

AN ANALYSIS OF EDUCATIONAL VALUE AND DEFENCE MECHANISM IN “LIFE OF PI” NOVEL BY YANN MARTEL

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Abstract: This research was aimed to analyze an educational value and defence mechanism in life of pi novel by Yann Martel. Life of Pi is an award-winning novel written by Yann Martel, a Canadian author. The novel depicts the topic of struggle for life and against death in an emergency situation. It tells about the struggle of an Indian boy who spent 227 days with a fierce tiger in the Pacific Ocean, and as the sole survivor in a shipwreck that killed his family. There are two problems are formulated to guide and limit the discussion in this study. The first problem examines the description of the educational value, the second problem examines the defence mechanism in that novel. The methodology of this research is descriptive qualitative method. All of the data are gathered by reading the novel, identifying, classifying, and reducing the data. The primary data of the study are in the form of monologues and dialogues of the novel itself. The primary data is supported by secondary data that is taken from books, journals, articles, essays, and sites that relate to the study. The selected data is interpreted into understandable meaning by descriptive technique. The result of the research finds that educational value in life of pi novel: he is intelligent, he was able to enter the best secondary school in his town and later achieved top grades as a university student; open-minded, He is open-minded in his way of thinking; spiritual, He practices three religions with the reason that he wants to love God; and has strong determination, He has a strong will and he does not give up or become desperate easily. The defence mechanism carried out by Pi Patel: by recognizing and using his strength, which is made possible by his intelligence; by being realistic about the situation, which is facilitated by his open- mindedness; and by adopting positive attitude, which is facilitated by his spirituality and strong determination.

Key Words: Educational Value; Defence Mechanism; Life of Pi; Novel

Introduction

Humans have predicate as communal, so in this life always interacting with others and their environment in a social context. Therefore, communication is an important thing to do. The existence of language will be required in the daily communication practice by the community. However, not all people can use and communication using English language fluently, especially in Indonesia. In addition, it becomes difficult for them to understand the meaning. To make beginner understand about English, they must use media to learn. The examples of media are newspaper, television, novel, book, movie, etc.

Novel could have a positive influence in education. The way novel clearly explains the process and message, so it can generate interest and motivation to learn. It has been a prevalent idea over a long period of time that literature is the reflection of human life. When we read a work of literature, we look at human beings, the environment they live in, the problems they face, and basically the lives they lead, presented in the form of movie. The exact names, places, or events may be fictional or factual, but the essence of the feelings, relationships, and problems experienced by the characters in the literary work is not far from what actually happens in real life.

Talking about education value is the spirit of education, so wherever they are taught the value of education will present itself. Educational value is the value of education. Educational value not only can be



found in academic processed but also can be found in anything experience. Educational value also can define a something or limitation of anything that educate someone directed to maturation, which have good or bad character, so it can useful for human live that can reach from educational process.

Education has an important role in one's life. People can hold education anywhere, not only in formal institution, but also in informal institution. For example: in the family. Family is the first institution and the foremost in the community because it is the place where human are born and grow up. The ways of education in the family affect the emergence and the development of character, manners and personality of each human being.

Education has the greatest value. All those activities that are good, useful and valuable from educational point of view are considered as educational values. Education has its aims to modify the nature of the education and not merely to supply a certain amount of knowledge. According to J. Wesley Null (2007:232), "Education does not mean teaching people to know that they do not know, it means teaching them to behave as they do not behave". Thus, the ultimate aim of education is to achieve good life. Aims are an end in themselves and values are the product. For achieving any goal or objective we devise certain methods to achieve it and when we are able to achieve for reaching the goal we call it values. Thus, in the field of education values are the results that we actually obtain.

The aims of values education are about the educational process that instils moral standards to create more civil and democratic societies. Values education therefore promotes tolerance and understanding above and beyond political, cultural and religious differences, putting special emphasis on the defence of human rights, the protection of ethnic minorities and the most vulnerable groups, and the conservation of the environment.

