

Self Identity in *The Catcher in The Rye* by J.D Salinger (1951) : an Existentialist Approach



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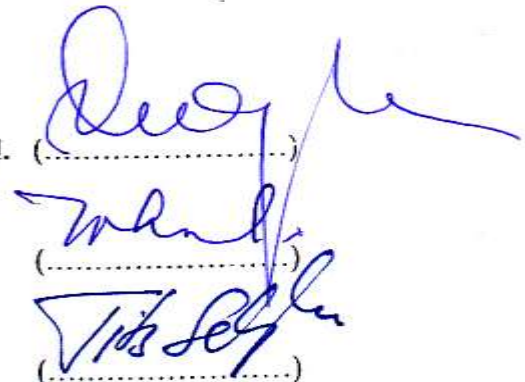
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Abstrak

Penelitian ini menceritakan karakter tentang seseorang di dalam novel yang bernama Holden Caulfield yang sedang mencari jati dirinya dengan cara melakukan kebebasan-kebebasan diluar batas. Penelitian ini mendeskripsikan tentang bagaimana Holden Caulfield menggambarkan proses dalam pencarian jati dirinya di dalam novel *The Catcher in The Rye*. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menemukan indikator jati diri yang ada pada tokoh Holden Caulfield serta mengetahui bagaimana proses terjadinya pencarian jati diri di dalam *The Catcher in The Rye*. Penelitian ini bersifat kualitatif dengan menggunakan metode deskriptif. Penelitian ini di analisis dengan menggunakan teori existentialist. Analisis tersebut digunakan untuk menemukan dan mendeskripsikan gambaran terjadinya proses dalam pencarian jati diri di dalam novel ini. Penelitian ini memiliki beberapa kesimpulan. Pertama, ada 2 prinsip yang digunakan dalam menemukan proses pencarian jati diri di novel *The Catcher in the Rye*, yaitu kepribadian diri dan identitas. Kedua, ada Prinsip Existentialist yang terdiri dari 5 elemen yaitu pencarian fakta, kebebasan, pembuktian dan itikad buruk, identik dengan dirinya dan ada bagi dirinya, sesuatu yang tidak masuk akal.

Kata Kunci: Jati Diri, Pendekatan Existentialist, *The Catcher in The Rye*.

Abstract

This study tells the character of a person in a novel called Holden Caulfield who is looking for his identity by way of freedoms out of bounds. This study describes how Holden Caulfield describes the process of finding his true self in the novel *The Catcher in The Rye*. The purpose of this study is to find an indicator of identity that is on the character Holden Caulfield and know how the process of identity search in *The Catcher in The Rye*. This research is qualitative by using descriptive method. This research is analyzed by using existentialist theory. The analysis is used to find and describe the picture of the process in the search for identity in this novel. This study has several conclusions. First, there are 2 principles used in finding the process of self-identity in *The Catcher in the Rye* novel, self and identity. Secondly, there is an Existentialist Principle consisting of 5 elements of facticity, freedom, authentication and bad faith, being-in-self and being-for-itself, absurdity.

Keywords: Self Identity, Existentialist Approach, *The Catcher in The Rye*.

1. INTRODUCTION

Self identity is the way for get the identity for own. It can be motivate own to rise the goal for life. Self and identity theories converge in asserting that self and identity sare mental constructs, that is, something represented in memory. This capacity develops early.

The theory of Existentialist is a philosophy that emphasizes individual existence, freedom and choice. It is the point of view that humans define their own meaning in life, and try to make rational decisions despite existing in an irrational universe. It focuses on the question of human existence, and the feeling that there is no purpose or explanation at the core of existence. The philosof Jean paul Satre (in Muzairi, 2002:4-5) defines

existentialism as one of the anthropology philosophy that expresses on human existence's freedom and responsible. It is strongly different to another philosophy studies, which Existentialism focus its studies on human existence. So that, Existentialism discourse forces everyone to aware the reality, that this world and human existence does not finish and imperfect. It means, human being always to face the existential problems like anxiety, fear and trembling anxiety, freedom, death, etc. All of them are the empirical facts for human being itself.

