

ABSTRACT

OCTAVIA, KAYLA. (2026). **An Analysis of Nostalgia as a Defense Mechanism in Inside Out 2**. Yogyakarta: Department of English Letters, Faculty of Letters, Universitas Sanata Dharma.

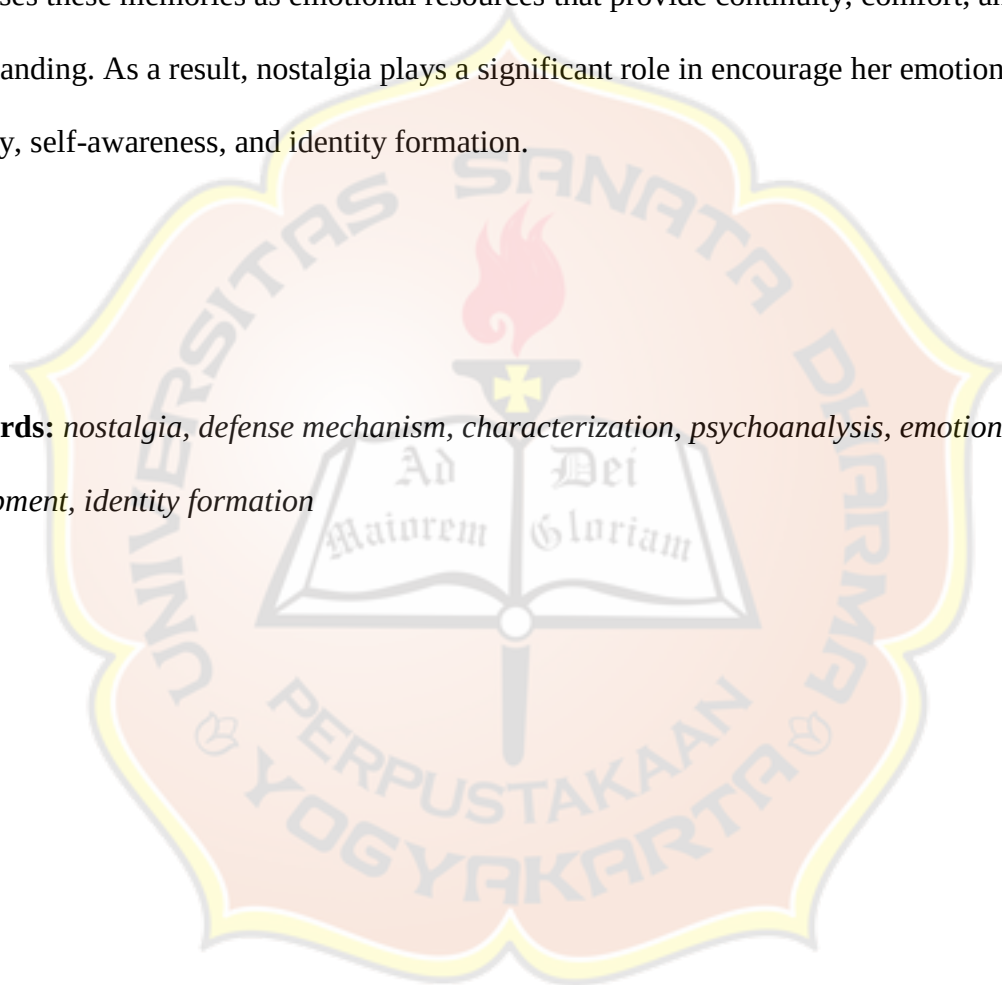
Nostalgia, commonly understood as a longing for the past, can extend beyond a simple emotional attachment to previous experiences because it may also function as a psychological mechanism through which individuals cope with emotional difficulties, maintain a sense of continuity, and negotiate changes in their identities. This study focuses on Riley's emotional development during adolescence and examines nostalgia as a defense mechanism. The film portrays Riley's struggle with new emotions, social pressure, and identity formation while the nostalgic memories play an important role in connecting her childhood experiences and current personality.