Individual humans need strength to survive in the social environment. Various kinds of conflicts will arise both internal conflicts (within individuals) and external conflicts (outside the individual self). Therefore, every human being needs a mechanism defence in daily life, so that, there are no difficulties in achieving life goals. The mechanism of self-defence carried out by humans is packaged through literary works by a writer.

Defence mechanisms are psychological strategies brought into play by the unconscious mind to manipulate, deny, or distort reality in order to defend against feelings of anxiety and unacceptable impulses and to maintain one's self-schema or other schemas. These processes that manipulate, deny, or distort reality may include the following: repression, or the burying of a painful feeling or thought from one's awareness even though it may resurface in a symbolic form, identification, incorporating an object or thought into oneself, and rationalization, the justification of one's behaviour and motivations by substituting "good" acceptable reasons for the actual motivations, In psychoanalytic theory, repression is considered the basis for other defence mechanisms.

The writer wants to conduct research with the title: "**An Analysis of Educational Values and Defence Mechanism in "Life of Pi" Novel by Yann Martel**". Regarding to the focus of the research above, the problem in this research need to be formulated as follows educational value in "Life of Pi" Novel by Yann Martel and defence mechanism in "Life of Pi" Novel by Yann Martel. the objective of this research are to analyze and to know about educational value in "Life of Pi" Novel by Yann Martel and defence mechanism in "Life of Pi" Novel by Yann Martel.

Method

The research will be conducted personally by analyzing the data, the data is dialogues in life of pi novel. Research methodology is commonly defined as a way or method to thinking and prepared to completed the research and reach the goal of the research. In this study the writer uses descriptive qualitative research to described the educational value that included in Life of Pi novel. According to Mandey Stanley (2015:21) "qualitative research is descriptive." The data collected is in the form of word rather than numbers. Processed the data take from various sources, articles, etc. Consecutively, this study deals with descriptive way to collects data. It is intended to described the educational value and defense mechanism in Life of Pi novel.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher more prior in accurate explanation to analyzed and present what have been found in the novel. The researcher was the used library research to completed the research, because the entire data for this study is collected from books and other writings, such as undergraduate theses and references from the Internet. The primary source of this study is Yann Martel's *Life of Pi*, while the secondary sources are taken from relevant books, theses, and online references.

The novel discussed in this study is called *Life of Pi*, written by Yann Martel. The data in this research was the used documentary technique to collect the data. Documentation is the method used in scientific research in order to collect data by using the document of evidence list. Documentation technique which researcher tried to found the data needed, such as notes, transcripts, newspapers, books, magazines and so on. In this research, researcher analyzed the educational values and defence mechanisms in *Life of Pi* novel by writing the relevant dialogues in a paper. In collecting data, the researcher did some steps that they were:

1. The researcher chooses *Life of Pi* novel.
2. The researcher read the novel until three times or more, then analysed the dialogues and part of the novel which can analysed as the educational value and defence mechanism.
3. Write the dialogues between the characters that are relevant to the research.

Results and Discussion

Result

This chapter attempts to answer the problems formulated in the first chapter. This chapter will be divided into two parts. To answer the first problem formulation, the first part will discuss about educational value. To answer the second problem formulation, the second part will discuss about defence mechanism.

Pi Patel is the main character of the novel. One part of the novel tells about Pi as a young teenager, while the other tells about Pi as an adult. This section discusses educational value in life of pi novel, the most dominant educational value is Intelligence, Open-mindedness, Spirituality, Strong Determination. As a university student in Canada, he maintains his academic excellence. "I was a very good student, if I may say so myself. I was tops at St. Michael's College four years in a row. I got every possible student award from the Department of Zoology. If I got none from the Department of Religious Studies, it is simply because there are no student awards in this department (Martel, 2003: 6)." His open-mindedness is shown through his past life (especially his early and mid-teens), speech, thoughts, mannerism, and reactions to the situation around him. "Mr. and Mr. Kumar taught me biology and Islam. Mr. and Mr. Kumar led me to study zoology and religious studies at the University of Toronto. Mr. and Mr. Kumar were the prophets of my Indian youth (2003: 82)."

