AMY’S DEFENSE MECHANISMS TO COPE WITH HER ANXIETIES IN GILLIAN FLYNN’S GONE GIRL

AN UNDERGRADUATE THESIS

Presented as Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Sarjana Sastra in English Letters

By

THERESIA TYAS THEA KIRANA
Student Number: 154214031

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FACULTY OF LETTERS
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FOUND IN GILLIAN FLYNN’S GONE GIRL

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NO DAY
BUT TODAY
FOR

MY DEAREST PARENTS,

BROTHER,

EYANG SOEDIJONO,

AND

FATHER DANANG
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Theresia Tyas Thea Kirana
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ABSTRACT

KIRANA, THERESIA TYAS THEA. Amy’s Defense Mechanism to Cope with Her Anxieties in Gillian Flynn’s Gone Girl. Yogyakarta: Department of English Letters, Faculty of Letters, Universitas Sanata Dharma.

Literature and human always have some connections in some ways. Literature can be a medium for human to portray the society and themselves. The existence of conflicts and problems within human’s life is inevitable. Therefore, human always has a kind of defense mechanism to protect themselves when they are in dangerous situation. This study discusses Amy’s anxieties and defense mechanism in a novel titled Gone Girl in order to see the correlation between her anxieties and defense mechanism, and how she copes with that.

The researcher’s two main problems are Amy’s anxieties and her defense mechanisms found in the novel. The first objective research is to understand Amy’s anxieties. Her anxieties can be known from her personality or characteristics. The second objective is to analyze Amy’s defense mechanisms in order to cope with her anxieties found in the novel.

To analyze the problem formulation above, the researcher uses psychoanalytic approach in order to answer the problem formulation which have been formulated into three main objectives of the study. Library research is used in order to find the exact theories in this study and to help the researcher to answer the problem formulation. There are two kind of resources that are used to finish the study. First, the researcher used a primary resource the novel Gone Girl by Gillian Flynn and the secondary sources are the theory books, articles, and some journals. Afterwards, the researcher formulated two problem formulation and used the psychoanalytic approach to help the researcher answer the problems. Following by that, the researcher applied several theories to analyze the problem formulation. The theories are theory of character and characterization, theory of anxiety, and theory of defense mechanism. The last step is the researcher drew the conclusion of the analysis.

It is proven in this study that Amy faces some anxieties, there are neurotic anxiety, moral anxiety, and realistic anxiety. The main anxiety comes since she was a little kid because of her parents always demand her to be a what they wanted for example to win everything in life. Later in her life, she feels some anxieties start to kicking in. She feels inadequate until later she meets Nick and all her repression that she has before start to exploding. From the first analysis about the anxieties that Amy faces, it is revealed in order to cope with her anxieties Amy performs some types of defense mechanism. Reaction Formation to cope with her moral anxiety, Sublimation to cope with neurotic anxiety, Denial to cope with realistic anxiety, and Introjection to make sure that she is standing out. The defense mechanisms that she uses is shown as Amy’s way to cope with her anxieties.

Key words: anxiety, defense mechanism, psychoanalytic
ABSTRAK

KIRANA, THERESIA TYAS THEA. Amy’s Anxieties and Defense Mechanism in Gillian Flynn’s Gone Girl. Yogyakarta: Department of English Letters, Faculty of Letters, Universitas Sanata Dharma.

Manusia dan kesusastraan selalu berhubungan hampir di setiap hal. Karya sastra bisa menjadi sarana bagi manusia untuk menggambarkan keadaan dirinya dan kehidupan sosial yang ada. Di dalam kehidupan, keberadaan konflik dan problematika selalu tak terhindarkan. Maka dari itu, manusia pasti pernah melakukan mekanisme pertahanan untuk melindungi dirinya dalam keadaan bahaya. Penelitian ini berfokus pada kecemasan dan mekanisme pertahanan yang dimiliki Amy di dalam novel Gone Girl dan bagaimana Amy menghadapi kecemasan yang dimilikinya dengan menggunakan mekanisme pertahanan.

Dua rumusan utama yang ingin dicapai oleh peneliti adalah kecemasan dan mekanisme pertahanan yang dipunyai oleh Amy. Rumusan masalah yang pertama ada untuk mengetahui kecemasan yang dimiliki Amy. Kecemasan tokoh tersebut dapat dikenal dari karakteristik tokoh. Rumusan masalah yang kedua adalah untuk menganalisis mekanisme pertahanan yang dipunyai oleh Amy untuk mengatasinya.


Penelitian ini membuktikan bahwa Amy memiliki beberapa kecemasan seperti kecemasan neurotik, kecemasan moral, dan kecemasan yang berdasar pada realita.. Amy selalu merasa tidak puas akan dirinya, sampai suatu saat ia bertemu dengan Nick, pria yang membuatnya merasa nyaman, dan semua represi yang dimiliki Amy akhirnya terlampiaskan. Dari analisis yang sudah dilakukan, terbukti bahwa Amy menggunakan mekanisme pertahanan untuk melalui perasaan cemasnya. Amy cenderung untuk melakukan reaksi formasi, sublimasi, penolakan, dan introjeksi untuk memastikan bahwa dirinya akan terus bertahan. Beberapa mekanisme pertahanan yang dilakukan Amy ini bertujuan untuk bertahan dan melalui perasaan cemas yang ada pada dirinya.

Kata kunci: kecemasan, mekanisme pertahanan, psikoanalisis
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Literature has always been a part of human’s life. Literary works are the mirror of what is currently happens in life. It is about the earthlings, the culture, and all the conflicts within it. What happened in real life affects literary works and vice versa. Therefore, literature and human are always sharing values that interrelate people, earthlings and non-earthlings. All the time, people are always face some problems, and each of them are dealing with different or even similar problems. The projection of human’s problems, activities, or even cultures can be seen in literary works. W.H. Hudson in his book *An Introduction to The Study of Literature* states,

> Literature is a vital record of what men have seen in life, what they have experienced about it, what they have thought and felt about those aspects of it which have the most immediate and enduring interest for all of us. It is thus fundamentally an expression of life through the medium of language (1913, p. 11).

It is obvious that there is a real connection between literature and human’s life. Through literary works, what human faces, feels, and experiences in life can be expressed and learned through the process of writing.

The character written in literary works represents what human will do in real life. What they will do is absolutely different according to their current conditions. The act of doing may be influenced by some aspects such as their status, past, trauma, family background, unique experiences, and so on. Through
the stages of life, human may faces many problems, troubles, and conflicts. It is a complex life with complex human and its mind. Since human is a complex creature, we all have different feelings. One of the feelings that human almost feel every day is the unpleasant thing. This feeling is the one that may affect someone to do something in their life. It is more than the feeling of fear, it is called anxiety.

According to The Encyclopedia of Phobias, Fears, and Anxieties, anxiety is “the discomfort feeling from the generalized fear, angst, and often from unknown origin along by physiological symptoms. It is a response to certain danger or when human facing a threatening situation or object.” (M, Ronald et al, 2008, p. 50)

In this research titled Amy's Defense Mechanisms to Cope with Her Anxieties in Gillian Flynn’s Gone Girl, the researcher’s focal point is to identify a literary character’s defense mechanisms through her anxieties. By understanding the character’s characteristics, the researcher knows the sign or clue to Amy’s anxieties. By understanding her anxieties, the researcher will also get to know better about what defense mechanisms that the character uses to cope with her anxieties. As stated by Baumeister, Dale, and Sommer (1998), it is necessary for the self to have some mechanism or process to defend itself against the threatening implications of this event (p. 1082) and its process is called defense mechanism. There are many types of defense mechanism. People in any age will absolutely use defense mechanism to protect themselves. According to Fenichel (1945), defense mechanisms are actually “designed to protect self-esteem”
(Baumeister et al, 1998, p. 1082). Thus, the use of self-defense mechanism is normal because it happens in everyday life.

Since the analysis focuses on the character’s defense mechanisms, the researcher uses psychoanalytic approach. It is the best approach to use in this research because the researcher concerns about the character’s mind and how the character uses defense mechanisms in order to cope with the her anxieties. For that reason, the understanding in psychology is needed while doing psychoanalytical study in literature. Literature and psychology have similarities in terms of the object of them, both of the study deals with human’s life. It is supported in a journal titled *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, Aras stated that

> There is a very strong correlation between literature and psychology for the fact that both of them deal with human beings and their reactions, perceptions of the world, miseries, wishes, desires, fears, conflicts and reconciliations (2014, p. 251).

