

## **A PSYCHOANALYTIC APPROACH IN LITERARY STUDY FROM DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES: A CONCEPTUAL PAPER**

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**Abstract:** This study examines literary studies's use of psychoanalytic theories from the perspectives of Anna Freud, Carl Jung, and Sigmund Freud. These theories deal with unconscious conflicts, Sigmund Freud emphasized the function of the id, ego, and superego in psychological frameworks and self-defense strategies. Therefore, Carl Jung initially stated that the collective unconscious includes general concepts and symbolism that influence the human experience. However, Anna Freud, developed psychoanalytic theory in the context of child development, focusing on the defense mechanisms of the ego and the environment's role in psychological development. Meanwhile, Anna Freud emphasized the impact of the surroundings on child growth and development, Freud focused on unconscious conflict and adult personality, and Jung focused on the evolutionary legacies and symbolism. Meanwhile, literary studies using the psychoanalytic theory provide significant perspectives of individual psychological theory and how it can be used to explain the movements and personalities of fictional narratives. The study improves the understanding of psychoanalytic perspectives. In short, the research findings indicate that even though all three theories have a psychoanalytic foundation, their areas of focus are different.

*Key Word:* psychoanalysis; unconsciousness; archetype; ego defense mechanisms; literary psychology.

### **Introduction**

There are many facts about psychology in literary research. The psychoanalytic theory seeks to explain how personality develops, focusing on motivation, emotions, and other internal aspects. Psychoanalysis is one of the modern theories used in English literature. Psychoanalysis is guided by this theory, which is thought to be a theory of personality dynamics and organization (Mahroof, 2017). Meanwhile, it shows that psychological types are disclosed or thick to be seen, and it is difficult to know how to interpret the phenomenon of those psychological appearances or psychological occurrences. Somehow, it is difficult to see the psychological appearance or the emergence of psychological concepts, whether do not know or even theory to understand that or to interpret the narrative in the movie, so that is why this conceptual paper aims to find out the theory and the field of theoretical psychology. Over the past 20 years, there have been many

developments in psychology studies (Diener, 2017). However, this introduction highlights the need for a theoretical framework to interpret the events and psychological concepts presented in a narrative. Therefore, the idea that psychological theories had to become more formal or mathematical has been important in these current theory discussions (Eronen & Romeijn, 2020). Thus, there is no clear approach to analyzing and interpreting them effectively without an adequate theoretical basis. Meanwhile, it is implicitly accepted that psychology functions in that manner, criticisms use psychoanalytic literary theory to argue that the field of study lacks comprehensive theory (McPhetres & Aydemir, 2021).

Therefore, this paper explores concepts of psychology. It will focus on three perspectives of experts, The first is the psychology theory by Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, and Anna Freud in which psychoanalytic literary theory provides insight into the psychological dimension. In addition, this conceptual paper emphasizes the importance of a theoretical framework in understanding the psychological phenomena that emerge in fictional narratives. To improve the interpretation of psychological appearances in fictional works, this conceptual paper aims to bridge the understanding gap and provide an innovative perspective in literary analysis through a psychoanalytic approach. Sigmund Freud created the psychoanalytic or psychoanalysis theory of personality and psychoanalysis in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This idea highlights how a *person's behavior* and *personality* are developed by their *subconscious*, early experiences, and internal conflicts. Psychoanalysis seeks to understand how these aspects affect mental health and offers therapeutic approaches to resolving emotional conflicts. Sigmund Freud (1923), first proposed the history and development of psychoanalysis which focused on catharsis and hypnosis techniques, to the emergence of various modern models (Bateman & Holmes, 1995). Meanwhile, (Bateman & Holmes, 1995) presents a comprehensive approach to the theory and practice of psychoanalysis by discussing various schools in modern psychoanalysis. Therefore, history, geography, and charismatic influence each perform an important role in the story of psychoanalysis (Bateman, 1995). Psychoanalysis includes concepts such as *the id*, *the ego*, and *the superego* that are included in personality structure. Meanwhile, defense mechanisms are defined as how to protect yourself from anxiety.

Meanwhile, the unconscious is a layer of the mind that influences behavior unconsciously and also stages of psychosexual development it includes the stages of life that affect the personality of an adult.

