

**DEFENSE MECHANISM OF THE MAIN CHARACTERS IN
EMILY HENRY'S *HAPPY PLACE***

THESIS

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**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK
IBRAHIM MALANG
2025**

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THESIS

Presented to
Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of *Sarjana Sastra* (S.S.)

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2025**

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I state the thesis entitled "**Defense Mechanism of the Main Characters in Emily Henry's *Happy Place***" is my original work. I do not include any materials previously written or published by another person, except those cited as references and written in the bibliography. Hereby, if there is any objection or claim, I am the only person who is responsible for that.

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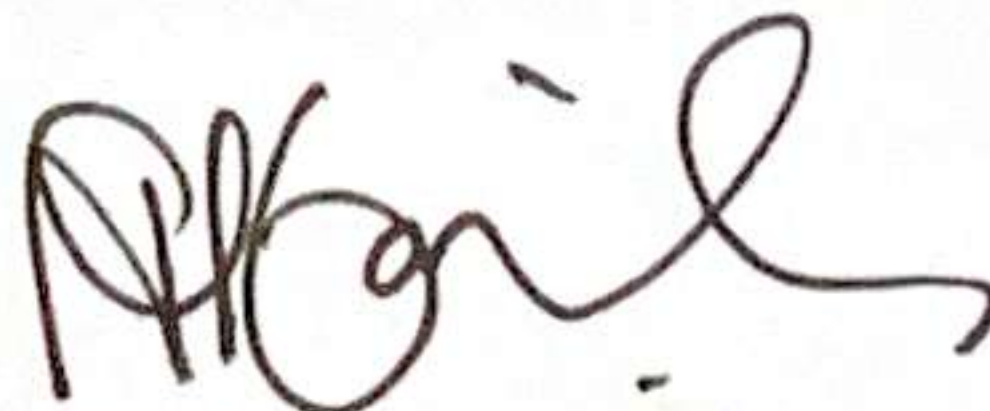
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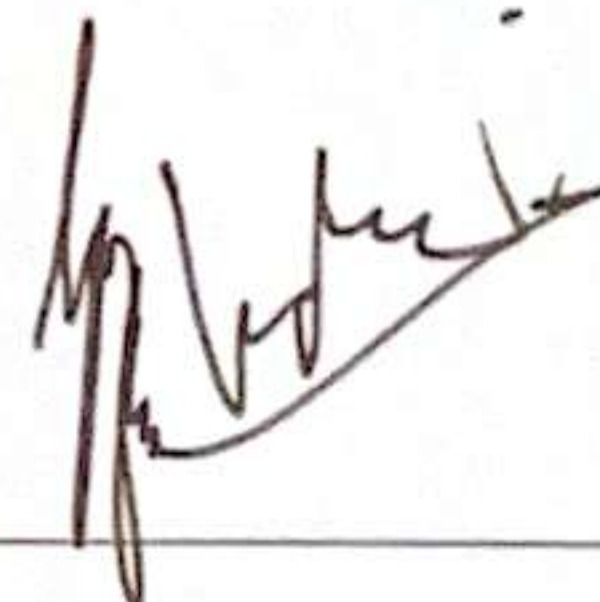
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MOTTO

"People who achieve success are not always smart people. People who always achieve success are people who are persistent and never give up."

-Susi Pudjiastuti-

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents, your highness Rahman Dosi and my beloved Mom Saripa Sahidin. The steadfast love of my parents has thrown many treasures for my education until the 11th semester.

~I love you Dad and I love you Mom ~

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Finally, the researcher truly realizes that this thesis has some weaknesses and needs constructive criticism and suggestions from the readers to make it perfect. Hopefully, this research can be useful for the readers, especially for the students of the Department of English Literature.

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ABSTRACT

Ain, Nafsia (2025) Defense Mechanism of the Main Characters in Emily Henry's *Happy Place*. Undergraduated Thesis. Department of English Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Advisor Whida Rositama, M. Hum.

Keywords: Main Characters, Novel, Defense Mechanism.

Psychological defense mechanisms are dynamic processes that develop and persist throughout the human lifespan from childhood to adulthood. In the context of interpersonal relationships, defense mechanisms can play a role as psychological protection against painful feelings and negative emotions. In this study, the researcher focused on analyzing the defense mechanisms used by the main characters Harriet and Wyn in the novel *Happy Place* by Emily Henry as the object of analysis. Harriet and Wyn use defense mechanisms to deal with various conflicts that arise in their relationship. This study uses a psychological approach utilizing Sigmund Freud's defense mechanism theory. Therefore, this study aims to determine what defense mechanisms Harriet and Wyn use in the novel *Happy Place* by Emily Henry. In this case, the researcher found seven forms of defense mechanisms used by Harriet and Wyn. The results of this study are Wyn uses denial and rationalization, while Harriet uses regression, projection, reaction formation, displacement, and fixation.

ABSTRAK

Ain, Nafsia (2025). Mekanisme Pertahanan Tokoh Utama dalam Emily Henry's *Happy Place*. Skripsi Jurusan Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Humaniora, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Pembimbing: Whida Rositama, M. Hum.

Kata kunci: Karakter Utama, Novel, Mekanisme Pertahanan.

Mekanisme pertahanan psikologis merupakan proses dinamis yang berkembang dan bertahan sepanjang rentang kehidupan manusia dari masa kanak-kanak hingga dewasa. Dalam konteks hubungan interpersonal, mekanisme pertahanan dapat memainkan peran sebagai pelindung psikologis terhadap perasaan menyakitkan dan emosi negatif. Dalam penelitian ini, peneliti memfokuskan menganalisis mekanisme pertahanan diri yang digunakan oleh karakter utama Harriet dan Wyn yang ada di dalam novel *Happy Place* karya Emily Henry sebagai objek analisis. Yang mana Harriet dan Wyn menggunakan mekanisme pertahanan untuk menghadapi berbagai konflik yang timbul dalam hubungan mereka. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan psikologis dengan menggunakan teori mekanisme pertahanan dari Sigmund Freud. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui apa saja mekanisme pertahanan yang digunakan Harriet dan Wyn dalam novel *Happy Place* karya Emily Henry. Dalam hal ini, peneliti menemukan tujuh bentuk mekanisme pertahanan yang digunakan oleh Harriet dan Wyn. Hasil dari penelitian ini adalah Wyn menggunakan denial dan rasionalisasi, kemudian Harriet menggunakan regresi, projection, reaction formation, displacement, dan fiksasi.

مستخلص البحث

عين، نفسية (٢٠٢٥). آلية الدفاع لدى الشخصية الرئيسية في رواية "المكان السعيد" لإميل هيري. أطروحة، قسم الأدب الإنجليزي، كلية العلوم الإنسانية، جامعة مولانا مالك إبراهيم الإسلامية الحكومية في مالانج. المشرف: ويدا روزيتاما، م. هم.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الشخصية الرئيسية، الرواية، آلية الدفاع.

آليات الدفاع النفسي هي عمليات ديناميكية تتطور وتستمر طوال عمر الإنسان من الطفولة إلى البلوغ. في سياق العلاقات الشخصية، يمكن أن تلعب آليات الدفاع دوراً كحماية نفسية ضد المشاعر المؤلمة والعواطف السلبية. في هذه الدراسة، ركز الباحث على لإميل هيري كموضوع *Happy Place* تحليل آليات الدفاع التي تستخدمها الشخصيتان الرئيسيتان هاربيت ووين في رواية للتحليل. تستخدم هاربيت ووين آليات الدفاع للتعامل مع الصراعات المختلفة التي تنشأ في علاقتهما. تستخدم هذه الدراسة نهجاً نفسياً باستخدام نظرية آليات الدفاع لسيغموند فرويد. لذلك، تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحديد آليات الدفاع التي تستخدمها هاربيت وإميل هيري. في هذه الحالة، وجد الباحث سبعة أشكال من آليات الدفاع التي تستخدمها هاربيت *Happy Place* ووين في رواية ووين. نتائج هذه الدراسة هي أن وين يستخدم الإنكار والتبرير، ثم تستخدم هاربيت الانحدار والإسقاط وتكوين رد الفعل والإزاحة والتثبيت

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher provides the background of the study, previous studies, research question, objective of the study, scope and limitation, significance of the study, and definition of key term.