We can find self identity in this novel. Holden Caulfield as the character who have the self identity. He looking for his self identity with some way. The way that very appear is about freedom. He through freedom or anything that no role for getting his self identity.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study is a descriptive qualitative research. The researcher conducts two objects of this study as follows, formal object and material object. The formal object is discussing about the issue of borderline personality disorder by using psychological approach, the material object is J.D Salinger's novel published by Random House. There are two data sources can be found in this study, as follows: primary data source and secondary data source. Primary data source is *The Catcher in The Rye* novel. Secondary data source consisting books, journal, articles and internet to complete the data analysis. In the techniques of collecting data, the researcher uses five steps as follows: 1) Reading repeatedly the novel "*The Catcher in the Rye*", 2) Browsing and reading the related articles and some information needed in the internet. 3) Taking notes of the important related with the study. 4) Identifying the problem in *The Catcher in The Rye* and finding the data. 5) Making conclusion and its suggestion based on the results.

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Self Identity analysis

Self is the defining of the essential qualities that make a person distinct from all others. There have been a number of different approaches to defining these qualities. The self is the idea of a unified being which is the source of consciousness. Moreover, this self is the agent responsible for the thoughts and actions of an individual to which they are ascribed. (The notion of self by Chelsea Rogers). There is quotation from the novel :

“partly because I have a lousy vocabulary and partly because I act quite young for my age sometimes. I was sixteen then, and I’m seventeen now, and sometimes I act like I’m about thirteen.” (*The Catcher*, p : 13)

That is the first evidence. From the statement above, we can know if the writer, Holden describes his self. He says that his self has a lousy vocabulary and he acts quite young. It can conclude that Holden’s self has a different essentials from the other people. The statement below is the second evidence.

Identity is “people’s concepts of who they are, of what sort of people they are, and how they relate to others”. (Hoggs and Abrams 1988, 2). Identity refers to the ways in which individuals and collectivities are distinguished in their social relations with other individuals and collectivities (Jenkins 1996, 4). There is a sentence in the novels that it can prove the statement above.

“as a matter of fact, I’m the only dumb one in the family. My brother D.B.’s a writer and all, and my brother Allie, the one that died, that I told about you, was a wizard. I’m the only really dumb one.” (*The Catcher*, p:89)

That is the second evidence. From the quotation above, we can know that Holden who as the one of the character in the story, he told about his identity which different with his brother and he explain about who is he and who is his brother. It can be a prove that in the novel, there is a statement which relate with the issue.

3.2. The Basic concepts of Existentialist analysis

3.2.1. Facticity

The elements of facticity cannot be said to belong to me in the way that the color of an orange belongs to orange, for as going to me, as “deciding” me, they have always already been interpreted by me.

In this below will be explain about the statement which take out from the novel as a prove :

“If you really want to hear about it, the first thing you’ll probably want to know is where I was born, and what my lousy childhood was like, and how my parents were occupied and all before they had me, and all that David Copperfield kind of crap, but I don’t feel like going into it, if you want to know the truth.” (*The Catcher*, p: 1)

That is evidence of facticity principle. From the quotation above, we can conclude that Holden has feeling bores with situation in his family and he is uncommunicative man because his parents quite touchy about anything. Relation between the quote and the principle, there is explained about the character of

Holden with his family and identify about how Holden respect his family especially with his parents.

3.2.2. Freedom

The basis freedom from Sartre is ontological : we are free because we are not a self (an in-self) but a presence-to-self. This implies that we are “other” to our selves, that whatever we are or whatever others may ascribe to us, we are “in the manner of not being it,” that is in the of being able to assume a perspective in its regard. Freedom means more than just “free to do whatever I want”.

There is evidence from the principle :

“I kept sitting there getting drunk and waiting for old Tina and Janine to come out and do their stuff, but they weren’t there. A flitty-looking guy with wavy hair came out and played piano, and then this new babe, Valencia, came out and sang. She wasn’t any good, but she was better than old Tina and Janine, and least she sang good song. I probably wouldn’t have done it, but I was getting drunk as hell.” (*The Catcher*, p: 194)

From the quotation above, the researcher conclude that Holden drunk very much. He is too depressed so he don’t care about in around him.

3.2.3. The Authentication and Bad Faith

Defining the authentication is to relate with he did not believe with other people, but he believes the himself. In this below will be explain a quotation from the novel :

“I knew right where it was, it was right near Central Park South and all but I still couldn’t find it. I must’ve been drunker than I thought. I keep walking and walking, and it kept getting darker and darker and spookier and spookier.” (*The Catcher*, p:200)

From the quotation above, the researcher conclude that Hoden or the actor in the story believes with his thought and he didn’t believe what the people said. It can be prove the authentication principle, and the researcher put the quotation for explain if there is true about the prove.