### **Sigmund Freud: The Psychology of Unconscious**

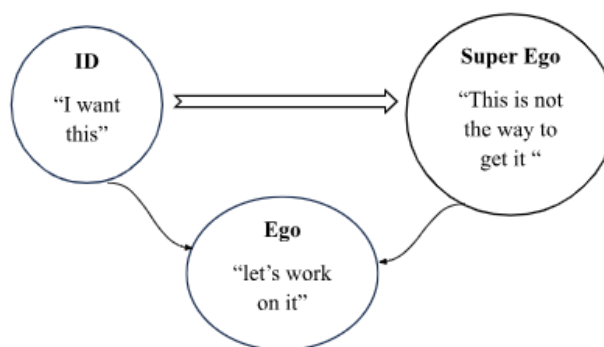
The study of *the unconscious* in psychology was first accepted by Sigmund Freud as a fundamental component of the structure of the human mind. Moreover, *the unconscious* idea provides a basis for Freud's psychoanalytic theory (Bian, 2023). In addition, Freud defined the three categories of the human mind in his theory: *conscious*, *pre-conscious*, and *unconscious*. Meanwhile, *consciousness* is part of the mind that contains thoughts, feelings, and perceptions that we are directly aware of for example what are you thinking about right now or the decision you just made. A basic concept in psychology is the conflict between *the conscious* and *the unconscious* (Holland, 1990).

Furthermore, *the pre-conscious* contains information that is not directly present in the *conscious* mind but can be easily accessed, for example, memories of childhood friends' names or old phone numbers that can be remembered when needed. Then, the bottom of the brain is known as *unconsciousness*, which describes desires that are not socially acceptable and that memory cannot return to *consciousness*. The deepest part of the thoughts, known as *the unconscious*, is dedicated to *repressed* or *unconscious* desires, traumatic experiences, and emotions. Thus, this information is difficult to access directly because it is often considered threatening or socially unacceptable. Therefore, *the unconscious* is seen in psychoanalytic self-psychology as the source of eliminated historical self-object needs rather than seeks and desires. (Hartmann, 1999).

Meanwhile, Freud (1923), believed that *the unconscious* greatly influences a person's behavior and thinking. There are some important points of *the unconscious*. First, *the unconscious* includes biological requirements, instincts, and basic desires like abuse and sexual desires that people repress because they consider to be inappropriate or go beyond social norms. Second, there is the repressive process, which Freud (1923), described as the primary source of *the unconscious's* content. Repression is a form of self-defense that allows one to ignore undesirable

or embarrassing experiences to protect oneself from anxiety. For example, a person may forget the experience of childhood violence as a form of psychological protection. Third, from manifestations in daily life, Freud (1923), pointed out that the contents of *the unconscious* often appear in symbolic forms, such as dreams, jokes, speech errors, and psychological symptoms. Freud called dreams *the path to the unconscious*. The *symbols* in the dream can reveal hidden desires or conflicts.

Furthermore, jokes include mistakes in speech or actions that appear involuntary and often reflect *the unconscious* content. Therefore, psychological symptoms, including anxiety disorders, phobias, and neurotic symptoms, are thought to result from conflict in the unconscious. In addition, Freud also divided the structure of the human personality into three components that are interconnected and relate to *the unconscious*.



**Figure 1.** Three components deal with the unconscious (Freud, 1923).

First, *the id* in which the id operates at the level of *the unconscious* and contains primitive impulses and pleasure principles. Second, *the ego* acts as a mediator between the id and reality, operating at both *conscious* and *preconscious* levels. On the other hand, *the superego* is the conscience and moral value that suppresses the desires of *the id*, many parts of it also operate at the *unconscious* level. Meanwhile, about *the ego*, *the ego* is the center of rational *consciousness* and control in the personality and acts as a counterweight between *the id* and *superego*. However, it operates on the principle of reality that seeks to satisfy the impulse of *the id* in a realistic and socially acceptable way. According to Freud (1923), there are the functions and roles of *the ego*. *The conflict was intrapsychic and occurred between some combination of the agencies ego, id, and super-ego. No longer was*



*conflict viewed as occurring simply between the self as a whole and social morality or material reality* (Marcus, 1999).

