MENTAL DISRUPTION OF THE MAIN CHARACTER
“BLANCHE” IN ‘A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE’ DRAMA
BY TENNESSEE WILLIAM (1947): A PSYCHOANALYSIS CRITICISM

Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Getting Bachelor Degree of Education in English Department

Proposed by

MARTHA AULIA RAHMAH
A320130022

ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
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ARTICLE PUBLICATION

By:

MARTHA AULIA RAHMAH

A320130022

Approved by Consultant:

Consultant

[Titis Setyabudi, S.S. M.A]

NIK. 948
ACCEPTANCE

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Martha Aulia Rahmah
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Accepted and Approved by board of Examiner
School of Teaching Training and Education
Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta
On August 2017

Team of Examiner:

1. Titis Setyabudi, S.S M.A
   (Ketua Dewan Penguji)

2. Dr. M. Thoyibi. M.S
   (Anggota Dewan Penguji I)

3. Dr. Phil. Dewi Candraningrum
   (Anggota Dewan Penguji II)

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MARTHA AULIA RAHMAH
A320130022
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Abstract

The study discusses the main character in the Tennessee William’s drama A Streetcar Named Desire, Blanche. The main character in this novel gets the trouble with her mental health because her bad life experienced. Blanche is the woman who tried to get the passion and desire so ambitious. In her life, Blanche often gets tough problems. She tried to confront it all with her strength. But he is not able to stabilize herself and being a very ambitious person and willing to do anything to be recognized by others. The method used in this research is qualitative method that is solved by using descriptive analysis. This study described the mental disruption character of Blanche causes her life experienced. The theory used in this research is Sigmund Freud’s theory of psychoanalysis criticism. Based on the theory, Psychoanalysis recognize the subject as a sum of signifiers. Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), defined the subject in linguistic terms. Psychoanalysis builds upon the basic explain that symptoms manifest in a subject’s behavior. One of the issues in psychoanalysis is mental disruption. Mental disruption has some type, consist of Anxiety disorders, Mood disorders, Psychiatric disorders, Personality disorders. The type of Blanche mental disruption is Personality disorders. Although she is getting all of that type, but the major is personality disorders. The result of this study indicates that experienced life can be a reason to someone get mental problem. Blanche tried so hard to accepted her life, but she can not do that and forced her to did some treatment for her mental health.

Keywords : Blanche, A Streetcar Named Desire, Tennessee William, Psychoanalysis Criticism, Mental disruption.

Abstrak

Studi ini membahas karakter utama dalam drama Tennessee William A Streetcar Named Desire, Blanche. Tokoh utama dalam novel ini mendapatkan masalah dengan kesehatan mentalnya karena pengalaman hidup yang dialami. Blanche adalah wanita yang berusaha mendapatkan gairah dan keinginannya yang begitu ambisi. Dalam hidupnya Blanche kerap mendapat masalah berat. Dia mencoba menghadapi semuanya dengan kekuatannya. Tapi dia tidak mampu menstabilkan dirinya dan menjadi orang yang sangat ambisius dan mau melakukan apapun untuk bisa diakui oleh orang lain. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah metode kualitatif yang dipecahkan dengan menggunakan analisis deskriptif. Studi ini menggambarkan karakter gangguan mental Blanche yang

**Keyword:** Blanche, A Streetcar Named Desire, Tennessee William, Psychoanalysis, Gangguan Mental.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The main character in the drama script is like the soul of the plot in the story. The description and characteristic of the main character determine to how the story catch the feel to the reader. Understanding psychiatric figure is needed to build character and understand the psychoanalysis aspects in a literary work.

The writer builds the story by creating various conflicts faced by the personality of figures. *A Streetcar Named Desire* is one of the greatest works created by Tennessee Williams, displaying a picture of reality with fantasy. Blanche character in the manuscript “A Streetcar Named Desire” suffers severe personality disorders in faced of complex conflict. When we read a literary work especially the drama script, we always get the feeling on the issues contained in the drama script. *A Streetcar Named Desire* offers a wide range of different characters with different ways to tell the reader about behaviour and character in it. The problem will display psychology conflict between characters and personal experiences that can be a reflection in real life. The researcher is interested in the problem and issues that Tennessee tried to expose. *A Streetcar Named Desire* tells the
reader about the experience of a woman who gets the mental disruption. This drama script is proper to analyze.

