

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Problem

In western literature, the name Virginia Woolf is not strange anymore. She is one of the greatest novelists who the world has ever had. Even though men dominate the modernist writers, there is also a female writer who is as brilliant as those male writers. “Virginia Woolf is also considered to be a pioneering creator of modernism fiction in the early twentieth century of the English literature”¹. Woolf is also “among the founders of the modernist movement that includes T. S. Eliot, James Joyce, Ezra Pound, and Gertrude Stein”². Besides, she is the centre of the brilliant Bloomsbury group, which included the novelist E. M. Foster, the biographer Lytton Strachery, and many important English intellectuals of the early twentieth century.

The fact that Virginia Woolf is the only female novelist of modernist literature arouses my curiosity to read one of her best novels, *Mrs. Dalloway*. “This novel is Virginia’s fourth novel although many scholars consider it the first of Virginia’s great novel”³. In spite of her masterpiece is *To the Lighthouse* but both *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse* were all recognized as revolutionary, solid productions. Among Virginia notable

¹ Ann, *About Author*, Cliffsnotes, Retrieved from:
<http://www.orlando.jp.org/VWSGB/dat/vwbiog.html>

² C. D Merriman, *Virginia Woolf (1882-1941), English Author, Feminist, Essayist, Publisher, and Critic*. Jalic Inc., 2007

³ *ibid.*

novels, *Mrs. Dalloway* is bestseller novel in Britain as well as in The United States. This novel offers sarcasm of Britain social class and a strong criticism of patriarch. Like the novel that preceded it, *Jacob's Room* (1922), “*Mrs. Dalloway* deals obliquely with the events and social issues surrounding the First World War, focusing on the thoughts and emotions of a variety of characters who all experience these times from differing perspectives”⁴.

Woolf was born in an educated family. She grows up in a wealthy and comfortable home, in which her father's abundant library allows her to take advantages of it. Fortunately, she can also gain the change to observe her father's writing talent and get use to be surrounded by intellectual conversation. But, “her parents have an extremely strong personality until she feels to live under her parents' shadow”⁵. Her natural fragile and harsh life causes her to suffer mental disorder, which leads her commit suicide at the age of 59 years. *Mrs. Dalloway* is a stretch of Virginia's own life, which her scream is almost in the entire text of this novel. ⁶

The theme of insanity actually is intermingling Virginia Woolf's past and future with the present. And, the idea of the story of *Mrs. Dalloway* comes from the unusual organizational strategy that creates a special problem for the novelist that is how to craft characters deep enough to be realistic while treating their lives in only a single day. Virginia solves it by what she called ‘tunneling’ technique, referring to the way her characters

⁴ Mark Hussey, The Female Victims of War in *Mrs. Dalloway*, in *Virginia Woolf and War: Fiction, Reality, Myth*, Syracuse, NY: Syracuse UP, 1991, Retrieved from: <http://www.gradesaver.com/classicnotes/titles/dalloway/about.html>

⁵ loc. cit.

⁶ Ann, *Female Insanity*, 1997, Retrieved from: www.google.com

remember their pasts.⁷

In sense, *Mrs. Dalloway* is a novel without plot, instead of creating major situations between characters to push the story forward. Woolf moves her narrative by following the passing hours of a day. The novel is composed of movements from one character to another, or of movements from the internal thoughts of one character to the internal thoughts of another. She develops William James's literary style 'streams of consciousness'. Steinberg states, "C. Hugh Holman defines a streams of consciousness novel as a type of psychological novel which takes as its subjects matter, the uninterrupted uneven and endless flow of consciousness of one or more of its characters"⁸. Thus, streams of consciousness is a mixture of all the levels of awareness, an unending flows of sensations, thoughts, memories, associations, and reflections. This technique of writing novel indicates individual conscious experience. Further more, the novelist will "write whatever comes across their minds, either it is suitable to the idea of the novel they are writing or not through the conscious experience of their characters"⁹, while producing their novels.

Neale and Davidson explain that, "Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory paved the way for contemporary approaches to understand mental disorders"¹⁰. Hence, Freudian psychoanalytic theory is an effective

⁷ loc. cit.

⁸E. R. Steinberg, *The Stream of Consciousness Technique in the Modern Novel* (New York: Kennikat Press Corp, 1979), p. 123.

⁹ loc. cit.

¹⁰ Gerald C. Davidson and John M. Neale, *Abnormal Psychology* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1996), p. 88.

instrument in analyzing one's behavior thoroughly. In fact, it can also find out the hidden meaning or interpretation of symbolic expression found in dreams, slips of the tongue and artistic or literary works. Moreover, through psychoanalysis people can understand crucial problems more deeply in literary works.

In his psychoanalytic theory, Freud ever stated that human behavior was the product of interaction between the conscious and the unconscious thoughts and feelings within the individual. Freud believed that people had to turn to the unconscious to understand both human behavior in general and psychopathology in particular. "Freud also emphasized the early experiences has an important role to personality development"¹¹. Thus, by emphasizing on the unconscious determinants, Freudian psychoanalytic theory's can explain one's personality, motivation, and mental disorders and also their development or changing.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the background above, the writer would like to analyze:

1. What is the difference between Clarissa and Septimus' response toward their similar causes of traumatic event in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*?
2. Why do Clarissa and Septimus respond differently?