First, as a conflict mediator, *the ego* serves to mediate the conflict between *the id's* impulsive impulses and the rigid demands of *the superego*, for example, when *the id* wants something instantly, *the ego* will look for ways that are acceptable to society to meet those needs. Second is the adaptation to reality, *the ego* analyzes real-world situations and adjusts behaviors to achieve goals without causing major conflicts, for example, if someone is hungry but doesn't have food, *the ego* will think of a way to get food legally. The third is about the defense of mechanisms. Meanwhile, *the ego* protects itself from anxiety and conflict by using defense mechanisms such as repression, projection, rationalization, and sublimation. Repression is repressing painful thoughts or feelings into *the subconscious*. Then, the projection is blaming others for unacceptable urges in oneself. Meanwhile, Freudians experienced significant challenges to Freud's claims for psychoanalysis, and the history of the psychoanalytic movement is one of research conflict (Lapsley & Stey, 2012).

In addition, Freud (1923), argued that psychoanalysis shouldn't be diverse, even if his theory kept changing throughout his life and he professionally and personally removed believers who moved from his main principles, continually supporting them (Sartika et al, 2024). Therefore, the relationship of *the ego* to *consciousness* and *unconsciousness* highlights two points such as *the ego* operates mostly in the realm of *consciousness* or *conscious* mind, but it also has aspects in the *preconscious* and *unconscious*. Therefore, the effects of *the unconscious* are *the ego* is often influenced by *unconscious* impulses that come from *the id*, although individuals are not always aware of it.

Thus, *the ego* begins to develop from childhood in response to the demands of reality and the need to control *the id* impulses and this developmental process involves learning from experience and forming coping strategies that help individuals adjust to the social environment. Then, *the ego* the implications in daily life also have two important points a healthy balance in a healthy *ego* allows individuals to face life's challenges flexibly and adaptively, without being overly dominated by impulsive urges *the id*, or overly rigid moral rules or *the superego*.

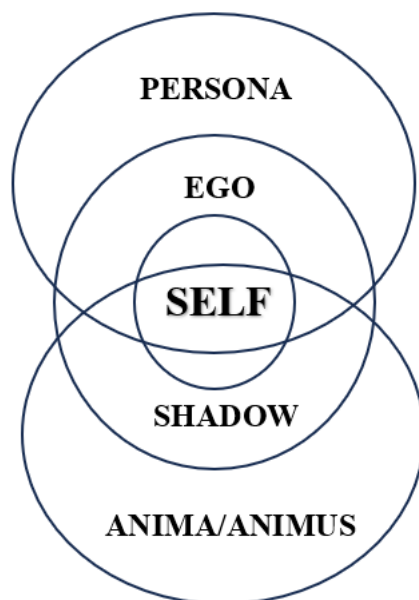
Meanwhile, *the ego* imbalance is divided into two parts. First, is the too-weak ego which a person may become impulsive or unable to resist impulses. Second, is the too-strong ego which a person may be too rigid, anxious, or have difficulty enjoying life because they think too much about moral rules and social norms. Although, psychoanalysis focuses on ideas common to nineteenth-century science, and concerning standard sensibilities, especially with its claims concerning *unconscious* mental processes and young sexuality (Lapsley & Stey, 2012).

Therefore, the concept of *the ego* in Freud's (1923), theory plays an important role as a controller and balancer between primitive impulses *the id*, and moral demands or *the superego*. *The ego* helps individuals function realistically in the real world by using defense mechanisms to cope with anxiety and conflict. According to Jung (1981), the primary factors influencing human behavior are an individual's and humanity's historical past, and *unconscious* processes are an important part of mental reality (Jung, 1981). By understanding the psychology of *the ego*, we can be more aware of how *the subconscious* mind influences our behavior, as well as how we can develop a healthy *ego* to achieve emotional and mental balance in our daily lives. One of the greatest minds in the psychoanalytic. Meanwhile, Freud (1923), created a theory of the psychology of *the self*. Freud (1923), believed that this idea has to do with the way self-identity forms and the formation of the human personality. Thus, *the id*, *the ego*, and *the superego* are the three components of Freud's theory of self-psychology.

The principle of pleasure directs how we act on *the id*, the most basic aspect of the human mind. The characteristics of *the id*, contain basic biological urges such as appetite, sex, and aggression, it is irrational, impulsive, and working at an unconscious level, for example, babies who cry because they are hungry or want comfort without considering their surroundings. Second, it discussed *the ego*, in this sight, it refers to the part of the personality that functions as a mediator between *the id* and *the superego* and operates on the principle of reality. Furthermore, Freud's (1923), theory was criticized for overemphasizing the biological and sexual aspects of psychological development. Memory, attention, thinking, imagination, and emotional experiences, all of which have developed throughout human evolution, are among the variables that connect psychic activities (Zaborowski, 1998).

