

The Inner Conflict Reflected in the Main Character of Papang in Kanittha Kwanyu's *The Comments* (2021)

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Abstract

*This research aims to analyze how inner conflict occurs and what types of inner conflict appear in the main characters in *The Comments* (2021). There are two problem formulations that the researchers use in this study, first, How does Papang's inner conflict reflected in *The Comments* (2021) by Kanittha Kwanyu? Second, What kind of inner conflict does Papang go through in *The Comments* (2021) by Kanittha Kwanyu? Researchers used qualitative methods to examine the problem. The theory and approach that researchers use are Freud's Psychoanalysis and Theory of Inner Conflict. This research also includes data collection procedures and data analysis procedures. The results of this research are, first, the causes of inner conflict in the main character, and what types of inner conflict arise from the first episode to the fifth episode.*

Keywords: *inner conflict, psychoanalysis, freud*

Introduction

Conflict is the most crucial component in creating a plot in a story that is based on real events in literary works since it serves as the foundation of a compelling narrative. As a result, conflict plays a crucial part in holding the audience's interest, and it is usual for them to become emotionally invested in what is happening in the plot.

Conflict that exists within one's heart, mind, and soul is known as inner conflict. This conflict is a struggle that people have with themselves. For instance, a conflict between two wants, beliefs, choices, expectations, or other issues results in a specific event. In this inner conflict, many psychiatric issues are explored from the first person perspective. In literature, inner struggle often determines the caliber, intensity, and allure of a piece. It could even be said that writing stories is actually nothing but to build and develop conflict. Conflicts can be searched for,

found, imagined, and developed based on conflicts that can be found in the real life.

There many literary works which elevate inner conflict of the characters, for instance, *To the Bone* by Marti Noxon (2017), *Lucy* by Luc Besson (2014), *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* by Stephen Daldry (2011), *Ayla: The Daughter of War* by Can Ulkay (2017), *Maleficent* by Robert Stromberg (2014).

One of the movies in form of drama series which contains of the mental state condition of the main character is *The Comments*. In *The Comments* series, it raises the issue of how the main character struggling with herself and focus of her inner conflict. In this study, researchers emphasize how the psychological view of the main character's inner conflict as a teenager and how does it affect her daily life as the main characters in the series *The Comments* (2021).

Based on the background of the study above, the researcher conducts a research by applying psychoanalysis theory with the topic of the research Inner Conflict Reflected in The Main Character of Papang in Kanittha Kwanyu's *The Comments* (2021).

Literary Review

Psychology of Literature

Literature is a reflection of how people feel, including their thoughts, motives, experiences, and comfort with using language to depict things in tangible terms. They put their feelings and thoughts into writing, making it useful for other people who can read what they have written. There are numerous different definitions of literature. Swann and Williams (2008: 1) claim that literature is imaginative writing in the sense of fiction, where the writing is not literally accurate and instead uses the writer's own experiences to choose, organize, and explain the writing process. This indicates that literature uses language as a medium and is an interpretation of human thought. It is fantastic and has a huge range. The writing object can then be a novel, a piece of prose, a song, etc.

An approach to comprehending literary works is through the psychology of literature. Focus is placed on the psychological actions taken by literary figures,

authors, and even readers who are knowledgeable about literary works. Wellek and Warren (1949: 75) define psychology of literature as the study of the creative process, the psychological kinds and laws present in literary works, the influence of literature on readers (audience psychology), and lastly the psychology of the writer as a type and individual. It means that the reader or audience can learn about the writer's and the character's psychology in literary works by studying the psychology of literature.

Psychoanalysis of Sigmund Freud

To comprehend the personality of the human soul, Sigmund Freud established the psychoanalytic theory. Freud's psychoanalysis stresses unconscious force, which derives from human instinct, according to Schultz (2017: 35). Freud's critique of the conventional psychology of consciousness comes from a unique angle. He draws a comparison between the soul with an iceberg, where the smaller portion that is visible on the water's surface is consciousness and the larger portion that lies below the surface is unconscious (Hall, 1993: 60).

Freud (1964) divided the human psyche into three, the id, ego, and superego. Id which is the human unconscious which is the basis of psychic energy. The ego is located between the conscious and unconscious of humans whose function is as a mediator between the demands of the desires and the obstacles of the superego. While the Superego becomes part conscious but partly unconscious, whose function is to limit and as a barrier to desires that are the result of learning and habits identified from parents or society.

