



THE DEPRESSION OF THE MAIN CHARACTER DEPICTED  
IN *SPEAK* BY LAURIE HALSE ANDERSON

THESIS

Submitted to Fulfil a Partial Requirement for S.1 Degree  
in the Department of English Faculty of Humanities  
Bung Hatta University

BY:

RIKA WAHYUNI

1310014211017

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT  
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES  
BUNG HATTA UNIVERSITY

PADANG

2017

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First of all, I would like to give my highest praise to Allah SWT, the Almighty God, for the blessing, opportunities and giving strength to me in my life. In addition, I also present my regard to our prophet Muhammad SAW for giving peace and changing our life to the better and brightness.

I would like to give my sincere gratitude for my family, especially my parents. Especially to Wirdona Daini B.A. she is my best mother ever who not only as a mother, but she also be the best patner I ever had in my life, she is a strong woman that I ever meet and I want to be like her in my future. She is as the partner who I can tell about everything that happen in my life . I am so glad I was born as your daughter. I am also so proud to be your little girl Marnalis Yohannes B,sc. He is also be the best father ever and never thought me grow so fast like now, he always recognize me as his lovely little girl. I love you both Buk Wir and Pak Nalis. Thank you for being my parents.Then, I would like to say thank you for all my brothers, Boy R Fernando S.Ti, Rio Naldo S.Kom, Rizal Reinaldo S.Kom who always protected me as their little girl and supported and to my the one and only sister that I have Dilla Resti S.E although sometime she makes me irritated but I love you all .

Alongside with them, I would like to deliver my gratefulness to both of my supervisors:Femmy Dahlan, S.S., M. Hum and Vilia Yusraini, S.S., M. Pdfor their assistance, motivation, attention and patience to guide in finishing this

thesis. Furthermore, I would like to express thank you for my examiner Dr. Elfiondri, S.S., M. Hum for giving suggestions and critics for this thesis.

I also do not forget to give my special thanks for everything to my beloved friend that I ever had in my life Cici Annisa Oktarina who stay with me for almost four years. She is kind of girl who without doubt will criticize me when I'm in the wrong side or way, and fight together to finish our study and thesis no matter in what kind of situation we were. Alhamdulillah we keep our promise to graduation together. Then, thank you to my girls Fannisa Nowizar and Dina Cis Vananda who always supported me in every situation, everytime and always care for me. And my biggest thanks to Riri Kurnia, my sister not by blood who has been with me for almost seven years and she always care everything about me, keep rock yaa. Then, to Noni Eka Putri who also fight together to finish our thesis and for the solidarity to pass this hard time. Love you girls.

I would like to say thank you so much for everyone who come and go in my life. I believe that we meet for a lesson and also thank you for the temporary happiness that you give. Your presents in my life so precious. Last, I also want to deliver thank you for all of my friends in English Departement '13, thank you for the amazing time in four years. Let's achieve our dream! Keep spirit guys! Wish you all the best and May Allah always bless us.

**THE DEPRESSION OF THE MAIN CHARACTER  
DEPICTED IN *SPEAK* BY LAURIE HALSE ANDERSON**

Rika Wahyuni<sup>1</sup>, Femmy Dahlan<sup>2</sup>, Vilia Yusraini<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Student of English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Bung Hatta University  
E-mail : rikawahyuni0206@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup>Lecturer of English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Bung Hatta University

---

**Abstract**

In this paper, the writer analyzes about the depression of the main character. Melinda Sordino which describes in *Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson. The novel is about a girl who experienced the sexual abused. The writer uses psychological theory to analyze depression in *Speak*. The technique of the research applied by the writer is close reading to understand this novel and help the writer to do the analysis. The analysis has two goals which are describing the causes and depression that showed by the main character. The causes of the main character's depression are being sexually abused, bullied, and thinking negatively. The depression of the main character shown by several symptoms. There are feeling of helplessness and hopelessness, loss of interest of daily activity, anger or irritability, loss of energy, self-loathing, concentration problem and unexplained aches and pains. In conclusion, the sexual abuse along with the continuing bullying and negative thinking of herself and about others triggers an ongoing stress which leads to depression.