### Carl Gustav Jung: The Psychology of Symbolism and Collective Unconscious

The Swiss psychiatrist and psychologist Carl Gustav Jung (1969), developed the field of analytical psychology. His theory emphasizes the complexity of the structure of the human personality. Both Freud (1923), and Jung (1969), are intelligent people who developed depth psychology while providing important contributions to psychology and twentieth-century human psychology (Adamski & Borowik, 2014). Meanwhile, Jung (1969), developed the idea of psychoanalysis with a focus on *symbolism* and *the collective unconscious*, developing the theory of analytic psychology.



**Figure 2.** The theory in psychology of *symbolism* and *collective unconscious* (Jung, 1969).

The concept of being *conscious* is unreliable in the literature on the topic, which makes it difficult to identify what it means exactly as well as that of *unconsciousness* (Moreno, 1967). Meanwhile, the first is about *the collective unconscious*, which is the deepest part of the human psyche and contains universal *archetypes*, *memories*, and *experiences*. In contrast to the personal *unconscious*, which can be formed among personal experience, *the collective unconscious* is shared by all people and is inherited evolutionarily. There are key features of *the collective unconscious*. First, is universal which patterns in *the collective unconscious* appear in cultures, religions, and myths around the world, regardless

of time or place. Second, inherited which *the collective unconscious* does not originate from personal experience but rather is a legacy of human evolution. The third consists of *archetypes*, it is the basic structure of *the collective unconscious archetype*.

The second is about the *archetype*. Meanwhile, Jung (1969), was a Swedish scientist whose name was attributed to the development and the introduction of the term *archetype* into the discussion of science (Zharylgapov & Syzdykova, 2023). The scientist's idea of *archetypes* gained particular attention. Therefore, *the collective unconscious* contains universal symbolic *archetypes* or models, which are known as *archetypes*. *The archetypes*, at that time, were not characterized by a particular shape but rather appeared as particular symbols in faith, mythology, art, and dreams. The first example is *anima* and *animus*. Meanwhile, *anima* is the feminine aspect of men. While *animus* is the masculine aspect of women. Both reflect the balance between masculine and feminine traits in humans. The second example is about *personas*. The first thing to emphasize about Jungian theory is that his concept of *self* does not quite align with the social constructionist approach adopted by most *personas* studies (Giles, 2020). Meanwhile, *personas* are defined as social masks used to interact with the outside world. Furthermore, *personas* help a person adjust to the demands of society but can be a source of conflict if they are too synonymous with the mask. The third example is *the shadow*. The *shadow* is defined as the dark side of personality consisting of repressed or unacknowledged urges and aspects of *the self*. Meanwhile, *the shadows* often appear in dreams or destructive behaviors. Meanwhile, destructive behavior is a form of destructive behavior, towards oneself, others, and the environment. This behavior can be physical, verbal, or emotional actions that aim or indirectly cause damage. Then, destructive behavior can appear in a variety of contexts, including interpersonal relationships, family, work, and community. Another example is *the self*, which is commonly defined as the center and totality of the human personality. *the self* is the goal of individuation, which is the process of unifying all aspects of personality.

Meanwhile, *symbolism* in Jung's (1969), psychology is a manifestation of *archetype* and *collective unconsciousness*. *The symbols* give meaning to human experiences that cannot be explained directly. They appear in the form of *dreams*,



*art, myths, or religion*. Then, the *symbol* function in Jung's theory connects *the consciousness* and *the unconscious*, because *symbols* act as a bridge between the inner world *unconscious* and the outer world *consciousness*. On the other hand, it is also used to uncover internal conflicts. For example, dreams about water often symbolize emotional depth or psychic transformation, and the last indicates the process of individuation, *symbols* such as circles often depict the journey towards *self-integration* or *the self*. Meanwhile, psychoanalysis disputed the belief that *consciousness* was direct knowledge of the contents of the mind, or the same content, limiting the applicability of the concept at the end of *consciousness* to the tangible and empirically verifiable referent the field of *consciousness* of the individual at the moment (Jung, 1950).

In therapy, Jung (1950), uses *dream* analysis and *symbol* exploration to help patients understand their inner conflicts while *the collective unconscious* often appears in *dreams* as an *archetypal* motif. By being aware of and understanding these *symbols*, individuals can achieve psychic balance and individuation. Therefore, *the collective unconscious* and *symbolism* are at the heart of Jung's thought, which provides a framework for understanding universal patterns in the human experience by exploring *symbols* and *archetypes*, a person can harmonize different aspects of personality and achieve a deeper understanding of oneself (Jung, 1950).