The superego, the supreme personality leader, stands for conscience, social standards, and the ideal self. Good principles dictate that the superego's role is to restrain the ego's inclinations and regulate the id. A judicial department that upholds the ideal concept seems to be something that ideals and conscience should work to bring about. The id can be thought of as the indulgent desire, the ego as feeling and wisdom, and the superego as conscience, a sense of right and wrong, and honor. The ego serves the id, superego, and reality like a servant would serve a master. The center of the personality structure is the ego. The ego

does more than only modify reality and id. But it also averts injury or disagreements between parties (Freud, 1964:105).

a. Id

According to Hall (1956: 22) Id is a psychic energy that drives humans to fulfill their basic needs such as eating, sex, and feeling comfortable. Id is always associated with pleasure and resists discomfort. Humans cannot live only with the id in themselves. Humans are in the process of learning to know what they can and cannot do, and in fulfilling their desires, a personality structure is formed called the ego. Id is an illogical thing capable of satisfying conflicting thoughts. The id is incapable of making decisions about what is good and what is bad. The role of id is to seek satisfaction or pleasure without paying attention to whether it is appropriate or not, which means the id has no morality. Id can survive by relying on the development of secondary processes. Ego becomes a secondary process that performs this function.

b. Ego

The personality structure is led by ego. Reasoning, problem-solving, and decision-making are mental functions assigned by ego. Schultz (2013: 50) ego lies between the conscious and the unconscious, the ego is caught between the id and the superego. Ego stands to the reality principle by fulfilling pleasures based on the limits of reality. Just like id, ego also has no morality, so it does not know good and bad. With the reality principle, the ego tries to replace the pleasure principle of id. Freud explained that ego weighs between the unreasonable demands of id and the superego, which means that ego has an intelligent function. Ego tries to control the illogical demands of id and superego with external logical demands, and this causes an anxious reaction and self-defense mechanisms to emerge. Ego tugs with id, but basically ego is in the grip of id which is strong and irregular. But ego can also be in complete control even though it depends on the energy of id.

c. Superego

Superego becomes important in the structure of the human personality because superego mediates between id and ego. Without superego, humans cannot

distinguish between good and bad. Superego has morality. According to Freud in Schultz (2013: 47) stated that the superego plays a good role in controlling sexual and aggressive urges. Superego monitors and judges the actions of ego. When the ego intends to act contrary to the moral standards of the superego, guilt arises. When the ego does not meet superego's standard of perfection, bad feelings arise. Superego maintains the standard of perfection and does not care about obstacles that the ego cannot overcome, superego is like id which does not care whether the set of conditions possessed by the superego can be put into practice.

Conflict

Conflict is when two or more opposing forces collide or fight. Humans experience inner and external conflicts both in literature and in real life. Conflict is a fight or competition between individuals who hold divergent needs, opinions, views, values, or objectives. In its broadest sense, conflict refers to when subject perspectives are incompatible (Diez et al., 2006: 565). Conflict, according to Lukens (2003: 99), is a fight between competing forces.

According to Irwanto, (1997: 213-216) often occurring conflict can be identified by a few traits:

1. Everyone experiences conflict, albeit they may react differently to the same stimulus. It is dependent on individual factors.
2. When motifs have values that are equal or similar, conflict results. It causes uncertainty and suspense.
3. Conflict can develop quickly, but it can also take a long time.

Conflict can be categorized into two categories. These conflicts are both inner and external. It is suitable with Koesnosobroto (1988: 43) assertion that conflict can be both inner and external.

Inner Conflict

A struggle that goes on inside a character's head is called inner or inner conflict. One's mind is engaged in an inner fight. Some literary conflicts take the shape of a character attempting to overcome a personal debilitating issue such as fear, addiction, emotional injury, or another.

Inner conflict characteristics:

1. A character may be faced with a decision or a dilemma, such as having to choose between two options for solving an issue or struggling with one's conscience.

It is backed by Perrin (1959:44), who said that a dilemma is a situation in which the protagonist must select between two options.

Within a problem, there is frequently a sense of irritation and even mystery.

2. A character has conflicting feelings, such as being simultaneously relieved and disappointed.
3. Fear holds a character back from achieving a goal.
4. A character is ashamed or guilty of a prior transgression. When a person has this emotion, it is called a person is aware of or believes whether or not they have lowered his or her own standards of behavior or has transgressed a moral norm, and is heavily accountable for that violation.
5. A character battles with their identity or their own self-image. Conflicts with one's own self include those with their race, religion, caste, sexual orientation, gender, and/or ethnicity.

Some characteristics, like race and sex, are fixed from birth. Later in life, some characteristics, like the language(s) spoken or the preferred religion, may change. It's reasonable and normal to have identity issues in diverse contexts. It might take some time and be difficult to develop one's identity, sense of self, and desired attributes. Depression and anxiety may result from identity struggles or a lack of a strong sense of self.

