having a talk.' By writing letters Violet believes she can connect with Gilbert even though the distance separates them, and knows the news and what Gilbert is doing while reporting violet's health and training state.

DISPERSION OF NEGATIVE FEELINGS WORK IN REALISTIC ANXIETY

In Dispersion of Negative Feelings, however, people can redirect their unacceptable urges onto a variety of people or objects so that the original impulse is disguised or concealed. Freud used the term “dispersion of negative feelings” in several ways. In this study, researcher found the function of dispersion of negative feelings within Violet which works to relieve realistic anxiety.

“I do not understand ‘fun’. However, I believe I want to keep touching it”. Possibly due to her anxiety and nervousness subsiding, her tone was softer than before. She politely thanked him as he held still the plush that was drifting apart from her nose once more. (p.34)

In excerpt above, waking up without her master on Violet's side worries Violet. Her only mission is to protect her master and listen to all of Gilbert's orders. However, Violet's condition was not even able to stand on her own, making her give up being stubborn. She decided to focus on healing herself, but the anxiety made her uneasy. Violet's anxiety is realistic anxiety, it is caused by violet fear of being left by her master. To overcome this anxiety, violet uses Dispersion of Negative Feelings as a defense mechanism. This can be seen in the following sentence, 'I do not understand' fun '. However, I believe I want to keep touching it.'. Without realizing this, Violet channeled her anxiety by touching the doll given

by Hodgin. While touching the doll violet anxiety eases and calms her down, the comfort of touching the stuffed dog makes Violet feel relieved.

CONTRADICTIONARY BEHAVIOR WORK IN MORAL ANXIETY

One of the ways in which a repressed impulse may become conscious is through adopting a disguise that is directly opposite its original form. This defense mechanism is called a Contradictory Behavior. In this study, researcher found the function of Contradictory Behavior within gilbert which works to relieve moral anxiety and realistic anxiety.

“She can do it.” His voice finally came out. “She can do it, but violet needs specific on-site directions. If you have witnessed the slaughter of back then, you understand that, right? She cannot function as a weapon unless I give instructions. Allow me to accompany her.” it had finally come out, but not with what he had wanted to say. (p.11)

In excerpt above, an order to send Violet to kill the arms dealer alone makes Gilbert nervous. A mission that quite many people should have undertaken but Violet had to complete it by herself, leaving him with anxiety. Gilbert knew his tool could complete the mission easily, but imagining himself ordering the girl away filled him with guilt. The anxiety Gilbert felt was moral anxiety, he promises himself to protect the girl and treat her well and didn't want to give the girl any more trouble with the orders he was giving. To overcome this anxiety Gilbert uses his Contradictory Behavior as his defense mechanism, this can be seen in the following sentence, 'She cannot function as a weapon unless I give instructions. Allow me to accompany her. '. Unable to refuse his superior's orders, Gilbert suggested going with Violet in secret mission.

CONCLUSION

The researcher concluded there are 3 types of anxiety reflected in the novel, Gilbert felt Moral Anxiety and Realistic Anxiety, while Violet felt Realistic Anxiety, Moral Anxiety, and Neurotic Anxiety. From this anxiety, the characters try to overcome their anxiety by using defense mechanisms as self-defense. Based on the second research question, the researcher found 5 types of defense mechanisms that the characters use is Contradictory behavior, Dispersion of negative feelings, Eradicate past mistakes, Repudiate of fact and Transfer negative emotions into beneficial activity. The researcher can be stated the most effective type of defense mechanism to overcome moral anxiety is Eradicate Past Mistakes with data that appears as much as 7 Excerpt. The most effective type of defense mechanism to overcome realistic anxiety is Repudiate of Fact with data that appears as much as 5 Excerpt. And the most effective type of defense mechanism to overcome neurotic anxiety is Repudiate of Fact with that appears as much as 2 Excerpt.

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