A. Background of the Study

Reported from the National Library of Medicine website, Ryan Bailey and Jose Pico in their article stated that as we grow from childhood to adolescence and then move on to adulthood, psychological defense mechanisms can persist from one phase to the next and then return to the previous phase in response to stressors, or can develop over time and can be maladaptive or adaptive (Bailey, & Pico, 2023). Defense mechanisms play a critical role in our relationships, often acting as a safety shield against painful feelings and negative emotions (Abrahams, 2023).

Issues in literary texts like novel are various and it most of the time represents human experience, literary texts could portray human conflicts, like psychological problems, as reflected in the character's (Zulfaisya & Hasra, 2020). This is also depicted in Emily Henry's novel *Happy Place*, in which the main character faces various conflicts. The main characters in the novel use defense mechanisms to overcome the conflicts they face (Henry, 2023).

Sigmund Freud's defense mechanism comes with various very common forms of defense, such as denial, repression, suppression, displacement, projection, rationalization, sublimation, regression, and reaction formation. The

phenomenon of defense mechanisms is described in the novel *Happy Place* by Emily Henry. *Happy Place* is a novel written by Emily Henry with 359 pages, published by Penguin Random House UK on April 25 2023. This novel provides information about the lives and love stories of its characters. *Happy Place* by Emily Henry is interesting to explore because it covers the life journey of the main characters, namely Harriet and Wyn (Henry, 2023).

Character is one of the main components in the novel besides the storyline, setting, theme, etc. One of the highlights of the characters in literary work is the different and unique personality proposed by the author (Amaliyah & Prastiwi, 2022). The uniqueness of each character is reflected in the personality side which is sometimes complicated and complex. Especially in the novel *Happy Place*, Emily Henry highlights defense mechanisms in the main characters, Harriet, whose full name is Harriet Kilpatrick, is a brain surgeon, born to parents who worked as teachers and receptionists.

Harriet has college friends named Sabrina, Cleo, Wyn, Kimmy, and Parth. Harriet was always excited when she met her college friends. Harriet and Wyn were previously dating but their friends did not know that they had broken up, because there were several reasons why they did not tell their friends about the breakup. Harriet and Wyn then get stuck on their annual weeklong vacation and pretend to still be engaged. *Happy Place* tells the story of how to love yourself and let go of other people's expectations and disappointments.

Harriet is a person who is afraid to reveal everything in her relationship and then Harriet always feels stressed because she tries to meet her parents'

expectations. While Wyn tends to hide her discomfort with self-deprecating humour, about how she is not smart enough or attractive enough. Harriet and Wyn are two people who care about each other, but find it difficult to communicate about their feelings, but at the end of the story they managed to dare to express their desires without having to think or worry about other people.

In that way, the novel is a great achievement, because it tells a story people who can overcome problems, such as worry, anxiety, and how to find satisfaction. In addition to having riveting characters and a compelling plot, the novel is also incredibly poignant in the way it portrays concern, fear, and even anxiousness. The main character in this novel withdraws into himself and ignores his desires and potential ways to overcome his relationship problems in an intense way. Harriet and Wyn have several psychological problems, and as a result, they constantly use defense mechanisms. Since the main characters depict various forms of defense mechanisms, defense mechanisms are the best choice for analysing the novel (Henry, 2023).

Sigmund Freud proposed a set of defense mechanisms, in a body of work that has long been influential. His work focused on how the ego defended itself against internal events, specifically, impulses that were regarded by the ego as unacceptable (Baumeister et al., 1998). Anna Freud's psychoanalysis is used to determine the forms of defense mechanisms that occur in the novel. Anna Freud proposed that the human mind uses various defense mechanisms to protect itself from anxiety and negative emotions, these defense mechanisms include repression, denial, projection, regression, sublimation, rationalization, etc

(Freud, 1966). Therefore, Harriet and Wyn were analyzed using a psychological approach and this research was entitled Main Character's Defense Mechanism Described in Emily Henry's *Happy Place*.

In conducting research on literary works, in relation to this research, the author identified several pieces of scholarly papers. This research is connected to a variety of previous studies. First, in a journal article researched by Tenrisanna (2018), his research discusses the types of defense mechanisms in two short stories by E. A. Poe, *The Black Cat* & *The Tell-Tale Heart*. This research uses a qualitative descriptive method with the psychoanalytic approach of Sigmund Freud's defense mechanism. This research focuses on the self-defense mechanisms used by the characters in two short stories by E. A. Poe, *The Black Cat* & *The Tell-Tale Heart*. The results of this research highlight the types of self-defense mechanisms used by characters and how they are implemented in dealing with inner conflicts in the two short stories.

Then Farah Mufidah et al. (2022) researched the anxiety and defense mechanisms experienced by the main character Morton Rainey in the film *Secret Window*. This research uses Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, especially the concepts of anxiety and self-defense mechanisms. This research focuses on analyzing the forms of anxiety experienced by Morton Rainey as well as the forms of self-defense mechanisms implemented by Morton Rainey in the film. The results of this research highlight that Morton Rainey experienced moral anxiety and reality anxiety. Then the self-defense mechanisms used by Morton Rainey include repression, rationalization, projection, displacement, and denial.

Moreover, Darwati (2018) stated that there was multiple personality disorder (MPD) experienced by the main character Kevin Wendell Crumb in the film *Split* (2017). The results of the research highlight the self-defense mechanisms used by Kevin Wendell Crumb's personalities to deal with his anxiety due to the MPD disorder he experiences.

Besides, Marwenti (2020) highlights the defense mechanisms used by the main character Simon in the novel *"Simon vs the Homo Sapiens Agenda"* by Becky Albertalli. This research uses Anna Freud's theory of self-defense mechanisms, which is a development of Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory. The self-defense mechanisms found include denial, fantasy, displacement, projection, reaction formation, and compensation. She shows that the defense mechanisms that Simon uses most are denial and fantasy.

Furthermore, AL-Ghazali (2023) examines the self-defense mechanisms of the characters in the novel *"And Then There Were None"* by Agatha Christie. This research uses two main theories, namely the structural approach and defense mechanisms. A structural approach is used to analyze the intrinsic elements of literary works. Meanwhile, the theory of self-defense mechanisms is used to analyze psychological strategies that are used unconsciously. This research focuses on analyzing the impact that occurs on the characters who use self-defense mechanisms in the novel *"And Then There Were None"*. The results of this study highlight that the characters' conscious actions to hide secrets have unintended effects on their mental states. The fact that there is a feeling of guilt

that arises from the characters in the novel. Then, self-defense mechanisms are used to hide the pressing feelings of guilt, resulting in various impacts.

Then, Izzati (2022) in his research discussed the anxiety and defense mechanisms depicted in the characters in the film *Short Term 12* (2013). The theory used is Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, especially regarding the concepts of anxiety and self-defense mechanisms. The focus of this research is analyzing the causes of anxiety and identifying types of self-defense mechanisms. This research is limited to analyzing anxiety and self-defense mechanisms in the 3 main characters, namely Grace, Jayden, and Marcus in the film *Short Term 12* (2013). The results of the research highlight that the cause of anxiety in the three characters is traumatic experiences in the past. Grace and Jayden were sexually abused by their father, while Marcus was abused by his mother. The self-defense mechanisms used are displacement, denial, and sublimation.

There is also research in a journal article, Psupito & Widyaningrum (2020) discussing the ego defense mechanism of the main character in the novel *"Fight Club"* by Chuck Palahniuk using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory. The theory used is Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis, especially ego defense mechanisms. Research focuses on the causes of the emergence of ego defense mechanisms, types of ego defense mechanisms, and the impact of using ego defense mechanisms. This research is limited to the analysis of ego defense mechanisms in the main character in the novel *"Fight Club"* by Chuck Palahniuk. The results of his research highlight that anxiety is the cause of the emergence

of ego defense mechanisms, the main character uses ego defense mechanisms, namely displacement and reaction formation. The impact on the main character is to become braver and accept reality more easily.