6. A character strives to kick a harmful habit. It indicates that the character had trouble stopping himself from doing badly. A pattern of behavior that is deemed harmful to one's physical or mental health and is frequently associated with a lack of self-control is referred to as a bad habit. The person may want to stop engaging in these actions, but because they have become embedded in them, they feel trapped and unable to do so.

Research Methodology

Researchers used a psychological approach using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis theory. The research is qualitative in nature which produces a description in the form of words from the observed figure. Sugiyono (2013) states that researchers are the main instrument, data collection techniques are triangulated, and data analysis is inductive, with natural object conditions, and research results that emphasize meaning not generalizations.

The main object of research and as support is the Thai drama series subtitled *The Comments* (2021) produced by GMMTV which airs on 23 May 2021 - 6 June 2021. Researchers took drama footage from the GMMTV official YouTube channel that provided with 5 episodes, which consists of 4 parts per episode.

The method of collecting data in this research is by doing observation. The procedures are watching and reading the scripts, identifying the data from the scripts and subtitle, classifying the data and selecting the data. After the data are collected, the next step is analyzing data by following displaying data, explaining data, and interpreting data.

Findings and Discussion

Papang's Inner Conflict Reflected in *The Comments* (2021)

The Comment is flashback drama series that tells about Papang, a student president who is perfect from all aspects and a popular student in her school, who decided to commit suicide in the same way as her idol actress during a live stream. She gets special treatment for being the top student in school, but her close friends are bothered by it. they did several ways to attack Papang in the social media. Papang also brutally rejected a male friend who liked her.

When Papang finds out that her best friend betrayed her, Papang feels guilty because all this time she has treated her friends so badly and is too embarrassed to apologize. Researchers observe another side of Papang who want to hide all of their issues by becoming someone who is popular and attracts a lot of attention, both at school and on social media, behind the bad attitude of Papang

who are arrogant and treat their peers poorly. Papang experiences inner conflict between what she knows to be true and what goes against her way of thinking and acting. Every episode contains a lot of unexpected events, and several of them make Papang understand that she frequently makes mistakes when interacting with other students at school, especially when she is with her close friends.

Papang's Inner Conflict in Dealing with Classmate's Response About Her Post with Gina

Papang uploaded a photo of herself with Gina, and got a lot of responses from her followers. Even some of Papang's classmates spoke openly in front of Papang. They said that Papang was looking for attention and wanted to be famous. Can be seen in the following dialog

Classmate 1 : They have collagen inefficiency.

Classmate 2 : A new comments says, "It's annoying when you see someone tries so hard."

Classmate 3 : "So fake."

Classmate 1 : "Wasted of my storage. Delete."

(The Comments, 2021, eps 2 [3/4] 10:29)

Even though she looked annoyed, Papang ignored the words of her friends. Papang experiences an inner conflict where the Papang's superego plays a role in suppressing Papang's ego which encourages Papang's desire to go against the words of her friends. Papang kept trying to stay calm and not be provoked by the atmosphere. Because in terms of quantity, Papang is outnumbered by his friends, and of course fighting is something that violates school rules.

Papang's Inner Conflict in Facing Her Problem With Wanwaew

Papang was called out by the teacher for fighting with Wanwaew. This problem started when Wanwaew did not accept that her father had an affair with Papang's mother. Wanwaew suddenly came to Papang and said harshly, then Papang fought back and a fight broke out.

Ms. Wimon: Pimpimon, this is first time you got into a fight. Aren't you going to say something?

Papang : I promise not to do it again.

(The Comments, 2021, eps 2 [4/4] 0:18)

We can see that Papang doesn't want to prolong his problems with Wanwaew. Papang's superego suppresses the ego to win the fight between the two of them.

Instead of blaming Wanwaew for starting the fight, Papang immediately apologized and promised not to do it again.

Papang's Inner Conflict in Facing Her Parent's Love Relationship

The scene is when Khan comes home after Papang's funeral, and his mother's lover is visiting the house. His mother's lover immediately left as soon as he saw Khan coming home. Khan asked about the situations and feelings of Papang when he saw his mother's lover often visiting the house.

