BINARY OPPOSITION AS THE NARRATIVE STRUCTURE OF J.D. SALINGER’S THE CATCHER IN THE RYE

UNDERGRADUATE THESIS

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

By

RIZKY WAHYUJATI

Student Number: 104214042

ENGLISH LETTERS STUDY PROGRAM
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LETTERS
FACULTY OF LETTERS
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Defended before the Board of Examiners
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Rizky Wahyujati
“less is more”
— Ludwig Mies van der Rohe
I dedicate this thesis to my cherished grandmother

Rahayu Ngabesah (19xx – 2013)
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My highest gratitude goes to my thesis advisor Paulus Sarwoto, S.S., M.A., Ph.D. for his guidance finishing my research and to my thesis co-advisor Gabriel Fajar Sasmita Aji, S.S., M.Hum. for his important suggestions on this study. I also thank Dewi Widyastuti, S.S., M.Hum., Harris Hermansyah Setiajid, M.Li. Fransisca Kristanti, S.Pd., M.Hum. and Anna Fitriati S.Pd., M.Hum. who have given me influential and worthy advices.

I will not complete my education unless my family supports me with all compassion and attention. Mr. Kimto and Mrs. Eti, you are my greatest parents. I would like to express my gratitude to Mr. Laurentius Suparwoto & Mrs. Murniyati and the family whom I spent the last eight and a half years with, especially to my cousins Flavianus Ferdia Finarta and Bernadeta Martina Nilamsari for their unlimited kindness as well as my beautiful niece Jacqueline Caelum Chesandra who always inspire me.

I would also thank to my unforgettable friends: Anto, Dody, Mateus, Martin, Driya, Andrew, Albert, Rama, Sammy, Kons, Daniel, Jessica, Patrick, and Mike Tan. Likewise, I am grateful for the friendship and learning with KKN LXVII: Gabs, Tamara, Gilang, Gege, Selin, and Rita. Finally, I owe my thankfulness to Meidhan Fidelia for inviting me to a great adventure, cultivating my passion in literature and introducing me The Catcher in the Rye.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TITLE PAGE</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPROVAL PAGE</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCEPTANCE PAGE</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEMBAR PERNYATAAN PERSETUJUAN PUBLIKASI KARYA ILMIAH UNTUK KEPENTINGAN AKADEMIS</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOTTO PAGE</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEDICATION PAGE</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE OF CONTENTS</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>xii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRAK</td>
<td>xiii</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study .................................................................. 1
B. Problem Formulation ....................................................................... 5
C. Objectives of the Study .................................................................. 5
D. Definition of Terms ........................................................................ 5

## CHAPTER II: REVIEWS OF RELATED LITERATURE ................................ 7

A. Review of Related Studies ......................................................... 7
B. Review of Related Theories ....................................................... 11
  1. Theory of Motif ......................................................................... 11
  2. Theory of Binary Opposition .................................................... 16
  3. Theory of Narrative Structure: Greimas’ Actants ...................... 19
C. Theoretical Framework .................................................................. 21

## CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY ...................................................... 22

A. Object of the Study ........................................................................ 22
B. Approach of the Study .................................................................... 23
C. Method of the Study ..................................................................... 24

## CHAPTER IV: ANALYSIS ................................................................ 26

A. Binary Opposition Examined through the Motifs in *The Catcher in the Rye* .................................................. 26
  1. Teacher Visit ........................................................................... 27
  2. Physical Fight ........................................................................... 31
  3. Rejected Sexual Desire .............................................................. 34
  4. Curiosity of the Unknown .......................................................... 37
B. Binary Opposition as the Narrative Structure of J.D. Salinger’s
*The Catcher in the Rye* ................................................................. 43
1. Subject/Object ................................................................. 45
2. Sender/Receiver ............................................................. 50
3. Helper/Opponent ............................................................ 52

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION .......................................................... 58
BIBLIOGRAPHY ........................................................................ 60
APPENDIX: Summary of J.D. Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye* ......... 63
ABSTRACT


This thesis begins once the researcher encountered a special phenomenon in the novel, *The Catcher in the Rye*, consisting of several repetitive events (motif). Based on such discovery, the researcher determines that structuralism provides the mean to analyze a text’s patterns. Structuralism itself relies on the concept of binary oppositions and narrative structure to comment on the structure of a text. *The Catcher in the Rye’s* important role in literary word and society is another reason to conduct this research. Besides, the writer wants to offer a new perspective on the analysis of the literary work because the previous studies about *The Catcher in the Rye* are mostly performed through psychological analysis.

There are two research questions of this study. The first question deals with the binary oppositions of the novel which are examined from the motifs found in *The Catcher in the Rye*. The second question leads to the explanation of how the binary oppositions become the narrative structure of *The Catcher in the Rye*.

The method of this study is library research, which uses documents such as journals and textbooks as the sources. The primary source of the research is Jerome David Salinger’s novel entitled *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951). The secondary sources of the research are several related studies (Widyanto and Wijaya’s undergraduate thesis and Trowbridge, Bryan, and Zapf’s paper) and related theories of structuralism analysis such as Freedman’s theory of motif and Greimas’ actantial analysis. Structuralism approach is applied in this study, focus on the concept of binary opposition as the narrative structure of a literary work.

The research finds two results. Firstly, several motifs are found in *The Catcher in the Rye*: teacher visit, physical fight, rejected sexual desire, unknown place; the motifs themselves are constructed upon a binary opposition of -/+ adulthood. Secondly, the binary oppositions of -/+ adulthood become the main narrative structure which drives the plot movement of *The Catcher in the Rye* as explained through Greimas’ actantial analysis. By applying all the necessary methods, finally this study can show that structuralist analysis of the novel uncovers the underlying principles that govern a literary work’s composition.
ABSTRAK


xiii
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Jerome David Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye* is about Holden Caulfield, a sixteen-year-old high school student who gets expelled from Pencey Prep because he flunks almost all subjects he takes. The narrative goes as Holden decides to leave earlier from the school’s dormitory, although he is supposed to stay a few days more. Holden wanders in New York City and tells the reader about his confusion as a teenager. Holden drinks and smokes, goes in and out from one nightclub to another, strolls in a bar, spends the night sleeplessly, and roams along the city’s streets and public places. He also asks intensively about where the Central Park ducks go in the winter.

This thesis begins with the finding of repeated events in *The Catcher in the Rye*, e.g. Holden’s visiting teacher. Holden visits Mr. Spencer in Chapter 2 and then Mr. Antolini in Chapter 24. Earlier in the novel, Holden visits Mr. Spencer to have a small talk but then Holden is lectured by Mr. Spencer. The same incident happens again when Holden visits Mr. Antolini. Not only the main event, but also the smallest component of the event recurs in the novel. For example, Jerome David Salinger describes in a very detail way that Holden realizes his teachers and their spouses are “separated” although both of them live in the same house.
The writer assumes that it is not a coincidence because other events in the novels recur in the same way as Holden’s visiting teacher. Discovering such peculiar, noteworthy and thought-provoking occurrence, the writer questions the reason of those recurring events’ existence in the novel. Speaking of repetitive events, J.A. Cuddon (1998: 522) introduces the term motif: “motif is one of the dominant ideas in work of literature, it may consist of a character, a recurrent image or a verbal pattern.” After that, a question is raised: what is the importance of these motifs?

It turns out that structuralism deals with motif as the material to uncover a text’s narrative operations, as Peter Barry (2009: 48) explains that “structuralist analyze (mainly) prose narratives, relating the text to some larger containing structure, e.g. treating narrative structure as a complex of recurrent patterns and motifs”. Structuralism itself relies mostly on the concept of binary oppositions, as Jonathan Culler (2008: 16) affirms that “structuralists think in binary terms, to look for functional oppositions in whatever material they are studying.”

Structuralist focuses on the structure of a text and “presents a series of parallels, echoes, reflections, patterns, and contrasts, so that the narrative becomes highly schematized” (Barry, 2009: 51). Instead of seeking interpretation of a literary work, structuralism is interested in investigating the process-making of a text’s meaning, as Culler (1997: 120) states, “structuralism seeks not to produce new interpretations of works but to understand how they can have the meanings and effects that they do.”
In order to accomplish its mission to explain how a text makes meaning for itself, structuralism analyze the narrative structure of a text, that is, “the fundamental structural units (such as units of narrative progression or functions such as character functions that govern texts’ narrative operations” (Lois Tyson, 2006: 224). Tyson suggests that there are several examples that are representatives of the structuralism field in general, one of them is the work of A.J. Greimas. Greimas introduces theory of actant, or character functions. Greimas’ actancial analysis uses the concept of binary opposition to explain the narrative structure of a text.

The other reason behind this research is the novel’s distinguished influence. The novel itself deals with teen angst and it becomes a well-known symbol of rebellion. R. Vincent Neffinger (2014: 48) states that “Catcher’s social impact was greatest in the way that the counterculture almost entirely interpreted the novel in the same manner, creating some semblance of community amidst a multitude of questioning young people.” Discontentedly, a number of controversial crimes such as the shooting of John Lennon and the assassination attempt of Ronald Reagan are related to this book, in a way that the convicts are judged to be obsessed with the novel.

Apart from the negative effects the book has, the novel itself gives a big influence to the popular culture. Many books, films, music, and television series adapt the core sense of The Catcher in the Rye, meaning that society is aware and they do care about what the novel says. Nancy Mills (2002) cites several examples,

The topic is worth studying because undoubtedly, *The Catcher in the Rye* has a great contribution to the literary world and to the society. The novel is accepted as “the teenagers’ bible” (Jessadaporn Achariyopas, 2012: 268) or as Fred H. Marcus (1962: 1) puts it, “*The Catcher in the Rye* produces live circuits, it is widely read by college students often on an unassigned basis. It has become a symbol of unrequired reading to the high school student than the verities.”

Moreover, several related studies are done by Sanata Dharma University English Letters’ students, but all of them are performed through psychoanalysis approach to analyze the given work. Therefore, by applying another approach on the analysis of the novel, i.e. structuralism, the writer offers another perspective or point of view. In this study the writer tries to answer the problem of how do the motif of repeated events make sense to the whole understanding of the novel. By perceiving in how the literary work makes meaning for itself, the better comprehension of the text then can be accomplished, as it is supposed to be in structuralism analysis.
B. Problem Formulation

In order to complete a comprehensive analysis, the questions to the problems in this study must be formulated in a specific way. The subjects being discussed are observed through two interrelated and ordered problem formulations, they are:

1. What are the binary oppositions examined from the motifs found in J.D. Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye*?

2. How do the binary oppositions become the narrative structure of *The Catcher in the Rye*?

C. Objectives of the Study

This study aims to, firstly, analyze the binary opposition from the motifs found in J.D. Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye*. The second objective reveals how the binary opposition becomes the narrative structure of J.D. Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye*, thus it shows the idea of structuralism analysis, that is, to uncover the universal underlying principles that govern a literary work’s composition.

