

MEURSAULT'S DESIRE IN ALBERT CAMUS'

THE STRANGER: A LACANIAN STUDY

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Abstract

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This research is entitled “Meursault’s Desire in the Novel The Stranger: A Lacan Study”. The purpose of this research is to analyze the desires of the main character in the novel The Stranger by Albert Camus using the desire theory by Jacques Lacan. The method used in this research is a qualitative research method using library research to collect data in the form of words, phrases, sentences, dialogue, and so on. Researchers use the three concepts of desire theory by Jacques Lacan (1953) to analyze the main character’s desires in terms of Imaginary, Symbolic and Real order. The results of this research concluded that the Imaginary stage was not found because there were no characters in the novel who told about their lives as children. However, in this novel you can find the Symbolic and Real order that inhabit in Meursault’s personality. So, the desire that he has and is represented in his personality and habits, namely to live as he wishes, even though it is contrary to existing norms, makes him a Subject as emptiness as stated in Lacan’s theory.

INTRODUCTION

Background

In the literary realm, language serves as a conduit for expressing characters within a narrative. These characters, often born from the author’s imagination, embody various traits that captivate audiences and convey deeper meanings. Psychological dimensions intricately woven into characters further enrich their portrayal, reflecting the author’s social and cultural constructs. As Al-Qalb (2021) suggests, human psyche is shaped not only by external influences but also by internal factors like emotions and beliefs. Therapeutic practices, as noted by Lukman (2016: 32), delve into individuals’ inner

thoughts and feelings, unveiling unconscious realms that underpin behavior.

Freud and Watson’s contrasting views on human psychology, as elucidated by Rahmat (2003: 111), shed light on the complexities of human motivation and behavior. While Freud attributes them to early psychosexual events and intrapsychic forces, Watson emphasizes environmental determinants. This intricate interplay of internal and external factors underscores the multifaceted nature of human existence.

Wibawa (2021: 953) posits that human life not only entails physical needs but also a fundamental need for recognition and acceptance. Social creatures by nature, individuals seek validation within their social spheres, adhering to societal norms to

foster harmonious relationships. Norms, whether religious, moral, civil, or legal, serve as guiding principles shaping social conduct and fostering cohesion within communities (Wibawa, 2021: 954).

In literary works, characters serve as conduits for exploring societal norms and interpersonal dynamics. Main characters, in particular, drive the narrative, offering insights into human complexities and societal constructs. Through characters like Meursault in Albert Camus' "The Stranger," authors communicate profound messages about existentialism and societal alienation.

Modern literary analysis extends beyond structural considerations to encompass psychoanalytic perspectives. Scholars, inspired by Freud's foundational work, employ psychoanalytic frameworks to dissect characters' inner workings and motivations. Camus' Meursault, with his indifference and existential detachment, embodies the absurdity of human existence (Camus, 1946: 17). His unconventional worldview challenges societal norms, sparking scholarly interest in psychoanalyzing his desires and behaviors.

Faruk (2012: 196) contends that human desires, though inherent, often remain latent or suppressed due to societal constraints. Freudian psychoanalysis, with its emphasis on the unconscious, offers a lens through which to explore these suppressed desires. Lacanian psychoanalytic theory, building upon Freud's work, introduces concepts like the Imaginary, Symbolic, and Real orders, elucidating the intricacies of human subjectivity (Susanto, 2012: 67).

Jacques Lacan's psychoanalytic framework, rooted in linguistic and symbolic analysis, unveils the subconscious desires that drive human behavior. Meursault's existential journey in "The Stranger" exemplifies Lacanian concepts of desire and subjectivity, as he navigates the complexities of life and societal expectations.

The enduring popularity of "The Stranger" attests to its profound impact on

literature and philosophy. Camus' exploration of absurdism and existentialism resonates across cultures, garnering global acclaim and recognition, including the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1957. Through characters like Meursault, Camus challenges conventional notions of existence, inviting readers to ponder life's inherent absurdities.

Problem Formulation

Based on the explanation above, the researcher needs to answer a question "What is Meursault's desire?"