Intrigued by the existence of defense mechanism in life, the researcher wants to understand more the use of defense mechanism in the main character from a literary work. In this case, the researcher uses the drama-thriller novel *Gone Girl* by Gillian Flynn. The character who is analyzed is Amy Dunne. She is described as a brilliant woman who is very well-organized, also she is married to a Missouri guy named Nick Dunne. Not only intrigued by the existence of defense mechanism, the researcher is also curious about Amy Dunne’s characteristics, how complex her mind is and how it is working so she can use some mechanisms to cope with her anxieties.
Gone Girl tells a story of what family problem looks like, in this case is about the marriage, Amy and Nick’s marriage. Life of marriage is full of problems such as money, sex, kid, trust, and compromise. Amy clearly experiences a massive stress because her husband is cheating. She feels great anxieties within herself. Amy’s defense mechanisms are varies according to the situation and her fear. Since the function of defense mechanisms is “to protect the person from excessive anxiety, undue negative affect, and or loss of self-esteem, then exposure to a situation that increases these reactions should result in an increase in defense use” (Cramer, 1991, p. 6).

As it mentioned above, the novel Gone Girl tells about Amy and Nick’s marriage in both point of views. The readers will know what really happen in their marriage and Amy and Nick’s personality also their point of views of the marriage itself.

B. Problem Formulation

The focus of this study is on Amy’s anxieties which triggered her to defend herself from the threatening situation that she faced. In other words, the researcher is focus on Amy’s anxieties and her defense mechanism in order to cope with her anxieties.

The research questions are:

1. How are the characteristics of Amy Dunne is portrayed in Gillian Flynn’s Gone Girl?

2. What anxieties are experienced by Amy in Gone Girl?
3. What types of self-defense mechanism are used by Amy in order to cope with her anxieties in *Gone Girl*?

C. Objectives of the Study

In this study, the researcher aims to unveil Amy’s anxieties and understand her defense mechanisms through breaking down her characteristics. After understanding and knowing Amy’s characteristics, the researcher goes to her anxieties. Furthermore, the researcher discovers Amy’s defense mechanisms uses by Amy in order to cope with her anxieties. Defense mechanism happens when one is feeling threatened and anxious about something. By unraveling Amy’s characteristics and anxieties first and identifying her defense mechanisms, the objectives of this study will be achieved. This goal is done by analyzing Amy’s characteristics throughout the plot of the novel and connecting the result with the theories.

D. Definition of Terms

This study uses the psychoanalytic approach to obtain the objectives. Therefore, there are some terms that use psychological words such as anxiety and defense mechanism. The following definitions are the explanation of these terms that are used in this research.

The first term is anxiety. In *Encyclopedia of Psychology* by Alan E. Kazdin in a website called American Psychological Association, anxiety is defined as “an emotion of reaction characterized by some tensions, excessive
thoughts and it may brings physical changes like increased blood pressure”. In this study’s context, anxiety will trigger the act of the character Amy to do some defense mechanisms to protect herself, her feelings, and anything bad that threatened her.

The second term is defense mechanism. Defense mechanism is “some mechanism or process from the self to defend itself against the threatening implications of some events” (Baumeister et al, 1998. p. 1082). Discussing defense mechanism focuses onto someone’s mind, to understand how the mind is working. In *Theories of Personality*, S. Freud states “the most primitive part of the mind are id, ego, and superego” (Feist and Feist, 2008, p. 27)

The id is in the center of a personality and exists in unconscious part of human mind. “The id has no contact with reality, yet it strives constantly to reduce tension by satisfying basic desires.” (Feist and Feist, 2008, p. 27). Id itself is functioned to seek pleasure, whether the pleasure is morally right or wrong. Different from id, ego is like a decision-making for a personality. “The ego, or I, is the only region of the mind in contact with reality” (Feist and Feist, 2008, p. 29). The ego is like a bridge to connect id and superego, to conduct what act a person should have done. Ego can control the id impulse, or the opposite. However, the superego is the above-I. “Superego represents the moral and ideal aspects of personality and is guided by the moralistic and idealistic principles as opposed to the pleasure principle of the id and the realistic principle of the ego” (Feist and Feist, 2008, p. 30). The superego is playing a role as the voice within the society standard.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. Review of Related Studies

This present research focuses on Amy’s anxieties and her defense mechanisms in Gone Girl by Gillian Flynn. To understand the topic better, there are some journals, articles, and thesis done by other researchers before. These following studies are useful for this current research, they can be used as additional guidelines for the researcher to set the boundaries between this current research and these following studies before. Furthermore, it is shown that this present research is different and interesting topic to discuss.

In a review article finds in The New Yorker by Joshua Rothman (2014) titled “What Gone Girl is Really About”, he compared the book and movie version of Gone Girl and the movie version of Fight Club. In his article, he states that Gone Girl raises the possibility that marriage and victimhood are inseparable. The novel version of Gone Girl is fascinating because Rothman sees it as “it gets at what is unsettling about coupledom, in the same way as people’s suspicion that, in some fundamental sense, it necessarily entails victimization” (Rothman, 2014, para. 7). Rothman’s review also shows that both Gone Girl and Fight Club have some similarities, “such as the characters rebel against the unbearable myth of attainable perfection, substituting for it an alternative one of transcendent, authentic, freedom-giving destruction” (Rothman, 2014, para. 5).
Another related study belongs to Nicholas Pramudya Ardhana Iswara’s thesis (2018) titled “Santiago’s Psyche and Self-Defense Mechanism Development in Paulo Coelho’s *The Alchemist*”. The object of his thesis is a novel by Paulo Coelho *The Alchemist*. Iswara analyzes the personality characteristics of the major character of the novel, Santiago, which also uses some defense mechanisms. In his thesis, he finds that Santiago, who is the person being analyzed in *The Alchemist*, shows his defense mechanism development as the result of his personality changes on his journey towards realizing his dream (Iswara, 2008, p. 60). Santiago, the adventurous character who Iswara analyzed, has three defense mechanisms. There are Denial, Projection, and Identification. Iswara studied Santiago’s personality changes throughout the journey which influences the development of his defense mechanism.

The third related study is taken from a journal titled “Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volumes”, the article chosen by the researcher is written by Sebastian Gardner (2012) titled “Psychoanalytic Theory: A Historical Reconstruction”. The researcher uses the approach which Gardner analyzed in his paper which he published at Oxford University Press. In his study, he portrayed a reconstruction of the basic psychoanalytic concept of the mind in terms of two historical resources, there are the concept of the subject developed in post-Kantian idealism, and Spinoza’s point of affinity of psychoanalytic explanation. He is suggesting that “theory may be viewed as the product of combining a conception of the subject developed in post-Kantian thought with a Spinozist view of the mechanics of human motivation” (Gardner, 2012, p. 42).
The fourth related study is a thesis by Gilang Wening Pertiwi (2016) titled “Amy’s Personality Disorder in Flynn’s Gone Girl: A Psychological Approach”. In her study, Pertiwi focused on finding out the characteristics of antisocial personality disorder found in Amy and examining the causes why she suffers personality disorder (Pertiwi, 2016, p. 8). There are so many aspects to be analyzed from Gone Girl by Gillian Flynn, Pertiwi’s study and this present research has the same object of study, which is Gone Girl, and similar approach. Nevertheless, the topic of this present research is different from Pertiwi’s. Pertiwi’s study is more focused on Amy’s personality disorder and the problems Amy has during the time when she develops her personality. Meanwhile this present research is focuses on Amy’s anxieties and defense mechanisms.

This present research studies some similar elements such as the same object in Rothman’s article, which is Gone Girl, the same topic about defense mechanism in Iswara’s thesis “Santiago’s Psyche and Self-Defense Mechanism Development in Paulo Coelho’s The Alchemist”, the similar psychoanalytic approach in Sebastian Gardner’s paper about “Psychoanalytic Theory: A Historical Reconstruction”, and the same object of study in Pertiwi’s thesis. However, this present research has different work from all those studies mentioned above, which is about Amy’s anxieties in Gone Girl and defense mechanisms she uses in order to cope with her anxieties. Those journals, articles, and studies help this research to be better.
B. Review of Related Theories

This present research focuses on Amy’s anxieties and defense mechanisms in Gone Girl by Gillian Flynn. Therefore, there are some possible theories used to critically support this research. There are theory of character and characterization, theory of anxiety, and theory of defense mechanism. Those theories are presented briefly as follows.

1. Theory of Character and Characterization

Character is one of the aspects that makes a story more engaged with its readers. The author, usually, makes character based on real life situation.