D. Definition of Terms

Related to the course of this research, three specific terms must be defined, they are: motif, binary opposition, and narrative structure.

1. Motif

M.H. Abrams (2012: 229) states that motif is a conspicuous element, such as type of event, device, reference, or formula, which occurs frequently in works of
literature. Another definition of the term according to William Harmon (2009: 355), motif is recurrent images, words, objects, phrases, situation, or actions that tend to unify the work.

2. Binary Opposition

Claude Levi-Strauss in Hans Bertens (2001:62) affirms that binary opposition is a very basic mental operation consisted in the creation of opposites, e.g. life/death. According to Levi-Strauss, such binary oppositions are the most fundamental structure that constitutes the basis of human culture. The classification of binary oppositions is based upon a presence and an absence of opposing element, such as male/female, light/darkness, above/below, and so on.

3. Narrative structure

The term narrative structure or the structure of narrative, as Tyson (2006: 224) introduces, is the fundamental structural units or functions that govern texts’ narrative operations. Structuralist’s job, then, is to analyze the inner “workings” of literary texts in order to discover the fundamental structural units of the novel.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. Review of Related Studies

To fully comprehend the study of structuralism applied in J.D. Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye*, several related studies are reviewed. Some of related studies are done by the students of English Letters Department. Y. Endri Widyanto’s thesis deals with role models and Yohanes Bayu Wijaya’s is about personality development. Unfortunately, there is a laxity of literary approaches’ point of view. Their studies use psychoanalysis approach—whereas structuralism is implemented in this study.

Widyanto (2003: 2) analyzes how the novel’s main character confronts the society’s bad influences. Widyanto (2003: 28) identifies Holden’s characteristics and examines the influences of the society toward Holden’s character. Finally Widyanto (2003: 53) concludes that Holden’s search of identity is “influenced by his instability of mind, of the losses and failure that he made, his lack of communication and his idealism. Holden’s cynicism is the result of the lack of positive role models in the society.”

Another related study done by Wijaya (2012: 5), discusses the development of Holden’s personality under the influence of the member of his family and also environment. Wijaya (2012: 60) shows Holden’s personality changes into maturity in the way of thinking because of the influence of the alienation and cynicism. Finally
Wijaya (2012: 61) concludes that “Holden’s interactions with family member and environment bring a positive change in Holden’s thinking.”

Both Widyanto and Wijaya’s theses accomplish its goal to explain Holden’s psychological problem (that Holden is a victim of the bad adult society). By reviewing related studies within the same approach (structuralism), it can help the structuralist analysis in this study. The next related studies evaluate *The Catcher in the Rye* through structuralism approach, particularly through the symbolic structure, psychological structure, and logical action.

Firstly, Clinton W. Trowbridge (1966: 681-693) conducts a research focus on the depiction of symbols found in the characters that Holden meets in the course of the novel. Trowbridge (1966: 681) clarifies that “a symbol cannot be fully understood without discussing it in relation to the entire work”. The representations of symbols are seen through the relation between Holden and the other characters.

Holden’s relationship with Mrs. Morrow, Maurice, Faith Cavendish, Seattle tourists, Jane Gallagher, Sally Hayes, and Phoebe brings out the symbols that Holden tries to communicate with the others, few succeed but many fail. As Trowbridge (1966: 683) states, Holden’s first encounter with Mrs. Morrow is significantly enough, his most successful one. Trowbridge (1966: 684) adds, the rest of Holden’s experiences until he meets Maurice, are increasingly unsuccessful. Unlike the other relations with older characters, it is different when Holden encounters his little sister Phoebe. Holden is comfortable to interact with his little sister Phoebe, or as
Trowbridge (1966: 686) states, Holden is “at home in a world of innocence and integrity. He can trust her to take his side, to understand and sympathize”.

All of Holden’s interactions with the other characters along the course of the novel symbolize the childhood side and adulthood side. These interpretations of the symbols found in the characters lead to the view of the narrative’s larger structure. According to Trowbridge (1966: 683), what happens to Holden, and what constitutes, therefore, the structural pattern of the novel is the result of the characters’ interactions.

Meanwhile, James Bryan (1974: 1065-1074) performs another research seen through the point of view of psychoanalytic reading of *The Catcher in the Rye*, but it is still related to structuralism in term of the goal of the study, that is, to show how the psychological actions develop the structure of the text. Bryan focuses on Holden’s psychological condition as someone that poised between two worlds (childhood-adulthood), one he cannot return to and the other he fears to enter.

Bryan (1974: 1065) states that the central rhythm of the narrative is “Holden confronts adult callousness and retreats reflexively into thoughts and fantasies about children.” At last, he states that the basic of his analysis is the “examination of the structure, scene construction, and suggestive imagery reveals a pattern of aggression and regression” that acted out in the central part of the novel based on Holden’s psychological background (Bryan, 1974: 1066).
The other researcher that gives attention to structural analysis is Hubert Zapf (1985: 266-271). He concludes that Holden’s actions in the novel are well-ordered, thus showing the unity of the text. According to Zapf (1985: 266), the actions making up the narrative of *The Catcher in the Rye* follow a specific logic which can be described with structuralist means. He provides a homological model for Holden’s action in *The Catcher in the Rye*: strong desire to return to childhood—desire for adulthood experience—rejection of adult world—rejection by adult world” (Zapf, 1985: 267). These base language rules motivate all of Holden’s actions throughout the story: Holden wants to join the adult but he is rejected by them.

The studies done by Trowbridge, Bryan, and Zapf contribute to the framework of this study in analyzing J.D. Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye* in the scope of structuralism approach. It can be summarized that Bryan’s research examines the narrative text from Holden’s psychological background, but still has relation to the study of the structure of the novel. Trowbridge focuses on the characters as the carrier of narrative’s symbol whereas Zapf gives attention on the plot in which it describes the main character’s actions as the basis of the novel’s narrative structure.

Furthermore, the distinctive feature of this research is that it examines the intrinsic element (motif) in the novel. No previous study is done until the same procedure such as this one. This study gives a new perspective from the theory of
binary opposition by examining the motifs in the narrative. It develops the other previous related structuralism studies and expectedly, to discover something new.

B. Review of Related Theories

To solve the problem formulations of the study, several principal and useful theories are used to analyze the issues in this research. There are three theories being reviewed in this part: theory of motif, theory of binary opposition, and Greimas’ theory of actant. The theory of motif is used to analyze the first problem (intrinsic element analysis). The theory of binary opposition is used to flesh out the opposing pairs in each motif. These dyads are important substances to the narrative structure analysis. Geimas’s theory of actant is applied in the narrative structure analysis.

1. Theory of Motif

Theory of motif begins with critics’ awareness that there is a certain intrinsic element in literary work which function as the tool to convey the intended message of the narrative text. As William Freedman (1971: 123) introduces, critics search for “clusters or families of related words or phrases that, by virtue of their frequency and particular use, tell us something about the author’s intentions, conscious or otherwise”. Critics realize that there are messages sent by the author repeatedly.

Some of the critics Freedman mentions in his paper are Mark Schorer and Reuben Brower. Schorer introduces the term “methaporic substructures” whereas Brower in Freedman (1971: 123) concerns about recurrent images or metaphors in a
literary work, thus offers the term “continuities”. These two critics agrees that this kind of intrinsic elements, combined with the figurative, “form a larger unit that may prove revealing still” (Freedman, 1971: 123). The combination of the literal and the figurative is called “motif”.

Essentially, a motif is a repeated element found in several literary texts or just in a single work. Karl Beckson (1960: 129) provides the definition of motif as:

A theme, character, or verbal pattern which recurs in literature or folklore … A motif may be a theme which runs through a number of different works. The motif of the imperishability of art, for example, appears in Shakespeare, Keats, Yeats, and many others. A recurring element within a single work is also called a motif.

According to Freedman (1971: 124), a motif recurs for a reason. The motif tells the reader something, “to establish a convenient separation about the action of the story (either its total structure or the events), the minds of the characters, the emotional import or the moral or cognitive content of the works. Motif tells the reader that there is another meaning rather than the incidents in the novel say straightforwardly.

Freedman argues that motif and symbol are closely related elements in the story and the difference between the two is very slight. The first difference, according to (Freedman, 1971: 124) is that “the symbol may occur singly, the motif is necessarily recurrent and its effect cumulative.” A symbol may appears once throughout the whole narrative, but a motif must be continuously emerges or repeating itself. Grace Fleming (2014) assures that “while a symbol might occur once
in literature to signify an idea or an emotion, a motif can be an element or idea that repeats throughout that piece of literature.”

Moreover, one motif can be represented by several symbols, as Freedman (1971: 124) says, “… to find scattered through the book frequent references or associational cluster”. Fleming (2014) gives clearer example of this, that “a motif could be expressed by a collection of related symbols. For example, the motif of fragmentation could come from several symbols that appear in a book: shattered glass, an unfaithful spouse, a runaway pet, teen, or car.” By now it is clear that motif differs from symbol in term of motif’s appearances in a given work, compared to symbol which requires to be mentioned at least once in the novel. Also, a symbol is always has the symbolic value, whereas a motif maybe has a symbolic value or it just say the literal meaning in the text.

Additionally, Freedman (1971: 124-125) explains another distinction between symbol and motif, in relation to the thing a symbol/a motif refers to:

“A symbol is something described; it is an event or it is a thing. It is always a thing or event described. A motif, in the other hand, although it may appear as something described, perhaps even more often forms part of the description. It slips, as it were, into the author’s vocabulary, into the dialogue, and into his imagery, often even at times when the symbolized referent if not immediately involved.

To find symbol in a given work, readers should recognize that the author provides several clues to the symbol (such as the title or the relation between an object with the narrative plot). To discover a motif, readers are required to see the text within larger
context, because motif becomes ‘part of the description’ rather mere a ‘something described’ as a symbol does.

Besides the investigation of the difference between symbol and motif, Freedman notes that there are at least four factors to be considered about motif: frequency, unlike-hood, appropriateness, context and unity. The first factor, frequency, as Freedman (1971: 126) states:

“Our obviously no specific numbers of references can possibly be fixed as requisite to the motif. That will vary with each work. But members of the family of references should occur often enough to indicate that purposiveness rather than merely coincidence or necessity is at least occasionally responsible for their presence. They should pervade the atmosphere sufficiently to assure that they will be at least subliminally felt.”

To be considered as a motif, there is no exact rule how many a certain element must appear in a novel, as long as it is ‘occur often enough’ and show that it has specific intention in the narrative text. The more it appears, as Freedman (1971: 126) emphases, “the deeper the impression it is likely to make on the reader—the effect, of course, will also be increased the more extensive the individual references are.”