Objectives

This study tries to analyse Meursault's desire that is expressed in his daily life. With Lacanian psychoanalytic perspective, this study tries to show ideas about three subjectivity orders that are represented in the main character of the novel.

Methodology

Data and Source Data. The primary data of this research is from dialog, conflict and the personality that presented Meursault. This study uses the novel *The Stranger* by Albert Camus in English version that was published in 1946 by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. The form of the data that was used from this research are dialog, monologue, and the narration of the book. The secondary data of this research is from other thesis and journals, articles about desire, and then as well as critical works that support and can be used in this research.

Method of Collecting Data. In conducting this study the author used library research as a technique used in the study. In the library research the author, read the whole novel and then start collecting data from the content of the novel, especially from the society, dialog and the conflict in the novel. Then used systematic browsing, to find the theory and compare it with other journals or articles. For collecting the data, the researcher analysed and classified the three orders of

desire that were represented in Meursault in the novel *The Stranger* by Albert Camus.

Method of Analyzing Data. The data collected by the researcher is analysed and interpreted using psychological theory which relates to the desire theory. The researcher addresses the problem formulation and discusses how the condition might be explained by the theory that was applied. Through Lacanian theory, researchers want to identify the Meursault character's personality in the novel using the theory of desire which includes Lacan's three orders of subjectivity, Imaginary Order, Symbolic Order, and The Real Order. Where the desires of the main character in the novel can be revealed.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Psychology of Literature

Literature, an art form employing language as its medium, often manifests characteristics stemming from imagination or reflecting the author's desires, notably through character portrayal. Psychoanalytic theory, delving into human mental function and development, finds application in literary creation, either consciously or unconsciously. This integration sparks interest in narrative and its underlying meanings (Faruk, 2012: 196; Anas, 2015: 1).

Human desires, according to Faruk, are intrinsic deficiencies necessitating satisfaction throughout life (Faruk, 2012: 196). Despite desire being perceived as disruptive to the symbolic order, literature offers a realm to explore these desires, portraying them in symbolic forms (Ratna, 2004: 62). Freud's psychoanalytic theory, a cornerstone in understanding human psychology, intersects significantly with literary analysis, emphasizing the presence of psychological aspects within literary works (Minderop, 2016: 2). Psychoanalytic theory, with its insights into personality development and human behavior, intertwines with literature, both mediums presenting a lens into human existence

(Minderop, 2015: 9). Freud's notion of unconscious desires persistently active underlies the depth of human behavior, enriching the exploration of psychological themes in literature.

Desire Theory

The theory of desire, as articulated by Lacan, revolves around the unconscious as central to psychoanalysis. Lacan's breakthrough, building upon Freud's work, highlights the divergence between the unconscious and conscious realms, emphasizing how the unconscious manifests differently, releasing memories and adopting distinct features. This understanding underscores Lacan's pivotal contribution to variations in comprehending the unconscious (Écrits, 2006: 425).

Lacan's theory of desire embeds subjectivity, echoing Freud's notion that the subject is a manifestation of the unconscious. Within Lacan's framework, the subject emerges as a modern construct, shaped by unconscious forces. Subjectivity, as per Lacan, encompasses various characteristics, notably the depiction of the subject as an empty entity (Lukman, 2016: 70). Lacan elucidates how individuals form themselves, revealing subjectivity as inherently linked to the unconscious.

Within Lacan's discourse, desire is dissected into three orders of subjectivity:

1. Imaginary

The Imaginary order precedes the Symbolic, portraying a stage where the ego exists in a realm dominated by imagery. Through the "mirror stage," individuals undergo a process of self-recognition, identifying with images that reflect an illusory self (Lukman, 2016: 74).

2. Symbolic

The Symbolic realm delves into subconscious thinking and linguistic structures, wherein language acts as the primary signifier of the self. As individuals navigate the Symbolic order, they engage in relationships and grasp concepts like time and history. Language, driven by desire and

a sense of loss, emerges as a tool for identification (Lukman, 2016: 77).

3. The Real

The Real order, transcending linguistic expression, represents an unattainable wholeness. Lacan posits it as an object of inexplicable anxiety, underpinning fantasies that safeguard its elusive nature (Lukman, 2016: 77-78).