The main character psychiatric problems may develop, especially on behaviour disorders and psychiatric disorders, causing complicated problems or conflicts. To understand things in it, the researcher analyse the psychological problems that occur in the main character of A Streetcar Named Desire. A Streetcar Named Desire written by Tennessee Williams belongs to the Psychoanalysis criticism. A Streetcar Named Desire tells the main character that has a deep emotional problem, forcing the main character. Psychoanalysis criticism focused on realism and naturalism that developed in the early 20th century. Realism can be found when we open ourselves from reality and describe all contents inside the text. Realism tells the figure of individuals who stand out, showing the concept of man as a complex figure and have psychological problems. Before analyzing the mental disruption, researcher wants to talk about the psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis comes from the Greek word psyche, meaning soul, and logos means science. So psychology is the science of the soul or the science that investigates and learns human behaviour (Atkinson 1996: 7). Many people believe that each individual has a personality characteristic or behaviour. Characteristics included the thoughts, feelings, and behaviour are characteristics of a person that shows how they adapted and compromise in life. That is personality (Santrock 1988: 435). Psyche is the Greek word which simply can be interpreted as the soul. The word 'Psyche' comes from the mythological tale of the princess 'Psyche' and god love 'Eros'. Psyche is a beautiful princess which makes the love itself fell in love with him (Audifax 2002: 16).

In this drama, the researcher describe about the mental disruption of the main character Blanche. There are factors that encourage a person to attempt in mental disruption. Those factors are social cultural, spiritual and moral character.
1.1 Social cultural

Social cultural context in which the psychological processes are unfolding. If, for example, the processes are normative and observed at the population level, then mental illness is less clear/more complicated. Second, we need to consider the evaluator’s values and worldview.

1.2 Spiritual

From a traditional spiritual perspective, consciousness is seen as resulting from or deeply connected to some supernatural force. Usually, there is a religious narrative that explains that there are good and bad forces in the world, and that suffering is a function of either being possessed by the bad, or through the idea that the afflicted have fallen out the favour of good. This generally occurs because of sin or related concept of immoral personality that leads to some form of badness or contamination.

1.3 Moral Character

The idea of moral character has been advocated by many cultural systems. Western thought can clearly locate the origin of ideas about moral character in the Greek philosophers. In a nutshell, the position of moral character is that there are virtues which one must learn, such as courage and fortitude, honesty and integrity, compassion and grace that enable one to live the admirable life.

2. METHOD

This research is qualitative method. It is using descriptive analysis. The object of this research is A streetcar Named Desire drama by Tennessee William (1947). This research is about mental disruption in this drama. The type of the study is library research. The type of data and data source divided into two,
primary and secondary data source. In conducting the study, the researcher uses the technique of collecting data, as follows: (a) Reading *A Streetcar Named Desire* drama script repeatedly. (b) Browsing to the internet to get some information from article and journals related to object of the study. (c) Find some theory from reading comprehensive of books which contain psychoanalysis theory. (d) Taking notes of important information. (e) Identifying the problem and finding the data. (f) Arranging the data into several parts according to its classification.

3. The result of the study and discussion

3.1 The Element Causes Of Mental Disruption

3.1.1 Social cultural

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3.2 Characteristic of Mental Disruption

3.2.1 Anxiety disorders

People with anxiety disorders respond to certain objects or situations with fear and dread, as well as with physical signs of anxiety or nervousness, such as a rapid heartbeat and sweating. An anxiety disorder is diagnosed if the person’s response is not appropriate for the situation, if the person cannot control the response, or if the anxiety interferes with normal functioning. Anxiety disorders include generalized anxiety disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), panic disorder, social anxiety disorder, and specific phobias.

3.2.3 Mood disorders

These disorders, also called affective disorders, involve persistent feelings of sadness or periods of feeling overly happy, or fluctuations from extreme happiness to extreme sadness. The most common mood disorders are depression, mania, and bipolar disorder.