The second factor is unlike-hood or uniqueness of the motif in a novel. As Freedman (1971: 126) states that “the more uncommon a reference is in a given context, the more likely it is to strike the reader, consciously or subconsciously, and the greater will be its effect.” It is the author’s right to choose his/her own motif, as there is no rule to shows “universal” subject. For example, author of a novel may
choose a unique object such as a less unknown flower rather than a rose (more common symbol for love) to reappear in a romantic story.

Concerning the symbolic function of the motif, it should be “appropriate to what it symbolizes” (Freedman, 1971: 127). Although an author has the freedom to choose his/her own motif, the motif should be make sense, related to the larger and whole text. Freedman cites the example of “constant references to doors, fences, gates, and the like are patently appropriate as symbolic representations of a character’s physical and spiritual isolation.” Motif is free-chosen, but it also should maintain the logicality and reasonableness.

The fourth factor should be considered about motif is the significance of the contexts in which it occurs. A motif should be “relevant to the principal end as a whole and to which they fit together into a recognizable and coherent unit” (Freedman, 1971: 127). It is clearly seen that motif helps the reader to understand the general theme of the text, or “the closer the association between the components of the cluster the more unified their effects” (Freedman, 1971: 127).

To conclude this part, the motif has a great potential in structuralism analysis, as Freedman (1971: 125) settles, “the motif may become a part of the total perspective, pervading the book’s atmosphere and becoming and important thread in the fabric of the work”. Motif contributes to the development of the novel’s progress as it “elaborate into a more general theme” (Chris Balick, 1996: 142). Motif gives the text medium to show the readers another way to absorb a novel’s complete ideas.
2. Theory of Binary Opposition

Before examining theory of binary opposition, firstly it is better to understand structuralism approach because those two are interrelated and inseparable concepts. Barry (2009: 50-51) confirms the difference between traditional criticism of liberal humanist which searches “any wider moral significance and going straight into the content of the literary work” and structuralism which is more interested in commenting the structure of the work by presenting “a serial of parallels, echoes, reflections, patterns, and contrasts; so that the narrative becomes highly schematized.” Additionally, Tory Young (2008: 31) defines that “structuralist criticism is a highly systematic, and even scientific, approach to the analysis of the text. The critical act should focus on the underlying systems that make meaning possible.”

Structuralism’s task, as Tyson (2006: 209) explains, is not “to describe the structure of a short story to interpret what the work means or evaluate whether or not it’s good literature.” Rather, structuralism’s activity is to “describe the structure of a literary work to discover how its composition demonstrates the underlying principles of a given structural system.” Structuralism begins with Saussure’s linguistic approach, then scholars realize that it can also be applied in the field of literature because, as Tyson (2006: 220) explains, “narratives provide fertile ground for structuralist criticism because, despite their range of forms, narratives share certain structural features, such as plot, setting, and character.”
One of structuralism’s main device is binary opposition. Cuddon (1998: 82) defines binary opposition from the term binary, it means “denotes composed of two.” Baldick (1996: 24) describes that binary opposition is “the principle of contrast between two mutually exclusive terms: on/off, up/down, left/right etc; an important concept of structuralism, which sees such distinctions as fundamental to all language and thought.” Furthermore, Mario J. Valdes in Irena R. Makaryk (1993: 511) stresses that “in binary opposition the two poles must not only be opposed to each other but must also be in exclusive opposition to each other; in other words, they are bound in polar opposition like the positive and negative charge of an electric current.” So, not only one paired has some opposite quality of another, but it must complete the full contradiction value of the opposite.

Structuralism claims that human being perceives meaning of something by referring to its opposition, e.g. human understand ‘dark’ as the condition of ‘light’ absence. Saussure in Michael Payne (2010: 665) founds that meaning is “structured as a relation of difference between elements, that a word has its meaning not because of what it refers to, but because it does not mean the same as other words.” Michael Ryan (2012: 20-21) stresses the significant role of binary opposition: “The differential principle is an important feature of structural analysis. No single part of language has meaning in and of itself. Its identity is made possible by its difference from and its connection to other parts of the language.”
Jack Solomon in Gregory Castle (2011: 439) states that some structuralist critics such as Levi-Strauss, A.J. Greimas, Tzvetan Todorov, and Roland Barthes use “Saussure’s and Levi-Struss’ structuralist methods to analyze cultural texts.” As Roland Barthes (1977: 92-93) states “the structuralist literary critic sought to describe the meaningful units of literary language—for example, distributional and integrational units of narrative—in terms of differential relations.” In other word, the text makes meaning by its component of the smallest difference, that is, two opposing pair or binary oppositions.

As Young (2008: 31) implies, the role of oppositions have great importance in the production of meaning, and structuralism views the binary opposition as “the basic structure that underlies the sense-making operations of language.” Yet it is true that human being could not value something without referring to its opposite. The reason for this judgment, as Culler (2008: 17) emphasizes the importance of binary opposition in literature, is because “when two things are set in opposition to one another the reader is forced to explore qualitative similarities and differences, to make a connection so as to derive meaning from the disjunction.” For structuralist, binary opposition is the perfect device to bring their concept into realization of structuralism analysis. Finally Barry (2009: 54) remarks the role of binary opposition, that “narrative structures are found upon such underlying paired opposites, or dyads, so that contrasts such as these are the skeletal structure on which all narratives are fleshed out.”
3. Theory of Narrative Structure: Greimas’ Actants

Tyson (2006: 224) gives example that to analyze the narrative structure of a text one can try “to discover the fundamental structural units (such as units of narrative progression) or functions (such as character functions)”. Character functions itself is described by A.J. Greimas as “actants”. Character functions are different from characters. Character functions perform as the underlying structure which is filled by the actual characters (surface phenomena) in a given story. In the narratives, this structure is embodied in the form of plot formulas, such as conflict and resolution, struggle and reconciliation, and separation and union.

Solomon in Castle (2011: 440) states that “the variety of attempts to find the literary equivalent to the phoneme has led to innovative studies of narrative function. A.J. Greimas pursued an underlying semantic structure for literary narrative.” Greimas rearranges and simplifies Vladimir Propp’s analysis in order to call attention to the “grammar” of narrative functions; which he argues that narratives are constructed around three basic oppositional pairs called actants.

Moreover, John N. Duvall (1982: 192) compares actants’ function in literature as phonemes in language. Greimas in Duvall (1982: 192) states that “literature is a language, and the individual narrative is a sentence”. Actants help the reader to understand the grammar of the narrative sentence, to find the paradigmatic langue of narrative, and to see how it is embodied in the parole of the individual narrative. Just as Jakobson isolates phonemes and Levi-Strauss seeks out mythemes, Greimas looks
for sememes, the smallest unit of a semantic signification, which he finds in the
actant.

Duvall (1982: 192) adds that actantial analysis looks at the entities that act. In the
Greimasian analysis, every narrative has six actants operating on three axes.
Tyson (2006: 227) describe this axes as three patterns of plots consist of six actants:
1. Subject/Object: stories of quest/desire (a subject or hero searches for an object: a
   person, thing, or state of being).
2. Sender/Receiver: stories of communication (a sender: a person, god, or institution
   sends the subject in search of the object).
3. Helper/Opponent: subplots of stories of quest/desire or communication (a helper
   aids the subject in the quest; an opponent tries to hinder the subject).
It is clear that actants are different with characters. Characters represent individual or
person, whether actants represent the functions of the characters according to
Greimas (subject, object, sender, receiver, helper, or opponent).

These six pairing of actans can be used to flesh out the narrative structure of a
text. By classifying the surface phenomena (e.g. characters) into its functions, the
narrative structure could be explained, as for Greimas, “the forwarding of the plot
involves the transfer of some entity from one actant to another” (Tyson, 2006: 225).
Actans act as “subject and object” and the transfer (action, change) act as “verb”.
Thus, Greimas suggests that “the fundamental structure of narrative is the same as the
fundamental structure of language: subject-verb-object” (Tyson, 2006: 225). The
actants reveal how the story goes and makes meaning for itself.
Greimas suggest that these six pairing actants create the universal type of narrative structure that can be found in all literary works, as it is mentioned earlier: the story quest, the story of communication, and the subplot of story of quest or communication.

C. Theoretical Framework

Some theories reviewed in this study are explained in term of their importance and how do they contribute in analyzing the two problem formulations mentioned earlier in the previous chapter.

William Freedman’s theory of motif are applied to solve the first problem formulation. Freedman’s theory of motif is used to classify which intrinsic element that can be considered as motif in *The Catcher in the Rye*. Levi-Strauss’ explanation of binary opposition is used by the researcher to decide the binary oppositions found in the motifs. Binary oppositions from the motifs (intrinsic elements) are important to proceed to the next step of the thesis. By using these theories of motif and binary opposition, the first problem formulation then can be answered.

Tyson’s description of narrative structure and Duvall’s example in how to do Greimas’ actantial analysis give a clear insight of what should be done in this research. Both Tyson and Duvall suggest that Greimas’ actants analysis is really helpful to flesh out the narrative structure of the text. By applying the theory of narrative structure (Greimas’ actantial analysis), the final objective of this research can be fully accomplished.
CHAPTER III

METHODODOLOGY

A. Object of the Study

The object of this research is a novel entitled *The Catcher in the Rye* which was written by Jerome David Salinger and published by Penguin Books in 2010. The novel is 230 pages long, and divided into 26 chapters. The interesting point from the novel is, it covers only around three-days setting of time and tells ordinary every day events the main character (Holden Caulfield). The novel highlights Holden’s wandering in New York City, and the story is told from the first person point of view.

*The Catcher in the Rye,* which was first published in 1951, now becomes one of the most celebrated novels in Anglo-American literature. It is sold around more than 65 million books worldwide. It is regarded as one of the best novel by Time Magazine and BBC’s poll called “The Big Read”. Although J.D. Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye* experiences great success in the book form, until now it hasn’t been adapted into movie, because of the author’s wish and his big standard for the adaptation. *The Catcher in the Rye* also gives big influences into the society, as the main character, Holden Caulfield, becomes the symbol of teenage rebellion. Moreover, many authors are influenced by *The Catcher in the Rye’s,* such as Stephen Chbosky (writer of *The Perks of being a Wallflower*) and Sylvia Plath (writer of *The Bell Jar*).
B. Approach of the Study

Concerning the goal of the study to reveal the underlying structure of the text through the scope of binary opposition’s concept, it is clear that the writer chooses structuralism approach to analyze the given literary text. Compared to the other literary approaches, structuralism itself has a distinguished characteristic, in which it does not attempt what a text means, but it focuses more on how a literary text means.

To apply the structuralism approach to the analysis of the given text, there is a certain procedure to be followed. In order to reveal the structure of the novel, it means that the writer must unfold the pattern of the story. The first tier is to find the motifs spread in the novel, and then the writer deducts some binary oppositions examined from the motifs. The writer tries to relate the intrinsic elements of the novel and structuralism approach. Tyson (2006: 220) suggests that “narrative provide fertile ground for structuralist criticism because narratives share certain structural features, such as plot, setting, and character”. It can be concluded that it is applicable to use structuralism approach because it tends to link the deeper structure of the literary text.