Characters are the persons represented in a dramatic or narrative work, who are interpreted by the reader as possessing particular moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities by inferences from what the persons say and their distinctive ways of saying it (Abrams and Harpham, 2009: 42)

Generally, characters are the representation of people in real life. They are the reflections of what actually people do. The author has full authority to create his or her own characters based on the plot of the story. Each characters have their own mind, behavior, and uniqueness. Hence, they can act fully under the author’s control. The actions done by the characters can be influenced by some aspects such as the author’s past life, experiences, perspective, belief, gender, and so on. The characters’ characteristic can be seen by the way they do something, express themselves, speech, and some others. The nature or personality of one character is called characterization.
In *Understanding Unseen* (1972, pp. 161-173), M.J. Murphy stated nine ways the author does to make a character more understandable for readers. The ways to identify the characterization of characters are:

a. **Personal description**

   A person’s or character’s appearance can be described in details by the author. Even the clothes, the physical appearances in a similar way to the face, the skin color, the eyes, the shape of the lips, the height, the hands, scars, and even birthmark. By giving details and adjectives to describe the character, the author helps the readers to understand what character is she or he is going to be about.

b. **Character as seen by another**

   The author does not directly describe the character. Still, the character depicted through the perspective and opinions of other characters. It is a mirror reflection because the reader will get what the character is seen through others.

c. **Speech**

   When a person speaks, argues, or even giving opinions, and making a statement, the reader can get an insight of what the character the person will be. What the characters say shows how their mind is thinking about.

d. **Past life**

   The reader can get some clues by knowing the characters’ past life. By knowing what happened to the characters’ history, the reader can get an answer why the characters are the way they are. The characters’ past life can be seen from
the thought of the character itself, through the conversation, by another character, or by direct comment by the author.

e. **Conversation of others**

   A person’s character can be seen through what other persons think or say about her or him. When the other persons talk about the thing about the character, it can give the reader a clue about what the character’s persona and shows how the others see the character itself.

f. **Reactions**

   How people react to some events in life can show their personality. Since how people react is the only thing one can handle in any circumstances. The clue to understand a character can be observed by looking at how the character reacts to some situations and events.

g. **Direct comment**

   The author can give explicit explanation of the character’s persona by describing the character directly.

h. **Thoughts**

   The character’s point of view or how their mind is working can be shown in a story. The reader has the privilege to know what the character is thinking about something through the author’s writing.

i. **Mannerism**

   The character’s mannerisms, habits, or customs can help the reader to understand better about the character’s identity. The reader can see it through
something the character repeatedly doing, or it can be seen through the character’s unique trait.

2. **Theory of Anxiety**

Related to the previous theory, the theory of anxiety is used to understand what Amy has been through in her life and what threat she faces.

Anxiety is a felt, affective, unpleasant state accompanied by a physical sensation that warns the person against impending danger. The unpleasantness is often vague and hard to pinpoint, but the anxiety itself is always felt (Feist and Feist, 2009, p. 33).

Freud also mentioned that only the ego produce or feel the anxiety, but the id, superego, and external world each are involved in one of three kinds of anxiety (Feist and Feist, 2009, pp. 33-34), there are listed below.

a. **Neurotic Anxiety**

This anxiety is defined as a worry or being alarmed about something that cannot be known or an unknown danger. As it stated in a journal titled *What is the difference between Existential Anxiety and so called Neurotic Anxiety*, neurotic anxiety is described as “mere worrying, and is a smoke screen, a distraction, a psychological evasion, so that the worrier can shift his or her attention away from their angst” (Iacovou, 2010, p. 4). This kind of anxiety can be experienced when people are surrounded by “the presence of their boss, lecturer, or any authority figures because they may be experienced an unconscious feeling of destruction against one or both parents” (Feist and Feist, 2009, p. 34). What happened in the childhood phase can be borrowed, such as the fear of punishment. That fear can be generalized into unconscious neurotic anxiety. As it cited from *psychologydictionary.org*, “neurotic anxiety typically originates from unconscious
conflict within one’s own mind”. It originates from mental conflicts and frustrations in oneself. The symptoms are there are some distressing sensation and unrest feeling about something.

b. Moral Anxiety

Contrary from neurotic anxiety, moral anxiety “grows from the conflicts between ego and superego” (Feist and Feist, 2009, p. 34). The results of moral anxiety appears in a sense of guilt or shame. It is based on a feeling that one's internalized values are about to be compromised. This kind of anxiety emerges from the conflict between one’s realistic needs and something that dictates one’s superego. For example, a person with bulimia may do sit up for a hundred times, then consciously urge the food to come out by throwing the food up in order to make up for eating the ‘not allowed’ food. They do this for the sake of living in the standard that society made even though such standard is not relevant. One thing that makes moral anxiety differs from the others is the “formal object of moral anxiety is problematic uncertainty about the correctness of a moral decision one is contemplating or has made” (Kurth, 2015, p.179).

c. Realistic Anxiety

The third type of anxiety is the basic form of anxiety, or closely related to fear. It is defined as “an unpleasant, non-specific feeling involving a possible danger, however it is different from fear in general because it does not involve a specific fearful object” (Feist and Feist, 2009, p. 34). For example, a person may feel realistic anxiety experience when they are in the crowd of people and knowing no one but her or himself in the plaza by midnight. Exploring human
anxiety has to deal with the basic types of anxieties which are important and still growing. These are the types of anxieties as it cited in journal titled *Anxiety and Anxiety Disorders* (Wiedemann, K., 2015, p. 808)

d. **State Anxiety**

According to the journal, everyone can experience the anxiety occasionally, whereas there are some differences in duration, frequency, and the severity level. According to Spielberger (1979) as cited in a journal titled *Anxiety and Anxiety Disorders* by Klaus Wiedemann, state anxiety is defined as “a transitory emotional state consisting of feelings of apprehension, nervousness, and physiological sequel such as an increased heart rate or respiration” (p. 808). It is also can be defined “as an impermanent condition experienced at a specific instant” (Woodrown as cited in Sanaei, 2016, p. 903).

e. **Trait Anxiety**

Different from state anxiety, this type of anxiety is dealing with longer in duration rather that state anxiety. It is a combination between state anxiety and the perspective of the world of being dangerous and threatening at the same time. Trait anxiety represents the personality characteristics rather than just short-term feelings. According to Sanaei in his article (2015), trait anxiety can be considered as “a stable predisposition to become anxious in an extensive range of situations” (p. 903).

3. **Theory of Defense Mechanism**

Freud believed that both normal and abnormal behavior result from interactions among the id, ego, and super ego, among which the ego tends to distort or simply deny a reality that would arouse unbearable anxiety.
Freud called this tactic a defense mechanism, and as long as it works, the anxiety will be experienced unconsciously. (Freud, para. 1)

The human ego has a special mechanism to defend itself. Defense mechanism happens when a person feels anxious or endanger because of harmful situation. In *Theories of Personality* by Jess Feist and Gregory J. Feist (2009, p. 35-38), Freud mentions several principal defense mechanisms.

a. **Repression**

   It is the basic type of defense mechanism. “Whenever ego is threatened by undesirable id impulses, it protects itself by repressing those impulses” (Feist and Feist, 2009, p. 35). Repression works by pushing painful thoughts to the unconscious world to make one unaware of it. For example, a person who has repressed memories about sexual abuse in childhood may have difficulty maintaining relationship with others, because she or he may see someone else as a threat (Feist and Feist, 2009, p. 35).

b. **Reaction Formation**

   “Reactive behavior can be identified by its exaggerated character by its obsessive and compulsive form” (Feist and Feist, 2009, p. 35). For example, a young adult who deeply hates his lecturer, he knows the society standard to always respect the older people or in this case a teacher, then he focuses on the opposite impulse which respecting his lecturer. That respect he is given to his lecturer is not genuine.

c. **Denial**

   According to *Psychoanalytic Theory*, denial is when “a person simply denies things that produce anxiety” (2004, p. 283). For example, when a person
who smokes and do drugs deny that she or he has problems in their life. They deny that they have problems by doing something else to avoid the feeling they must feel.

d. Displacement

This type of defense mechanism is like blaming something to another object. “People can redirect their unacceptable urges onto a variety of people or objects so that the original impulse is disguised or concealed” (Feist and Feist, 2009, p. 36). For example, Richard gets mad and shouts at Martha. Then, Martha goes to her workplace and shout at Lisa, her co-worker. The co-worker, with nobody left to displace her anger onto, she throws a pile of papers.

e. Fixation

“Fixations are universal and permanent attachment of the libido onto an earlier, more primitive stage of development” (Feist and Feist, 2009, p. 36). For example, people who get pleasure from smoking and drinking, they may have what it calls oral fixation (Feist and Feist, 2009, p. 36).

f. Regression

This kind of defense mechanism is quite a form of getaway, it is when people are looking to an activity that is risk-free. “It happens to anxiety-producing situations is to revert to earlier, safer, more secure patterns of behavior” (Feist and Feist, 2009, p. 36). One example found in Theories of Personality, “Under extreme stress one adult may adopt the fetal position, another may return home to mother, and still another may react by remaining all day in bed, well covered from the cold and threatening world” (Feist and Feist, 2009, p. 36).
g. **Projection**

“Projection defined as seeing in others unacceptable feelings or tendencies that actually reside in one’s own unconscious” (Feist and Feist, 2009, p. 37). It happens when the internal impulse provokes too much anxiety. People project their thoughts or feelings to external object when they are feeling uncomfortable with their own feelings. They project it because they need to repress their thoughts or feelings to another alternative target.

h. **Introjection**

It is the type of defense mechanism where people introject another person’s positive qualities into their own principle. For example, a fan of The Beatles may adopt or introject the lifestyle of The Beatles’ members. “People introject characteristics that they see as valuable and that will permit them to feel better about themselves” (Feist and Feist, 2009, p. 37).

i. **Sublimation**

“Sublimation is the repression of the genital aim of Eros by substituting a cultural or social aim” (Feist and Feist, 2009, p. 38). It is the transformation of some unwanted desires into something less harmful. When people deal with uncomfortable situations, they create bad energies. Those energies are what people going to sublimate into something that is socially acceptable.