Bad faith can be defined as people didn’t believe with themself and more respect with other opinion. It can be describe the phenomenon in which human beings under pressure from social forces, adopt false values and disown their innate freedom. It is closely related to the concept of self-deception.

In the novel, Holden has a bad faith character. He accept offering from elevator guys of the hotel. His mind does not balance. He begins unbelieve with himself

and accept what the elevator guy of hotel's offer. Holden is still twenty-two but his depressed can beat anything. Because of that, holden's mind become unstable.

3.2.4. Etre en soi and Etre pour soi (Being-in-self and Being-for-itself)

Etre en soi or being-in-itself is contrasted with the being of person, which he describes as a combination of or vacillation or tension. This element will be prove with the quotation below :

“ I didn't feel too drunk any more when I went outside, but it was getting very cold out again, and my teeth started chattering like hell. I couldn't make them. I stop walked over to Madison Avenue and started to wait around for a bus because I didn't have hardly nt money left and I had to start economizing on cabs and all. But I didn't feel like getting on a damn bus. And besides, I didn't even know where I was supposed to go. So what I did, I started walking over to the park. I figure I'd go by that little lake and see what the hell the ducks were doing, see if they were around or not. I still didn't know if they were around or not. It wasn't far over to the park, and I didn't even know where I was going to sleep yet –so I went. I wasn't tired or anything. I just felt blue as hell.” (*The Catcher*, p: 199)

Holden feel do something but he is unconsciously with himself. He was not doing what exactly happened. He didn't feel that he drunk, but in the reality he was drunk too much. It is from his says if he getting very cold and his teeth started chattering like hell. From its sentence, Holden feel something but he didn't more concious.

Etre-pour-soi is related to the conciousness that man has a concioussness of himself that he was there. The awareness that he will no say a way of being human. In other words, the human has a relationship with himself, so that human conciousness appear with the presence of something or object in front of human future. Finally, Holden is concious with he did. He thinks about his sisters, parents and his family. His illness make a concious of him. He wants to go home and he think that he didn't want if his family worried about him. Holden decides that he will back to his home and he try anyhow for going home. He also try anyhow sayswith his parents. The explanation will be proved with quotation in below.

“I started thinking how old Phoeboe would feel if I got pneumonia and died. It was a childish way to think, but I couldn't stop myself. She'd feel pretty bad if something like that happened. She likes me a lot. I mean she's quite fond of me. She really is. Anyway, I couldn't get

that off my mind, so finally what I figure I'd do, I figured I'd better sneak home and see her, in case I died and all. I had my door key with me and all, and I figured what I'd do, sneak in apartment, very quiet and all, and just sort of chew the fat with her for a while. The only thing that worried me was our front door. It creaks and squeaks. It's pretty old apartment house, and the superintendent's a lazy bastard, and everything creaks and squeaks. I was afraid my parents might hear me sneaking in. But I decided I'd try it anyhow."

"So, I got the hell out of the park, and went home. I walked all the way. It wasn't too far, and I wasn't tired or even drunk any more. It was just very cold and nobody around anywhere." (*The Catcher*, p: 202-203)

3.2.5. Absurdity

Absurdity in Sartre's element means human beings natural order in which meaning rather can be created by actions and interpretation.

"I started thinking how old Phoebe would feel if I got pneumonia and died. It was a childish way to think, but I couldn't stop myself. She'd feel pretty bad if something like that happened. She likes me a lot. I mean she's quite fond of me. She really is. Anyway, I couldn't get that off my mind, so finally what I figure I'd do, I figured I'd better sneak home and see her, in case I died and all." (*The Catcher*, p:252)

The quotation above tells about how Holden feels confused. He wants to do something but he can't do that. Holden didn't know what should he do. He likes people who feel confused for doing anything and he feels that anything which he does will be worse.

3.3. Discussion

Based on the existentialist analysis, the indicators of self identity in *The catcher in the rye's* novel, the researcher tries to complete the study by all those elements and putting them back to unity. Through *The Catcher in The Rye*, J.D Salinger wants to convey self identity in the novel. He wants to tell that self identity is people's character. Self identity is character that must be have by ourself. There are two findings in this study, the first finding is the indicator of self identity from Holden's character. The researcher will explain that self identity owned by Holden is true. Because in the novel, the character of Holden looking for his self identity with all the way. It is related to self meaning that self is the defining of the essential qualities that make people distinct from all others. From the novel, Holden describes about his self that he has a lousy vocabulary and he acts quite young. The second indicator is identity which refers to the way in personality and collectivities are distinguished in their social relative with other person and collectivities (Jenkins 1996, 4). From the analysis in above, The character Holden has a identity that he

told about his identity which different with his. He belief with himself for do everything and it is his identity.