Khoirunisa & Rahayu (2020) in their research discussed the ego defense mechanisms of the main female character in the film *Maleficent*. His research focuses on the causes of conflict, the effects of conflict, and ego defense mechanisms. The theory used is Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, especially regarding ego defense mechanisms. This research is limited to analyzing the defense mechanisms of ego projection and repression used by the character *Maleficent* in the film. The results of his research highlight that the cause of conflict is the disappointment experienced by *Maleficent*, the effect is revenge, and the ego defense mechanisms used by *Maleficent* are projection and repression.

Shelah & Marsih (2022) analyzed the novel "After" by Anna Todd. Here the author focuses on one of the first characters, namely Hardin, his defense mechanism, and how he shows it. The method used is qualitative description. The author used Sigmund Freud's theory of self-defense mechanisms as the main theory. The author found that the first character used denial, projection, rationalization, isolation, aggressor identification, and displacement. The main character uses this defense mechanism to shape himself to prevent anxiety.

Finally, Fortuna & Rahayu (2023), in their research discussed the ego defense mechanism used by the main character Teddy in the film *Shutter Island*. Research focuses on the causes of trauma and ego defense mechanisms. The

theory used is Freudian psychoanalytic theory, especially regarding trauma and ego defense mechanisms. This research is limited to analyzing four types of ego defense mechanisms used by Teddy, namely repression, denial, projection, and displacement. The research results highlight that the cause of Teddy's trauma was killing many German soldiers during World War II, feeling guilty for not taking his wife to a psychiatrist which led to his wife killed his three children, and the death of his three children, then Teddy used repression, denial, projection, and displacement to overcome his trauma.

Even though the research carried out has the same topic and theory to be analyzed as previous studies, the research methods and objects are different. Previous research was used in E. A. Poe's *Selected Short Stories* the *Black Cat* & the *Tell-Tale Heart*, *Secret Window* Film, *The Split* Film, *Simon vs the Homo Sapiens* novel agenda, character in *Christie's and Then There Were None*, *The Characters of Short Term 12* (2013), *Fight Club* novel (1996), *Maleficent* Movie, *Hardin Scott Reflected* in *Anna Todd's After*, and character of *Shutter Island* (2010) as objects, while the author uses the novel *Happy Place* by Emily Henry as an object of research. Apart from that, previous studies have had mixed results because there are elements that influence the emergence of forms of defense mechanisms.

There are reasons that trigger someone to use defense mechanisms. In conducting this research, the author tried to examine a novel using defense mechanisms to gain new insight into what forms of self-defense mechanisms are used by the main characters and how their relationships can trigger defense

mechanisms. This research can provide a new perspective in understanding defense mechanisms through literature in the form of works of fiction, because the main characters in the novel *Happy Place*, namely Harriet and Wyn, describe the main characteristics of a form of defense mechanism.

B. Research Question

Considering the background of the study, the researcher formulate this following question: What are the forms of defense mechanism of Harriet and Wyn in Emily Henry's *Happy Place*?

C. Scope and Limitation

This research uses a literary psychology approach in the research process. The researcher examines the forms of defense mechanisms in the main characters using the theory of psychoanalysis by Sigmund Freud. The scope of this research is limited to analyzing the defense mechanisms used by Harriet and Wyn on the story in the novel *Happy Place* by Emily Henry.

D. Significance of the Study

In practical terms, this study aims to serve as a resource for scholars and students to enhance their comprehension of literary criticism, particularly in relation to defensive mechanism topics. Therefore, be simpler to comprehend the many kinds and instances of defense systems. It is also hoped that in the future, scholars will be able to delve further into their subjects to maintain their relevance and advance literary criticism.

E. Definition of Key Terms

Sigmund Freud (1894, 1896) noted several ego defenses, which he refers to throughout his written works. His daughter Anna Freud (1936) developed these Defense Mechanisms in his work entitled *The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defence*. Sigmund Freud explains that defense mechanisms are psychological strategies that are unconsciously used to protect a person from anxiety arising from unacceptable thoughts or feelings. According to Freudian theory, defense mechanisms involve a distortion of reality in some way so that we are better able to cope with a situation (A. Freud, 1936).

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents related theories about psychology in the literature including anxiety as well as defense mechanism processes. Where the novel *Happy Place* contains several events that reveal the main character's defense mechanisms related to psychoanalysis theory, then the author also uses psychoanalysis theory by Sigmund Freud to analyze a literary work to be researched.

A. Psychology in Literature

Psychology is a relatively young science with its experimental roots in the 19th century, compared, for example, to human physiology, which dates much earlier (Hayes, 2023). Psychology is the study of mind and behavior (Zhang, 2020). As a scientific discipline, psychology seeks to understand how the mind works, why humans act in certain ways, and the factors that influence the way individuals think and behave. Literature is an artistic creation, a work of art like a painting or a musical composition, but it is a special kind of art, differing from painting or music in many important ways (Barnet & Cain, 2014). Literature is a special kind of language, in contrast to the ordinary language we commonly use and a literary work is a piece of writing that is distinguished from other forms of writing by its use of language to create a specific aesthetic and imaginative experience (Eagleton, 1996).

Psychology and literature are two scientific disciplines that investigate the human psyche. While literature utilizes fiction to portray human behavior, psychology studies human actions and their causes. These two subfields of

science focus on human behavior are complementary to one another and related to it (Yimer, 2019). Literature has become an imaginative laboratory for psychological exploration. Many modern psychological discoveries about consciousness, hidden motives, and internal conflicts in literary works. Meanwhile, psychological theory has provided an analytical framework that can be used to interpret literary texts more deeply, as seen in the psychoanalytic approach to literary criticism.

There is a very strong correlation between literature and psychology for the fact that both of them deal with human beings and their reactions, perceptions of the world, miseries, wishes, desires, fears, conflicts and reconciliations; individual and social concerns, by means of varied concepts, methods, and approaches (Aras, 2015). The basic of the correlation between literature and psychology is a literary work. Literary works study human beings and describe their inner world with all its aspects (Can, 2016). Then, Sigmund Freud in *The Interpretation of Dreams* considered that literary works could provide insight into subconscious desires, conflicts and psychological processes of both the author and the characters he created (S. Freud, 1900). The various literary works that we currently enjoy are part of the media as well as a means of making literary works to express and convey their emotions, feelings, and even opinions, personal experiences, and reflections of people's lives (Yurizka & Simanjuntak, 2023).

B. Psychoanalysis

According to Hossain (2017), psychoanalysis is considered an interesting and satisfying approach in the application of interpretive analysis. Psychoanalysis is a mechanism for interpreting the hidden meaning of a text and this approach helps someone understand complex symbols, actions, metaphors, and settings in a literary work (Niaz et al., 2019). In interpreting complex symbols, psychoanalysis uses various important concepts such as the unconscious, complexes, and archetypes. Every symbol in a literary work is seen as having a meaning that goes beyond its physical representation, where certain objects, actions, or locations can represent certain psychological conditions or emotional experiences.

Psychoanalysis is the first wave of psychotherapy development which has a huge influence on the development of psychology overall and other psychologists (Zhang, 2020). Psychoanalysis theory means a theory that explains the subject and changes in personality. The most important parts of this subject are emotions, motivations, and other internal elements (Khoirunisa et al., 2022). The theory of psychoanalysis at the beginning of the 20th century, then according to him psychoanalysis is a method of medically treating a patient's nerves (S. Freud, 1920). Freud introduced the concept that the human mind consists of three levels of awareness, namely conscious, preconscious, and unconscious. He believed that most human behavior is influenced by the unconscious mind containing desires, impulses, and repressed memories.

C. Defense Mechanism

The defense mechanisms as unconscious processes, have as their primary purpose to exclude from the conscience an experience perceived as unacceptable or dangerous for one's psychic stability (Salone et al., 2021). Defense mechanisms are techniques used by the ego in conflict which are the result of one of its ways of avoiding pain. Under normal conditions, these mechanisms contribute much to our healthy attitude toward reality; at the same time they make neurotic possibilities real (S. Freud, 1926).