Pi has a high level of spirituality, which is shown through his speech, thoughts, mannerisms, and reactions. Pi believes in three religions: Hindu since his birth, Christianity and Islam since his teens. His reason was simply because he loves all three religions. "Bapu Gandhi said, 'All religions are true.' I just want to love God," I blurted out, and looked down, red in the face (2003: 92). Since he was a child, Pi has been showing a strong determination. It means that he is firmly committed to the things he does and does not give up easily. Pi learned swimming when he was seven, taught by the family's good friend called Mamaji. First he could not swim well, but he "tried his best to swim" (2003: 11). Later, he found swimming "grueling", but also pleasurable (2003: 12). Mamaji also taught Pi's parents and brother to swim, but Pi was the only one who kept working until he was actually able to swim.

Defence mechanism can be interpreted the same as the mechanism of self-defence that is how some of the ways individuals reduce feelings of depression, anxiety, stress or conflict is to do mechanisms self-defence whether they do consciously or not. This part identifies how Pi manages to survive, which is divided into three sub-sections based on the ways through which Pi manages to survive.

Pi's quick thinking, creativity, and logical ability became useful when he had to defend himself from the tiger. He built a raft from the remaining oars, life jackets and lifebuoy, using the knife and ropes provided in the lifeboat. He figured out how to make everything quickly, using limited materials. "I had to organize my survival. Not a second to waste. I needed shelter and right away. I thought of the prow I had made with an oar. But now the tarpaulin was unrolled at the bow; there was nothing to hold the oar in place. And I had no proof that hanging at the end of an oar provided real safety from Richard Parker. He might

easily reach and nab me. I had to find something else. My mind worked fast. I built a raft. The oars, if you remember, floated. And I had life jackets and a sturdy lifebuoy (2003: 197).”

Being realistic about the situation means seeing the situation as it really is, without any exaggeration or downplay, without adding pleasant (but untrue) elements or hiding unpleasant elements. This might be difficult to do, especially in difficult situations, such as Pi’s situation in the middle of the ocean. That is why Pi’s second characteristic, open- mindedness, becomes important, because it truly takes an open mind to be able to accept such bizarre and unbelievable things happening to him. Additionally, Pi as intelligence and strong determination also helped him to be realistic about the situation. When he found out there was a tiger in the lifeboat, he considered jumping overboard and swimming, but he realized he was hundreds or even thousands of miles away from land. “There was a tiger in the lifeboat. I could hardly believe it, yet I knew I had to. And I had to save myself. I considered jumping overboard and swimming away, but my body refused to move. I was hundreds of miles from landfall, if not over a thousand miles. I couldn’t swim such a distance, even with a lifebuoy (2003: 195-196).”

Adopting positive attitude means looking at the good aspect in everything, or in other words, staying optimistic and not losing morale easily. Pi was able to survive because of his ability to adopt positive attitude, which was supported by his characteristics, especially his strong determination and spirituality. His strong determination helped him to keep struggling and not give up even when everything seems hopeless, and his spirituality helped him boost his morale when facing difficulties. During the 227 days he spent in the ocean, Pi faced so many challenges and so much suffering, being the only survivor from the shipwreck, losing his whole family, facing the threats of wild animals, fierce weather, lack of food and drink, and dealing with uncertainty about his own fate. However, his strong determination to live enable him to keep struggling, even when he was not aware of his struggle. “I was alone and orphaned, in the middle of the Pacific, hanging on to an oar, an adult tiger in front of me, sharks beneath me, a storm raging about me. Had I considered my prospects in the light of reason, I surely would have given up and let go of the oar, hoping that I might drown before being eaten. But I don’t recall that I had a single thought during those first minutes of relative safety. I didn’t even notice daybreak. I held on to the oar, I just held on, God only knows why (2003: 140).”

Discussion

Pi Patel is the main character of the novel. Part of the novel tells about Pi as a young teenager, while the other part tells about Pi as an adult. This section discusses educational value in life of pi novel, the most dominant educational value is Intelligence, Open-mindedness, Spirituality, Strong Determination.

Intelligence is having or showing care and conscientiousness in one’s work or duties. Pi’s intelligence is shown since he was a child until he becomes an adult, in the academic field as well as in the real world. To begin with, Pi has good academic achievement. However, more than just academic achievement, Pi’s intelligence is reflected by the fact that he always wants to know about everything and always eager to learn.