The second finding is tells about the elements of existentialism. There are five element or principle of existentialism based onSartre's theory of existentialism. The first principle is facticity, and then freedom, the authentication and badfaith, entre en soi and atre pour soi, and the last is absurdity. The first elements is facticity, The elements of facticity cannot be said to belong to me in the way that the color of an orange belongs to orange, for as going to me, as "deciding" me, they have always already been interpreted by me. Though third-person opinion can identify skin color, class, or ethnicity, the minute it seeks to identify them as mine. It must cope with the individual character of the existence own. The character Holden has sense bores with situation in his family because didn't what he wants. And he is tight-lipped man. But he has feeling respect for his family especially his parents. The second is freedom, Freedom means more than just "free to do whatever I want". Holden who he is the character of this novel, he wants to feel free from his problem and his ways is drunk too much beer in the bar until morning because he is to depressed, so he don't care about in around him. He didn't care about time and people around him and also himself. He drunk like a very bad person. He is very feel free, so he do whatever he wants like drunk too much until overtime. The third is the authentication and bad faith, The Authentication is the authentication is to relate with he did not believe with other people, but he believes the himself. The character of Holden believesx that hisx thought and he didn't believe with other people opinion. Bad faith can be defined as people didn't believe with themself and more respect with other opinion. It can be describe the phenomenon in which human beings under pressure from social forces, adopt false values and disown their innate freedom. It is closely related to the concept of self-deception. The character in the novel has a bad faith too, he accept offering fromthe elevator guys of hotel about calling a girl for him. He begins unbelieve with himself and accept what the elevator of hotel's offer. Sometimes, his mind does not balance, and because of that he didn't believe with himself. The fourth is Etre en soi and Etre pour soi, Etre en soi is not to be reffered to anything other than itself that might be regarded as its beginning or its end or plan it is realizing. Holden has feling if he is unconsciously with himself. He was not doing what exactly happened. He didn't feel that he drunk, but in the reality he was drunk too much. It is from his says that he feel very cold and his teeth started chattering like hell. Holden feel something but he didn't more concious. Etre-pour-soi is related to the conciousness that man has a concioussness of himself that he was

there. The awareness that he will no say a way of being human. In other words, human has a relationship with himself, so that human consciousness appear with the presence of something or object for the human future. The character of this novel, Holden, is feels conscious with he did. He has a illness that make a conscious of him. He wants to go home and he thinks that he didn't want if his family especially phoebe his sister worried about him. Holden decides that he will back to his home and he try anyhow for going home. He also try anyhow says with his parents. Holden has a feeling consciousness and because of that he want to go to his home. The fifth is Absurdity in sartre's element means human beings natural order in which meaning rather can be created by actions and interpretation. Holden who the character of this novel, feel confuse. He wants to do something but he can't do that. Holden didn't know what should he do. He likes person who he will be worse if he dsoing anything that he wants to do.

Based on the analysis above, self identity of Holden is suitable with existetialism theory focused on existentialist of literary work. Actually that literary works cannot be separated from the real life with identity that exist in environment.

4. CONCLUSION

There are 2 findings in this novel, the first finding tells about the indicator of self-identity. There are two indicators of self-identity in this novel, firstly is Self, Self is the defining of the essential qualities that make a person distinct from all others. There have been a number of different approaches to defining these qualities. The self is the idea of a unified being which is the source of consciousness. Moreover, this self is the agent responsible for the thoughts and actions of an individual to which they are ascribed. Secondly is Identity, Identity is "people's concepts of who they are, of what sort of people they are, and how they relate to others". (Hoggs and Abrams 1988, 2). Identity refers to the ways in which individuals and collectivities are distinguished in their social relations with other individuals and collectivities (Jenkins 1996, 4).

The second finding tells about The Elements of Existentialism, there are five element or principle of existentialism based on sartre's theory of existentialism. The first principle is facticity, and then freedom, the authentication and badfaith, *entre en soi* and *atre pour soi*, and the last is absurdity. The first elements is facticity, The elements of facticity cannot be said to belong to me in the way that the color of an orange belongs to orange, for as going to me, as "deciding" me, they have always already been interpreted by me. Though third-person opinion can identify skin color, class, or ethnicity, the minute it seeks

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