There are three objectives of the study, formulated from the three research questions addressed in the analysis part. The first is to analyze and identify the nostalgic moments featured in Riley's life. The second is to interpret how nostalgia contributes to Riley's emotional maturity and identity formation. The third one is to analyze how Riley's defense mechanisms reflect her emotional struggles and identity negotiation during adolescence.

The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative method to analyze the nostalgic and psychological aspects in Inside Out 2 (2024). The analysis applies Svetlana Boym's theory of nostalgia, particularly reflective nostalgia, Murphy's theory of characterization, and Anna Freud's theory of defense mechanisms. Murphy's characterization theory is used to examine Riley's character through her past life, thoughts and feelings, reactions to others, conversation, and actions. Meanwhile, Anna Freud's theory is used to identify the defense mechanisms that develops in response to her emotional struggles.

The findings reveal that Riley primarily experiences reflective nostalgia, which functions as a psychological defense mechanism throughout the film. Riley is able to manage anxiety, social pressure, fear of rejection, and identity conflicts during adolescence because nostalgic memories help strengthen several ego defenses, including as sublimation, repression, compensation, and displacement. Rather than attempting to reproduce the past, Riley uses these memories as emotional resources that provide continuity, comfort, and self-understanding. As a result, nostalgia plays a significant role in encourage her emotional maturity, self-awareness, and identity formation.

Keywords: *nostalgia, defense mechanism, characterization, psychoanalysis, emotional development, identity formation*



ABSTRAK

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Nostalgia tidak hanya merepresentasikan kerinduan terhadap masa lalu, namun juga berfungsi sebagai mekanisme psikologis yang membantu individu menghadapi kesulitan emosional dan proses transisi identitas. Penelitian ini mengkaji nostalgia sebagai mekanisme pertahanan diri dengan berfokus pada perkembangan emosional Riley selama masa remaja. Film ini menggambarkan perjuangan Riley dalam menghadapi emosi-emosi baru, tekanan social, serta pembentukan identitas, sementara kenangan masa kecilnya berperan penting dalam menghubungkan masa lalu dengan dirinya di masa kini.

Penelitian ini memiliki tiga tujuan. Pertama mengidentifikasi dan menganalisis momen nostalgia yang muncul dalam kehidupan Riley. Kedua, mengkaji kontribusi nostalgia terhadap kematangan emosional dan pembentukan identitas Riley. Ketiga, menganalisis bagaimana proses mekanisme pertahanan diri Riley mencerminkan pergulatan emosional serta proses negosiasi identitas yang dialaminya selama masa remaja.

Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah metode deskriptif kualitatif. Untuk menganalisis pengalaman Riley dalam *Inside Out 2* (2024). Analisis penelitian ini menerapkan teori nostalgia dari Svetlana Boym, khususnya reflective nostalgia, teori karakterisasi dari Murphy digunakan untuk mengkaji karakter Riley melalui kehidupan masa lalu, pikiran dan perasaan, reaksi terhadap orang lain, percakapan, dan tindakan. Sementara itu, teori Anna Freud digunakan untuk mengidentifikasi mekanisme pertahanan diri yang berkembang dalam diri Riley sebagai respons terhadap pergulatan emosional yang dialaminya.

Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa Riley mengalami reflective nostalgia yang berfungsi sebagai mekanisme pertahanan diri. Kenangan-kenangan masa lalu membantu Riley menghadapi kecemasan, tekanan social, ketakutan akan penolakan, serta konflik identitas yang muncul selama masa remaja dengan memperkuat beberapa mekanisme pertahanan ego, yaitu represi (repression), sublimasi (sublimation), kompensasi (compensation), dan pengalihan (displacement). Alih-alih berusaha menghidupkan kembali masa lalu, Riley memanfaatkan kenangan tersebut sebagai sumber dukungan emosional yang memberinya rasa keberlanjutan diri, kenyamanan dan pemahaman terhadap dirinya sendiri. Dengan demikian, nostalgia berperan penting dalam mendorong kematangan emosional, kesadaran diri, dan pembentukan identitasnya.

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