C. **Theoretical Framework**

After applying some theories to this present research titled “Amy’s Defense Mechanism to Cope with Her in Gillian Flynn’s *Gone Girl*” there are
some findings that this novel has related to those theories mentioned above. The first discussion focuses on Amy’s characteristics. Examining her characteristic by using the theory of character and characterization can identify her anxieties. The second discussion focuses on Amy’s anxieties. Following by theory of anxiety by Sigmund Freud, the researcher can get the message that Amy Dunne is not like every wife because she is different with her ability to have self-discipline and punish everyone who has betrayed her and anything behind Amy’s act and behavior.

Related to the first formulated problem, the third analysis is to identify what types of defense mechanism that she uses using the theory of defense mechanism by Sigmund Freud. It is also shown what the character has to do to cope with the problems and difficulties in her life. By using and applying all those theories and its relation with the all of the research formulations, this research can give the best result at last.
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

A. Object of the Study

The object of the study is a drama-thriller novel by an American author, Gillian Flynn, titled Gone Girl. The novel is written by Flynn who was the winner of the two CWA Dagger Awards. Gone Girl is originally written in English and first published by Weidenfeld & Nicolson in Great Britain in 2012. Most of the themes of Flynn’s writing are about dysfunctional families, violence, and self-harm (Goodreads Author, 2011). The novel Gone Girl is divided into three parts, the first part, Boy Loses Girl, contains Nick’s truth and Amy’s lies. The second part, Boy Meets Girl, is where Amy shows her true personalities, how evil or bad she is. Part three, Boy Gets Girl Back (or Vice Versa), is where Amy comes home to Nick and continue with her lies.

Gone Girl is a story of a husband and wife, living their bumpy marriage with all the problems like money, trust, and lies. The main characters are Amy and Nick Dunne. Amy Dunne is a daughter of two child psychologists, her parents are making a book titled Amazing Amy. That book becomes the bread and butter of Elliot’s family. Amy grows up with the book and the book itself is giving a massive impact to Amy’s life in general because the story in the book is similar to what happens in Amy’s daily life. Growing up being compared to the fantasy Amy in the Amazing Amy and being the only child after her mother had some miscarriages make Amy becomes a person who loves to be number one because
she needs that validation. Being with Nick Dunne, the husband, makes Amy feel known, recognizable, and fulfilled.

However, Amy and Nick’s marriage is not the same as everybody’s. They have bumps and their problems become more complex because of Amy’s personalities. She has a tendency to manipulate the truth and use it as her defense to make herself blameless. During her life, Amy has done many lies to make her seem guiltless and to make the person she has problem with really learn their lesson and not messing up with her anymore.

Amy knows that her fifth wedding anniversary is the right time to punish Nick for betraying her. She runs away from her home right in the morning after Nick went somewhere. Yet, she is not leaving Nick just like that, she cuts and bleeds herself, makes the house seem like a crime scene, leaves the cat outside the door, and gives her clues and gifts for Nick. Amy has been planning her run away scene since a long time. She fakes her pregnancy and also writes a seven years long diary from 2005 to 2012. The diary itself tells a story about a bit of Amy’s relationship with her parents and her love story with Nick. With the missing out of Amy Dunne, Nick finds Amy’s other side that no one else knows. Yet, he finds himself thinking about Amy more often when she is gone rather than when she is with him.

After forty days gone, Amy decides to go home for Nick because she feels it is the right time to start over her marriage with Nick after what happened. The story ends in one day before their sixth year anniversary, with Nick is stroking Amy’s hair and he says he feels sorry for Amy because every day she wakes up
she has to be herself over and over again. His words left Amy silent in outrage. The journey of their marriage could reveal what anxieties are Amy facing and how Amy using her defense mechanisms to cope with her anxieties.

B. Approach of the Study

In this research, the researcher uses psychoanalytic approach to answer the formulated problems above. Defense mechanisms, which happens in human’s unconscious part, can be analyzed with the psychoanalytic approach. Psychoanalytic approach according to A Glossary of Literary Terms is “a procedure for analysis and therapy of neuroses” and psychoanalytic criticism is “a form of literary criticism which uses some of the techniques of psychoanalysis in the interpretation of literature” (Abrams and Harpham, 2002, p. 96). It deals with the human’s behavior, in this case is Amy’s dynamic behavior, as it cited in an article Psychoanalytic Theory used in English Literature: A Descriptive Study in in a journal titled Global Journal of Human Social Science: Linguistics & Education, psychoanalytic theory can analyzed human’s behavior in unconscious part.

It is a theory that is regarded as a theory of personality organization and the dynamics of personality that guides psychoanalysis. The goal of psychoanalysis was to show that behaviour which was caused by the interaction between unconscious and unconsciousness. (Hossain, 2017, p. 40).

When deals with human’s behaviour, especially the developing of Amy’s defense mechanisms, psychoanalytic approach is the best approach to do so.
C. Method of the Study

This research used library research and conducted by using primary and secondary sources. The primary source of this research is the novel Gone Girl by Gillian Flynn. The secondary sources are a book titled *Personality Theories* by Jess Feist and Gregory J. Feist, talked about some psychodynamic theories by some experts. A journal titled *Freudian Defense Mechanisms and Empirical Findings in Modern Social Psychology: Reaction Formation, Projection, Displacement, Undoing, Isolation, Sublimation, and Denial* by Baumeister, Karen Dale, and Kristin L. Sommer which explained more about defense mechanisms. It is also supported by a book titled *Understanding Unseen* by M.J. Murphy which talks about character and characterization.

There are some steps taken to analyze Amy’s anxieties and defense mechanism in *Gone Girl*. First, the researcher did a close reading on the object of this research, which is *Gone Girl*. In every part where Amy has done something, the researcher considered her acts as useful clues.

Secondly, the researcher made some markings on some important parts found in the novel to use them as some clues. Thirdly, the researcher gathered all the information, collected some theories or sources from journals or e-book. Fourthly, the researcher started to analyze each of the problem formulation. The previous important information used to answer several questions based on the problem formulation.

Next, the first question is about Amy’s characteristics. The researcher began to dig into Amy’s character in the story by using Murphy’s theory of
analyzing the characters. After understanding the character better, the researcher began to dig in Amy’s anxieties by using Freud’s theory in *Theories of Personality*. Move on to the third question about Amy’s defense mechanisms found in the novel. The researcher gathered all the information from the novel and use Freud’s theory of defense mechanism to reveal what defense mechanisms Amy uses.

The researcher finds Amy Dunne changes her personality from the beginning until the end of the story. Amy opens up her true colors in the end of the storyline. From the fact that Amy has changed her personality, the researcher finds some of Amy’s anxieties that trigger her changing. Through the anxieties that trigger her to change to be a different person, the researcher finds some defense mechanisms used by Amy to protect herself.
CHAPTER IV
ANALYSIS

In this chapter the researcher analyzes Amy’s anxieties and defense mechanism in order to cope with her anxieties. Amy Dunne is the main character of *Gone Girl* by Gillian Flynn. She is a woman, a wife, and a daughter. She is the only child of Rand and Marybeth Elliot and she always gets what she wanted, that is why she is used to be the alpha girl in everyone’s life. Amy also has some issues with herself. In order to answer the formulated problems, the analysis conducted by this research is broken down into three parts. The first part discusses about Amy’s characteristics, the characteristics help the researcher to dig more and give some clues or signs about Amy’s anxieties in the second part. The last part discusses about Amy’s defense mechanism throughout her life in the novel.

A. **The Characteristics of Amy Dunne**

As the main character in *Gone Girl*, Amy Dunne has some significant characteristics, which make her stand out. Her ability to make people believe that she is pure, guiltless, and smart is outstanding. Amy is a 38-year-old American woman. She is quite famous because her parents, two child psychologists, make a book titled *Amazing Amy*. The book itself tells a story of the amazing Amy and her friends, yet it is more like the positive picture of Amy, the way a good person should be. Using the theory of character and characterization by M.J Murphy
(1972) in the book *Understanding Unseen*, Amy’s characters can be analyzed one by one. Those characteristics are:

1. **Precise about Everything**

Amy’s true characteristics is shown start from the second part of the novel. In the first part of the novel, all she writes in her diary entries are lies. Therefore, start from the part two of the novel, the reader knows that she is a very discipline and detailed woman. She organizes things, puts everything in order, and makes sure everything she does is well prepared beforehand. This characteristic is shown by the way Amy manages things and situations in her life. For an instance, in part two of the novel, Boy Meets Girl, Amy has finally declared that she is making checklists to dole out her punishments for Nick, the unfaithful husband.

