

**HEATHCLIFF'S PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT
IN EMILY BRONTE'S *WUTHERING HEIGHTS***

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Abstract

This thesis will discuss about Heathcliff's personality development in the novel *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte. The purpose of this thesis is to analyze how and why the character's personality develops. The writer uses characters, setting, and conflicts for intrinsic theory and Alfred Adler's Individual Psychology for extrinsic theory. For the methodology, the writer uses library research methodology and psychological approach. The result shows that social interest, inferiority complex, goal orientation, and superiority complex give many influences in developing Heathcliff's personality so that he can take over *Wuthering Heights* and *Thrushcross Grange*. In the conclusion, Heathcliff comes as the most dominant and superior character by his personality development.

Keywords: Character, Personality, Social Interest, Goal, Inferiority, Superiority

Introduction

Literature is a creative work which is created as the reflection of human life. In *An Introduction to Study Literature*, Hudson says that literature is a record of what men have seen in life and what they have experienced of it (2010: 11). He

also adds that literature is an expression of life in the medium of language (2010: 11). In other words, literature takes human life and expressions as the sources which are embodied into a work.

Many kinds of literary works adopt human life and expressions to be expressed into an art of language. One of them is novel. Novel may express the author's personality, people's personality in real life, or just the author's imagination to build a personality in the characters within the story. One of the novels that represents human personality is a novel by Emily Bronte, *Wuthering Heights*.

This novel tells about the love story between Heathcliff and Catherine which involves the hatred and revenge by Heathcliff. The conflicts between Heathcliff and other characters develop his personality and life from an innocent and poor boy to be a superior and wealthy man. The way Heathcliff struggles for his goals points out his progressive personality which comes as the main focus in analyzing the novel in this thesis.

This novel can be analyzed using psychological theories since it tells about human life experience that has any close relationship to psychology. Heathcliff's personality is influenced by the social environment and situation. His life experience creates his emotion and behaviour that develops and becomes part of him. The personality development of Heathcliff becomes a consideration in analyzing this novel using Individual Psychology theory by Alfred Adler. The thesis is compiled with the title "Heathcliff's Personality Development in Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*".

Purposes of the Study

The specific purposes of this thesis are:

1. To explain Heathcliff's experiences that affect his personality.
2. To analyze the specific goals of Heathcliff which lead his personality to develop.
3. To explain how Heathcliff's personality develops from the beginning until the end of the novel.

Analysis

Social interest influences someone's personality since childhood. The education by parents develops their sense of social interest. Therefore, they are capable to adapt to society and get their useful side of life. Even though social interest is an important element to build a good cooperation between individuals and society, Heathcliff does not fulfill this criteria. He is lacking of social interest which influences his development. Heathcliff grows up with no sense of social interest. His foster father's death, Mr. Earnshaw, makes his courage fading away. He loses his interest to books or learning after he loses Mr. Earnshaw. Nelly Dean adds:

Then personal appearance sympathised with mental deterioration: he acquired a slouching gait, and ignoble look; his naturally reserved disposition was exaggerated into an almost idiotic excess of unsociable moroseness; and he took a grim pleasure, apparently, in exciting the aversion rather than the esteem of his few acquaintance (1996: 49).

He becomes unsociable man. He used to raise people's aversion to him. The deterioration of his actions becomes an indication of his incapability to get another encouragement. He is incapable to overcome his own problems. From this point, he begins losing his social interest.

His lack of social interest then influences his inferiority feeling to be greater. Heathcliff who is always abused by Hindley, feels weaker and inferior than him. His background as an abandoned and orphan boy creates his inferiority feeling to others. His inferiority feeling to Hindley is reflected in Nelly Dean's statement:

He seemed a sullen, patient child; hardened, perhaps, to ill-treatment: he would stand Hindley's blows without winking or shedding a tear, and my pinches moved him only to draw in a breath and open his eyes, as if he had hurt himself by accident, and nobody was to blame (1996: 27).

Heathcliff who is always abused by Hindley never strikes him back. He never blames Hindley or scolds him. His silence resembles his inferior feeling to Hindley.

Heathcliff's inferiority feeling turns into inferiority complex once he meets Edgar Linton. Edgar Linton is a well-mannered boy from an honorable family who lives in Thrushcross Grange. Heathcliff's inferiority feeling to Edgar is shown in the conversation between Heathcliff and Nelly Dean. Heathcliff states:

'But, Nelly, if I knocked him down twenty times, that wouldn't make him less handsome, or me more so. I wish I had light hair and a fair skin, and was dressed, and behaved as well, and had a chance of being as rich as he will be! (1996: 41)'.

From his words above, Heathcliff feels inferior to Edgar Linton by comparing himself to Edgar. He feels that Edgar is more handsome than himself. He states that Edgar is well-mannered and rich. His inferiority comes out when his background as an orphan is recalled back. His feeling of inferiority toward Edgar becomes obvious when he wishes to be like Edgar. Heathcliff says, “‘In other words, I must wish for Edgar Linton’s great blue eyes, and even forehead,’ he replied. ‘I do – and that won’t help me to them’” (1996: 41). These sentences express his inferiority that turns to be greater by comparing himself and wishing something he does not have.

Social interest and inferiority feeling lead the characters to set their power and goal as their compensation. They create their path to their goals in many ways. This path then affects their behavior and personality.