Pi is described as an open- minded person, meaning that he is not confined to most people’s way of thinking, or the way of thinking considered “normal” or “usual”. In thinking and deciding on actions to take, Pi is open to all possibilities. His open- mindedness is shown through his past life (especially his early and mid- teens), speech, thoughts, mannerism, and reactions to the situation around him. He is able to acknowledge beliefs that differ from his own belief. Similarly, as an adult, he gets along well with scientists, even though their faith and lifestyle are so much different from his own.

Pi has a high level of spirituality, which is shown through his speech, thoughts, mannerisms, and reactions. Pi believes in three religions: Hindu since his birth, Christianity and Islam since his teens. His reason was simply because he loves all three religions. Furthermore, after learning the in-depth teachings of the religions, Pi came to the conclusion that all those religions have a similarity: they all teach good things. Strong determination is believing in yourself. It means willingness to accept “failure” so you can learn the critical skill of adaptation. It means not compromising on your most important values, and walking the walk, rather than just talking the talk. Since he was a child, Pi has been showing a strong determination. It means that he is firmly committed to the things he does and does not give up easily. It shows that Pi’s



determination to continue his swimming lesson was strong enough despite the difficulty, while the rest of his family gave up.

Defence mechanism can be interpreted the same as the mechanism of self-defence that is how some of the ways individuals reduce feelings of depression, anxiety, stress or conflict is to do mechanisms self-defence whether they do consciously or not. This part identifies how Pi manages to survive, which is divided into three sub-sections based on the ways through which Pi manages to survive. Pi was able to cope with his problems and survive by fully recognizing his strength and weakness. The previous part has discussed Pi's intelligence as his first characteristic, which included his broad knowledge about animals and the nature, his love of reading, his ability to learn from everything around him, a good logical ability, and creativity in devising strategies. In the situation faced by Pi, his superior intelligence became his main strength. While his weakness was his physical frailness (especially compared to a big, fierce tiger) and his lack of familiarity with the wild ocean environment.

He succeeded in making the raft, which indeed became his safe place from the tiger, although it was not too strong. Pi grabbed a rat and threw it to the tiger to distract it, and moved to the raft. The tiger then ate the hyena. If Pi had not made any raft, he would have also been eaten. By considering the odds, Pi was able to take the most realistic step, namely to remain in the lifeboat despite the tiger, as that option was less dangerous than jumping and swimming. Naturally he felt depressed and tired, but he simply refused to give up, because as he said himself, he had a fierce will to live.

Conclusions

After analyzed the novel, this chapter would like to conclude based on the problem statement. To answer the first problem formulation, the writer describes about educational value in Martel's *Life of Pi*. First, Pi is intelligent. In the academic field, he was able to enter the best secondary school in his town and later achieved top grades as a university student. Secondly, Pi is open-minded. He is open-minded in his way of thinking. If the conventional ways fail, then he does not mind trying a new approach, even though it is unusual. Thirdly, Pi is spiritual. He practices three religions with the reason that he wants to love God. Indeed, he loves and believes in God in such a simple way. Lastly, Pi has strong determination. He has a strong will and he does not give up or become desperate easily.

To answer the second problem formulation, the writer describes the defence mechanism. Pi plays an important role, because those defence mechanism enable him to carry out those ways successfully. First, Pi survived by recognizing and using his strength. Naturally, his strength is his intelligence — from his wide knowledge about animals, his strong logic, his ability to apply and combine his vast knowledge, and his creativities. Secondly, Pi survived by being realistic about the situation. Pi's open-mindedness played an important role here, as it enabled him to accept the bizarre and seemingly impossible circumstances and to use unusual ways to deal with his problems. He approached the situation as it was, without modifying any detail to make it more pleasant. Thirdly, Pi survived by adopting positive attitude. His spirituality and strong determination became important, because they prevented him from giving up and boosted his morale when facing difficulties. Despite all the hardships he faced, he kept struggling to live and refused to give up.

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