Item 22: Cut myself has been on the list a long time. Now it’s real and my arm hurts. A lot. It takes a very special discipline to slice oneself past the paper-cut layer, down to the muscle. You want a lot of blood, but not so much that you pass out, get discovered hours later in a kiddie pool of red with a lot of explaining to do. I held a box cutter to my wrist first, but looking at the crisscross of veins, I felt like a bomb technician in an action movie. Snip the wrong line and you die. I ended up cutting into the inside of my upper arm, gnawing on a rag so I wouldn’t scream. One long, deep good one. I sat cross-legged on my kitchen floor for ten minutes, letting the blood drizzle steadily until I’d made a nice thick puddle. Then I cleaned it up as poorly as Nick would have done after he bashed my head in. I want the house to tell a story of conflict of true and false (Flynn, 2012, pp. 247-248).

Amy seems very comprehensive about what is she doing and how it affects her project, which framing her husband for her murder. According to M.J. Murphy, this kind of Amy’s trait is identified by the speech. Other than that, the fact that Amy is a discipline and very precise person is shown through her thoughts and reactions. The researcher can see what she thinks about through her
writing in her diary, also Amy’s discipline quality can be seen through her reactions. How she handles herself in certain circumstances, in this matter is when she decides to use her ability to put everything in order to bring Nick down.

Those little details strengthen the fact that Amy is a very discipline woman and loves to be in control of something. She even mentions she cleans the floor as poorly as Nick has done to make it more believable.

On my list was Write *Diary Entries for 2005 to 2012*. Seven years of diary entries, not every day, but twice monthly, at least. Do you know how much discipline that takes? Would Cool Girl Amy be able to do that? To research each week’s current events, to cross-consult with my old diary planners to make sure I forgot nothing important, the to reconstruct how Diary Amy would react to each event? It was fun, mostly.

One hundred and fifty-two entries total, and I don’t think I ever lose her voice. I wrote her very carefully, Diary Amy. She is designed to appeal to the cops, to appeal to the public should portions be released. They have to read this diary like it’s some sort of Gothic tragedy. A wonderful, good-hearted woman — whole life a head of her, everything going for her, whatever else they say about women who die-chooses the wrong mate and pays the ultimate price. They have to like me. Her (Flynn, 2012, pp. 266-267).

Seeing Amy’s devotion to make the diary, the seven years diary with one hundred and fifty-two entries, can show the readers the discipline part of Amy’s characteristics. She knows exactly what to prepare first and how to make the plan succeed. She has plans A, B, so on and so forth. She is not someone who can be easily give up to reach her goal. Her mind is always working, thinking what is best only for herself.

I’m learning to live fairly efficiently myself. A girl has to budget when she’s dead. I had time to plan, to stockpile some cash: I gave myself a good twelve months between deciding to disappear and disappearing. That’s why most people get caught in murders: They don’t have the discipline to wait. I have $10,200 in cash. If I’d cleared out $10,200 in a month, that would have been noticed. But I collected cash forwards from credit cards I took out in Nick’s name – the cards that would make him
look like a greedy little cheat – and I siphoned off another $4,400 from our bank accounts over the months: withdrawals of $200 or $300, nothing to attract attention. I stole from Nick, from his pockets, a $20 here, a $10 there, a slow deliberate stockpile – it’s like that budgeting plan where you put the money you’d spend on your morning Starbucks into a jar, and at the end of the year you have $1,500. And I’d always steal from the tip jar when I went to The Bar. I’m sure Nick blamed Go, and Go blamed Nick, and neither of them said anything because they felt too sorry for the other (Flynn, 2012, p. 276).

Those events show how she makes routine and stick to it until she is done. She thinks things down to its root. She sees beyond Nick’s sight. She is afraid of losing, that is why she has been disciplined throughout her life. Amy pays attention to her list, from where she should takes some money, how much, and how often she should takes the money.

2. Ambitious to be Number One

The relationship between Amy and herself is not healthy because of what she has experienced since she is a baby. Amy’s mother, Marybeth, had five miscarriages and two stillbirths before pregnant with Amy. Using the theory of character and characterization by M.J. Murphy, this kind of Amy’s trait is seen through her past life, to be exact by the explanation of the character itself. Seeing the fact that she is the only child who made it into the world makes Amy felt like a winner, she would have been like the other unborn children, yet she won the battle. She was born to the world and granted her parents wish.

I grew up feeling special, proud. I was the girl who battled oblivion and won. The chances were about 1 percent, but I did it. I ruined my mother’s womb in the process – my own prenatal Sherman’s March. Marybeth would never have another baby. As a child, I got a vibrant pleasure out of this: just me, just me, only me (Flynn, 2012, p. 249).
Since the day she was born, Amy already feels she must be looked up to. She is destined to always get what she wants and people must like her, whatever happens. She needs to make sure that people recognize her. It is shown through character as seen by another character, in this way is how Nick sees Amy. “She always needed that validation, the praise, all the time.” (Flynn, 2012, p. 256). Amy also says that she has the desire to win. “For someone like me, who likes to win, it’s tempting to want to be the girl every guy wants” (Flynn, 2012, p. 252).

Amy yearns for being the number one may be because the way her parents treat her. The novel does not tell much about Amy’s childhood, yet the researcher assumed she must be a spoiled girl because her parents mostly give her what she wants. She states she gets a vibrant pleasure as a child because she is only child in the family. Little Amy also likes to disturb her mother me-time, no matter how hard her father tries to distract Amy of wanting to be with her mother, Amy always wins. “I wouldn’t give my mother those few minutes” (Flynn, 2012, p. 250). Amy’s ambitiousness can be seen mostly by her speech, the way she explains or makes a statement about herself. As it is stated in the theory of character and characterization, what a character says shows how her or his mind is about.

3. **Manipulative to Someone Who Hurts Her**

Amy has done so many lies throughout her life. She even fakes her personality when she first met Nick. Owing to the fact that Nick is the first person who makes Amy seen and truly laugh (Flynn, 2012, p. 33).
I was pretending, the way I often did, pretending to have personality. I can’t help it, it’s what I’ve always done: The way some women change fashion regularly, I change personalities (Flynn, 2012, p. 250).

Her speech says about how she conducts such way of behaving. The main thing that makes Amy fakes her murder is because she knows Nick starts to give up on her. Amy thinks the main reason why Nick acts that way is because she finally shows Nick her true colors, the authentic version of herself. “I was probably happier for those few years – pretending to be someone else” (Flynn, 2012, p. 253). The novel itself does not explain a lot about Amy’s childhood, nevertheless Amy may experience mixed emotions because some events in her life and the way her parents treat her may be not the right thing to do.

We just want you to be happy. Rand and Marybeth said that all the time, but they never explained how. So many lessons and opportunities and advantages, and they never taught me how to be happy (Flynn, 2012, p. 252).

With Nick, Amy finally being the happiest girl in the world, she feels pure joy. After all the years, Amy starts to show her real characteristics to Nick because she does not feel right, and she believes that her true personalities is so much better, interesting, and challenging. She starts to make Nick listen to her, she does not like it when Nick cannot go with her to have some drinks with her friends. In part one of the novel, Amy mentions about how she does not like to prevent Nick to go out with his friends to accompany her. She even calls the man who obeys his wife’s or girlfriend’s wants as a dancing monkey (Flynn, 2012, p. 61). However, in reality, it does matter for Amy when Nick cannot come to go out with her.
That ludicrous diary entry? *I don’t need pathetic dancing-monkey scenarios to repeat to my friends, I am content with letting him be himself.* That was pure, dumb Cool Girl bullshit. What a cunt. Again, I don’t get it: If you let a man cancel plans or decline to do things for you, you lose (Flynn, 2012, p. 253).

It turns out Nick does not love Amy’s new personalities. “Can you imagine, finally showing your true self to your spouse, your soul mate, and having him not like you? So that’s how the hating first began” (Flynn, 2012, p. 254). Nick states it for himself that she does not like the new Amy. He loves the old Amy, the one who can make him laugh. The present Amy makes him uncomfortable because she makes him scared (Flynn, 2012, p. 55).

Another example is when Amy with Desi Collings, her ex-boyfriend. When Amy runs out of money in her runaway, Amy calls Desi to ask for money. “I pretend to balk, chew the edge of my lip, look away and then back to Desi. ‘I need money to live on for a bit. I thought about getting a job, but—’” (Flynn, 2012, p. 364). Instead of giving money to Amy, Desi gives Amy a house, a place to live with him. Amy, feeling like a prisoner, does not want to live with Desi for a long time. One morning, Amy teased and spoiled Desi with love, to make Desi really fall head over heels in love with her again. Following by that, they are making love and Amy gave three sleeping pills to Desi, the she kills him in his sleep.

The knife I used on him, and on my bonds, will be nearby on the floor where I dropped it, dazed, and walked barefoot, carrying nothing out of the house but his keys – to the car, to the gate – and climbed, still slick with his blood, into his vintage Jaguar and returned like some long-lost faithful pet, straight back home to my husband. I’d been reduced to an animal state; I didn’t think of anything but getting back to Nick (Flynn, 2012, p. 417).
Amy does all of that just for she can run away from Desi and go back home for Nick. Amy is so manipulative to Desi because she feels like Desi is an annoying person to be with, he follows Amy everywhere she goes.