Sigmund Freud, the father of psychoanalysis, introduced the forms of defense mechanisms and described them as unconscious strategies used to protect itself from anxiety or other unpleasant emotions (S. Freud, 1936). Freud used the defense mechanism to explain a person's subconscious processes which refers to his defense against anxiety. This mechanism protects it from external threats or impulses arise from internal anxiety by distorting reality in various ways (Solihah & Ahmadi, 2022). Anxiety is an emotion that is a part of our daily life. These disorders can be long-lasting or recurrent and in daily life (Craske et al., 2009). Anxiety is also called neurosis which is a common mental disorder. It affects every person across the world. Anxiety disorder is the most prevalent disorder in comparison with other mental disorders (Gautam et al., 2022).

Defense mechanism is a process to defend oneself against things that are threatening (Baumeister et al., 1998). This technique assists people in managing difficult feelings. When we face something dangerous, whether it is outside criticism, inner guilt, or distressing memories, our mind instinctively tries to

protect us from emotional damage. Defense mechanisms act as psychological shields that help us cope with stress and preserve emotional balance. They function by distorting, denying, or altering reality in manners that diminish our awareness of unpleasant truths or emotions. The application of defense mechanisms can be beneficial as well as detrimental. It varies based on the way the person utilizes it.

A defense mechanism is also demonstrated in the literature. Characters in literary pieces often face various challenges that lead them to employ defense mechanisms. Characters in literary works typically exhibit traits that reveal how they make choices or address challenges. The traits of the characters in a literary piece might influence the defense mechanisms they employ.

Forms of defense mechanisms include, repression, projection, denial, displacement, sublimation, rationalization, regression, reaction formation, isolation, introjection, identification, and fixation. The forms of defense mechanisms are obtained from books, journals and theses that research and discuss defense mechanisms. After finding the forms of defense mechanisms obtained from theses and journals, the researcher then looked for books that explained the forms of defense mechanisms as citations, the following is an explanation;

1. Repression is a defense mechanism process that actively prevents certain thoughts or experiences from reaching consciousness, so that these thoughts remain in the subconscious and can then give rise to symptoms as a form of manifestation. In this quote, Freud explains that when there is a therapeutic

process that tries to bring these unconscious thoughts to consciousness, there is strong resistance from the patient which shows that there is a repression mechanism that is still actively working to keep these thoughts in the subconscious (S. Freud, 1920).

2. Projection is a psychological process in which a person attributes or projects feelings, thoughts, or internal impulses that are unacceptable to him onto other people or the outside world. Freud developed this concept primarily while analyzing primitive beliefs and totem systems (S. Freud, 1913).
3. Denial is a defense mechanism in which the ego refuses to acknowledge some painful aspect of external reality. This is a primitive form of defense that involves the denial of a threatening or anxiety-provoking reality (A. Freud, 1936).
4. Displacement is a psychic process in which the psychic energy or emotional intensity of one idea or object is transferred to another idea or object that is less threatening or more acceptable. Freud first observed this mechanism in his analysis of dreams (S. Freud, 1900).
5. Sublimation is a self-defense mechanism in which primitive and socially unacceptable libido drives or energy are diverted into forms of activity that are more socially acceptable and culturally beneficial (S. Freud, 1905).
6. Rationalization is an unconscious process in which the ego creates plausible reasons to justify actions, feelings, or impulses that are actually driven by unacceptable motives. Unlike conscious lying, rationalization occurs

without the individual's awareness that they are concealing their true motives (S. Freud, 1926).

7. Regression is a psychological process in which a person's thoughts or behavior returns to an earlier or primitive stage of development (S. Freud, 1900).
8. Reaction Formation is a self-defense mechanism in which a person develops attitudes and behavior that are contrary to their actual impulses or desires because the original impulses are considered unacceptable or threatening (S. Freud, 1905).
9. Isolation as a defense mechanism in which thoughts or memories that cause anxiety are separated from their emotional aspects, or separated from their original context and associations (S. Freud, 1926).
10. Freud understood introjection as a primitive process in which the ego identifies with an external object by "swallowing" or taking on its characteristics. Unlike more mature identification, introjection involves taking on the entire object, not just certain aspects (S. Freud, 1923).
11. Identification is a psychological process in which a person takes on and internalizes the characteristics, traits, or aspects of another person into his or her personality structure (S. Freud, 1949).
12. Fixation

Technically, fixation as the permanent attachment of the libido to an earlier and primitive stage of development. Fixation is a defense mechanism common to all people. Fixation is a person's attachment to a certain phase

in the past. This is a condition when a person is psychologically stuck at a certain point in their development or in an experience, making it difficult for them to fully move forward into the present or future. Freud explained that fixation does not always lead to neurosis, although every neurosis involves some form of fixation (S. Freud, 1977).

In general, defense mechanisms can have both positive and negative effects on an individual's life. They can help people cope with stressful situations, but they can also interfere with interpersonal relationships, prevent personal growth and development, and limit one's ability to cope with stress healthily and constructively.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODS

This chapter expounds on research method contains research design, data source, data collection, and data analysis.

A. Research Design

The design of this study is literary criticism. This study analyzes the point of defense mechanism using Sigmund Freud's theory of defense mechanism. I think Sigmund Freud's theory of defense mechanism fits the topic of this research, and psychoanalysis is the most appropriate theory to analyze Harriet and Wyn's defense mechanism in *Happy Place*. This study is a literary criticism, this study aims to describe the defense phenomena that occur in the novel.

B. Data Source

In this research, researcher used information from the hard copy novel *Happy Place* by Emily Henry which was released in 2023 by Penguin Random House UK. There are 40 chapters and 359 pages in *Happy Place*. The words, phrases or sentences in the novel are then used as data by the researcher.

C. Data Collection

The researcher repeatedly and critically read Emily Henry's *Happy Place*. Then, researcher selects a theory that is pertinent to the analysis of the *Happy Place*. In addition, researcher gathers the necessary information for this study, such as storylines, settings, and the thoughts and deeds of the characters. The researcher then makes a few comments on the most important information and, using a classification system, divides it up into multiple chapters.

Additionally, researcher chooses and organizes research-related data, associates data with its theory, and ultimately develops the data.

D. Data Analysis

Happy Place novel is analyzed by the researcher using analytical psychology. Thus, to study the character, researcher decides to use Sigmund Freud's theories. Then, researcher narrows the scope of the study by focusing on the characters of Wyn and Harriet to analyze the novel's defense mechanism. Subsequently, researcher uncovers proof to pinpoint the primary characters defense mechanism. After gathering all the data, the writer will organize it, make connections, and research further details about Wyn and Harriet. Further, researcher draws inferences from all the findings.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter contains the answers to the problem of the study. The researcher tries to explain the problem of the study mentioned above. In this chapter, the researcher identifies and analyses the defense mechanism used by the main characters in Emily Henry's *Happy Place*.

The researcher found that the main character applied seven defense mechanism; denial, regression, rationalization, projection, reaction-formation, displacement, and fixation. Below, the researcher wants to analyze or examine the forms of defense mechanisms used by Wyn and Harriet in the novel *Happy Place*.

The Forms of Defense Mechanism Used by the Main Characters in the Novel *Happy Place* by Emily Henry

In this novel, the main characters utilize various defense mechanisms. The defense mechanisms include denial, regression, rationalization, projection, reaction-formation, displacement, and fixation. The main characters encounters issues that lead her to use a defense mechanism. In the following section, the researcher aims to discuss the defense mechanisms employed by the main characters and the rationale behind them.

1. Denial

The first form of defense mechanism used by Wyn is denial. In this novel, Wyn as the main characters is utilizing denial. Wyn employs this method of defense, denial, for several reasons. By denying his feelings for Harriet and acting as if he has accepted their separation. His defense strategy

asserts that he is fine without Harriet. This is evident in the following statement:

His eyes hold mine, his jaw muscles working. "I never wanted to hurt you."

"I know." But it changes nothing.