Moreover, the writer uses the structuralism approach because it conveys the main goal of this study, that is, to uncover the underlying structure of J.D. Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye*. As Charles Bressler (1999: 99) states:

No matter what its methodology, structuralism emphasizes form and structure, not actual content of a text. Although individual texts must be analyzed, structuralists are more interested in the rule-governed system that underlies texts than in the texts themselves. How a text’s underlying structural codes combine to produce the text’s meaning rather than a reader’s personal interpretation is structuralism’s chief interest.
By employing structuralism approach, the writer can highlight and point out how does J.D. Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye* makes meaning for itself. For that reason, structuralism approach is the most suitable option to be used in this study.

C. Method of the Study

The library research was taken to accomplish the goal of this study. By applying library research, some documents (journals, textbooks) were read to support the study. The primary source of this study is a novel entitled *The Catcher in the Rye* which was written by Jerome David Salinger. The secondary sources are related theories of structuralism and related studies of the study of structuralism applied in *The Catcher in the Rye*. Some important theories are Freedman’s study of motif and Greimas’s actantial analysis.

Several steps were taken in the analysis itself. First, the writer read closely *The Catcher in the Rye*. The writer also observed how many chapters are in the novel and how the story went along the chapters.

Next, in the second step, the writer decided the problem formulations of the research: (1) to find the motifs (the intrinsic elements), and (2) to analyze the narrative structure of the novel based on the binary oppositions examined from the motifs. From the problem formulations, the writer studied several important related studies and theories to support the analysis.

In the third step, the writer investigated some patterns that appeared in the novel. From the recurrent patterns then it can be concluded the motifs found in the literary text. After that, from the motifs found in the text, the writer then concluded
the binary opposition contained in each motif. By this point the first problem formulation was solved.

After that, the structural analysis was done in order to complete the analysis of this study. The writer tried to see how the text made meaning by applying the theory of binary opposition as the narrative structure of a novel. The writer use Greimas’ actantial analysis to show the relationship between two opposites (which explained the narrative structure of the novel) so that the second problem formulation was accomplished. In the last step, the writer withdrew the conclusions. In this part the writer stated directly the answers of the problem formulations.
CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part is the intrinsic elements (motifs) analysis and binary oppositions based on the motifs found in the text. The second part is the structuralism analysis which explains how the binary oppositions become the narrative structure of the novel.

The study is supported by the idea that one of structuralism’s job is to “analyze mainly prose narratives, relating the text to some larger containing structure, such as a notion of narrative as a complex of recurrent patterns or motifs” (Barry, 2009: 48). By seeing the repeating theme, the underlying structure of the given work can be fleshed out. Finally, how the text makes meaning for itself can be understood as it is supposed to be in structuralism analysis.

A. Binary Opposition Examined through the Motifs in The Catcher in the Rye

Cuddon (1998: 522) defines motif as “one of the dominant ideas in work of literature; a part of the main theme—it may consist of a character, a recurrent image or a verbal pattern”. Through close reading of the novel, four motifs are observed, they are: (1) teacher visit, (2) physical fight, (3) rejected sexual desire, and (4) curiosity. The motifs in J.D. Salinger’s The Catcher in the Rye mostly deal with the repetition of plot events. The similarities of recurring events are described in the following explanation in order to show the recurrent pattern of the novel.
1. **Teacher Visit**

   In the course of the novel, Holden visits his two teachers, Mr. Spencer and Mr. Antolini. The patterns of the plots related to Holden’s visits are similar: Holden expects to be understood by adults (teachers), but they lecture and disappoint him.

   a. **Mr. Spencer visit**

   In the beginning of the novel, Holden gets kicked out from his school and tells the reader that he has a terrible day. He stands alone in the Thomsen Hill, and suddenly he remembers that he needs to meet his teacher, to “say good-by to old Spencer, my history teacher” (J.D. Salinger, 2010: 3). Mr. Spencer writes letter to Holden saying that Mr. Spencer wants to see Holden before Holden goes home. Holden knows that Mr. Spencer gets influenza and decides to see him as soon as possible. It is clear that Holden makes attempt to communicate with Mr. Spencer.

   When Holden comes to Mr. Spencer’s house, he notices Mr. Spencer and his wife live separately, that “they each had their own room and all” (Salinger, 2010: 7). In the course of the novel, Mr. Spencer’s wife is not involved in the conversation between Mr. Spencer and Holden Caulfield. This tiny detail will be repeated in Holden’s next meeting with the other teacher.

   Holden regrets visiting Mr. Spencer’s because he knows that his expectation to have a good conversation is not going to happen. Holden realizes that “the minute I went in, I was sort of sorry I’d come” (Salinger, 2010: 8). Instead of showing support to Holden, Mr. Spencer lectures Holden about getting kicked out from school. Holden recognizes that “all of sudden then, I wanted to get the hell out of the room, and I
could feel a terrific lecture coming on” (Salinger, 2010: 10-11). In fact Mr. Spencer
does lecture Holden:

‘Do you feel absolutely no concern for your future, boy?’
‘Oh, I feel some concern for my future, all right. Sure. Sure, I do. But not too
much, I guess.’
‘You will,’ old Spencer said. ‘You will, boy. You will when it’s too late.’
I didn’t like hearing him say that. It made me sound dead or something. It was
very depressing. (Salinger, 2010: 15)

Holden dislikes to be lectured because all he needs is support and acceptance. Holden
does not want to be blamed for getting expelled and he thinks that he “is just going
through a phase right now” (Salinger, 2010: 16).

Moreover, Mr. Spencer’s physical appearance disturbs Holden that he wants
to leave as soon as possible:

But I just couldn’t hang around there any longer, the way we were on the
opposite sides of the pole, and the way he kept missing the bed whenever he
chucked something at it, and his sad old bathrobe with his chest showing, and
that grippy smell of Vicks nose drops all over the place (Salinger, 2010: 16).

As Holden could not stay any longer, he makes excuse to “get going now to take the
equipment at the gym” (Salinger, 2010: 15). Truthfully, Holden doesn’t take back his
equipment because he left all the equipment on the New York’s subway.

b. Mr. Antolini visit

In the latter part of the novel, Holden comes home secretly to see his little
sister Phoebe and after some conversations he decides “to phone this guy that was my
English teacher at Elkton Hills, Mr. Antolini” (Salinger, 2010: 186). Holden doesn’t
want his parents know that he comes home at the time it was not supposed to be, so
Holden makes a plan to sleep over at Mr. Antolini’s. Luckily, Mr. Antolini is very
kind and he says that Holden “could come right over if he wanted to” (Salinger, 2010: 188).

When Holden comes to Mr. Antolini’s house, he observes that Mr. Antolini and his wife “were never in the same room at the same time and it was sort of funny” (Salinger, 2010: 196). This detail is carefully written as it is the recurrence of the same detail from Holden’s earlier visit at Mr. Spencer’s. The repeating elements give clue to the motif of visiting teacher.

The same accident of Holden being lectured by his teacher happens again. Holden wants to stay at Mr. Antolini’s and enjoys the visit, but Mr. Antolini talks a lot about Holden getting kicked out from school. In turn, Holden “didn’t feel much like thinking and answering and all and that he “had a headache and felt lousy” (Salinger, 2010: 199).

Horribly, Mr. Antolini also disappoints Holden by patting his head while Holden sleeps:

I woke up all of a sudden, I don’t know what time it was or anything, but I woke up. I felt something on my head, some guy’s hand. Boy, it really scared hell out of me. What it was, it was Mr Antolini’s hand. What he was doing was, he was sitting on the floor right next to the couch, in the dark and all, and he was sort of petting me or patting me on the goddam head. Boy, I’ll bet I jumped about a thousand feet (Salinger, 2010: 206-207).

Holden is disappointed because he regards Mr. Antolini as “the best teacher I ever had” (Salinger, 2010: 188) and eventually Mr. Antolini does something pervert to him.
Afraid of Mr. Antolini’s action, Holden decides to leave Mr. Antolini’s apartment as soon as possible:

‘I have to go anyway,’ I said—boy, was I nervous!
‘You have to go where?’ Mr Antolini said.
‘I left my bags and all at the station. I think maybe I’d better go down and get them. I have all my stuff in them.’ (Salinger, 2010: 207)

The excuse Holden makes to leave is the same as the excuses when he leaves Mr. Spencer: Holden needs to take his stuff he left at somewhere (the gym and station).

The characters’ actions in the two chapters reflect the motif of Holden’s failed attempt to communicate with adults. Holden seeks advices from who he thinks are the experienced: Mr. Spencer and Mr. Antolini. Both of them are Holden’s teachers thus it is normal to consider them as the wiser people. The repeating patterns are shown by the similarity of the actions in the two chapters. In the Chapter 2, Holden sees Mr. Spencer with an expectation to be understood, but in turn Mr. Spencer lectures him and forces Holden to leaves. The same accident happens in the Chapter 24 where Mr. Antolini also lectures Holden.

Additionally, smaller detail such as the similarity that both Mr. Spencer’s and Mr. Antolini’s wives do not involved in the conversation between Holden and his teachers complements the motif. Holden’s excuse that he needs to take his equipment he left at some place is also repeated. It is clear that the motif is constituted by the conflict of unexperienced one (Holden as teenager) and experienced ones (Mr. Spencer and Mr. Antolini as the adults). From the table below it can be seen that the narrative actions in the two chapters show some important resemblances:
Holden’s visiting teacher obviously resembles two opposites: student and teacher. Holden as student is a person who seeks help from his teachers (Mr. Spencer and Mr. Antolini) whom Holden considers more experienced. Thus, the binary oppositions in the visiting teacher motif are student/teacher and inexperienced/experienced.

2. Physical Fight

The second motif is about Holden who loses two physical fights. Holden’s opponents are either stronger (Stradlater, Holden’s roommate at Pencey Prep) or older (Maurice, the elevator operator at Edmont Hotel). Holden fights them because they are dishonest. Stradlater lies about his date with a girl who Holden likes while Maurice lies about a prostitute’s cost. Holden wants to stand against them because Holden believes that he is the one who values honesty. Because the opponents are stronger, in the end Holden loses both fights.

a. Stradlater Fight

Stradlater is Holden’s roommate. Although Stradlater and Holden are “practically the same height, but Stradlater weighed about twice as much as Holden

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Mr. Spencer (Chapter 2)</th>
<th>Mr. Antolini (Chapter 24)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ spouse</td>
<td>Communication attempt</td>
<td>Communication attempt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What the teachers do</td>
<td>Lectures Holden</td>
<td>Lectures Holden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holden’s reason to leave</td>
<td>Disappointing physical appearance (bumpy chest)</td>
<td>Disappointing action (head patting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holden’s excuse to leave</td>
<td>Take back his equipment</td>
<td>Take back his bag</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
did” (Salinger, 2010: 27). Holden admits that Stradlater “had a damn good build” (Salinger, 2010: 27). So, physically Stradlater is stronger than Holden.