4. *Revengeful to Someone Who Hurts Her*

Amy’s parents are child psychologists. However, her parents “chose this particular public form of passive-aggressiveness toward their child was not just fucked up, but also stupid and weird and kind of hilarious.” (Flynn, 2012, p. 30). Coming from her own statements, Amy realizes her own parents always compare her with other people.

And yet I can’t fail to notice that whenever I screw something up, Amy does it right: When I finally quit violin at age twelve, Amy was revealed as a prodigy in the next book. (‘Sheesh, violin can be hard work, but hard work is the only way to get better!’). When I blew off the junior tennis championship at age sixteen to do a beach weekend with friends, Amy recommitted to the game. (‘Sheesh, I know it’s fun to spend time with friends, but I’d be letting myself and everyone else if I didn’t show up for the tournament.’) (Flynn, 2012, p. 30).

This kind of characteristic can be seen through Amy’s past life. It is clear to see the struggle Amy has faced since her childhood because of the *Amazing Amy* book which her parents wrote, Amy thinks the book as the way her parents teach her to do better in her real life. The book becomes the source of Amy’s anxieties in general because Amy is demand to be like the fiction Amy in the *Amazing Amy* that her parents wrote. Amy does not feel happy, the researcher can say that Amy brings her parents’ behaviour as she grows up such as being the number one. For instance, when Amy was in high school, her friend, Suzy, and Amy met a guy from their brother school. The next day, the guy called Suzy instead of Amy. Feeling jealous and afraid of losing, Amy planned something to
‘punish’ Suzy because she was the one who was getting a call from the guy. Logically, this is something that a normal person will not do to her or his own friend. Amy punished Suzy a lesson by manipulating her twisted ankle, fractured arm, and cracked ribs by throwing herself down a flight of stairs (Flynn, 2012, pp. 324-326). After all of that, all Suzy’s friends were avoiding her until she dropped out of school and she decided to go back to Memphis. This kind of behaviour of Amy is seen through Suzy’s statements. According to the theory by M.J. Murphy, it is called character as seen by another. One day after all the chaos, a letter from Amy arrived, “Forgot to wait for me after English, twice. Forgot I am allergic to strawberries, twice.” (Flynn, 2012, p. 326).

Another example is when Amy is dating a guy named Tommy O’Hara, the guy Amy has accused for raping her. Tommy and Amy are good together, until one day Tommy realizes that Amy is not the one for him because Amy was not being herself when she was dating him. Not long after that, Tommy starts making excuses not to hang out with her and starts seeing another woman. Somehow Amy knows about that and she starts her punishment project by making love with Tommy. The next thing that happens is horrible because Amy is faking a rape case.

‘The next thing I know, two cops are at my door, and they’ve done a rape kit on Amy, and she has “wounds consistent with forcible rape.” And she has ligature marks on her wrists, and when they search my apartment, there on the headboard of my bed are two ties –like, neckties –tucked down near the mattress, and the ties are, quote, “consistent with the ligature marks”’ (Flynn, 2012, p. 311-312).

Amy is a real deal when someone is messing up with her. She does not easily let the person go without learning a lesson from her, she wants the person
to feel what she feels, and even it is so much more than she feels. Tommy even got a note from Amy that says, “Maybe next time you’ll think twice” (Flynn, 2012, p. 312). It shows Amy can be so hurtful when something bad happens in her life and does not make her happy. She will always find her way to teach people lessons.

Amy’s vengeful behaviour is mostly seen by the explanation of other characters, in this case are Suzy and Tommy O’Hara. The two characters help the researcher to understand better how others see and think of Amy. On top of that, Amy’s past life also plays a big role to learn about her vengeful character, because the researcher can get the answer why Amy is being a vengeful person.

B. Amy Dunne’s Anxieties

In the previous part, the researcher found Amy’s characteristics which are she is precise about everything, ambitious to be the number one, loves to lie, and a revengeful person. These characteristics of Amy have an influence in how Amy experiences her anxiety. In Theories of Personality, Sigmund Freud mentions three anxieties, which are “neurotic anxiety, where the anxious feeling exists in the ego, but begins from id impulse, the second is moral anxiety where it comes from the superego, and last but not least is realistic anxiety where the feeling comes from the outer world” (Feist and Feist, 2009, p. 34). Amy experiences all of the three anxieties, however she often experiences moral and realistic anxieties rather than neurotic anxiety.
1. Moral Anxiety

Moral anxiety as it stated in *Theories of Personality* is “stems from the conflict between the ego and the superego” (Feist and Feist, 2009, p. 36). In the novel part one, *Boy Loses Girl*, Amy begins to feel a moral anxiety when she starts to move to Missouri, Nick’s hometown, to take care of Nick’s mother, Maureen, who gets a stage four of cancer. Amy does not like the idea to move to Missouri at first, and she debates it because she thinks that living in Missouri is not how she picture her life will be (Flynn, 2012, p. 112). This fact goes along with what moral anxiety is about. As it is mentioned in chapter two, moral anxiety “comes from the conflict between one’s realistic needs and another thing that dictates one’s superego” (Feist and Feist, 2009, p. 34). Since Amy does not want to move to Missouri, she is still going to move because her husband is asking her and it is all for the sake of mama Maureen’s health.

After one month living in Missouri, she feels she also should take care of Mama Maureen, Nick’s mother, and makes her happy. If she does not move, she may experiences a sense of guilt, however, even though Amy decides to move out with Nick, she still goes through a guilt feeling. “In the side mirror, I track the skyline (the *receding skyline*—isn’t that what they write in Victorian novels where the doomed heroine is forced to leave her ancestral home), but none of the good buildings (Flynn, 2012, p. 114). Amy uses the symbol of heroine who is forced to leave to picture herself in that situation because she feels like a number one, she does not want another person to have Nick’s attention except herself. It is clearly seen that Amy is having a battle with some feelings to move to Missouri.
Amy tries so hard to be happy when she moves to Missouri. For instance, Nick and Amy throw a housewarming party to please Mama Maureen. Amy and Nick are required to make the party because they are living in a new area. When they finally throw the housewarming party, Nick tells Amy to be nice to everyone. Amy, shocked with what Nick is saying, feels upset and hurt because she has been nice and friendly to everyone.

Sometimes I feel like Nick has decided on a version of me that doesn’t exist. Since we’ve moved here, I’ve done girls’ nights out and charity walks, I’ve cooked casseroles for his dad and helped sell tickets for raffles. I tapped the last of my money to give to Nick and Go so they could buy the bar they’ve always wanted, and I even put the check inside a chard shaped like a mug – Cheers to You! – and Nick just gave begrudging thanks. I don’t know what to do. I’m trying (Flynn, 2012, p. 136).

Amy may be feeling like a failure when she cannot make Nick and everyone happy. Another proof that Amy experienced moral anxiety is she has this burden to make Mama Maureen happy by giving her grandkids because she has been asking for the little ones so many times (Flynn, 2012, p. 102). Amy clearly does not want children, yet she must have been thinking about it and makes her consider having one, someday. “Since Amy had decided she didn’t want kids, and she’d reiterated this fact several times, but the tears gave me perverse wedge of hope that maybe she was changing her mind” Nick said that (Flynn, 2012, p. 103). It is easy to see that there is a conflict between Amy’s mind and what the society demands. Meaning Amy does not want a kid but her mother-in-law keeps asking her to have one, so she feels a guilt feeling towards Mama Maureen. Amy also senses a guilt feeling by crying out, the result of her moral anxiety. However, later in the diary, Amy tells Nick that she wants a baby to save
their marriage, but Nick does not agree with that because their financial condition and his mom just passed away. Nevertheless that is just Amy’s tactic to manipulate people to believe that she wants to get pregnant and later making the public to blame Nick more for her missing.

2. Neurotic Anxiety

According to Feist and Feist, neurotic anxiety happens when “one fear of unknown danger and when surrounded by an authority presence such as boss, lecturer, parents, and so on, because they previously experienced unconscious feelings of destruction against one or both parents” (Jess Feist and Gregory J. Feist, 2009, p. 34). In Amy’s diary entry on February 15, 2012, Amy senses some changes in Nick. Not only because Nick’s mother has died, but also Nick’s presence makes Amy frightened.

Because something is horribly wrong with my husband, of that I am sure now. Yes, he’s mourning his mother, but this is something more. It feels directed at me, not a sadness but... I can feel him watching me sometimes, and I look up and see his face twisted in disgust, like he’s walked in on me doing something awful, instead of just eating cereal in the morning or combing my hair at night. He’s so angry, so unstable (Flynn, 2012, p. 220).