"All I want," he says, "is for you to be happy." (Ch.18 Pg.154)

The phrase "I never wanted to hurt you" illustrates how Wyn refuses to accept accountability for the suffering he inflicted. He attempts to evade acknowledging that his actions have caused pain to Harriet. The use of the term "never" represents a type of denial. This illustrates how Wyn attempts to outright reject the idea that he meant to cause harm, despite his actions clearly resulting in the pain that Harriet experienced. Harriet's reply of "I know" followed by "But it changes nothing" reinforces that Wyn is exhibiting a type of denial. At the conclusion of the quote, Wyn states, "All I want, is for you to be happy," which also appears to be a kind of denial. He attempts to redirect attention from the hurt he has inflicted by asserting that his only desire is for Harriet to find happiness.

Wyn also feels anxious when discussing marriage with Harriet, because he is always afraid of not being able to make Harriet happy. This is proven by the statement below:

"Have you thought about the wedding at all?" Eloise asks.

"Oh, I'm sure it's way too early for that," Mom says, "Harriet's still got a couple of years of medical school. And then she'll have to do a long residency."

Anxiety gurgles through my gut. "We're figuring it out."

Under the table, Wyn's hand finds mine, and he laces our fingers together. He drags the pad of his thumb over the callus where I burnt my index finger with Sabrina and Cleo on our first trip to the cottage. I got you.

"We're not in a rush," Wyn says. "I don't want to do anything that gets in the way of Harriet's career." (Ch.23 Pg.199)

This quote also shows that Wyn uses denial as a defense mechanism in her relationship with Harriet. The key point that shows denial is the contrast between Harriet's internal reactions and Wyn's statements. When Eloise asks about marriage, Harriet experiences anxiety and gives an ambiguous answer. This shows that marriage is a topic that causes tension between the two of them. However, Wyn then quickly takes over the conversation and denies it with the phrase "We're not in a rush," Wyn says. "I don't want to do anything that gets in the way of Harriet's career."

Wyn seems to be in denial about any issues or tension regarding the timing of their marriage. She hides her own possible desire to get married sooner by focusing on Harriet's career. Her physical gestures such as holding Harriet's hand under the table and rubbing the scar along with Wyn's phrase "I got you" are both attempts to appease, and also serve as a way to avoid addressing the real issue. By prioritizing Harriet's career as the main reason for the delay, Wyn is also denying her own feelings of frustration about the timing of the marriage or concerns about the future of their relationship. This is a form of denial where she refuses to acknowledge the anxiety she is feeling. This defense mechanism helps Wyn avoid conflict and protects herself from her anxiety.

Wyn always felt like a failure in her life, so he always avoided and refused to discuss his work or problems with Harriet. This is proven by the statement below:

"What was the text," I hiss out as our lips draw apart.
"What text," he asks, turning me back to the car, the warm metal of the hood meeting my back.
"From your mom," I say. "I saw a text from your mom."
"Nothing," he says, lifting me onto the hood.
"Wyn."
"It's about work, Harriet," he says, squeezing my thighs, pulling them around his hips.
"That doesn't make any sense," I say as he kisses his way down my throat, hand curling against my ear.
"I can explain it to you right now," he says, "or we can have sex in the car." (Ch.27 Pg.222)

The quote shows Wyn using a defense mechanism in the form of denial. This can be seen from how Wyn tries to distract Harriet from a topic she does not want to discuss with sexual and physical approaches. When Harriet directly asks about the message from Wyn's mother, Wyn first pretends not to know, then when Harriet emphasizes her question, Wyn responds briefly and immediately diverts the situation with physical action. When Harriet continues to press, Wyn gives a short answer. Wyn explicitly offers a diversionary option as a strategy to deny and avoid honest communication about an anxiety-inducing topic. Wyn uses the defense mechanism of denial because the message from her mother contains information, he does not want Harriet to know.

2. Rationalization

Here Wyn uses rationalization as a defense mechanism by creating a narrative that sounds logical and mature to explain his decision to end his relationship with Harriet. Shown by the evidence below:

My chest stings. It's not the exact phrasing, but it's close enough to what he said to me, months ago: We were kids when we got together,

and things are different now, and it's time we accepted that. (Ch.5 Pg.35)

From the quote above, Wyn tries to provide reasons that sound logical and acceptable for ending the relationship. He gave reasons including their young age when starting the relationship as justification for his decision. Wyn used the change in circumstances as justification. This is his way of making his decisions seem natural and inevitable, rather than his emotional choices. Wynn tries to make his decisions rational and mature. This is a form of rationalization where he views the breakup as a mature decision that must be accepted, not as an emotional choice that might be painful. The reasons given by Wyn are rationalizations rather than real reasons.

Wyn employs his father's passing as a logical rationale to defend his actions toward Harriet. This is proven by the statement below:

"I've spent months trying to make myself mad at you," I go on hoarsely, "for blaming me and judging me for something I didn't even do. And then I come here, and you act like you do blame me. Like you hate me or, worse, feel nothing at all for me. Until suddenly you act like nothing's changed. And you tell me you never thought I cheated on you, and you kiss me like you love me." (Ch.29 Pg.237)
"I was in such a fucking dark place, Harriet. After I lost my dad. I was drowning." (Ch.29 Pg.238)

The quotes above show that Wyn uses rationalization as a defense mechanism in her relationship with Harriet. Rationalization is seen when Wyn responds to Harriet's disappointment and confusion with the statement "I was in such a fucking dark place, Harriet. After I lost my dad. I was drowning." In this quote, Wyn uses her sadness over losing her father as a

seemingly reasonable explanation to justify her inconsistent behavior towards Harriet. But on the other hand, suddenly acts as if nothing has changed and kisses Harriet as if she still loves her. Rationalization is done as a protection for Wyn to avoid taking full responsibility for her actions that hurt Harriet. Rather than admitting that her changeable and inconsistent behavior is a problem that she needs to be fully responsible for, Wyn shifts some of the 'blame' to her state and mental condition. Harriet's statement shows that there is significant confusion and inconsistency in the way Wyn treats her, but rather than addressing the root of the problem, Wyn uses her feelings of pain as a logical excuse.

"I knew you'd never leave me," he goes on, his voice like sandpaper. "Not when I was such a fucking wreck. But I didn't want to trap you. I didn't want you to wake up one day and realize you were living the wrong life, and I'd let you do it. (ch.29 pg.241)

The statement clearly illustrates Wyn employing the defense mechanism of rationalization in her relationship with Harriet. In her remarks, Wyn attempts to rationalize her choice to terminate their relationship with explanations that appear reasonable and somewhat honorable. The statements "I didn't want to trap you" and *"I didn't want you to wake up one day and realize you were living the wrong life"* reflect a rationalization where Wyn portrays herself as making sacrifices for Harriet's benefit. This choice stems from more self-centered personal reasons or anxieties she is reluctant to acknowledge. The initial statements *"I knew you'd never leave me,"* and *"Not when I was such a fucking wreck"* suggest that her actual choice might have originated from insecurity or a fear that

Harriet stayed with him solely out of sympathy. By means of rationalization, Wyn constructs a story where she is the savior who rescues Harriet from a bleak future, rather than someone who may be afraid of commitment or unable to deal with her own emotional problems.

3. Regression

Researcher found that there was a regression used by Harriet in her memories with Wyn. This is proven by the statement below:

You're not my friend, Harriet sometimes replays in my mind. (ch.10 pg.87)

The phrase “You’re not my friend, Harriet sometimes replays in my mind.” Illustrating how Harriet employs the defense mechanism of regression in her bond with Wyn. In this instance, Harriet continuously revisits Wyn’s comments in her thoughts, much like a child obsessed with a dismissal or painful remark. Instead of handling the statement with maturity, Harriet finds herself trapped in a loop, endlessly revisiting the words in her thoughts, revealing a more basic emotional reaction. This recurrence demonstrates Harriet reverting to a more fragile and childish mindset, in which she cannot progress past the anguish. Like a child revisiting a moment, Harriet struggles to process and move on from the phrase “You’re not my friend, Harriet sometimes replays in my mind.” in a constructive and mature fashion. This regression serves as Harriet's method of managing the pain from her relationship with Wyn, yet it ultimately obstructs her emotional healing and growth.