Holden fights Stradlater over Jane Gallagher, Holden’s childhood friend. Stradlater goes to a date with Jane Gallager while Holden writes a composition for him. When Stradlater comes back to the dorm, Holden is curious about the date. Stradlater explains that he and Jane Gallagher just sit in Ed Banky’s (the basketball coach) car. Holden suspects that they have sex in the car, but Stradlater refuses to give a clear answer:

‘What’d you do?’ I said. ‘Give her the time in Ed Banky’s goddam car?’ My voice was shaking something awful.
‘What a a thing to say. Want me to wash your mouth out with soap?’ (Salinger, 2010: 45)

Holden asks Stradlater about the truth if Stradlater makes out with Jane or not, but Stradlater doesn’t want to answer Holden’s question. Stradlater merely states that it is “a professional secret” (Salinger, 2010: 45).

Irritated with Stradlater’s attitude, Holden fights Stradlater and eventually Holden loses. Holden’s searching for truth (about Stradlater’s date with Jane) finally must be paid with pain and blood. This depicts Holden’s unpreparedness to cope with the stronger and crueler world of adult:

Then he really let one go at me, and the next thing I knew I was on the goddam floor again. I don’t remember if he knocked me out or not, but I don’t think so. It’s pretty hard to knock a guy out, except in the goddam movies. But my nose was bleeding all over the place. (Salinger, 2010: 47)
b. Maurice Fight

Maurice is the elevator guy in the hotel which Holden spends the night in. Maurice offers Holden a prostitute, costs “five bucks a throw” (Salinger, 2010: 99). Holden agrees to hire the prostitute, while actually he doesn’t really want to have sex with. After the prostitute named Sunny comes to his room, Holden says that he only wants to have a conversation.

Sunny the prostitute doesn’t want to talk to Holden, saying that “if you’re gonna talk, do it. I got things to do.” (Salinger, 2010: 103). After a short time of conversation which Holden monopolizes, Sunny decides to storm out. The problem begins when Sunny asks for ten dollars as Maurice tells her to do so. Holden disagrees because Maurice says that it is five dollars for a throw. Sunny leaves Holden in his room for a while, then she comes back with Maurice to take the remaining five dollars:

‘What’s the matter? Wuddaya want?’ I said. Boy, my voice was shaking like hell.
‘Nothin’ much,’ old Maurice said. ‘Just five bucks.’ He did all the talking for the two of them. Old Sunny just stood there next to him, with her mouth open and all. (Salinger, 2010: 109)

Maurice says that the cost is “Ten bucks for a throw, fifteen bucks till noon.” (Salinger, 2010: 109). Maurice lies about the prostitute’s tariff. Holden wants to stand for his purity, that he is honest. He doesn’t want to give the other five bucks as Maurice asks.

The consequence is, Holden gets involved in another fight and lost the fight for the second time: “Then he smacked me. I didn’t even try to get out of the way or
duck or anything. All I felt was this terrific punch in my stomach” (Salinger, 2010: 112). Maurice’s dishonesty represents the lies of the adult world which Holden couldn’t deal with. From the table below it can be seen the similarity between two Holden’s fights which lead to the physical fight motif:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compared to Holden</th>
<th>Stradlater (Chapter 6)</th>
<th>Maurice (Chapter 14)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dishonest about</td>
<td>Jane’s date</td>
<td>Sunny’s tariff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fight result</td>
<td>Lost</td>
<td>Lost</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both characters Holden fight with in the novel (Stradlater and Maurice) are older and stronger than Holden, but they are dishonest men. The recurrent of these two objects portrays the motif of Holden’s physical fight with the adults, where he loses both of the fights. Holden represents the honest and pure while his opponents embody the dishonest world of stronger (and older) people. Thus, the binary oppositions of physical fight motif are weaker/stronger and honest/dishonest.

3. **Rejected Sexual Desire**

After Holden decides to leave the dormitory on Saturday night, he encounters several older women. Holden flirts with them and offers to get a drink, but all of the adult women reject his invitation. First Holden meets Mrs. Morrow, a mother of his friend in the train from Agerstown to New York. After that, when Holden arrives at Edmont Hotel, he calls Miss Faith Cavendish, a girl “that wasn’t exactly a whore or anything but that didn’t mind doing it once in a while” (Salinger, 2010: 69). Then at the Lavender Room of Edmont Hotel Holden meets three Seattle women named
Marty, Laverne, and Bernice. Holden flirts with all of them and invites to join him for a drink but all of the women reject Holden.

a. Mrs. Morrow

Mrs. Morrow is the mother of Holden’s friend, Ernie. Although she was much older than Holden, Holden thinks that she is attractive woman and “had a quite a lot of sex appeal” (Salinger, 2010: 60). After several conversation Holden invites Mrs. Morrow to have a drink:

‘Would you care for a cocktail?’ I asked her. I was feeling in the mood for one myself. ‘We can go in the club car. All right?’
‘Dear, are you allowed to order drinks?’ she asked me. (Salinger, 2010: 61)

Mrs. Morrow accuses that “the club’s car most likely closed” (Salinger, 2010: 62). Being rejected by Mrs. Morrow, then Holden tells lies to her, such as that he must have a brain tumor operation and will going to South America with his grandmother for a vacation (Salinger, 2010: 62-63). Holden tells lies after he fails inviting Mrs. Morrow. Holden hopes that by telling such awesome things at least he can impress Mrs. Morrow.

b. Miss Faith Cavendish

Immediately after Holden gets his room at Edmont Hotel, he “sits down in a chair, smokes some cigarettes and feels pretty horny” (Salinger, 2010: 68). He has the idea of calling someone named Faith Cavendish to make appointment. Holden knows Miss Cavendish’s number from his friend Eddie Birdsell. Holden phones Miss Cavendish and invites her for a cocktail (and perhaps have sex):

‘Who is this?’ she said.
‘Well, you don’t know me, but I’m a friend of Eddie Birdsell’s. He suggested that if I were in town sometime, we ought to get together for a cocktail or two.’ (Salinger, 2010: 69)

Miss Faith Cavendish, whom Holden never met, rejects Holden’s invitation. She states that it is too late at night and she needs a sleep: “Well, I’d like awfully to get together with you sometime, Mr Cawwifle. You sound very attractive. You sound like a very attractive person. But it is late” (Salinger, 2010: 71).

c. Three Seattle Women

Being rejected by Miss Faith Cavendish, subsequently Holden decides to go to Lavender Room at Edmont Hotel where he sees a group of tourist from Seattle. Holden begins to flirt and offers to dance:

I started giving the three witches at the next table the eye again. I just gave all three of them this very cool glance and all. … I sort of leaned over and said, ‘Would any of you girls care to dance?’ (Salinger, 2010: 75-76)

The three women from Seattle laugh at Holden because he is so young to invite them for a dance. Although they do accept Holden’s invitation to dance, but they give no attention to him.

Holden treats Bernice, Laverne, and Marty “two drinks apiece for them all” (Salinger, 2010: 80) with intention to hold them in the place and continue the conversation. Holden wants them to stay a little longer, but they leave Holden for a sleep straightaway after they finish the drink:

All of a sudden, when they finished their drink, all three of them stood up on me and said they had to get to bed. They said they were going to see the first show at Radio City Music Hall. I tried to get them to stick around for a while, but they wouldn’t. So we said good-by and all (Salinger, 2010: 81).
For the third time, Holden fails to flirt with the older women. Although Bernice, Laverne, and Marty drinks with him Holden is not contented with the conversation they have because “they were so ignorant and all” (Salinger, 2010: 81).

The similarity in this motif is that Holden looks for attention from adult women, he wants to show them that he is mature enough by treats them a drink but the women reject him for being too young. The storylines in Chapter 8, 9, and 10 are much more the same:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Holden’s desire</th>
<th>Mrs. Morrow (Chapter 8)</th>
<th>Faith Cavendish (Chapter 9)</th>
<th>Seattle Women (Chapter 10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women’s reaction</td>
<td>Rejects Holden’s invitation</td>
<td>Rejects Holden’s invitation</td>
<td>Reject Holden’s wish</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this motif Holden attempts to get involved with older opposite sex, but in the end the older women (Mrs. Morrow, Miss Faith Cavendish, Bernice, Laverne, and Marty) reject Holden’s request because they consider Holden as not yet mature. The characters in this motif show the binary opposition of younger/older and immature/mature.

4. Curiosity of the Unknown

Jessica Shattuck (2010) argues that “where do the ducks go in the winter when the lagoon freezes?” is a question Holden comes back to throughout the book. Holden is very curious to know such thing because the question represents more than literal meaning. Holden is not only asks about the unknown place where the ducks go
in the winter, but also the unknown place where he should go in his purposeless wandering.

Salinger puts the duck and winter in the context of Holden’s journey which happens in the winter. The question “where do the ducks go in the winter” represents Holden’s journey. Before winter Holden stays at school with his friends, but after Holden gets kicked out he decides to wander in the city and finds out that actually he doesn’t know where he should go. This situation is perfectly depicted in the “where do the ducks go in the winter” question: Holden knows that before winter the ducks stay in Central Park’s lagoon (known place) but when winter comes Holden knows nothing about the duck because he never sees them (unknown place).