¹¹ *ibid.*, p. 32.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The objective of writing this paper is:

1. To reveal the difference between Clarissa and Septimus' response toward their similar causes of traumatic event in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*
2. To find the reason(s) why Clarissa and Septimus respond differently

1.4 Significance of the Study

In this study, the writer wishes to give contribution on the work of Virginia Woolf especially *Mrs. Dalloway* as one of Woolf's masterpiece novel though considered to be a sensitive and psychological subtlety novel as like this statement, "*Mrs. Dalloway* is considered to be a sensitive and psychological subtlety novel"¹². Through this study the writer dare to bring out the psychological sight of the novel due to the writer curious to reveal the difference between Clarissa and Septimus' response toward their similar causes of traumatic event in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*.

By reading *Mrs. Dalloway*, the readers can see how traumatic experience can lead to a tragic ending in someone's life. The readers can learn that every person has multifaceted systems of personality that define how is the state of one's mentality. An interesting middle –aged woman views life and death around her will broaden our knowledge about the optimistic view to face life and death. Furthermore, the readers can also

¹² loc. cit.

learn how society demands can have a different impact to different individual so that we, as members of a conventional society know how to place ourselves so that we are not driven to the wrong track like what happens to Septimus who decides to commit suicide.

To other fellows, English students especially of the Muhammadiyah University of Surabaya who are going to write paper, it is hoped that this paper can be one of the sources of encouragement especially for those who are going to use psychoanalysis as their approach to analyze modern literary works. Furthermore, this paper can broaden the reader's mind that the usage of stream of unconsciousness technique is really helpful in doing the psychoanalytical study.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of this analysis is going to be on the topic of the different psychological process in responding to the similar causes of trauma of Clarissa Dalloway and Septimus Warren Smith in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*.

The writer limits the source of data by analyzing only the two characters, Clarissa Dalloway and Septimus Warren Smith, as both are representing the traumatic persons. Here, the writer uses a psychological approach, in which the theory that the writer is used is a psychoanalysis theory as the fundamental theory, it is a theory by Sigmund Freud-a psychologist that becomes well-known because of his success to develop the

principles and methods that later called psychological concepts that may support her study. Hence, the writer focuses only on the theories by Sigmund Freud, in which the writer wants reveal the difference between Clarissa and Septimus's response toward their similar causes of traumatic event in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*.

1.6 Method of the Study

The writer applies a library research for this study, hence, the sort of data she uses in order to support this study is:

1. First, is the main data/source that is used in this study is gained from the novel of Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, which published by Harcourt Inc., and with foreword by Maureen Howard, foreword copyright in 1981, USA.
2. And to support this study, the writer also obtained information through online internet, articles, essays, and literary theories about psychology by focusing on psychoanalysis theory of Sigmund Freud, as the fundamental theory because as Weiten Wayne says, "Psychoanalytic theory attempts to explain personality, motivation, and mental disorders by focusing on unconscious determinants of behavior"¹³. The theory includes are for instance the theory of personality considering three major systems they are the *id*, *ego*, and *superego*, the theory of instincts-- the *death instincts* and the *life instincts*--, and other psychological

¹³ op. cit. p. 46.

concepts; as the supporting theory in order to firm her analysis. The supporting data the writer uses are the concept of traumatic event; and the concept on abnormal behavior: *the posttraumatic stress disorder*.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

1. Response is, Neale and Davison say “an expression, which arises to encounter new various challenges”¹⁴
2. Traumatic event is, Neale and Davison say, “...traumatic event, which the person has directly experienced or witnessed or learned about that involved actual or threatened death, or serious injury, or threat to physical integrity”¹⁵
3. Id is the original system of the personality, which Hall says, “It consists of everything that is inherited and is present at birth, including the instincts”¹⁶
4. Ego is, according to Weiten, “The ego thus engages in secondary-process thinking, which is relatively rational, realistic, and oriented towards problem solving”¹⁷
5. Superego is the moral component of personality that incorporates social standards about what represents right or wrong”¹⁸

¹⁴ op. cit., p. 154.

¹⁵ ibid., p. 155.

¹⁶ Calvin S. Hall, *A Primer to Freudian Psychology* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc, 1979), p. 32.

¹⁷ W. Weiten, *Psychology Themes & Variations* (3rded; U. S. A: Brooks/ Cole Publishing Company, 1997), p. 331.

¹⁸ ibid.

6. Instinct is, Hall states, “Instinct is a sum of psychic energy which imparts direction to psychological process. It has a source, an aim, an object, and an impetus”¹⁹
7. PTSD (Posttraumatic Stress Disorders) is, Neale and Davison say “a response that reflects an extreme behavior to a severely stressful event”²⁰

1.8 Organization of the Study

This paper will be divided into four chapters. The first one is introduction. The second is the review of related literature; it is to find out theories that relate to the literary work that is going to be analyzed by the researcher. The third is analysis of the psychological process the difference between Clarissa and Septimus’s response toward their similar causes of traumatic event in Virginia Woolf’s *Mrs. Dalloway*. And the last one is conclusion and suggestion of the research.

¹⁹ op. cit., p. 31.

²⁰ ibid.