Harriet reacts to her stress with immature actions. This is evidenced by the statement below:

I need space. I need air. I need hours of hypnotherapy to erase him from my nerve endings. "I need to use the bathroom," I blurt, and slip out into the aisle. (ch.16 pg.141)

The quotes evidently illustrate Harriet employing the defense mechanism of regression in her relationship with Wyn. Regression is evident in how Harriet reacts to stressful circumstances by displaying more immature behavior. Confronted by Wyn's presence that leaves her emotionally overwhelmed, Harriet responds immaturity; she "blurt" out an excuse about needing to go to the bathroom to avoid the situation. This is akin to how a child handles a distressing situation by seeking an easy escape. The earlier statement "I need space. I need air. I need hours of hypnotherapy to erase him from my nerve endings" displays an over-the-top and theatrical perspective that indicates an immature way of thinking. The choice of the term "blurt" and the expression "slip out into the aisle" highlights the spontaneous and unforeseen aspect of her behavior, akin to a child behaving without thinking about social repercussions. Through this regression, Harriet reverts to a simpler escape behavior rather than dealing with the situation with emotional maturity, illustrating her inability to manage her feelings towards Wyn in a mature manner.

Harriet's thoughts were solely occupied with Wyn, regardless of how close or distant Wyn was. This is proven by the statement below:

There's no thought, no logic, no feeling other than him. (ch.20 pg.177)

The statement " *There's no thought, no logic, no feeling other than him.*" clearly illustrates Harriet employing the defense mechanism of regression in her connection with Wyn. In this statement, Harriet depicts a mental condition of being entirely controlled by Wyn, lacking the capacity to reason or experience other feelings. This regression is evident in how Harriet returns to a more immature, childlike perspective that has not yet acquired the ability for intricate thinking and emotional control. When Harriet is near or thinking of Wyn, she can only concentrate on Wyn, without the capacity to reflect on other elements of the situation or her life. The absence of "thought" and "logic" suggests a deterioration in the mental capacities usually found in adults, while the lack of feelings beyond Wyn points to a reversion to a more basic level of emotional growth where a single figure eclipses all emotions. As a result of this regression, Harriet forfeits the emotional maturity she might have achieved as an adult.

Harriet had difficulty accepting the changes in her relationship with Wyn and wanted to go back to a time when everything was okay. This is evidenced by the statement below:

*Every bit of Wyn he gives me is something to treasure, to examine from every angle.
The last words I hear every night are I love you so much (Ch.21
Pg.184)*

"Every bit of Wynn she gives me is something to treasure, to examine from every angle" This quote shows Harriet's regression because she shows excessive dependency behavior by considering every little thing about Wyn like a treasure that must be guarded. The behavior of observing

every detail "from every angle" reflects obsession and dependence and being very fixated on one thing. "The last words I hear every night are I love you so much" This shows Harriet's regression due to the need for repetition in hearing the same words every night, this is like the habits of small children who need routine to feel safe, then there is dependency strong emotional response to Wynn's affirmation of love. Harriet seeks security and reassurance through repeated words of love, like a child who needs repeated affirmation.

You are where my mind goes when it needs to be soothed. (Ch.19 Pg.171)

From the quote above, it also shows that Harriet uses regression in her relationship with Wyn, because it reflects an unhealthy emotional dependency. In the context of psychology, regression is a defense mechanism in which a person returns to childish behavior or a previous stage of development when faced with stress. This kind of dependency indicates regression because Harriet always remembers Wyn to calm herself down when her mind is in turmoil.

4. Projection

Researcher found that Harriet accused Wyn of not being serious about their relationship, but this was all just fear that arose from her feelings.

This is proven by the statement below:

Like he can't fathom that all my love for him didn't just vanish, the way his did for me. That it had to go somewhere, and funneling it into anger is how I've managed to make it through these last two days. (ch.13 Pg.119)

The novel quote above shows that Harriet uses projection as a defense mechanism. Harriet accuses Wyn of not being able to understand her feelings, when in fact she herself is having difficulty understanding and accepting her partner's change in feelings. Harriet projects her anger and difficulty accepting the situation onto her partner. He assumes his partner's love just disappears without truly understanding his partner's emotional process. When Harriet says that she channeled her love into anger, while Harriet is using projection to deal with her hurt feelings, she is also projecting her pain and sadness in the form of anger towards her partner. Projection as a defense mechanism may help Harriet cope with the pain by shifting the focus from the feelings of sadness and loss, she is experiencing to the anger directed at Wyn.

Harriet assumed Wyn no longer loved her. This is proven by the statement below:

He just didn't want me anymore. (Ch.18 pg. 153)

The quote also shows that Harriet is using projection in her relationship with Wyn, because she is projecting her own feelings and worries onto Wyn. In psychology, projection is a defense mechanism in which a person attributes their own uncomfortable feelings or thoughts to another person. In this case, Harriet is feeling doubtful about Wyn, but she is not acknowledging these feelings in herself, she is projecting them onto Wyn by stating that Wyn is the one who does not want her anymore.

Harriet assumed Wyn was happy and ready to let go. This is evident in the following statement:

*He's happy. He might've gone to Montana for his mom, but he's there for himself now.
She must see how happy he is. She must know he's ready to let go of me. ch.25 pg.214*

The statement clearly illustrates Harriet employing the defense mechanism of projection in her relationship with Wyn. In the phrases "He's happy" and "he's ready to let go of me." Harriet is truly reflecting her own anxieties and concerns regarding Wyn's emotions. She lacks conclusive proof of Wyn's happiness or willingness to release her, but she asserts them as if they are confirmed truths. The statements "She must see how happy he is." and "She must know he's ready to let go of me." enhance this projection, as Harriet projects her worries onto another person (Wyn's mother) and envisions that Wyn's mother shares Harriet's fears. In truth, Harriet fears that Wyn is content without her and has moved on, but instead of facing these emotions as her personal concerns, she turns them into perceived realities that others can also observe. In this projection, Harriet seeks to shield herself from pain by acting as if these are all accepted truths, instead of merely her own anxieties.

Harriet believed Wyn had overlooked her and made her a memory. This is proven by the statement below:

Accepting, now, the truth: That he's moved on. That all these moments I cling to, like little mental life rafts, are just memories for him. ch.25 pg.214

The statement illustrates Harriet employing the defense mechanism of projection within her relationship with Wyn. When Harriet claims she is “*Accepting, now, the truth*” that Wyn has “moved on” and that the moments she regards as “mental life rafts” are merely “memories” to Wyn, she is essentially projecting her profound fears into a definitive belief about Wyn’s emotions. Harriet cannot access Wyn’s true thoughts, but she asserts with confidence that Wyn has forgotten her. This is projection since Harriet is attributing her own anxieties (fear of being overlooked) as truths regarding Wyn’s actions. By declaring this as a truth she acknowledges, Harriet is attempting to safeguard herself from doubt and the potential disappointment of her dreams being crushed. This outlook enables Harriet to manage the pain by believing that the worst is already behind her. She is imposing her own emotions regarding their relationship onto Wyn without any genuine proof of Wyn's actual feelings.

Harriet blamed her feelings of dependency on Wyn. This is evident in the following statement:

Stupid, stupid, stupid heart. Don't you know he hasn't been yours to cry over for a long time? (ch.25 pg.215)

The phrase "Stupid, stupid, stupid heart. Don't you know he hasn't been yours to cry over for a long time?" indicates that Harriet employs the defense mechanism of projection in her connection with Wyn. In this declaration, Harriet addresses her own emotions. Rather than acknowledging that she is the one unable to move on from Wyn, Harriet attributes her lingering sadness to her "stupid" heart. The threefold use of

the term "stupid" highlights Harriet's irritation with her own emotions. Through this projection, Harriet shields her ego from facing the truth that she is the one unable to move on from Wyn, despite being aware that their relationship ended a long time ago. Projection allows Harriet to condemn and criticize certain aspects of herself without having to completely recognize that the emotions originate from her entire being.