Amy, being the only child in the family, feels like she should be treated like a winner, a superior one. However, when she lives with Nick, she has to compromise that feeling. Amy experiences neurotic anxiety because Nick did hurt Amy before. “He shoved me. Hard. Two days ago, he shoved me, and I fell and banged my head against the kitchen island and I couldn’t see for three seconds” (Flynn, 2012, p. 220). After that, Amy feels the presence of Nick like an unknown danger because she has a painful experience when she was with Nick before. They
were talking about money, how to pay their credit-card bills, whether Amy should get a job or not so they can start a family and real life when suddenly Nick bursts into his anger and shoves Amy.

3. **Realistic Anxiety**

This type of anxiety is the basic form of anxiety. But realistic anxiety is different from fear, because “it does not involve a specific fearful object” (Feist and Feist, 2009, p. 34). Realistic anxiety as its name is based on the reality. In part two, Boy Meets Girl, Amy undergoes the feeling of realistic anxiety when she gets away and lives in a cabin in Missouri Ozarks (Flynn, 2012, p. 265). After some time living in the cabin, she befriends with Jeff and Greta. They accidentally know that Amy is bringing a lot of cash when they golf together. Amy is being oppressed with Jeff and Greta knowing she brings a lot of money, she feels very nervous and on edge. “I wake up feeling immediately nervous. Off” (Flynn, 2012, p. 336). Amy is anxious about something, she is afraid if someone might know her, and there is no specific fearful object, therefore it is called realistic anxiety.

Plus, Greta is making Amy extremely tense when they watch Ellen Abbott show talking about the missing of Amy Dunne, and Jeff is acting so weird when they go fishing together.

There was something about Jeff and that race to the shoreline, toward my bundled dress and my money belt. Something about way Greta keeps alighting on Ellen Abbott. It makes me nervous. Or am I being paranoid? (Flynn, 2012, p. 336).

Amy is anxious about the fact that something must be up for her. She is anxious whether someday Jeff and Greta will know that Amy fakes her identity, or the police will find her hiding in the Ozark. Amy is having a hard time to deal
with the reality that she faces. The only way to go out from this kind of anxiety is to remove oneself from the harmful situation. Amy decides to go out from the cabin, even clean it with bleach, wipe off her fingerprints on the furniture, and vacuum any hairs.

After she gets out from the cabin, knowing nowhere to go, Amy makes a decision to call Desi Collings, Amy’s ex boyfriend who is still in love with her, somehow. The second moment of Amy experiences realistic anxiety is when she is in a café, because she is afraid and anxious if someone is looking at her and knowing her. “And now the guy is looking at me, tilting his head toward the side, in exaggerated confusion” (Flynn, 2012, p. 363). Amy thinks the guy is a cop, she is afraid of being caught. Everywhere she goes, she feels someone is watching her, that is because her own lies to be manipulative.

C. Amy’s Defense Mechanism in order to Cope with Her Anxieties

After discovering Amy’s characteristics and anxieties, the researcher continues with the defense mechanisms that Amy uses in order to cope with her anxiety. People certainly use defense mechanisms to defend one’s emotion when one is feeling anxious or happen to be in a harmful situation. Phebe Cramer in his book *The Development of Defense Mechanisms* explains that defense mechanism has two functions.

Conceived of in this way, the function of the defense mechanism is to "ward off" dangers to the ego from two directions. It defends the ego against inner dangers-instinctual demands and the related anxiety-and also against dangers based on external prohibitions (or the mental representation of external prohibitions) that result in the loss of narcissistic supplies and feelings of guilt (1991, p. 6).
It is clear to see the function of defense mechanism to protect the self from anything harmful. In *Gone Girl*, Amy experiences all of the three anxieties, yet she more often experiences moral and realistic anxieties because the burden she has as a wife and daughter. Amy’s defense mechanisms to cope with her anxiety are often driven unconsciously. According at the evidences in the novel and analyzing them with theory of defense mechanism, some of Amy’s actions can be classified as Reaction Formation, Sublimation, Denial, and Introduction defense mechanisms.

1. Reaction Formation

Reaction Formation defense mechanism happens when a repressed impulse may turn into conscious action by selecting a disguise that is completely opposite from the real emotion. In other words, it is the act of changing one’s apprehensive feeling into something that is acceptable or in control. Amy uses Reaction Formation defense mechanism when something related to her and Nick’s mother, Mama Maureen, happens. Amy, as it explained B part in moral anxiety, is not interested to move to Missouri because that is not the life that Amy imagined before. Amy does not want to move because moving to Missouri is not what Amy imagined her life. However, in the end, she leaves New York City to Missouri, Nick’s hometown, to take care of Nick’s mother. Through how Amy writes her diary and she behaves when she is with Mama Maureen, the readers can understand that Amy is not comfortable with her. However, she must love and respect Mama Maureen because she is her mother-in-law.
It all begins when Mama Maureen welcomes Nick and Amy in their first morning in Missouri. Amy says that Mama Maureen does not like to insist something. “She simply makes things a reality by assuming they are” (Flynn, 2012, p. 134). From the writing, Amy is seen as someone who sees people by their flaws. Just as how she sees Mama Maureen. Amy also has this hard feeling towards Mama Maureen. The feeling begins at Amy and Nick’s engagement party back in New York. Maureen spills some words that are not appropriate to say to her son’s wife-to-be.

Maureen managed to say: ‘It’s not easy, pairing yourself off with someone forever. It’s an admirable thing, and I’m glad you’re both doing it, but, boy-oh-girl-oh, there will be days you wish you’d never done it. And those will be the good times, when it’s only days of regret and not months’. I must have looked shocked—I was definitely shocked—because she said quickly: “But then you have good times, too. I know you will. You two. A lot of good times. So just… forgive me, sweetheart, what I said before. I’m just being a silly old divorced lady. (Flynn, 2012, p. 138).

Amy may be feeling confused and downcast because of what Mama Maureen says to her. The relationship between Amy and Mama Maureen is not a good relationship between a daughter-in-law and a mother-in-law. Nick says Amy is barely know his mother and “Amy didn’t care to know my family, didn’t want to know my birthplace,” (Flynn, 2012, p. 6).

Here was where I should have said, ‘Amy loves Mom.’ But I couldn’t tell Go that Amy loved our mother, because after all that time, Amy still barely knew our mother. Their few meetings had left them both baffled. Amy would dissect the conversations for days after – ‘And what did she mean by ...,’ – as if my mother were some ancient peasant tribeswoman arriving from the tundra with an armful of raw yak meat and some buttons for bartering, trying to get something from Amy that wasn’t on offer (Flynn, 2012, p. 6).
The uncomfortable feeling between Amy and Nick’s mom continues when Mama Maureen introduces Amy to her friends. Amy feels like Mama Maureen is overacting about her being born and live in New York.

Maureen, the tristate’s hardiest cancer patient, introduces me to all her friends the same way you’d show off a slightly dangerous new pet: ‘This is Nick’s wife, Amy, who was born and raised in New York City.’ (Flynn, 2012, p. 135)

All of Maureen’s friends answer with some kind of mocking ways. Amy confused with how to answer, only reply them with “You’d like it or It’s definitely not for everyone or Mmm, because I’ve run out of things to say” (Flynn, 2012, p. 135). As seen from the dialogue, Amy tries so hard to act kinder and be respectful to her mother in law. She uses Reaction Formation defense mechanism to turn herself to be more acceptable in that situation. Amy knows the society demands people to be respectful toward older people, especially Amy’s mother-in-law. Amy’s conscious impulse is to accept Maureen and love her. Since such uncomfortable and hard feelings toward the parents can bring too much anxiety. Another example is when Maureen calls Amy to go out with her. Amy, reluctant to go, straight away answers her with a yes in order to be polite even though she is not having it.

So yesterday she phones me in the morning, asks me if I want to go on a field trip with her and her friends – she is having a good day, she wants to get out of the house as much as she can – and I agree immediately, even though I knew they’d be doing nothing that particularly interested me (Flynn, 2012, p. 175).

Amy agreed to avoid the feeling of anxious or not being good enough for her mother in law who is in bad condition. Her impulse immediately says yes when Maureen asks her out. Despite the fact, that during the meeting, Maureen
asks Amy to be her proxy to pay for plasma donation center. Amy clearly does not want to give her money but she may be act like it is okay. “I swallow a quick gust of anger: *I used to have more than a little cash of my own, but I gave it to your son*” (Flynn, 2012, p. 176).

Her characteristic that affects Amy’s Reaction Formation towards Mama Maureen is her desires to be the number one. She wants people to look at her as a good person who obeys her mother-in-law. She does not want people to look at her as suspect of something.

2. **Sublimation**

The second defense mechanism Amy uses in the novel is Sublimation. As cited from Feist and Feist, “Sublimation is being 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 pursuit” (Flynn, 2012, p. 38). In Sigmund Freud’s defense mechanisms, Sublimation is considered beneficial because one is convert his or her negative feelings into positive actions.

The defense mechanism of sublimation that Amy experienced begins when Amy is writing her fake diary to make Nick seen as someone to blame for her missing and fake murder. “I can tell you more about how I did everything, but I’d like you to know me first. Not Diary Amy, who is a work of fiction” (Flynn, 2012, p. 248).