**Keywords: main character, depression, sexual abuse, bullying, ongoing stress**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>ABSTRACT.....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS.....</b>	<b>iv</b>

### **CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The Reason For Choosing The Topic.....	1
1.2 The Objective and Scope of The Research.....	2
1.3 The Formulation of The Problem.....	3
1.4 Review of Related Literature.....	3
1.4.1 Previous Study.....	3
1.4.2 Theoretical Framework.....	4
1.5 Method of Research.....	8

### **CHAPTER II THE CAUSES OF THE MAIN CHARACTER'S**

#### **DEPRESSION**

2.1 Early Experience.....	10
2.1.1 Being Sexually Abused.....	10
2.1.2 Being Bullied.....	13
2.1.3 Thinking	
Negatively.....	17
2.1.3.1 About Herself.....	17
2.1.3.2 About Others.....	20
2.2 Ongoing Stress.....	23

### **CHAPTER III THE DEPRESSION OF THE MAIN CHARACTER**

3.1 Feelings of helplessness and hopelessness.....	27
3.2 Loss of interest in daily activities.....	28
3.3 Anger or irritability.....	31
3.4 Loss of Energy.....	33
3.5 Self-loathing .....	35
3.6 Concentration Problems.....	37
3.7 Unexplained aches and pain.....	40

**CHAPTER IV**

<b>CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>42</b>
------------------------	-----------

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

## TABLE OF CONTENT

### CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

1.6 The Reason For Choosing The Topic.....	1
1.7 The Objective and Scope of The Research.....	2
1.8 The Formulation of The Problem.....	2
1.9 Review of Related Literature.....	2
1.9.1 Previous Study.....	2
1.9.2 Theoretical Framework.....	3
1.10 Method of Research.....	7
1.11 Presentation.....	8

### CHAPTER II THE CAUSE OF THE MAIN CHARACTER'S DEPRESSION

2.1 Early Experience	
----------------------	--

2.1.1 Being Sexually Abused

2.1.2 Bullied

2.1.3 Thinking Negatively

2.1.3.1 About Herself

2.1.3.2 About Others

2.2 Ongoing Stress

### **CHAPTER III THE SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION OF THE MAIN CHARACTER**

3.1 Feelings of helplessness and hopelessness

3.2 Loss of interest in daily activities

3.3 Anger or irritability

3.4 Loss of Energy

3.5 Self-loathing

3.6 Concentration Problems

### **CHAPTER IV CONCLUSION**

### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**



# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Reason For Choosing The Topic

In every second time in human life, they are dealing with a lot of problems. From the very simple problem that they have and can handle until the big problem that they cannot handle anymore. The human problems can be the cause of psychological problems of someone. One of the common psychological problems that usually happen in human life is depression.

Depression is a condition of thinks, feels, and behavior that can affect or influence of a person, and also can makes the changes from the way people thinking, how their feeling and also how their reaction or behaving about the things around them. Commonly, the depression happens because of several factors. For example, it's happend because of the early experience that they got. A person who get depression usually show the several symptoms as the signs that someone is depression. For instance, a person who get depression will loss their interest in doing activity or about something and they also have the problem of concentration in their life.

One of the literary works that discusses about depression is novel entitled *Speak*. *Speak* was written by Laurie Halse Anderson. She is an American writer best known for children's and young adult novels. She was born October 23, 1961. *Speak* is a *New York Times* Best-Seller. The novel received several awards

and honors, including the 2000 Golden Kite Award and the 2000 ALA Best Books for Young Adults.

The setting of this story is in Syracuse, New York. This novel shows us about the main character symptoms of depression and also what the causes of depression. This novel is about a 9 grades freshman high school girl named Melinda Sordino who gets sexual abuse from her senior in the summer party before her freshman of high school. After get the sexual abuse from her senior Melinda get panic and called the police to the party, some people get arrested because of it, since that time her closest friends refuse to speak to her. Melinda begins her freshman year as an outcast, friendless except for a new student, Heather from Ohio. At school, she also get bullied by her friends, whether it's from the words or from the acts. This story depicts that Melinda is a girl who always thinking negatively about everthing.