5. Reaction-Formation

In this novel, researchers found that Harriet acted as if she hated Wyn even though in fact, she still loved him. This is evident in the following statement:

*"AND HOW'S WYN?" Sabrina asks.
The seesaw inside me jolts again. Sharp gray eyes flash across my mind, the phantom scent of pine and clove wafting over me. Not yet, I think.
"WHAT?" I shout, pretending not to have heard.
Sabrina repeats, "WYN. HOW'S WYN?"
Electrifying, though not necessarily in a good way? Sometimes nauseating? Occasionally devastating. (ch.2 pg.9)*

These quotes show that Harriet uses reaction formation as a defense mechanism, because she consciously displays reactions that are opposite to her true feelings. When Sabrina asks about Wynn, Harriet has a very strong internal reaction - indicated by the memory of Wyn's gray eyes, but Harriet pretends not to hear. This is a form of reaction formation because Harriet deliberately displays an attitude of indifference and pretends not to hear, which is the opposite of her true feelings. Harriet uses this mechanism to protect herself from disturbing feelings regarding Wynn.

Harriet behaves as though she dislikes Wyn's presence, despite her true desire for it. This is proven by the statement below:

*Oh god. He's not supposed to be here!
The next time I saw him, I was supposed to be in a sexy Reformation dress with a hot new boyfriend and a full face of makeup. (ch.3 pg.17)*

The quote shows that Harriet uses reaction formation in her relationship with Wyn. Reaction formation is a defense mechanism in which a person overreacts in a way that is the opposite of their true feelings to cover up uncomfortable emotions. In this case, Harriet still has deep feelings for Wyn and is unable to let go, but she tries to show the opposite. Her strong desire to appear happy, successful, and over Wyn reveals that she is still very emotionally attached to Wyn. Her panicked reaction to seeing Wyn unexpectedly also shows that she is not ready to face her in a normal setting. She wants to make sure that the next time she meets him, she will appear much better and more desirable. This reaction formation serves as a defense to hide Harriet's hurt and vulnerability, and to avoid facing the reality that she may still love Wyn or feel rejected by her. Instead of admitting her sadness or longing, she replaces it with a desire to change her appearance and a desire for a new lover.

Harriet displays actions that contradict her genuine emotions because she aims to shield herself from painful feelings. This is proven by the statement below:

"If we're making each other unhappy," I say as evenly as I can, "we can't keep going. I couldn't stand living every day knowing you're sent me." ch.23 pg.206

The statement illustrates Harriet employing the reaction-formation defense mechanism in her relationship with Wyn. By expressing herself in a measured and composed manner "I say as evenly as I can", Harriet is concealing her true emotions. She expresses a desire to terminate the relationship if they evoke unhappiness in each other, but this is ultimately a way of safeguarding herself against the fear of causing her pain again. Rather than admitting her anxiety about being abandoned, Harriet decides to terminate the relationship herself. The phrase "I couldn't stand living every day knowing you resent me." exposes her greatest fear, but she conceals it with a strong and rational demeanour that opposes her actual emotions. Harriet employs this reaction formation to shield herself by acting indifferent, while she holds strong feelings for the relationship and fears losing Wyn.

Harriet consistently assured herself that ending her relationship with Wyn was the correct choice, yet it ultimately contradicted her true feelings for him. This is evident in the following statement:

Years later, when it's late and I can't sleep for the phantom ache in my chest, I pull this memory out and turn it over. I think, We did the right thing. We let each other go. That too is a kind of comfort. ch.23 pg.207

This statement demonstrates Harriet employing the defense mechanism of reaction formation in her connection with Wyn. By stating, "We did the right thing. We let each other go. That too is a kind of comfort." Harriet attempts to assure herself that ending their relationship was the correct choice. Nonetheless, the contradiction becomes evident when she

recalls this memory years later at night while struggling to sleep, feeling a "phantom ache" in her chest. Harriet refers to the breakup as "comfort," but in truth, she is still in pain. This reaction formation aids Harriet in managing her pain by displaying feelings that are contrary to her genuine emotions. Harriet asserts her relief and the correctness of the decision, despite the lingering sorrow and yearning. In this manner, Harriet shields herself from completely acknowledging that she continues to love and long for Wyn.

Harriet consistently behaves as if she is indifferent to Wyn and that she does not require Wyn in her life. This is evident in the following statement:

I can talk myself in and out of worrying about it all day, but it's not my business. Just like I told him my life wasn't his business. ch.25 pg.214

The statement clearly illustrates Harriet's employment of the reaction formation defense mechanism in her connection with Wyn. Harriet acknowledges that she can persuade herself to stop worrying about Wyn, yet she genuinely cares profoundly and contemplates Wyn significantly. Rather than acknowledging her emotions, she promptly responds with "but it's not my business." In the brief remark "Just like I told him my life wasn't his business." Harriet seeks to establish a clear boundary with Wyn, asserting that her life does not involve Wyn. Nevertheless, this act truly contradicts her innermost wishes. Reaction-formation is evident in Harriet's deliberate creation of a barrier between herself, even though she desires Wyn to show greater concern and engage more in her life. By stating that her life is not

Wyn's concern, Harriet shields herself from her anxieties. She transforms her initial desire for closeness and attention from Wyn into a demeanour of apathy. By using this defense mechanism, Harriet attempts to persuade herself that she does not require Wyn's attention, when that is exactly what she desires. This demonstrates that she is combating anxiety by acting indifferent, while she cares a great deal.

6. Displacement

In the novel *Happy Place*, researcher found that Harriet transferred her stress and disappointment to work. Harriet diverts her stress, especially regarding her relationship with Wyn by focusing on her work as a surgical resident and other activities. This is a form of defense mechanism she that uses to overcome difficult emotional situations, especially after breaking up with Wyn but having to pretend to still be together for the sake of their best friend's marriage. This is proven by the statement below:

"I'm so happy you could make this work," she says as we reach the car.

"I know how busy you are at the hospital." (ch.2 pg.7)

The novel quotes above shows that Harriet uses displacement as a defense mechanism, because she diverts her feelings and emotional stress into busy work at the hospital. When her friend, Sabrina, says "I know how busy you are at the hospital", her words indicate that Harriet deliberately immersed herself in her work as a doctor to avoid problems. Being busy in the hospital becomes a safer and more acceptable substitute object than having to face the problem of his true feelings, especially regarding his

relationship with Wyn. Harriet chooses to focus on her career to avoid dealing with feelings and situations that hurt her.

Besides diverting her stressful thoughts to her work, Harriet also diverts them to her hobbies. This is proven by the statement below:

*The moment I slip my fingers into the water to start coning the clay up, calm floods me. My thoughts fritter away. I press the foot pedal, maneuvering the lump of muck upward as it centers on the spinning wheel.
I lose myself in the rhythm of it. (ch.34 pg.283)*

This statement highlights the process of displacement that Harriet undergoes while creating pottery. As Harriet starts to mold the clay on the wheel, she undergoes a significant mental transformation. She gets engrossed in the flow of the pottery-making process. This moment serves as a means for her to liberate herself from the weight of anxious thoughts. As her fingers make contact with the water and clay, a tranquility envelops her, illustrating how she channels intricate mental energy into a tangible creative pursuit. The act of displacement is clear in how Harriet immerses herself in the rhythmic action of shaping clay. The process of creating pottery turns into a form of meditation, helping her to let go of inner stress and diverting her attention from any troubling issues or feelings. Focusing on the motions of her hands and feet while attending to the shaping of the clay, she discovers a secure environment to soothe her thoughts and alleviate internal tension.

Harriet also uses displacement when she feels hurt towards Wyn. This is evident in the following statement:

I start taking long showers so I can let it all out without piling my pain onto his. Ch.28 Pg.250

The quote also shows that Harriet is using displacement in her relationship with Wyn. Displacement is a defense mechanism in which a person redirects emotions, especially negative emotions such as anger, sadness, or frustration, from their original source to a safer or less threatening target. In this case, Harriet has painful feelings that she wants to express to Wyn, but rather than communicating her feelings directly to Wyn, she displaces her emotional expression to private moments in the shower. Taking a long shower becomes a safe way for Harriet to release her emotions without having to face the consequences of expressing those feelings directly to Wyn. This action reflects Harriet's inability or unwillingness to deal with conflict and honest communication in her relationship.