The process of writing Amy’s fake diary, which is the diary entries in the first part of the novel, and the real one, which in the second and third part of the novel, is considered as Sublimation defense mechanism. Since Sublimation is beneficial for both the individual and society. From Amy’s point of view, Diary
Amy is useful for Amy herself and the society, in this case the people around her and the police, to find it and make Nick to be the only one to blame. The diary itself is a positive outcome of Amy’s feelings and how she deals with her problems. “I wrote her very carefully, Diary Amy. She is designed to appeal to the cops, to appeal to the public should portions be released” (Flynn, 2012, p. 267). According to Amy, the diary itself can be a helpful thing because it can save herself and show the world how she feels during her marriage.

The diary that Amy writes is in two versions. The first version is what Amy wants the public to see, and the second version is the true self of Amy. Amy writes her first version of diary full of Nick’s negativities. That is one of the plans she made to make her revenge. Amy uses Sublimation to cope with her neurotic anxiety. She does not say or do anything when Nick shoved her hard, she remains silent, however she plans something big and bad for Nick. Amy also writes in her fake diary to make her stand out and make people think that she is the one who hurt the most. She wants that spotlight because she is ambitious to be number one.

3. Denial

According to Psychoanalytic Theory, denial is when “a person simply denies things that produce anxiety” (2004, p. 283). When Amy finds herself being watched by another person in a café when she is with Desi Collings, she is feeling anxious. She experiences realistic anxiety and she uses Denial to cope with her anxiety. However, she decides to deny that feeling by turning her back towards the man who watches her.

And now the guy is looking at me, tilting his head toward the side, in exaggerated confusion. If he were a cartoon, he’d scratch his head, and it
would make a rubbery *wiik-wiik* sound. For some reason: *I think he looks like a cop.* I turn my back to him. (Flynn, 2009, p. 363)

Amy is using a cartoon imagination in her mind. It might be she is thinking about a comfort situation, because cartoon in general presents something fun, a safe zone for everyone. After she is thinking about that, she turns her back to the man. The act of turning her back is defined as Denial because she tries to avoid the realistic anxiety that she experiences. She refuses to acknowledge something that happens right in that moment. She seems to act like nothing happens because she is in a uncomfortable situation. As it mentioned in characteristics’ part, Amy is a manipulative person. She acts like nothing happens when she is with Desi Collings and when a suspicious man watches her. She only turn her back so she feels comfortable when the truth is she is not comfortable at all.

4. **Introjection**

As it mentioned in *Theories of Personality*, “People introject characteristics that they see as valuable and that will permit them to feel better about themselves” (Feist and Feist, 2009, p. 37). Amy introjects Maureen’s characteristics to defend herself when Nick is feeling blue because of her mother’s death. Even though Amy has some bitter feelings for Maureen when she lives, she admires Maureen’s unconditional love for Nick (Flynn, 2012, p. 158). She knows Maureen has been babied Nick along the way. Amy ever experiences an anxious feeling because Nick likes to be babied. She thinks that she cannot make him happy because she is not that type of woman who loves to indulge someone. “That he would be happier with a woman who thrills at husband care and
homemaking, and I’m not disparaging these skills: I wish I had them” (Flynn, 2012, p. 159).

Amy tries to adopt Maureen’s mannerisms and lifestyle to make Nick happier when her mother passed away. She uses Introjection defense mechanism to feel better about herself. Amy sees Maureen as someone who has positive qualities, and Amy believes Maureen’s characteristics can be adopted to save her face in front of Nick. However, Nick’s response is not what Amy wants.

But I tried to do the same those first weeks after his mom passed. I snipped the bread crusts, I ironed his T-shirts, I baked a blueberry pie from his mom’s recipe. ‘I don’t need to be babied, really, Amy,’ he said as he stared at the load of skinned breads. ‘I let my mom do it because it made her happy, but I know you don’t like that nurturing stuff.’ (Flynn, 2012, p. 210).

Amy does the same thing as Maureen does before. She incorporates Maureen’s positive qualities into their own ego to please her husband. Amy is aware of the fact that if she takes Maureen as her model, she can reduce her anxiety or her inadequate feeling of being not good enough for Nick. She uses Introjection defense mechanism to cope with her realistic anxiety of losing Nick.
CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION

In this last chapter, the researcher reaches to the conclusion of the analysis of Amy’s anxieties and defense mechanism in *Gone Girl* by Gillian Flynn. In this research, the researcher has two formulated problems which have been discussed in the previous chapters.

The first and second formulated problem are discovering Amy’s characteristics and anxieties portrayed in the novel. Her anxieties are discovered through analyzing her characteristics first. Using the theory of character and characterization by M. J. Murphy in *Understanding Unseen*, the researcher finds Amy’s characteristics as a discipline person, ambitious to be the number one, a manipulative, and revengeful person. The researcher notices why Amy has those kind of unfavorable characteristics because her past and the way her parents treated her. Furthermore, it is caused by Amy’s personal feelings toward her parents and it seems through her diary that she never communicates her feelings with her parents. Amy is a very clever person, however she mistook the positive part of herself to do something harmful and wrong in society eyes. Amy also has some stories made up by herself about some men who are crazy about her. Not only men, but also a made up story about a woman, Hilary Handy, who is insanely wanted to be like her. Amy continues her lies throughout her life. In the middle of the novel, the readers can see something bad is about to happen because in page 189, Desi Collings denies Nick’s statement from Amy that says Desi ever
tried to kill himself in Amy’s dorm room. Amy lies are not small, they are big and have a massive impact to her and the victim’s surrounding.

The researcher has found that Amy’s characteristics slightly plays some role in her anxieties. For example her stubborn mind to be a number one makes her to feel a moral anxiety when she feels she is not capable of being a good wife for Nick, or a competent daughter-in-law for Maureen. Amy, who loves to lie, also experiences realistic anxiety when she lives in the cabin on her runaway. She is frightened if somebody know who she is, Amy definitely does not want that because she can be the most hateful person on earth, and she cannot live with people hating on her because she demands recognition. Amy worries and anxious about some little things because she likes to lie and she is lying most in her lifetime, the researcher thinks that is why Amy experiences realistic anxieties the most.

The turning point of Amy’s life and why she begins to feel anxious is when she caught Nick’s red handed for his infidelity. As it mentioned in a journal titled *Journal of Religion and Health*, Freud said that “the cause of anxiety is the perception of certain dangers, e.g., such dangers as a fear of castration, of loss of the love object, and later even the fear of death, the loss of life” (Morris, 1973, p. 198). Amy surely has this feeling of being left by Nick, the one who makes her truly happy in her life. She is afraid of losing this figure of someone who brings comfort to her life. That is why Amy is doing some defense mechanism in a way to cope with her anxieties. As it cited from *Theories of Personality*, “all defense mechanisms protect ego against anxiety” (Feist and Feist, 2009, p. 38).
Amy clearly defense herself because she feels some dangers are coming through in her life.

The following problem formulation discusses Amy’s defense mechanism found in the novel in order to cope with her anxiety. The researcher used theory of defense mechanism by Sigmund Freud taken from *Theories of Personality* by Jess Feist and Gregory J. Feist. Amy’s defense mechanisms found in the novel are Reaction Formation, Sublimation, Denial and Introjection. In the beginning of the novel, Amy uses Sublimation first in her defense mechanisms process. She writes her diary entries about her life with Nick, how the love begins, what happened to Nick and her life after they are moving to Missouri, and especially her feelings toward Nick. Even though the diary itself is not one hundred percent believable, because in the middle of the novel Amy said the diary she wrote is fake and meant to lead the public’s opinion, her family, and the police to blame Nick for her murder, the diary itself is still a process of Amy’s Sublimation defense mechanism. Since the purpose of the diary is beneficial for the individual, in this case is Amy, to make Nick looks like the perpetrator. As it mentioned in the previous chapter, Amy loves to punish someone who hurts herself. By punish it means double than what the person does to Amy.

In the Reaction Formation part of analysis, Amy kept her feelings to herself in order to respect her mother-in-law. She used Reaction Formation to gave a positive face to the society, as it said before, Amy loves validation. She tried so hard to make her presence meaningful and not being a threat to someone. It might be she wanted to prove to Nick that she is a good daughter-in-law, and
wife. Since later in Introjection part, she introjected some of Maureen’s personalities to make Nick trust her. Amy clearly wanted to save her marriage, therefore she wanted to look up to someone who played a big role in Nick’s life. The other reason why Amy used Introjection is to make her feel better about herself. She wanted to put her anxious feeling away about not being good enough for Nick. After all, everything that matters to her is only Nick because he is the first one who showed her how to genuinely happy.

Throughout reading a novel, people can enjoy and learn something from it because this type of literary works is beneficial to both author and reader. For instance, in this research based on a novel titled *Gone Girl*, people can learn and dig more about a character’s characteristics and psychological aspects such as anxieties and defense mechanisms. People can see and learn something from different perspective by reading this novel. Through literary works and the process of analyzing them, people can widen their minds about some events that happens in life.
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