This story also illustrates that Melinda showing her depression in a form of symptoms of people who are depressed. Based on synopsis above, the writer is interested to study about the main character's depression. Then, the writer will analyze about the causes and the symptoms of the main character depression in this novel, through the narration by the main character and also by the act and speech of the main character and the others character that depicted about the depression of Melinda Sordino. Because of that the writer entitled this analysis "The Depression Of The Main Character Depicted In *Speak* By Laurie Halse Anderson"

## **1.2 The Objective and The Scope of The Study**

The object of the research is to analyze *Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson by using the psychological theory. The objective of this research is to describe the depression of the main character. Then, the scope of this research will be limited on the causes and symptoms of the main character in *Speak*.

## **1.3 The Formulation of The Problem**

To guide this writing, the writer makes two research questions, in order to achieve a good analysis and lead the writer in her analysis:

1. What are the causes of the main character's depression of the story?
2. How are the depression of the main character in the story?

## **1.4 Review of Related Literature**

### **1.4.1 Previous Study**

The discussion of *Speak* has been held by two previous researchers. The first research is by Yohannes Michael Kristanto from Sanata Dharma University (2013). His research is entitled "Symbols Reflecting to Development of the Main Character of Laurie Halse Anderson's *Speak*". In this research he used the New Criticism Approach. This research is about the three symbols that show in this novel, such as tree, closet, and turkey-bone sculpture. Symbol tree is related to the development of the main character. Symbol closet is related to the place that she like to spend most of her time. And the symbol of turkey-bones sculpture is symbolizes of Melinda's life and poster of Maya Angelou.

The second research is by Widya Agustin (2016) from Andalas University entitled “Reduction of Young Adult Sexual Violence as Reflects in Laurie Halse Anderson’s *Speak*”. This thesis reveals the past of the author Laurie Halse Anderson through her realist fiction *Speak* and her contributions to reduce the sexual violence of children in the neighborhood. The focus of the study is to analyze the main character and narrator novel, Melinda, as a representation of the author. The writer applying biographical theory by Alan Swingewood in revealing the author contributions to reduce the sexual violence of children in neighborhood. The results showed that the main character from the author, the efforts of the author to reduce cases of sexual violence toward the children and negative impact on children who experiencing the sexual violence.

This research, the writer will analyze the same novel with different theory; psychological theory to analyze the causes and the symptoms of the main character depression depicted in this story.

#### **1.4.2 Theoretical Framework**

This chapter is focus on explanation of theory that will conduct this research. The writer uses the psychological theory to analysis depression in *Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson. The other definition to support this theory by Rice P.L “depression is a mood disorder, prolonged states that color all mental processes (thinking, feeling and behaving) a person”.

The depression happen in human life usually because of several possibly factors and for someone who get depressed will show the several symptoms that can be indication if that person is depressed.

According to *Coping With Depression* by Lee Brosan, Jo Cope, Rachael Martin, Alina Hurding, Claire Warrington, Kieron Hegarty and Jo Gresham-Ord. There are a number of causes of depression, some to do with what happens physically and some to do with what happens in your life. Very often when people get depressed a combination of things comes into play. The main ones are listed below:

1. Genetics. People may inherit genes that make them more likely to develop depression. If a lot of people in your family have had difficulties with depression, then this may be the case for you. However, keep in mind that a high rate of depression in a family may also be because of the way people in the family behave towards each other, and thus not due to the direct effect of genes.
2. Brains and Biology. When people are depressed, there are changes in the brain, both in levels of special brain chemicals and in electrical activity. These changes are more marked in people who suffer a lot of physical symptoms of depression (e.g., difficult sleeping, change in appetite, lethargy). When people recover from depression, these changes disappear and brain activity goes back to normal. It is not known whether brain changes cause depression or are a side effect of depression. Other aspects of psychology may also contribute to depression. For example, disturbed sleep can lead to fatigue, irritability and poor problem

solving. This can set the stage for depression to develop. When people are depressed, they often develop significant problems with sleep, which can help to keep the depression going.