The bad treatments by Hindley affect in Heathcliff’s behaviour. Heathcliff’s inferiority complex which is caused by Hindley leads him to set his goal. His goals are implied in this dialogue between Heathcliff and Nelly Dean.

‘I’m [Heathcliff] trying to settle how I shall pay Hindley back. I don’t care how long I wait, if I can only do it, at last. I hope he will not die before I do!’

‘For shame, Heathcliff!’ said I. ‘It is for God to punish wicked people; we should learn to forgive.’

‘No, God won’t have the satisfaction that I shall,’ he returned. ‘I only wish I knew the best way! Let me alone, and I’ll plan it out: while I’m thinking of that, I don’t feel pain’ (1996: 44).

In this dialogue, it can be seen that Heathcliff plans to take revenge on Hindley. He thinks of the his best way to gain his will. His will to take revenge to

Hindley influences his former personality. His will indirectly develops his personality from a patient and uncomplaining kid to rough and vindictive man.

Heathcliff actually has the main goal of his life. He wants to be united with his love, Catherine. After Catherine's death, Heathcliff states, "... I dreamt I was sleeping the last sleep, by that sleeper [Catherine], with my heart stopped, and my cheek frozen against hers'" (1996: 212). From his words, Heathcliff implies his will to be with Catherine. His dream about Catherine also reflects his latent goal to be united with her. This goal becomes his last goal before his death. This goal also becomes the main reason of all his behaviors throughout the novel.

Heathcliff has gained his superiority by possessing Wuthering Heights. In this case, Wuthering Heights which should be possessed by Hareton has been settled by Heathcliff. Then, Heathcliff makes Hareton to be his servant. His superiority feeling turns into superiority complex when he has an eager desire to possess Thrushcross Grange.

Heathcliff went up once, to show her Linton's will. He had bequeathed the whole of his, and what had been her, moveable property to his father. The poor creature was threatened, or coaxed, into that act during her week's absence, when his uncle died. The lands, being a minor, he could not meddle with. However, Mr. Heathcliff has claimed and kept them in his wife's right, and his also – I suppose legally – at any rate, Catherine, destitute of cash and friends, cannot disturb his possession (1996: 216).

To attain his goal in possessing Thrushcross Grange, Heathcliff forces Cathy to marry Linton. He also forces Linton to write such will. Cathy's property and wealth then move to Heathcliff's possession. Heathcliff represents his possession in the beginning of the story when Lockwood as his new tenant comes to his

dwelling. Heathcliff claims, “‘Thrushcross Grange is my own, sir,’“ (1996: 1). Heathcliff states that Thrushcross Grange is his own. His words indicates that Heathcliff has been taking over Thrushcross Grange. From these dialogues, it can be seen Heathcliff’s superiority by owning Thrushcross Grange, the place where his rival used to live.

Heathcliff then gains his superiority after he reunites with Catherine in his death. He is buried beside Catherine’s grave as he wishes. After Heathcliff’s death, Nelly Dean tells Lockwood:

Yet that old man by the kitchen fire affirms he has seen two on ‘em looking out of his chamber window on every rainy night since his [Heathcliff] death – and an odd thing happened to me about a month ago.

I was going to the Grange one evening – a dark evening, threatening thunder – and, just at the turn of the Heights, I encountered a little boy with a sheep and two lambs before him, he was crying terribly, and I supposed the lambs were skittish, and would not be guided.

‘What is the matter, my little man?’ I asked.

‘They’s Heathcliff, and a woman yonder, under t’ Nab,’ he blubbered, ‘un’ Aw darnut pass ‘em’” (1996: 247).

Nelly Dean tells Lockwood about the strange events after Heathcliff’s death. She says that an old man sees two people in Heathcliff’s chamber. She also says that there is a boy who cries after he sees Heathcliff and a woman. Eventhough there is no certain proofs whether the strange events are true or not, the two creatures that has been seen by the old man and the boy can be considered as Heathcliff and Catherine. This events can be an indication of Heathcliff’s reunion with Catherine. They are reunited in their afterlife.

Conclusion

The analysis above explains Heathcliff's personality development based on social interest, inferiority complex, goal orientation, and superiority complex. Heathcliff, who used to be a weak boy as an orphan, starts to set his goal to avenge Hindley and Edgar. Heathcliff loses Mr. Earnshaw's affections which makes him lack of social interest just like Hindley. Hindley and Edgar's bad treatments to Heathcliff create his inferiority complex. He then sets his goals to avenge them in any ways. His absence for three years points out his struggles to raise his position to be equal to Hindley and Edgar. Heathcliff then succeeds to take over Wuthering Heights from Hindley as his debt payments. Heathcliff also takes over Edgar's dwelling, Thrushcross Grange, by forcing Edgar's daughter, Cathy, to marry his son.

Heathcliff's movement through his life points out his personality development. He moves toward his goals and makes him indirectly develops himself from his former position. He used to be a stranger in Wuthering Heights. He used to be a weak and oppressed boy in his environment as well. He then develops his personality to be a hard-hearted man and becomes an oppressor to others just like what others have done to him. Eventhough some of Heathcliff's actions to achieve his goal are wrong, however, Heathcliff comes as the dominant and superior character in the novel. He struggles and works hard in order to gain his goal. Once he gets his superiority by owning Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange, he still has one main goal: to be united with Catherine.

Bibliography

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