Holden’s question about where do the ducks go in the winter recurs along the novel. Firstly he thinks of it when Mr. Spencer lectures him, and then the next same two questions he ask to two taxi drivers in New York City. Another important point to be noted is the person’s occupation whom Holden asks, that is taxi driver. There are two persons Holden asks concerning where do the ducks go in the winter, and it is not a coincidental that they have the same job. Unfortunately, they fail to answer Holden’s simple yet vital question. In the end, Holden’s curiosity about where the ducks go in the winter remains unanswered.
a. **Holden asks himself about the ducks**

Holden thinks about the ducks while being lectured by Mr. Spencer:

> The funny thing is though, I was sort of thinking of something else while I shot the bull. I live in New York, and I was thinking about the lagoon in Central Park, down near Central Park South. I was wondering if it would be frozen over when I got home, and if it was, where did the ducks go. I was wondering where the ducks went when the lagoon got all icy and frozen over. I wondered if some guy came in a truck and took them away to a zoo or something. Or if they just flew away. (Salinger, 2010: 13-14)

This is the first time Holden thinks about the ducks. At first the question seems insignificant to the novel because it is just Holden’s daydream and distraction while he is being lectured by Mr. Spencer. Later, Holden asks the same question to other people, wishing that he finds satisfying answers.

b. **Holden asks the first taxi driver about the ducks**

When Holden arrives in New York City, he takes a taxi to Edmont Hotel. Suddenly Holden remembers about the ducks again and he asks the taxi driver if he knows where the ducks go in the winter:

> Then I thought of something, all of sudden. ‘Hey, listen,’ I said. ‘You know those ducks in that lagoon right near Central Park South? That little lake? By any chance, do you happen to know where they go, the ducks, when it gets all frozen over? Do you happen to know, by any chance?’ (Salinger, 2010: 65)

The taxi driver does not interested to answer Holden’s question. The taxi driver thinks that Holden says something unimportant:

> He turned around and looked at me like I was a madman. ‘What’re tryna to do, bud?’ he said. ‘Kid me?’ (Salinger, 2010: 65)
c. Holden asks the second taxi driver about the ducks

After Holden leaves the Lavender Room, he decides to check out Ernie’s Bar in Greenwich Village. He takes a taxi, and for the second time asks the taxi driver about the ducks in the Central Park. Previously, Holden doesn’t find satisfying respond from the first driver. The second taxi driver, according to Holden, is “much better guy than the other driver I’d had” (Salinger, 2010: 88). They have a conversation and Holden asks about the ducks in Central Park:

‘Well, you know the ducks that swim around in it? In the springtime and all? Do you happen to know where they go in the wintertime, by any chance?’
‘Where who goes?’ (Salinger, 2010: 88)

Unlike the first taxi driver, Horwitz the second taxi driver shows interest about Holden’s curiosity. Although Horwitz misinterprets the ducks as the fish, Horwitz maintains his interest to continue the conversation:

I stopped having a conversation with him, if he was going to get so damn touchy about it. But he started it up again himself. He turned all the way around again, and said, ‘The fish don’t go no place. They stay right where they are, the fish. Right in the goddam lake. (Salinger, 2010: 89)

In the end, Horwitz doesn’t know where the ducks go in the winter, but Holden thinks that “he got so damn excited and all” Salinger (2010: 89-90).

The table below shows the resemblances between the story plot in which Holden asks where do the ducks go in the winter. Although each person asked by Holden (including himself) about the ducks give different attention, the similarity of
the recurring “where do the ducks go in the winter” question is the same: Holden still doesn’t know where the ducks go in the winter. So, it is clear that the binary oppositions of known/unknown place construct the motif of Holden’s unanswered question. Seen in Holden’s point of view, the binary opposition of known/unknown place represents –adulthood/+adulthood opposites. Holden has already know the state of –adulthood and yet to search the unknown land of adulthood.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Holden (Chapter 2)</th>
<th>1st taxi driver (Chapter 9)</th>
<th>2nd taxi driver (Chapter 12)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respond</td>
<td>Curious</td>
<td>Not interested</td>
<td>Interested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answer</td>
<td>Unanswered</td>
<td>Unanswered</td>
<td>Unanswered</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Holden’s curiosity to know where ducks go in the winter also fulfills the requirement to be an outstanding motif, as Freedman describes that motif is characterized by its unlikeness and uniqueness. When Holden asks where the ducks go in the winter, he is not only questioning the ducks, but also himself. Although Holden wanders in New York City and checks in and out to many places he feels that he does not know what he really does and where should he go so that he feels comfortable.

After the first task of defining the binary opposition per one motif is done, then Barry (2009: 53-54) suggests that “we may then perform a simplifying move which is rather like finding the lowest common denominator of a set of number, for those items might be reduced to a set of more generalized ones.”
generalized binary opposition represents the bigger novel’s plot rather than focusing on one point of the story (such as the motif does).

Reviewing backward, there are four motifs found in the novel: 1) visiting teacher, 2) physical fight, 3) rejected sexual desire, and 4) curiosity. The next task to define the binary opposition of each motif and the generalized binary opposition which represent all of the motifs, can be shown in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motif</th>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Attribute</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visiting Teacher</td>
<td>Holden / Spencer, Antolini</td>
<td>Student / Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Unexperienced / Experienced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Fight</td>
<td>Holden / Stradlater, Maurice</td>
<td>Weaker / Stronger, Older</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Honest / Dishonest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rejected Sexual Desire</td>
<td>Holden / Mrs. Morrow, Miss Faith Cavendish, Bernice, Laverne, Marty</td>
<td>Younger / Older</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Immature / Mature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curiosity</td>
<td>Ducks before winter stay at the Central Park / Ducks in the winter go to unknown place, Holden before winter stay at school / Holden at around Christmas (winter) wander purposelessly</td>
<td>Known Place / Unknown Place</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The common pattern that can be seen in the motifs is about Holden versus other characters he encounters. The first three motifs (visiting teacher, physical fight, and rejected sexual desire) show a clear distinction between two opposites, that is Holden on one side and the adults on the other side. Holden who resembles the state of (−) adulthood has the characteristics and qualities of being an unexperienced student, honest but weak, and younger and immature. On the other hand, the adults
have the qualities of being experienced teachers, stronger and dishonest, and older and mature.

The two opposites in the motif known place/unknown place describe Holden as a teenager where he finds his comfort zone (in the school, where Holden can do whatever he wants) but no matter what happens Holden must get out from his known place to step in the world of adult which he doesn’t know yet. So, it can be concluded that the main binary opposition of the novel is (−)/(+) adulthood.

B. Binary Opposition as the Narrative Structure of The Catcher in the Rye

Culler in Wilfred L. Guerin (2005: 375) implies that the goal of structuralism analysis is “to specify the codes and conventions which make meanings possible”. Moreover, Tyson (2006: 244) argues that structuralist analysis of narrative examines “in minute detail the inner workings of literary texts in order to discover the fundamental structural units (such as units of narrative progression) or functions (such as character functions) that govern texts’ narrative operations.”

To conduct such examination, Greimas’ actantial analysis is used in this part of study because as Terrence Hawkes (2003: 74) suggests, “Greimas’ insistence on the relationship between entities, rather than the entities themselves, marks him as a structuralist.” Raman Selden (1997: 74) also supports this idea, stating that “actantial analysis thinks in terms of relations between entities”. When relations between entities are described, it require the transfer of some entity—a quality, an object—between actants and thus the narrative structure can be discovered, as Tyson (2006: 225) explains:
For Greimas, the forwarding of the plot—the movement from conflict to resolution, struggle to reconciliation, separation to union, and so forth—involves the transfer of some entity (a quality or an object) from one actant to another. Thus, the fundamental structure of narrative is the same as the fundamental structure of language: subject-verb-object. This basic narrative grammar generates three patterns of plots (Stories of Desire, Communication, Auxiliary support of hindrance) by aligning what Greimas sees as the six fundamental actants into three pairs of oppositions: Subject/Object, Sender/Receiver, Helper/Opponent.

Actants or character functions carry out the plot formula in which the structure is embodied. Selden (1997: 74) states that Greimas aims to arrive at the universal grammar of narrative by applying to it a semantic analysis of sentence structure. Greimas’ actantial analysis demonstrates the skeletal narrative structure of the text which is based on binary oppositions. So, it is very advantageous to apply Greimas’ actants as the main device to decode the binary opposition in the narrative structure of *The Catcher in the Rye*.

The following analysis tries to explain how binary opposition as “the basic human conceptual mode” (Hawkes, 2003: 71) becomes the basis of the novel’s plot movement and the main character’s actions. By using Greimas’ actantial analysis, the relationship between opposites is described thus it shows how the binary oppositions “constitute the essence of narrative and generate the structures that we recognize as stories” (Hawkes, 2003: 71-72).

As it is answered in the first problem formulation, the main binary opposition of *The Catcher in the Rye* are (−) adulthood / (+) adulthood. Then, Tyson (2006: 225) states, seen from Greimas’ six fundamental actants the binary oppositions can be described into three pairs of oppositions: subject/object, sender/receiver, and helper/
opponent. These pairs of oppositions reflect its own plot types, respectively, stories of quest or desire, stories of communication, and subplots of stories of quest or desire and communication.

1. **Subject/Object = Holden/Adulthood**

   According to Tyson (2006: 225), subject/object actants accomplish the plot types or stories of quest or desire where a subject, or hero, searches for an object: a person, thing, or state of being.

   The general theme of *The Catcher in the Rye* according to this actants is Holden’s searching for adulthood. Holden as an expelled student questions the value of becoming an adult. Holden’s quest begins earlier in the novel when Mr. Spencer lectures him about responsibility for one’s own future: “Do you feel absolutely no concern for your future boy? – Oh I feel some concern for my future, all right. Sure. Sure, I do … But not too much, I guess.” (Salinger, 2010: 15)

   Although Holden has negative viewpoint about adult (such as phony, pervert, and pretender), it is clear that Holden want to know the truth. Holden’s curiosity about where do the ducks go in the winter is the perfect allusion for his quest. The thought about the ducks come to Holden’s mind when he is being lectured by Mr. Spencer. Like the ducks, Holden also does not know what will his future going to be. Holden experiences the quest to know the unknown place (i.e. adulthood).

   After being expelled from Pencey, Holden discovers he could not stay in school because he is disappointed with dormitory life. Consequently, he decides to leave the dormitory and wander in the city, thus postpone his arrival to his home.
Holden does not know yet that his decision leads him to more advanced quest of knowing the truth about adulthood. Right after Holden checks in at the Edmont Hotel, his first stop at the city, Holden retells that soon he meets the same phonies at the Hotel, just the same when he stays in school:

We got to the Edmont Hotel, and I checked in. I’d put on my red hunting cap when I was in the cab, just for the hell of it, but I took it off before I checked in. I didn’t want to look like a screwball or something. Which is really ironic. I didn’t know then that the goddam hotel was full of perverts and morons. Screwballs all over the place. (Salinger, 2010: 66)

Then, for the next two days wandering in the city Holden encounters more adults with negative traits, such as the dishonest Maurice, the pretenders (the three tourist from Seattle), his brother’s ex-girlfriend, Lilian Simmons, and his date Sally Hayes who “gives [Holden] a royal pain in the ass” (Salinger, 2010: 144). These irritating encounters make Holden gives up in his search to know the true meaning of adulthood. Knowing the bitter reality of adulthood, Holden rejects to enter adult life.