3. Early Experience. For some people, life may have been difficult from very early on. There may have been practical difficulties, or they may have been abused or neglected. Their parents may have separated or died. Or they may have had a tough time at school; perhaps they were bullied. In these cases, people are more vulnerable to developing depression, particularly if their early experiences taught them to think negatively.

4. Life Events. For some people, things were going along reasonably well until something awful happened – perhaps their marriage broke down, they lost their job, or a loved one died. Such events can sometimes trigger depression, particularly if they involve major losses.

5. Ongoing Stress. For some people, there is not a single or major event that gets depression started. Sometimes depression is caused by problems that seem to go on and on, with no solution in sight. These problems can be much more ordinary things, such as ongoing problems with work, accommodation, ongoing tension in relationships, or loneliness. The list is pretty long. These stresses are more likely to cause depression if they make people feel trapped or humiliated. (5-6)

In the story, there are two causes of the main character depression that be found by the writer. The first one is Early experience which is consist of being

sexually abused, being bullied and thinking negatively. The second cause of the main character depression is ongoing stress.

Someone who get depressed usually will showing signs or symptoms if she or he get depression. Based on Melinda Smith, M.A., Robert Segal, M.A., and Jeanne Segal, PhD on their article, symptoms of depression can include:

1. Feelings of helplessness and hopelessness. A bleak outlook—nothing will ever get better and there's nothing you can do to improve your situation.
2. Loss of interest in daily activities. You don't care anymore about former hobbies, pastimes, social activities, or sex. You've lost your ability to feel joy and pleasure.
3. Appetite or weight changes. Significant weight loss or weight gain—a change of more than 5% of body weight in a month.
4. Sleep changes. Either insomnia, especially waking in the early hours of the morning, or oversleeping.
5. Anger or irritability. Feeling agitated, restless, or even violent. Your tolerance level is low, your temper short, and everything and everyone gets on your nerves.
6. Loss of energy. Feeling fatigued, sluggish, and physically drained. Your whole body may feel heavy, and even small tasks are exhausting or take longer to complete.
7. Self-loathing. Strong feelings of worthlessness or guilt. You harshly criticize yourself for perceived faults and mistakes.

8. Reckless behavior. You engage in escapist behavior such as substance abuse, compulsive gambling, reckless driving, or dangerous sports.

9. Concentration problems. Trouble focusing, making decisions, or remembering things.

10. Unexplained aches and pains. An increase in physical complaints such as headaches, back pain, aching muscles, and stomach pain.

In this novel there are seven of symptoms of depression can be seen through the main character, such as Feeling Hopelessness, Loss of Interest, Feeling agitated, Loss of Energy, Feeling Worthlessness and Concentration Problems and the last one is Unexplained aches and pains.

### **1.5 Method of Research**

The research is held to study of the main character depression in the novel by applying Psychological Theory. The writer collects the data by doing close reading of the short story and interprets it. “Note specific uses of language, such as imagery, symbols, repeated terms, patterns of expression, the tone of the speaker, and the main ideas the writer introduces. Close reading technique takes the form of writing, discussion or silent observation it should be based on questioning the text.”(Jacobus: 6) “close reading examines details; interpretation aims to establish the overall meaning of work. A work of literature may be interpreted in a number of ways, but some interpretations are more convincing than others. (Jacobus: 8)



The writer collects the information by reading the novel carefully and intensively to get a good understanding about the story. While reading the novel the writer makes a mark or underlines the data to support the analysis. The writer also support her analysis with reading and searching the sources or some articles or anything that makes the writer be more understand about the story and to do the good research. Then, the important data are collected by the writer and classified it according to the topic and research question. In the end, the writer makes the conclusion as the result of the analysis.