ANALYSIS

The researcher provides the answer of the problem formulation by using Jacques Lacan desire theory. After reading and understanding both the novel and theory comprehensively as well as collecting the data related, the researcher tries to analyse the desire of Meursault in Albert Camus novel *The Stranger* based on observational learning.

Lacan defines the levels of human development, where Lacan says the levels of development themselves are: imaginary (Mirror Stage) order, symbolic order, the real order. Based on these three issues, each has its own working principles and dynamics, but all three are related to each other and it is difficult to separate their influence on human behaviour and psychology. To see Meursault's personality in Albert Camus' novel *The Stranger* then the researcher will classify Meursault's desires based on his character and interactions with the people around him.

1. Imaginary (Mirror Stages) Order

The imaginary stage or mirror stage in Lacan's discussion is a stage that refers to children aged 6-18 months getting to know themselves by seeing themselves in the mirror for the first time. This mirror stage explains how the development of an ego, a self-image combines in a state of imagination. The image that appears reflected is himself but is also not his true self, where there is a blurring between subject and object (Lukman, 2016: 71-72).

Based on the analysis of Meursault's character in the novel *The Stranger*, there is no part in the novel that tells about Meursault as a child. This stage is part of

the ego formation process in the subject.

2. Symbolic Order

The Symbolic order is the subconscious world which is then associated with subconscious thinking and researching aspects of language. Someone who speaks or writes always manifests themselves with language and with signs (Sikana, 2005: 175). What this means is that the symbolic structure is entered following the path of childhood language development, and with that language it then enters the social world, meaning that children continue to enter the social world by gradually using language. Through the Meursault character researchers found and analyzed the data as follows:

When Meursault received news that his mother had died, he talked to his employer to ask for permission to go on holiday to go to his mother's funeral. He said without thinking to his employer that his mother's death was not his fault, which of course made the atmosphere a bit awkward. Meursault shouldn't have said that and it's shows that Meursault is outspoken person.

"I have fixed up with my employer for two days' leave; obviously, under the circumstances, he couldn't refuse. Still, I had an idea he looked annoyed, and I said, without thinking: "Sorry, sir, but it's not my fault, you know."

Afterwards it struck me I needn't have said that. I had no reason to excuse myself; it was up to him to express his sympathy and so forth .(Camus, 1946: 4)

Regarding the dialogue above is Lacan Symbolic order, the expression given by the employer to Meursault has two meanings, namely that it is difficult for him to give him vacation leave, on the other hand, this expression can also be interpreted as feelings of surprise and sympathy. In the sentence *"Sorry sir, but it's not my fault, you know."* Meursault realises his mistake in speaking, where this sentence is a reflex of his unconscious which he said without thinking. This is in accordance with Lacan's Symbolic order understanding where in

relation to the unconscious area, Lacan explains that “the unconscious area has the same structure as a language” (Lukman, 2016: 66).

There was an incident which made his actions look indifferent to others. Where he was offered by the officer to see his mother’s body one last time, but the answer “No need” made the officer look at him. And when Meursault’s spontaneous reaction certainly creates an ambiguous reaction for the officer’s.

“We put the lid on, but I was told to unscrew it when you came, so that you could see her.”

While he was going up to the coffin I told him not to trouble.

“Eh? What’s that?” he exclaimed. “You don’t want me to ...?”

“No,” I said.

He put back the screwdriver in his pocket and stared at me. I realized then that I shouldn’t have said, “No,” and it made me rather embarrassed. (Camus, 1946: 6)

Regarding on the dialog above, based on the last sentence it’s Symbolic order. Where the officer’s gaze at Meursault has a meaning that it may seem strange to him. Because he may think it is normal for family members to see the bodies of their deceased family members, as a form of their last respect. But the conflicting reaction that Meursault shows with what usually happens makes the atmosphere feel awkward and silent. In Jacques Lacan theory, the Symbolic World is the subconscious world which is then associated with subconscious thinking and researching aspects of language. Someone who speaks or writes always manifests themselves with language and with signs (Sikana, 2005: 175).