3.2.3 Psychotic disorders

Psychotic disorders are characterized by distorted awareness and thinking. Two of the most common symptoms of psychotic disorders are hallucinations. The experience of images or sounds that are not real, such as hearing voices and delusions false beliefs that the ill person accepts as true, despite evidence to the contrary. Schizophrenia is an example of a psychotic disorder. This disorder has made itself prevalent in today’s society. Many people fail to realize that the abuse of illegal substances, especially
drugs like marijuana, PCP, ecstasy, can induce or even magnify a psychotic disorder. Of course any substance that impairs your judgment and control can be detrimental to your well being.

3.2.4 Personality disorders

People with personality disorders have extreme and inflexible personality traits that are distressing to the person and/or cause problems at work, school, or in social relationships. In addition, the person’s patterns of thinking and personality significantly differ from the expectations of society and are so rigid that they interfere with the person’s normal functioning. Examples include antisocial personality disorder, obsessive-compulsive personality disorder, and paranoid personality disorder. In A Streetcar Named Desire, ‘Blanche’ has the characteristic of mental disruption that are personality disorders. She get a problem in social relationship, in her marriage, it is support Blanche to get mental disruption.

3.3 DISCUSSION

According to DSM-IV individuals with hysterical personality disorder may have difficulty in achieving emotional intimacy in romantic or sexual relationships. Without realizing it, they often act in a role such as the princess in their relationship to others. They may attempt to control their partner through emotional manipulation or excessive temptation, while showing a dependent attitude marked on those affected by hysterical personality at a later stage. Individuals with this disorder often have disrupted relationships with same-sex peers because their provocative sexual interpersonal style may indicate a threat of their relationship. They often experience stressful and sad situations when they are not the center of attention. They want new things, stimulation, and excitement and they have a tendency to quickly get bored with their usual routine. These individuals
are often intolerant, or frustrated by situations involving delaying gratification, and their actions are often directed to quickly gaining satisfaction. Although they often start a job or action enthusiastically, their interest may drop rapidly. Long-term relationships can be ignored to make way for the excitement of new relationships.

From Blanche's actions on the dialogue, it appears he is stealing attention on Stanley and his friends who are playing poker. Blanche knows that every man is playing poker, can not take the trouble because they are always drunk while playing, especially Stanley. In such conditions, Blanche felt that he was not the center of attention, when he had just returned from traveling with Stella. Stanley, Pablo, Steve and Mitch's attention at the time were abundant in poker games. Blanche was looking for a way to turn on the radio for the attention of the men.

Especially Stanley and Mitch were a little distracted from the game. The incident happened again, until Stanley's anger mounted. How clear that passion comes from within Blanche. Previously she had talk to Stella about her wishes for Mitch. she wants to overwhelm a man in addition to his worries over the physically increasingly faded. Blanche wanted to prove to herself that she was still admired by some men.

Blanche resolves that feeling by drinking alcohol. Previously she spoke to Stella to be able to get Mitch. After Stella left with Stanley and his friends, Blanche reflected herself on all the doubts. Feelings of chaos and defense of reality with the fantasy world created by Blanche, made her experience a very visible shock from the changes in his uncontrollable feelings and emotions. A jumping mood, bringing her into an uncontrollable state. If the wish was not as expected, Blanche felt a very high level of fear and anxiety. Conditions like that also affect the
physical state such as shaking or digging. Sometimes in certain circumstances she often complained that he often feel tired. These symptoms are mood disorder and somatoform disorder that is also associated with histrionic personality disorder.

In the above dialog many emerging criteria that lead to histrionic mental disorders. In reversing reality, she is always worried if reality can actually be known. The transfer of speech is always being made. To cover up from any conversation that can worry her. Blanche always uses projection defense mechanisms. All forms of criticism spoken to Stella are her own. It was done to enlarge her self-esteem in front of Stella's eyes with one of the talks is critical. There is little impression to cover the anxiety by looking for praise and attention that is by questioning her beauty. The consistent nature of exploiting the self-image to attract more attention to men is shown from the beginning to the end of the drama. Beauty is the most important thing for Blanche. Blanche showed herself to always look fresh and charming in front of many people. That way by wearing clothes that look luxurious, makeup and hot water bath. From the beginning Blanche has stringed the story, as an adept actor so it continues uttering a lie about her Lies are always thrown up until he gets used to saying lies and until he does not realize why to lie. To the point where Blanche thinks it is true there is no lie at all. There is a fragility torn apart inside her if there is someone trying to explain the reality and the lies she has done. The situation is quite confusing. Almost all Blanche's thoughts were drowned in his fantasy world. If that fact endangers herself and her fantasies, she will withdraw by doing denial or escape towards another that can be self-destructive.

