

**LIFE INSTINCT EXPERIENCE REFLECTED IN JENNY
DOWNHAM'S NOVEL *BEFORE I DIE* (2007):
A PSYCHOANALYTIC PERSPECTIVE**

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By:

RADITYAWATI SURYANINGRUM

A 320100024

**FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION
MUHAMMADIYAH UNIVERSITY OF SURAKARTA**

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FAKULTAS KEGURUAN DAN ILMU PENDIDIKAN

Sekretariat JL. A Yani Tromol Pos 1 Pabelan, Kartasura, Surakarta 57102 Telp. (0271) 717417 Ext. 188

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Nama : Mauliy Halwat Hikmat, Ph. D.

NIK : 727

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NIM : A 320100024

Program Study : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris

Judul Skripsi : **LIFE INSTINCT EXPERIENCE REFLECTED IN
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Pembimbing I

Pembimbing II

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Radityawati Suryaningrum
A 320100024
Soerya.aditya@gmail.com
Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta

ABSTRACT

This research paper is aimed to show a visible image of Jenny Downham's novel which is analyzed by using psychological perspective. The objectives of the research are to analyze the novel based on the structural elements and to analyze on the psychoanalytic perspective proposed by Sigmund Freud. This research paper belongs to qualitative research. Data of the research is divided into primary data and secondary data. The primary data of the research is "Before I Die" novel and secondary data of the research are website, dictionary, and some books that support the analysis. The method to analyze this data is descriptive analysis. Based on the psycholoanalytic perspective analysis, Jenny Downham illustrated psychological phenomena in which an individual has experienced internal and external conflict. The outcome of the study shows that Jenny Downham illustrates the psychological phenomenon when an individual submits herself fully to her own instinct.

Keyword: life instinct, psychoanalytical perspective.

A. Introduction

Before I Die novel was created by Jenny Downham. The novel was published in 2007 in United Kingdom. The novel is originally published in Great Britain by David Fickling Books. The novel has 46 chapters and 296 pages. The major character in *Before I Die* is Tessa Scott. Tessa has terminal cancer and creates a list of ten things, she wants to do the best things in her life. *Before I Die* was adapted to *Now is Good* film in 2012. The stars of film are Dakota Fanning and Jeremy Irvine. *Now Is Good* is a 2012 British teen drama film directed by Ol Parker. *Before I Die* novel is interesting novel to read. Jenny Downham wants to write for and about teenagers because they are on the cusp of adulthood. She make the book interesting when everyone know Tessa will die but She make list before Tessa dies. This novel has good response from public reason. Jenny Downham (<http://www.randomhouse.co.uk>), novel *Before I Die* was critically acclaimed and was shortlisted for the 2007 Guardian Award and the 2008 Lancashire Children's Book of the Year, nominated for the 2008 Carnegie Medal and the 2008 Book trust Teenage Prize, and won the 2008 Branford Boase Award. Jenny Downham writes the first novel but she gets good respons from public reasons.

Before I Die novel has good and bad responses. This novel has good respons from public reason. Jenny Downham (<http://www.randomhouse.co.uk>), novel *Before I Die* was critically acclaimed and was shortlisted for the 2007 Guardian Award and the 2008 Lancashire Children's Book of the Year, nominated for the 2008 Carnegie Medal and the 2008 Book trust Teenage Prize, and won the 2008 Branford Boase Award. Jenny Downham wrote the first novel but she got good respons from public reasons. This novel gets some responses from the readers. Dinah Hall, Sunday Telegraph (<http://www.randomhouse.co.uk>), "Downham's prose is brave and bare, her characters relentlessly realistic".

The researcher analysis *Before I Die* novel. There are four reasons why the writer is interested in analyzing this novel: The first reason is main character of *Before I Die* novel. The second reason is the influence and power of love of her family and friends. The third reason is the importance of having desire. The last reason is diction of *Before I Die* novel.

Based on the previous background of the study, the researcher proposed the problem, how is life instinct experience reflected in Jenny Downham's Novel *Before I Die* (2007)? The researcher focuses this research on analyzing life instinct experience reflected in *Before I Die* novel (2007) written by Jenny Downham based on a Psychological Perspective. In carrying this research the researcher formulates the objectives of the study as follow is to analyze life instinct experience reflected in *Before I Die* (2007) novel based on its structural elements and main character in this novel using Psychological Perspective

There is no literature review related to *Before I Die* (2007) novel written by Jenny Downham at least among university in Surakarta, Semarang and Yogyakarta. The researcher searched some website and jurnal from internet such as Proquest, Questia, Ebscohost, Cambridge, Knovel, etc. So, the writer cannot compare this research with another research.

The researcher uses some literary theories to analyze this novel. The researcher uses According to Risdianto, "Literature is sometimes defined as 'anything written'. However we can surely distinguish between literature in the sense of any writing and literature in the sense of verbal works of art" (2011: 5). Wellek and Warren defines psychology of literature, "we may mean the psychological study of the writer, as type and as individual, or the study of the creative process, or the study of the psychological types and laws present within works of literature or finally, the effects of literature upon its readers or audience psychology" (1993: 5).