### **Anna Freud: Psychoanalysis in The Context of Child Development.**

Anna Freud (1936), made an important contribution to expanding psychoanalytic theory into the context of child development through an approach known as psychoanalytic developmental psychology. This theory emphasizes that the understanding of child development must consider the stages of a child's psychosexual, emotional, and social development holistically. There are some of the main points of this theory such as, the first is about child development as a gradual process. Anna Freud (1936), sees child development as a gradual process that must be understood according to a certain stage of development. Particular aspects of Anna Freud's biography indicate the existence of struggles that are

particular to teenagers, which may be linked to some of her theoretical and practical discoveries in the field of adolescent psychoanalysis (Houssier, 2016).

Meanwhile, infancy and toddlerhood focus on the relationship with the primary caregiver, especially the mother, then early childhood is a period in which conflicts between biological impulses and environmental expectations begin to emerge, next is about latent period, which is the age at which the child begins to develop control over impulses and adjust to social norms, last is adolescence, it is the stage of identity integration, which involves a struggle with sexual urges and the search for identity. Second, Anna states that there are stages of *defense mechanisms in children*. Meanwhile, Anna (1936), expanded her understanding of *ego defense mechanisms*, such as *repression*, *projection*, and *sublimation*, by explaining how these mechanisms are seen in children's behavior. In addition, she emphasized that *defense mechanisms* in children are a normal part of development, but excessive or dysfunctional patterns can be an indication of psychological disorders. The third is about *environmental context* and *the role of parents in child psychoanalysis*. Because *the ego* has a major role in this early work, it is still clear how important Anna Freud (1936), views the outside world and its objects about a child's development and early defense mechanisms (Holder, 2007).

Furthermore, she emphasized the importance of the environment and relationships with parents, unlike adult psychoanalysis, child therapy often involves indirect interventions, such as working with parents and caregivers to create an environment that supports the child's development. The fourth is about the direct observation of children. Meanwhile, Anna Freud introduced a direct observation method to understand children's behavior in the context of their daily lives. This is different from the traditional psychoanalytic approach that relies on free association. In this way, he can better understand the child's needs and conflicts (Holder, 2007). The next point is about the contribution to the understanding of child psychopathology.

Meanwhile, Anna (1936), argued that psychological disorders in children should be analyzed in the context of development for example, childhood phobias may reflect fears that are normal in certain stages of development, and behavioral disorders can be a response to environmental stresses. This approach allows for a

more comprehensive understanding of how psychological disorders develop and how they can be intervened. On the other hand, Anna (1936), also pays special attention to the latent period age 6-12 years, during which sexual urges are suppressed and the child's energy is directed towards learning and social interaction, she believes that this is the ideal time to help children develop healthy coping mechanisms. Similarly, she argued that children in institutions and those educated by a single parent still conduct behavior that is usually considered to reflect basic experiences and also develop habits that are characteristic of the missing parent's masculinity (Mayes & Cohen, 2017).

### **Conclusion**

This paper aims to elaborate psychoanalytic approach in the literary study from different perspectives. From the discussions, it can be seen that Freud's theory focuses on the structure of personality consisting of the id, ego, and superego. He emphasizes the influence of the subconscious, internal conflicts, and childhood experiences in shaping personality. Meanwhile, self-defense mechanisms such as repression and projection are key in explaining individual behavior. Meanwhile, based on Jung's theory he developed the concept of analytic psychology that highlighted the importance of the collective unconscious, archetype, and symbolism. He views the unconscious as an evolutionary legacy that contains universal patterns or archetypes that influence human behavior. Therefore, Anna's theory extends psychoanalysis into the context of child development, highlighting the importance of psychosexual developmental stages, ego defense mechanisms in children, environmental influences, and the role of parents in children's psychological development. From those perspectives, the differences can be seen from other aspects such as the form the focus, the approach, and also object of the study.

Meanwhile, talking about the differences from other perspectives. I also try to find out the similarities between those three experts such as all three theories highlighting the importance of the unconscious in influencing behavior. Then, all theories emphasize the role of defense mechanisms in dealing with psychological conflicts, and those three theories make significant contributions to understanding

human psychological dynamics through psychoanalytic approaches. Each theory offers unique insights, and although Anna Freud and Carl Jung are different from Sigmund Freud, they are still rooted in the foundations of psychoanalysis.

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