**The Analysis of Neurosis on the Main Character of Paulo Coelho’s Novel *Veronika Decides to Die* and the Application in English Language Teaching**

By

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**Abstract**

The aims of this research are to analyze neurosis on the main character of the novel, to find out how the main character copes with the neurosis and how its application on the novel in English Language Teaching. This research is descriptive qualitative research. The researcher applies library research as method in collecting data and uses psychological approach to analyze the neurosis on the main character. The researcher collects the data by reading the novel and identifying neurosis found on the main character. After collecting the data, the researcher analyzes the data by explaining and describing the neurosis, the coping strategies of neurosis which is applied by the main character and how to apply novel as medium in English Language Teaching. The result of the analysis shows that childhood experience is the cause of neurosis, triggered by anxiety. The neurotic strategies which are applied to cope with neurosis have affected personality development. Applying novel as medium in English Language Teaching gives some advantages for the students, since novel provides features of written language which can improve students’ skills. The application is for university students in higher education because they are considered having abilities to deal with features of written language and the length of the novel.

Key words: application in ELT, main character, neurosis, novel *Veronika Decides to Die*

1. **Background**

English as international language becomes an important part in international society as a tool to communicate with other people around the world. It makes people start to learn English in context of using it as a tool to communicate or as a study to learn the whole parts of the language.

Learning a language is not only learning the grammatical structure, vocabulary and pronunciation, but also learning the custom, tradition and literature as reflection of a society where the language exists and used by the people. Literature as part of language can be a good medium to learn language because it is a resource of language learning and acquisition which provides valuable language experience. Literature serves the basic skills of language learning. By using literature in such a way to further the learners’ mastery in four basic areas of listening, reading, writing and speaking, it may become a significant part of language teaching programme. Using literature in language teaching is very useful because it offers benefits of authentic material, cultural enrichment, language development and personal growth (Collie and Slater, 1994:5-7).

One kind of literary works which can be used to teach English is novel. Novel contains real examples of grammatical structure and vocabulary items which raise learners’ awareness of the range of target language and advance their competence in all language skills. The students can gain additional familiarity with many features of written language which can broaden and enrich their reading and writing skills because they have to cope with language which is intended for native speakers.

Literature, especially novel, as reflection of phenomena in societies has relation with other disciplines. One of the disciplines is psychology. Psychology has a close relationship with literary works since it is often used to analyze literary works and gives deeper understanding in interpreting literary works.

This research deals with a novel entitled *Veronika Decides to Die* written by Paulo Coelho. This novel mainly talks about psychological issues which are reflected in its characters. In this research, the researcher is interested in analyzing neurosis as the psychological issue on Veronika, the main character of the novel. Neurosis is defined as poor ability to adapt to one’s environment, an inability to change one life patterns, an inability to develop a richer, more complex, more satisfying personality.

In analyzing neurosis, the researcher uses a theory of psychoanalysis from Karen Horney which mainly talks about neurosis. Horney (in Schultz and Schultz, 2005:157-158) stated the cause of neurosis which is emphasized on childhood experience. She also proposed theory of neurotic strategies to cope with neurosis.

Because this novel contains many technical words related to psychology, applying this novel in language teaching may improve students’ vocabulary and the students’ proficiency since the students have to deal with many features of written language which can make them improve their language skills.

1. **Research Method**

The object of the research is novel entitled *Veronika Decides to Die* written by Paulo Coelho. This research is descriptive qualitative research because the purpose of the research is to describe the neurosis found in the main character of novel *Veronika Decides to Die.* The data is the text of the novel which indicates the cause of neurosis and also the coping strategies of neurosis. In doing this research, the main instrument of the research in collecting and analyzing data is the researcher herself (Arikunto, 2010:24).

In collecting data, the researcher reads the novel and then identifies the sentences or paragraphs of the novel which indicate neurosis in the main character. After collecting the data, the researcher analyzes the data by identifying neurosis in the main character and then relating it with the theories from journals or books as supporting data. The data is interpreted classified into cause of neurosis and the coping strategies, then, explaining about how to apply the novel in English Language Teaching. The last step is drawing conclusion.

1. **Finding and Discussion**

After collecting and analyzing the data, the researcher found the cause of neurosis and the coping strategies to cope with neurosis. The researcher serves the findings as follows:

1. Cause

The cause of neurosis in the main character comes from Veronika’s childhood experiences. The determination of her parents in deciding everything in her life makes her develop anxiety in which she cannot express her own desires and feelings. The anxiety becomes stronger when her mother forces her to study law and neglects Veronika’s will to be a pianist.

She must repress her wishes because she is afraid in losing her parents’ love by not obeying them, especially her mother. She also does not want to hurt her mother by behaving against her mother’s will. All of those things related to the relationship between Veronika and her parents. Her parents, especially her mother, tend to place parents’ will ahead of the children’s. They tend to give what they think the best for their children without considering their children’ opinion about what they really want and do. There is also an imbalanced portion of parenting of Veronika’s parents.

1. Coping Strategies

In coping with neurosis, Veronika applies neurotic trends such as maintaining emotional distances and social life, repressing feelings and avoiding conflicts, and building idealized-self image.

Those neurotic trends lead her to develop a detached personality as her interpersonal orientation to other people which tends to move away from people. Veronika’s personality development is indirectly influenced by the neurotic strategies which are applied to cope with neurosis. It is because the coping strategies have been applied for many years in her life time. She also builds idealized-self which makes her try to be perfect in front of other people. The emotional distress which is caused by anxiety makes her lack of self-awareness which makes her unable to realize her true-self in which she can express and show her potentials. The idealized-self image is an illusory sense and image of her weakness.

1. Application in ELT

Novel *Veronika Decides to Die* is suitable and acceptable to be applied as a medium to teach English since it is a valuable resource to learn a language. It contains many technical words related to psychology, many features of written language and moral value which can encourage personal involvement and can be used to improve and enhance students’ language proficiency and skills. It also provides examples of different style of writing and also representation of various authentic language uses.

1. **Conclusion**

Based on the finding and discussion, it can be concluded that the causes of neurosis on the main character of Paulo Coelho’s novel *Veronika Decides to Die* are determination of parents, children-parents relationship and repressed wish in childhood. From the analysis, the main character copes with neurosis by applying neurotic strategies such as maintaining emotional distances and social life, repressing feelings and avoiding conflicts. It can also be concluded that this novel is suitable and acceptable to be applied in higher education for university students as medium to teach English.

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