Holden decides to ‘run’ from adult life. Right before Holden decides to go back home, he meets Sally Hayes, his former girlfriend. Holden invites Sally Hayes to avoid tedious and tiresome adult life, going into a hermitage in the west:

What we could do is, tomorrow morning we could drive up to Massachusetts and Vermont, and all around there, see. I was getting excited as hell, the more I thought about it, and I sort of reached over and took old Sally’s goddam hand. ‘I have about a hundred and eighty bucks in the bank. Honest to God, we could have a terrific time! Wuddaya say? C’mon! Wuddaya say? Will you do it with me? Please!’ (Salinger, 2010: 142-43)
Sally refuses Holden’s invitation to run from adulthood, stating that they are still incapable of doing such action. Sally says that as a good student, Holden should finish his education and get a stable job:

‘You can’t just do something like that,’ old Sally said. She sounded sore as hell.
‘Why not? Why the hell not?’
‘Because you can’t, that’s all. In the first place, we’re both practically children. And I did you ever stop to think what you’d do if you didn’t get a job when your money ran out? We’d starve to death. The whole thing’s so fantastic, it isn’t even—’
(Salinger, 2010: 143)

Contrary to Sally, Holden refuses the boring adult life and states that Sally doesn’t get what he really means. According to Holden, Sally is an adolescence who is strict to the “normal” path of life, whether Holden rejects all the falseness of adult life:

We’d have to go to down-stairs in elevators with suitcases and stuff. We’d have to phone up everybody and tell ‘em good-by and send ‘em postcards from hotels and all. And I’d be working in some office, making a lot of dough, and riding to work in cabs and Madison Avenue buses, and reading newspapers, and playing bridge all the time, and going to the movies and seeing a lot of stupid shorts and coming attractions and newsreels. Newsreels. Christ almighty. There’s always a dumb horse race, and some dame breaking a bottle over a ship, and some chim-panzee riding a goddam bicycle with pants on. It wouldn’t be the same at all. You don’t see what I mean at all.’
(Salinger, 2010: 143-44)

After the unsuccessful date with Sally, Holden sneaks to his home and meets his little sister Phoebe. Holden tells Phoebe that he could not stand anymore with his school life and the phoniness of adults he meets:

‘It was one of the worst schools I ever went to. It was full of phonies. And mean guys. You never saw so many mean guys in your life.
(Salinger, 2010: 180)
‘Even the couple of nice teachers on the faculty, they were phonies, too,’ I said. (Salinger, 2010: 181)

God, Phoebe! I can’t explain. I just didn’t like anything that was happening at Pencey. I can’t explain.’ (Salinger, 2010: 182)

The next morning Holden writes to Phoebe about his willingness to go independent: “Dear Phoebe, I can’t wait around till Wednesday anymore so I will probably hitch hike out west this afternoon” (Salinger, 2010: 181). Much of Holden’s guess, Phoebe wants to run with Holden. Holden tells Phoebe that she could not go because she must finish her school et cetera, contradict to his own condition:

Can’t I go with you? Holden? Can’t I? Please.’
‘No. Shut up.’
‘Why can’t I? Please, Holden! I won’t do anything – I’ll just go with you, that’s all! I won’t even take my clothes with me if you don’t want me to – I’ll just take my –’
‘You can’t take anything. Because you’re not going. I’m going alone. So shut up.’
(Salinger, 2010: 222)

Finally, in the end of the novel Holden admits that he gives up and decides to go back home. It can be interpreted that there are three major places which symbolize each of Holden’s personal development: (1) school dormitory as the place where the story starts and Holden begins to question the values of adulthood, thus the quest is activated. School dormitory symbolize in-between place: Holden as a high school student is not a child anymore but he is not an adult yet, (2) the city – symbol of adult life – where most of Holden’s quests take place, and (3) home where Holden meets his little sister Phoebe, thus it symbolizes childhood. Note that Holden sneaks out to his home in order to avoid meeting his parents. Phoebe says that their parents “won’t
be home till very late because they went to a party in Norwalk, Connecticut” (Salinger, 2010: 174). The parents’ absence means that home is purposely selected to symbolize Holden’s interaction with childhood; it pulls back to Holden’s time before he grows up and enters high school (adolescence).

Holden’s interaction with Phoebe opens his eyes that all he need is to accept purity, innocence, and happiness of childhood. Holden fails to wander and living a hermitage life in the west and become his own “version” of adult. Holden has no other choice rather than accepts his failing quest, goes back home, and just waits for his parents’ judgment:

‘I’m not going away anywhere. I changed my mind. So stop crying and shut up.’ I said. (Salinger, 2010: 223)

‘Did you mean it what you said? You really aren’t going away anywhere? Are you really going home afterwards?’ she asked me. ‘Yeah,’ I said. I meant it, too. I wasn’t lying to her. I really did go home afterwards. (Salinger, 2010: 228)

From the plot movement it is clearly seen that Holden searches for reason so he can accept adult life. The characteristic of the quest story in *The Catcher in the Rye* is that the subject does not find the object he wants. Holden searches the alternate and better point of view of adult life, but there is only one version of adult life according to him, so he rejects adult life and thus it means that Holden fails to obtain adulthood.

In the end of the story Holden embraces the happiness and purity of childhood. Although the quest fails, the objective of subject/object actants is to show
that in the novel there is a story of quest itself, no matter what is the result. The story of quest ignites all Holden’s actions in the novel: it drives Holden’s motivation and actions toward adulthood, why he observes adults life carefully et cetera.

2. Sender/Receiver = Adulthood/Holden

Tyson (2006: 225) states that sender/receiver actants fulfill the plot types or stories of communication, where a sender—a person, god, or institution—sends the subject in search of the object, which the receiver ultimately receives. According to Louis Hebert (2011: 71), the sender is considered to be that which initiates the action. The sender is the element requesting the establishment of the junction (the relationship established between subject and object); for example, the King asks the Prince to rescue the Princess. Hebert (2011: 71) interprets the receiver as the element that benefits from the desired junction between subject and object (for example, the King, the kingdom, the Princess, the Prince, etc.).

Hawkes (2003: 73) states that for Greimas, the two actantial categories of subject/object and sender/receiver can be merged in one story involving just two acteurs, in which the subject also takes role as the receiver and the object also takes role as the sender (subject and receiver/object and sender). Tyson (2006: 225) also support this idea by stating that “… a given narrative can combine a story of quest/desire with a story of communication. For example, in a simple love story the hero can be both the subject and the receiver, and his beloved can be both the object and sender.”
From the description above, it can be said that adulthood is the sender which initiates all Holden’s actions. The quality of being responsible (one of adulthood’s trait) causes Holden’s expulsion from Pencey Prep. Mr. Spencer, Holden’s favourite teacher, as an adult he gives advice, direction, and asks Holden about his future and thus sends Holden to begin his quests. Holden as receiver is presumed to get benefit from the quest of adulthood. Holden is expected to understand, accept, and enter adult world, thus continues his personal development as a human being.

Pencey’s banishment forces Holden to interact and communicate with adults. After being expelled, Holden is supposed to stay at Pencey for three more days. But then, Holden decides to leave Pencey sooner:

But all of a sudden, I changed my mind. All of a sudden, I decided what I’d really do, I’d get the hell out of Pencey – right that same night and all. I mean not wait till Wednesday or anything. I just didn’t want to hang around any more. It made me too sad and lonesome. So what I decided to do, I decided I’d take a room in a hotel in New York – some very inexpensive hotel and all – and just take it easy till Wednesday.

(Salinger, 2010: 54)

Holden’s leaving from Pencey leads him to more communications with adults in the city. At first Holden doesn’t know that in the city there are more phonies, but soon he realizes that his wandering directs him to communicate with adult world.

Holden’s preconception about adults that they are full of phonies, ignites him to search for more accurate information and experiences about adulthood. Adulthood’s unknown territory ignites Holden to search for it, or on the other word, adulthood’s unknown territory sends Holden. Where do the ducks go in the winter is the perfect allusion of this sender/receiver actants. The mystery of adulthood’s terra
incognita evokes Holden to begin his quest. Seen in greater context, adulthood sends Holden because the phase of coming of age is unavoidable. Sooner or later Holden should consider this matter seriously.

Adulthood sends Holden to identify the meaning of adult world, and Holden as the receiver is expected to accept the truth. Unfortunately, after some disappointing communications with adults which signify the truth about adult world, Holden rejects the idea of adulthood. Holden as the receiver does not get benefits from his quest. Like the subject/object actants, the sender/receiver actants in The Catcher in the Rye have the characteristic of failed mission, i.e. the receiver does not receive the object he searches.

3. Helper/Opponent = Adults/Phoebe

Tyson (2006: 225) explains that the actants helper/opponent are subplots of stories of quest/desire where a helper aids the subject in the quest and an opponent tries to hinder the subject. In the analysis of helper/opponent actants, it should be considered carefully that “the helper is not allied to the subject, but to the relationship established between the subject and the object” (Hebert, 2011: 72).

Thus, the helper/opponent actants depend on the subject’s quest. As it is mentioned earlier, Holden desires to search the real meaning of adulthood. From this standpoint, the helper is the one who help Holden knows the real adulthood, and the opponent is the one who prevents Holden to accept adulthood.

As it is explained, Holden fails in his quest. Holden refuses to enter adult life and accept childhood. The adults which Holden encounters show him the real adult
life, whether Holden’s little sister Phoebe turns back Holden to appreciate the purity and innocence of childhood. Therefore, the adults are the helpers and Phoebe is the opponent.

Holden’s helpers in the novel can be considered as large in number of characters compared to his only opponent, Phoebe. It is permissible for such incident because according to Greimas in Hawkes (2003: 70-71), “actants operate on the level of function, rather than the content. An actant may embody itself in a particular character or it may reside in the function of more than one character in respect of their common role in the story’s underlying ‘oppositional’ structure.”

In the progression of Holden’s quest, he encounters several adults who show him the real traits of adult world such as including dishonesty, rejection, ignorance, and disappointment. Maurice and Stradlater demonstrate that power can be misused to defend selfishness and dishonesty. As it is mentioned before, Maurice fools Holden about the prostitute’s cost and Stradlater does not want to tell Holden the truth. The two characters then fight Holden because of Holden’s persistence to know the real fact and defend honesty. From earlier point of the story Holden rejects all the adult’s trait he encounters, but the adults keep showing Holden their negative traits. Structurally, because of Holden’s quest is to know the real adult life, so the adults help Holden to fulfill his personal quest.

Holden expects his favourite and best teachers, Mr. Spencer and Mr. Antolini, to at least show the good side of adult life. Holden considers them as his helper whom he asks advice from in his quest of searching adulthood. In fact the teachers do help
Holden, in terms of showing the reality of adulthood. Mr. Spencer shows Holden that growing up is having uglier physical appearance and disturbing behavior (Salinger, 2010: 16). Mr. Antolini shows Holden that adult can do something filthy. All of these helpers demonstrate what adult life is like: they show that adulthood is full of negative traits which make Holden rethinks about the meaning of growing up, whether he should accept to be an adult or rejects it.

Holden’s relations with several older women represent another revelation of reality in his quest to find and accept adulthood. After several unsuccessful attempt to communicate his desire to the women, Holden finally realizes that adulthood is full of rejection. These rejections obstruct Holden to approve the fact that soon he is about to enter adult world.