Freud claims that's "psychoanalytic aims at and achieve nothing more than discovery of the unconscious in mental life" (Pervin and John, 1997: 71). According to Gilmer (1984: 60), "Psychoanalytic theory sees the work of our mind and emotions as product of the dynamic interaction between our instincts and the counter forces set up by external environment". Hall and Lindzey defines, "Psychoanalysis, on other hand, was a psychology of unconscious; its interest were in the areas of motivation, emotion, conflict, neurotic symptoms, dreams, and character traits" (1970: 67). Three major systems are *id*, *ego*, and *superego*. Freud explains that the "it" almost always translated into English as *id*, the "I" translated as *ego* and the "above-I" which is rendered into English as *superego* (Feist, 1985: 24).

According to Freud, "every instinct is characterized by an impetus, a source, an aim, and an object." (Feist, 1985: 29). Freud explains, "eros manifests itself in many ways. Some of the manifestations of the sexual instinct identified by Freud are narcissism, love, sadism and masochism." (Feist, 1985: 30)

B. Research Method

The researcher elaborates five main points concerning how to conduct the research. They are: type of study, the researcher uses a descriptive qualitative research. It is library research while data sources are using library data. The purpose of this research is to analyze novel using psychological perspective. The object of the study is life instinct experience reflected at *Before I Die* novel (2004) written by Jenny Downham. It is analyzed by using a psychological perspective. In this novel, the researcher downloaded from ebookfi, the novel has not acknowledgements and copyright but this novel has complete pages and chapters. There are two types of data sources that are used in this research, the primary data sources is *Before I Die* novel (2007) written by Jenny Downham. The secondary data sources are from other sources related

to the study, such as: website, dictionary, and some books that support the analysis. The method of collecting data in this research is note-taking *Before I Die* novel, and the technique used in analyzing the data is descriptive analysis. It concerns with the structural elements of the novel and psychological perspective.

C. Research Finding and Discussion

1. Research Finding

Based on Freud, “every instinct is characterized by an impetus, a source, an aim, and an object.” (Feist, 1985: 29)

- a. Freud explains impetus, or pressure, “is the amount of force exerted by the instinct” (Feist, 1985: 29). Freud defines “The reflection of the force or intensity, of a need is rarely the same” (Hall and Lindzey, 1985: 36). Impetus of BID is Tessa wants to have a boyfriend. Impetus depicted in this novel.

“I wish I had a boyfriend. I wish he lived in the wardrobe on a coat hanger. Whenever I wanted, I could get him out and he’d look at me the way boys do in films, as if I’m beautiful. He wouldn’t speak much, but he’d be breathing hard as he took off his leather jacket and unbuckled his jeans. He’d wear white pants and he’d be so gorgeous I’m almost faint. He’d take my clothes off too. He’d whisper, “Tessa, I love you. I really bloody love you. You’re beautiful” – exactly those words – as he undressed me.

I sit up and switch on the bedside light. There’s a pen, but no paper, so on the wall behind me I write, I want to feel the weight of a boy on top of me. (BID: 4)

- b. According to Freud, the source of an instinct (Feist, 1985: 29) “is the region or zone within the organism from which a state of excitation or tension is derived.” Freud explains, “The bodily need it represents remains constant, unless it is changed or eliminated by physical maturation” (Hall and Lindzey, 1985: 36). The source of

BID is an erogenous zone. The source depicted in this novel. “And he goes back to kissing my neck, my breasts, my stomach until his face disappears from me again” (BID: 24)

“I want to show him my breasts. I want to undo my bra and get them out. I pull him towards the bed. We’re still kissing – throats, necks, mouths. The room seems full of smoke, with something burning here between us. (BID: 198)

- c. Freud explains, the aim of an instinct (Feist, 1985: 29) is the removal of that excitation or the reduction of tension. Freud defines “the fulfillment of the need remains constant overtime” (Hall and Lindzey, 1985: 36). The aim of BID is Tessa can fulfill her desire. Tessa feels happy when Tessa did to sex with Adam. The aim reflected in this novel. “I’m Tessa. I’m Adam. It’s utterly beautiful not to know my own edges.” (BID: 198)
- d. Freud defines (Feist, 1985: 29) “the object is the person or thing that serves as the means through which the aim is satisfied”. Freud explains “the object of an instinct includes everything that one has to do to obtain that object” (Hall and Lindzey, 1985: 36). The object is Tessa, Jake and Adam. Jake lost Tessa’s virginity. The object reflected in this novel.