Harriet attempts to channel her feelings of affection toward another person. This is proven by the statement below:

I choke out, "so I tried. I tried to love somebody else. I tried to even like somebody else. I kissed someone else. I slept with someone else, but I couldn't stop feeling like I was yours." ch.29 pg.243

The quote illustrates Harriet employing the defense mechanism of displacement within her relationship with Wyn. By admitting, "I tried to love somebody else. I kissed someone else. I slept with someone else," Harriet clearly shows how she projects her emotions and wishes for Wyn onto someone else. Displacement happens when Harriet transfers her genuine feelings for Wyn onto a more convenient or safer substitute. Harriet tries to transfer her feelings of love onto another person to manage her inability to be with Wyn, but this effort proves unsuccessful as she

acknowledges with the phrase "I couldn't stop feeling like I was yours." Harriet's manner of "choke out" this confession indicates the significant emotional weight of her unsuccessful effort to suppress her feelings. In this displacement, Harriet tries to handle the anguish of her connection with Wyn, but ultimately understands that this defense mechanism fails her as her genuine emotions are too intense to suppress.

7. Fixation

In the novel *Happy Place*, researcher found that Harriet uses certain places or memories as a psychological mechanism to cope with stress and seek comfort. This is evident in the following statement:

There are a handful of places, of memories, that I always come back to when I need to calm myself, but this place tops the charts. (ch.2 pg.4)

This statement illustrates the obsession felt by Harriet. The phrase "There are a handful of places, of memories, that I always come back to when I need to calm myself" indicates a fixed and concentrated perspective on certain specific locations. The expression "this place tops the charts" indicates that within her memories, there exists one specific place that offers the strongest ability to soothe her. This illustrates fixation, with Harriet repeatedly and obsessively revisiting a specific point as a means of defense mechanism. In Harriet's psychological context, fixation is evident in her dependence on specific places or memories as a means to manage stress or anxiety. This suggests that she consistently reacts to stress in a particular and habitual manner, failing to explore or seek different options. The

location in discussion is more than just a physical spot; it is a mental space that offers feelings of safety, control, and tranquillity during stressful times.

Harriet is also trapped in a loop of traumatic memories. This is proven by the statement below:

Another flash of memory: me, kneeling on the ground, atop the comforter Wyn's dragged to the floor. Arms up, baby, he says gently. He peels the ruined white T-shirt over my head, runs a cool washcloth over my collarbones, collecting what's left of my mess. I can barely keep my eyes open. (ch.9 pg.77)

This statement indicates that Harriet is preoccupied with the distressing memory. The expression "Another flash of memory" suggests that this recollection is not fresh but rather an element of a sequence of memories that constantly torment Harriet's thoughts. The vivid depiction of the scene her kneeling stance, the torn white T-shirt, and Wyn's tender gestures demonstrates the intensity and permanence of this memory in Harriet's mind. The term "another" in "Another flash of memory" signifies that this memory did not emerge only once, but rather frequently surfaced in her awareness. Fixation is observed in how Harriet vividly recalls every aspect of the moment, as though time halted at that instant. Her struggle to completely open her eyes and the vivid recollection of minor details suggest that this memory has captured her thoughts and feelings.

Harriet always remembers everything when she was with Wyn, she is trapped in her memories. This is proven by the statement below:

while I'm trapped with him burned onto my heart, my brain, my lungs, my skin. ch.11 pg.99

The phrase "*I'm trapped with him burned onto my heart, my brain, my lungs, my skin.*" Effectively demonstrates Harriet's obsession with Wyn. The term "trapped" suggests that Harriet feels incapable of breaking free from her memories and emotions for Wyn, as though she is confined within her own fixation. The expression "burned onto" suggests a profound and lasting mark, like a burn that results in a scar. Harriet believes that Wyn has become an essential aspect of her whole self. The term "heart" can be understood as (emotion), "brain" as (thought), "lungs" denotes (breath of life), and "skin" represents (physical sensation), suggesting that Harriet is undergoing an intense obsession, where she cannot think, feel, or live without being perpetually plagued by Wyn's memory in her thoughts. This obsession reveals an unhealthy psychological reliance, as Harriet has permitted her identity and life to be entirely linked to her former relationship with Wyn, to the extent that it hinders her from progressing.

Harriet demonstrates a form of fixation regarding her relationship with Wyn, recalling the apartment she shared with Wyn in the past. This is evident in the following statement:

Our apartment. It still manages to hold traces of him. Or maybe that's me, carrying his ghost around wherever I go. "Mhm." ch.18 pg.156

Fixation is evident in how Harriet persists in seeking and sensing Wyn's presence in the space they previously inhabited, despite her absence. Harriet continues to call the apartment "our apartment," showing her inability to let go of the emotional bond. The expression "still manages to

hold traces of him" conveys her ongoing quest for signs of Wyn's existence, as though the apartment itself retains those memories. More profoundly, Harriet wonders if she always carries Wyn's "ghost" with her, suggesting an internal fixation that persistently trails her. The soft "Mhm" at the conclusion of the quote strengthens the notion that this is a continual and ingrained thought process within her. This obsession demonstrates Harriet's difficulty in letting go of the relationship, as she remains focused on the memory of Wyn, who is no longer a part of her reality.

Harriet also uses fixation when she always wants to be with Wyn.

This is evident in the following statement:

"All I wanted was to be wrapped up in Wyn's arms, and I knew if I walked into our apartment, there'd be shadows of him everywhere but no trace of the real thing." (ch.19 pg.170)

The quote shows that Harriet uses fixation as a defense mechanism because she is still emotionally fixated on Wyn even though he is no longer physically present. Harriet's intense desire to be in Wyn's arms signals her deep attachment to a past relationship, while her admission that their apartment will only have Wyn's shadow without her real presence reveals her awareness of her partner's absence. This fixation functions as a defense mechanism as Harriet avoids full acceptance of the losses and changes in her life. By remaining psychologically attached to Wyn, Harriet protects herself from the pain that comes from the fact that her relationship with Wyn has ended.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter contains the conclusions and the suggestions for this research. Researchers concluded the results of the analysis based on data in the novel *Happy Place* by Emily Henry. In this chapter, the researcher also includes suggestions to help other researchers who have similar research topics. Researchers hope that the results of this research can be useful for other parties who need it.

A. Conclusion

Researcher discovered that the main characters in *Happy Place* by Emily Henry employ seven types of defense mechanisms: denial, rationalization, regression, projection, reaction formation, displacement, and fixation. Wyn refuses to acknowledge any remaining emotions for Harriet and acts as if he is fine with their separation. Wyn cited their young age at the beginning of the relationship as a reason for his choice to end things with Harriet. Harriet looks for safety and comfort in Wyn's cherished expressions of affection, much like a child who requires constant validation. Harriet claimed that Wyn failed to comprehend her emotions, while she herself struggled to grasp and accept her partner's evolving feelings. She believes her partner's affection has vanished without genuinely grasping her partner's emotional journey. Harriet intentionally shows a demeanor of indifference regarding matters related to Wyn that contrasts with her actual emotions. Harriet channeled her emotions and stress into her hectic tasks at the hospital. Harriet decided to concentrate on her job and hobbies to steer clear of emotions and circumstances that caused her pain. Harriet

employs fixation as a defense mechanism since she remains emotionally attached to Wyn, despite his physical absence. Harriet's intense longing to be held by Wyn indicates her profound connection to a previous relationship.

B. Suggestions

The researcher focuses this research study on the defense mechanisms used by the main characters in the novel *Happy Place* by Emily Henry using Sigmund Freud's theory. After reading and understanding more deeply the content of the story in the novel, the researcher realized that there were still many things that could be researched in the novel. There are still many other aspects and events that can be researched, so there are still other theories of literary criticism such as structuralism, sociology of literature, and feminism that can be used by future researchers. It is hoped that future researchers will understand more about the forms of defense mechanisms. Researchers also hope that defense mechanisms can help readers overcome anxiety problems.

Defense mechanisms can have a negative impact on mental health if they are used excessively or frequently used to deal with existing problems. In the end, the researcher realizes that there are still many shortcomings in this research. Therefore, criticism and suggestions from readers are very necessary for further research to be even better.

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