The essence of Blanche's destruction is the sense of loss and solitude that sparks a desire to save herself from it. If the desire to
be achieved is not successful, then the mental confusion will be more enlarged. Blanche's only hope was Mitch. Mitch is a bright source of life for Blanche. Blanche strives to establish closeness in his own way and retain prima donna behavior. Feel the intimate closeness and convinced that Mitch is deeply in love with her and does everything to get her. The exaggerated conviction was shattered when Blanche's lie was discovered by Mitch.

Truth was known to Mitch after getting information from his best friend Stanley. Blanche was shocked by such a state of affairs. So all her hopes and desires were destroyed. Blanche's egos state is no longer able to solve the problem. The arrival of a florist symbolizes Blanche's death. The death of a great hope and craving, the death of the ever-coveted perfection. Being unable to solve the problem blanche uses a primitive regression defense mechanism.

Bad events continue to blanket Blanche to the point of getting her mentally depressed. The end of this drama Blanche was trapped by her own conviction. Waiting for a handsome man who will pick her up and spend the rest of life with the man. Her strong conviction for the arrival of a man who became a refuge would come. That's the way she thought, when at the time Stanley and Stella had to put Blanche in a mental hospital, they waited for the doctor along with the nurse who would pick blanche up.

The conclusion during the dialogues above is Blanche can not control between Id, Ego and Superego normally. The Ego’s Blanche dominate the others. To be able to live a normal life, Blanche must be able to suppress the ego on herself and give space to the superego to help the mind choose a good decision.

4. CONCLUSION

The researcher concludes that based on psychoanalysis criticism. There are three basic psychoanalysis conception in A
Streetcar Named Desire drama by Tennessee Williams 1947’s as follows:

First, psychoanalysis divided into three basic conception, there are Id, Ego, Superego. id is pleasure principle, ego is realistic principle and superego is idealistic principle. Id, Ego and Superego are often described as human (ego) who want to take decisions and Id role as devil and superego role as angel.

Second is the type of mental disruption in the main character of Blanche. There are anxiety disorders, mood disorders, psychotic disorders, personality disorders. Anxiety disorders are different, though. They can cause such distress that it interferes with your ability to lead a normal life. This type of disorder is a serious mental illness. Anxiety disorders of Blanche reflected in his sense of desire or passion is uncontrolled. Mood disorders also called affective disorders, involve persistent feelings of sadness or periods of feeling overly happy, or fluctuations from extreme happiness to extreme sadness. The most common mood disorders are depression, mania, and bipolar disorder. Psychotic disorders are characterized by distorted awareness and thinking. Two of the most common symptoms of psychotic disorders are hallucinations. The experience of images or sounds that are not real, such as hearing voices and delusions false beliefs that the ill person accepts as true, despite evidence to the contrary.

People with personality disorders have extreme and inflexible personality traits that are distressing to the person and/or cause problems at work, school, or in social relationships. Personality disorders is the type of mental disruption which happened in Blanche. Some of the conflicts experienced by Blance in A Streetcar Named Desire makes the Blanche’s ego become uncontrollable and unable to balance the personality. From the problem, it can be detected that the mental disruption in Blanche belongs to personality disorders.
Third, the causes of Blanche’s mental disruption analysing with psychoanalysis. The causes of Blanche’s mental disruption is her experienced life that far away from the happiness. The beginning is about her boyfriend’s fact; homosexual. And then he suicide, felt guilty. She did something wrong and abnormal because she felt depression, and surrender. That conditions, take along blanche to the deepest depression and phobia. The beginning cause Blanche psychiatric disorder is after the death of his lover, Allan, by suicide. The incident greatly caused Blanche's mental culpability which from the beginning had characterized the mental defence weakly, because the social environment in the place of Blanche made him grow with his bad habits.

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