“I gulp my tea down, put the cup on the draining board and move even closer to Jake. The tips of our shoes touch.
“Kiss me,” I say, which sounds ridiculous as soon as I say it, but Jake doesn’t seem to mind. He puts down his beer and leans towards me.” (BID: 20)

Tessa and Adam make love. The object reflected in this novell. “We kiss again. For minutes. Tiny kisses where he bites my top lip gently, where my tongue edges his mouth. The room seems full of ghosts, of trees, the sky.” (BID: 197)

Freud explains that eros manifests itself in many ways. Some of the manifestations of the sexual instinct identified by Freud are narcissism, love, sadism and masochism. (Feist, 1985: 30)

a. Narcissism

According to Freud, during early infancy the child is primarily self centered. Its libido, in other words, is invested upon its ego (Feist, 1985: 31). Narcissism has primary and secondary narcissism. Narcissism of BID is Tessa feel to be beautiful girl. Sentences are “He’d whisper, “Tessa, I love you. I really bloody love you. You’re beautiful” – exactly those words – as he undressed me.” (BID: 4). Tessa feels she is a lucky girl because she is not like Zoey, Tessa has not acne. “I’ve never had a spot in my life. It’s the luck of the draw.” (BID: 10) Tessa feels that she knows what will do in a club with stoner boy.

I know what’ll happen next because I’ve had plenty of time for reading and I know all the plots. Stoner Boy will come closer to check us out. Zoey won’t look at him, but I will. I’ll gaze for a second too long and he’ll lean towards me and ask me my name. “Tessa,” I’ll say, and he’ll repeat it – the hard “T”, the sibilance of that double “S”, the hopeful “A”. I’ll nod to let him know he got it right, that I’m pleased with how sweet and new it sounds on his tongue. Then he’ll hold out both arms, palms up, as if saying, I give in, what can I do with all that beauty? I’ll smile coyly and look at the floor. This tells him he can make a move, that I won’t bite, that I know the game. He’ll wrap me in his arms then and we’ll dance together, my head against his chest, listening to his heart – a stranger’s heart.” (BID: 14-15)

b. Love

Freud explains, a second manifestation of eros is love, which develops when the libido is invested in an object other than self (Feist, 1985: 31). Love of BID is Tessa loves with her parents, her young brother, her friend and her boyfriend.

c. Sadism

According to Freud, (Feist, 1985: 31), “sadism is the instinct manifested when sexual pleasure is attained from inflicting pain or humiliation on another.” However, the researcher does not find sadism in *Before I Die* novel.

d. Masochism

Freud defines, masochism, like sadism, “is a normal need, but it becomes a perversion when eros becomes subservient to the destructive instinct” (Feist, 1985: 31). However, the researcher does not find masochism in *Before I Die* novel.

2. Discussion

Based on the psychoanalytic analysis, there are some factors which influence how the major character, calls Tessa Scott, has spirit to survive in *Before I Die* novel. Tessa has cancer since she was twelve years old. Tessa has a list of thing, she wants to do before she dies. Tessa has ten things on the list. Tessa tries to full things. Although, Tessa knows that her life is not long. She changes her life and she wants to different life. Tessa believes that her desires motivates to life. The researcher takes a psychoanalytic perspective because this theory is suitable with of characters and this novel. So, the researcher takes this theory to analyze major character and to equal of theory in *Before I Die* novel.

The researcher concludes that Jenny Downham wants to tell that life instinct is a part of life. The researcher uses three elements of personality to build the major character’s mental condition, including *id*, *ego*, and *superego*. By psychology of literature, we may mean the psychological study of the writer, as type and as individual, or the study of the creative process, or the study of the psychological types and laws present within works of literature or finally, the effects of literature upon its readers or audience psychology (Wellek and Warren, 1993: 5). In

Before I Die novel, Jenny Downham illustrates the psychological phenomenon when an individual submits herself fully to her own instinct. The analyzing Tessa Scott personality in *Before I Die* by Jenny Downham, based on Freud's psychoanalytic theory shows that the *Id* of Tessa Scott is bigger than other's and dominating in Tessa's psychological activity.

D. Conclusion

Based on the analysis and discussion on the previous chapters, the researcher draws conclusions as follows: Firstly, based on the structural analysis, Jenny Downham wants to say to the reader that life instinct is a part of life, to be fulfilled. To support this message, Jenny Downham creates the major character and minor character. She creates Tessa who is teenager but she has a cancer. So, Jenny Downham wants to keep spirit in our life. The setting, plot, style, point of view that related one another to build the theme of the *Before I Die* novel that tells about a girl names Tessa Scott. Tessa was sixteen years old. But, she was not lucky like another girl. Tessa has cancer since she is twelve years old. So, Tessa decides to change her life. She has a list of things she wants to do before she dies, and from the sounds of it she doesn't have long time. One of them her list is sex.

Second, based on the psychoanalytic analysis, there are some factors which influence how the main character called Tessa Scott has spirit to live in *Before I Die* novel. The major character of the novel is Tessa Scott who has cancer. Medical team help Tessa for four years, but her cancer has spread to her spinal fluid. So, the cancer has spread faster than anyone expected. She thinks and decides to change her life. Tessa has a list of things, she wants to do before she dies. Tessa has ten things on the list. Tessa tries to fulfill the things. In this novel, Jenny Downham illustrates the psychological phenomenon when an individual submits herself fully to her own instinct.

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NIK. 410



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NIM : A320 100 024

Program Study : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris

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Mauliy Halwat Hikmat, Ph. D.

NIK. 727



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NIM : A 320100024
Fakultas/Progdi : FKIP/PENDIDIKAN BAHASA INGGRIS
Jenis : JURNAL
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