Another side of adult world that Holden investigates is the lack of curiosity to know the truth. This matter is learnt by Holden when he asks two taxi drivers about where the ducks go in the winter. As it is explained in the previous part of this chapter, the first taxi driver considers Holden question as a joke, but actually it is an important question because symbolically it represents Holden’s quest for his self-purpose. The second taxi driver, although he gives more attention to Holden’s question compared to the first taxi driver, does not know the answer. This depicts that even adults themselves do not know where they are going, they do not know their own life’s purpose.

Surprisingly, the opponent is the one who influences Holden to choose another alternative rather than accepting adulthood. Unpredictably, the opponent is
the one who can make Holden smiles. Holden’s little sister, Phoebe, is his opponent in his quest of searching adulthood.

Holden tells Phoebe the reality he realizes about how phony adults are, and Phoebe challenges Holden that he does not have anything he likes:

‘You don’t like anything that’s happening.’ You don’t like any schools. You don’t like a million things. You don’t. Name one thing.’
‘One thing? One thing I like?’ I said. ‘Okay.’
The trouble was, I couldn’t concentrate too hot. Sometimes it’s hard to concentrate.
(Salinger, 2010: 182)

Phoebe forces Holden to dig what he really likes. Holden finally realizes that all he needs to do is to be the catcher in the rye. Holden carries the mission to guard and save the children from falling to the abyss of adulthood:

‘You know what I’d like to do?’ I said. ‘You know what I’d like to be? I mean if I had my goddam choice?’
… ‘Anyway, I keep picturing all these little kids playing some game in this big field of rye and all. Thousands of little kids, and nobody’s around – nobody big, I mean – except me. And I’m standing on the edge of some crazy cliff. What I have to do, I have to catch everybody if they start to go over the cliff – I mean if they’re running and they don’t look where they’re going I have to come out from somewhere and catch them. That’s all I’d do all day. I’d just be the catcher in the rye and all. I know it’s crazy, but that’s the only thing I’d really like to be. …’
(Salinger, 2010: 186)

Phoebe reveals Holden’s deepest desire. Holden wants to be a catcher in the rye. This one is focal to the novel’s theme as it points the metaphor “catcher in the rye”, which is also the novel’s title. (Salinger, 2010: 182).

Phoebe also compels Holden to consider what he will do next. When Holden decides to run away from his coming-to-happen adulthood, living a hermit-like life
(Salinger, 2010: 142) and thinks about not going back home until he is thirty five (Salinger, 2010: 220), Phoebe asks Holden whether she can go with him (Salinger, 2010: 221). Phoebe’s attitude impels Holden to review his action. Holden begins to realize that Phoebe could not go with him (Salinger, 2010: 222).

In the latter part of the novel, Phoebe shows Holden happiness, a valuable thing Holden does not find in his quest of searching adulthood:

I felt so damn happy all of a sudden, the way old Phoebe kept going around and around. I was damn near bawling, I felt so damn happy, if you want to know the truth. I don’t know why. It was just that she looked so damn nice, the way she kept going around and around, in her blue coat and all. God, I wish you could’ve been there. (Salinger, 2010: 229)

Phoebe makes Holden gives up to search adulthood, thus the only way left if to enjoy. Holden reveals that all he need to have is watching his little sister rides the carrousel. Although it rains heavily and the fact that Holden is in big distress, Phoebe’s authentic behavior makes Holden believes that there is a world of honesty. Fails to communicate with adult world, Holden accept the purity of childhood depicted in Phoebe’s feat.

The characteristics of The Catcher in the Rye’s actants are subject/object and sender/receiver do not fulfill their stories of quest and communication, respectively. The subject Holden does not find the object (adulthood) he searches, and the receiver (Holden) does not receive the object because the receiver fails to communicate with the sender. Based on the Greimasian actantial analysis, all of the actions in the novel then can be reduced into two basic actions: to search and to not find.
All of the actants of subject/object, sender/receiver, and helper/opponent are derived from \(-/+\) adulthood binary oppositions. As Tyson (2006: 225) states, the actants itself cause the “movement of the plot and involves the transfer of some entity (a quality or an object) from one actant to another”. It is true because actants itself is defined as “entities that act” (Duvall, 1982: 192). The actantial analysis builds significant foundation for binary opposition in the narrative structure analysis, because actantial analysis tends to “reduce all conflicts to the fundamental conflict between two binary oppositions” (Tyson, 2006: 226).

It should be noted first that this kind of formulaic description could not be judged as completely constant. Structuralism analysis has the double value of both objectivity and subjectivity. As Tyson (2006: 244) alerts:

“[the structuralism’s] reliance on formulaic description derives from its commitment to the kind of objectivity associated with mathematics and its philosophical grounding as a science of humanity, which requires us to speculate on the relationship between the structural formula we describe and the world in which we live.”

What matters is, structuralism offers a different point of view to see the operation of a text, as Barry (2009: 54) asserts that “narrative structure are founded upon such underlying paired opposites, or dyads, so that contrasts such as these are the skeletal structure on which all narratives are fleshed out.” In *The Catcher in the Rye*, the underlying paired opposites or binary oppositions of \(-/+\) adulthood become the foundation of the text’s “to search and not find” narrative structure. The two dyads of \(-/+\) adulthood take a vital and significant role in the narrative progression of the novel, as all the actions are concentrated on the conflicts between the two opposites.
CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION

Jerome David Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye* consists of recurrent motifs. The motifs found in *The Catcher in the Rye* are: 1) teacher visit, 2) physical fight, 3) rejected sexual desire, and 4) unknown place. Each motif involves two opposing elements. In the teacher visit motif, Holden as a Pencey Prep student communicates with his teachers (student/teachers). In the physical fight motif, Holden as the honest character challenges the impurity of adults. In the rejected sexual desire motif, Holden encounters several older women and is rejected after trying to flirt with them. In the unknown place motif, Holden questions the mystery of adult world. The main binary oppositions concluded from the motifs are -/+ adulthood.

The binary oppositions -/+ adulthood determine the actants or character functions in the story. Those actants are subject/object, sender/receiver, and helper/opponent. The subject/object axis of *The Catcher in the Rye* are Holden/adulthood. This axis creates the story of quest: the subject (Holden) searches for an object (the state of adulthood). The second axis, sender/receiver, is represented by adulthood/Holden. This axis generates the story of communication: the sender initiates the receiver’s action, thus the communication between two opposites take place and intensifies the relationship between the two. The third axis, helper/opponent, provides the subplot of stories of quest where the helper aids the subject in the quest and the opponent tries to hinder the subject. Adults as the helper
assist Holden in his quest for searching the state of adulthood. In contrast, Holden’s little sister, Phoebe, obstructs Holden’s pursuit to be an adult.

The actants subject/object and sender/receiver in *The Catcher in the Rye* have certain characteristics. In the story of quest, the subject doesn’t find the object. In the story of communication, the receiver doesn’t receive what he searches. Although both axis of subject/object and sender/receiver fail to complete its plot types (stories of quest and communication, respectively), the actantial analysis shows that such story based on the paired actants happen in *The Catcher in the Rye*. The paired actants show the relationship between two main opposites (-/+ adulthood) and it defines the narrative structure of the novel.

The motifs, the binary opposition, the actants, and the narrative structure analysis shows the unity and wholeness of the novel, as it is supposed to be in structuralism’s point of view. Tyson (2006: 209-210) concludes the overall view about structuralism: structuralist aims to investigate the structure that underlie and organize the literary works. In other words, this study has demonstrated that the underlying principle of a given structural system (e.g, of binary oppositions, such as -/+ adulthood which is found in *The Catcher in the Rye*) can be found in any other literary works. Structuralist analysis of this novel has uncovered the universal underlying principles that govern a literary work’s composition.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDIX

Summary of Jerome David Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye*

Holden Caulfield is a sixteen years old Pencey Prep student. The novel starts as Holden watches the football game from Thompsen Hill. Holden tells the reader that he has just been expelled from his school because he failed four from five subjects he takes that semester. Then Holden realizes that he should visit his teacher, Mr. Spencer, to say good bye. Unexpectedly, Mr. Spencer lectures Holden about life and it disturb him. Holden goes back to his dorm and fights his roommate, Stradlater, because of Jane Gallagher, a girl Holden likes. After Holden is beaten by Stradlater, Holden decides to leave the school although he is supposed to stay at Pencey for three more days. Holden decides to spend two or three days in a hotel in New York before he heads for home.

In the way to New York, Holden meets Mrs. Morrow, a mother of Holden’s friend, Ernest Morrow. Holden finds that Mrs. Morrow is sexually attractive and tries to invite her for a cocktail. Unfortunately, Mrs. Morrow rejects Holden’s invitation. After that, Holden arrives at Penn Station and takes a taxi to Edmont Hotel. Holden asks the taxi driver about where the ducks go in the winter. The taxi driver is not interested. Holden checks into Edmont Hotel. He phones Miss Faith Cavendish, hoping for a date. Miss Faith Cavendish says that she has to work the next day, so she needs a rest. Afterward, Holden goes to the Lavender Room in Edmont Hotel and meets three Seattle women: Bernice, Laverne, and Marty. Holden talks with them.
Holden decides to go to Ernie’s night club in Greenwich Village by taxi. He asks the taxi driver again about where the ducks go in the winter. Holden heads back to Edmont Hotel, and meets Maurice the elevator operator. Maurice offers Holden a prostitute costs five dollars. Then, Sunny the prostitute comes to Holden’s rooms. In the end, Sunny wants ten dollars from Holden, but he only gives five dollars. The next morning Sunny comes with Maurice to take the remaining five dollars. Holden refuses and Maurice punches Holden’s stomach.

Holden goes to a sandwich bar for breakfast and meets two nuns. Holden then decides to call Sally Hayes, his friend from previous school. Holden takes Sally Hayes to watch a play at Biltmore. After the play, they go ice skating at Radio City. Holden offers Sally Hayes to run with him and living a hermitage life in the west. Sally refuses Holden’s idea. Then, Holden meets Carl Luce (his other friend from previous school) at Wicker Bar. Holden asks Carl Luce mainly about sex. Carl Luce storms out, and Holden wanders in the Central Park. Holden has the idea to sneak home to meet his little sister Phoebe without his parents knowing.

Holden meets Phoebe. Their parents are not at home. Holden tells Phoebe that he wants to be “the catcher in the rye”. Holden’s parents come home from Norfolk, and Holden decides to sleep over at Mr. Antolini, his teacher from previous school. When Holden sleeps, Mr. Antolini pats Holden’s head. Holden freaks out and decides to sleep at Grand Central Station.

Holden goes to Phoebe’s school and delivers a letter to be given to Phoebe. Holden tells Phoebe that he wants to go away. After school hour Holden meets
Phoebe. She wants to go with Holden, but Holden says that she can’t go with him. Phoebe gets mad. Holden invites Phoebe to go to the Central Park zoo. Phoebe rides the carrousel at Central Park. It begins to rain. Holden stays watching his little sister Phoebe. Holden weeps and tells the reader that he feels so happy.