Khan : Does he come here often?
Mother's : He comes whenever he's free.
Khan : Was Papang okay with this?
Mother's : Sometimes she was. Sometimes she wasn't. Like you, Khan.
Khan : If she's like me, it means she wasn't fine.
(*The Comments*, 2021, eps 2 [4/4] 6:04)

Ego Papang pushed her against her mother's love relationship. Every time her mother's lover came, Papang always said harshly and sarcastically. Even several times Papang tried to expel him. Papang opposes their relationship because her mother's lover already has a family and is the father of her underclassman at school. Even the fights that happened at school were also triggered because of their parents' relationship.

But just before Papang decided to kill herself, she gave in and let her mother's lover come and have dinner at the house. Then Papang came into the room and was found dead the next day. Papang's superego restrained her and made her give up her mother's relationship, and an inner conflict occurred in Papang.

Papang's Inner Conflict in Facing Her Problem With Nan

Nan used a dating app and used the Papang identity to attract the attention of the boys. Papang was disturbed and felt that his name had become bad when the account sent several photos of Papang and photos of Nan who deliberately undressed. Papang continues to search for information, and finds out that Nan is the culprit.

Papang came to Nan who was on the toilet and scolded him. Nan felt guilty and apologized many times to Papang.

Nan : I know what I did was wrong. Those comments were criticizing me. I feel guilty every day. You can tell everyone that I did it. I'll admit it. I'm sorry Papang.

Papang : You got the guts to do it but not own up to it. I wouldn't hurt my friend the way you did.

(*The Comments*, 2021, eps 3 [3/4] 7:01)

Nan felt guilty and kept apologizing to Papang. She was even willing if her identity was revealed so that Papang's good name could return. An inner conflict occurs to Papang when her ego drives her to blame Nan and reveal the real identity behind the account used Papang's name for Nan's pleasure and harms Papang. But superego Papang held Papang back from doing this. Papang was very angry and did not want to return to being Nan's friend, but Papang did not want to reveal Nan's identity and said "I wouldn't hurt my friend the way you did." then deleted the post about the photo that was spread.

Papang's Inner Conflict in Facing Her Mother's Issue

Nan told Khan that Papang often uploaded statuses on her social media. But Khan never knew about it because Papang always hid her problems from her brother. Nan told that Papang had uploaded a status about her mother who was considered a mistress "*Nobody wants to be mistress*". But Papang hid it from Khan so that Khan would not know about it.

Nan : This post made everyone think your mother really was a mistress.

Khan : She never told me about this. Why didn't I see this status?

Nan : She must have hidden it from you. When we were close, I saw her do this often when there was something she didn't want to you find out.

Khan : Why didn't she choose to tell me but tell others instead? If I had known, I wouldn't have let her fix the problem this way.

(*The Comments*, 2021, eps 3 [3/4] 12:26)

Papang often keeps his problems to himself and rarely tells anyone about them. He didn't even want his older brother to know what was wrong with him. Ego Papang pushed Papang to get angry and express his annoyance, but he didn't want other people to know and add to their problems.

There is an inner conflict within Papang, the role of Papang's superego is to hold him back from telling what happened to him. Instead of telling other people, Papang wrote about it on social media.

Papang's Inner Conflict in Facing Her Problem With Toon

Papang knows that Toon is the person behind the account that has been attacking her on social media. Papang invites Toon to meet and reveal everything. Papang was very disappointed when she found out that Toon was the culprit.

Toon didn't want to admit it, but finally she explained why she did that. Toon thinks that people's treatment of Papang is very unfair, Papang is always privileged at school for being the best student and student council president. Toon also felt that Papang has gone too far with her close friends. Papang's words often hurt her friends, and even Papang is more concerned with her followers on social media than her close friends.

Papang : You hate me so much that you created an account to attack me. Why are you doing this to me? Why when you can be honest with me?

Toon : Because all you care about is people on social media. You care about those people more than Nan and me who are your best friends. You do anything for those people to admire you. You have chosen to care about those people online. Now you need to live with relationship you've chosen.

(The Comments, 2021, eps 4 [3/4] 3:11)

Ego Papang encourages her to do anything for her own fame and pleasure. Even Papang ignores and hurts her close friends because she cares too much about her followers on social media. Papang also often takes advantage of her position and rewards to get good treatment and harm those who try to oppose her.

When Toon told her everything, Papang felt guilty and realized that all this time she had behaved badly to the people around her. While crying, Papang tried to convince her that she would get even better in the future. The inner conflict occurs when Papang's superego makes her aware of what is right, and fights against her ego about things that are fun but wrong.

Conclusion

The researcher found several inner conflicts experienced by the main character through the analysis of id, ego, and superego which are associated with the characteristics of inner conflict to answer the first problem statement. Then in

the second problem statement, the researcher analyzed what defense mechanisms emerged from the beginning to the end of the episode.

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