Marie came that evening and asked me if I’d marry her; I said I didn’t mind; if she was keen on it, we’d get married.

Then she asked me again if I love her, I replied, as much as before, that her question meant nothing or next to nothing—but I supposed I didn’t. (Camus

1946:28)

Based on Meursault’s conversation above with his girlfriend Marie, the quote above is part of Meursault’s Symbolic order. He agreed to marry her girlfriend, Marie. But the expression and response that Meursault gave was something that his lover did not expect, it seemed indifferent and relaxed, this might have made Marie doubt Meursault’s love by asking him again whether the man really loved him. And again Meursault thinks Marie’s question is not important, because just loving the girl is enough for Meursault without having to know the meaning of love and what loving is like.

There’s a situation where Meursault was asked by his friend and neighbour, Raymond, to help him write a letter to his lover. And in this situation Meursault shows symbolic order based on Lacan desire theory.

I wrote the letter. I didn’t take much trouble over it, but I wanted to satisfy Raymond, as I’d no reason not to satisfy him. (Camus, 1946: 22)

In the paragraph above, is part of the Symbolic order where Meursault carries out these actions based on his closeness to Raymond. This is in accordance with the Symbolic understanding according to Sikana, where the structural system in the existing Symbolic structure such as birth, kinship, gender and language are the development factors (Sikana, 2005: 176). And Meursault’s actions were done because he wanted to satisfy Raymond. This is in line with Lacan’s understanding of the explanation of the subject of emptiness. Where he exists because of the signifiers, and the signifiers here can be seen through his interactions with Raymond. His desire to help Raymond is proof of the lack within Meursault.

The hall was dark and, when I was starting up the stairs, I almost bumped into old Salamano, who lived on the same floor as I. As usual, he had his dog with

him. For eight years the two had been inseparable. Salamano's spaniel is an ugly brute, afflicted with some skin disease—mange, I suspect; anyhow, it has lost all its hair and its body is covered with brown scabs. Perhaps through living in one small room, cooped up with his dog, Salamano has come to resemble it. (Camus, 1946: 18-19)

Next data above is Symbolic order, where Meursault's response to his neighbour named Salamano, how does Meursault give his thoughts on Salamano's life which is almost the same as his dog's in representing Salamano's life which is not cared for just like his dog. And it's part of desire theory based on Symbolic order. How he compared someone here represent as a "symbol" of how he sees Salamano who looks like his dog.

There's a situation where Meursault got asking repeatedly by the police about the murder that befell him, until he was tried and questioned by the magistrate. This incident occurred after he shot an Arab, causing the person to die.

Then he inquired if I had chosen a lawyer to defend me. I answered, "No," I hadn't thought about it, and asked him if it was really necessary for me to have one.

"Why do you ask that?" he said. I replied that I regarded my case as very simple. He smiled. "Well, it may seem so to you. But we've got to abide by the law, and, if you don't engage a lawyer, the court will have to appoint one for you."

"...."

When leaving, I very nearly held out my hand and said, "Good-by", just in time I remembered that I'd killed a man. (Camus, 1946: 40)

From the conversation above show the Symbolic order that can be show through Meursault's answers and behaviour when he answer the question. He don't really care and not afraid or feel worried about what happen to him. Like someone who doesn't really care about the law and his life. And

this is shown in the last quote where he thought about saying goodbye and thought better of it because he had killed someone, he should not be friendly in a situation like that. How reckless he is.

The other situation where he show indifferent, where he had a conversation with a man. They talk about the funeral of Meursault Mother that this man thought it's carried out quickly. Even this man said something impolite to Meursault's in that condition where his Mother died, he doesn't feel offended by that man talk about.

"Here," he had said, "things have to go to with a rush, like. You've hardly time to get used to the idea that someone's dead, before you're hauled off to the funeral."

"That's enough," his wife had put in. "You didn't ought to say such a things to the poor young gentleman." The old fellow had blushed and begun to apologize. I told him it was quite all right. As a matter of fact, i found it rather interesting, what he'd been telling me; I hadn't thought of that before. (Camus, 1946: 7)

In the next data showed it is a form of Symbolic order based on Lacan desire theory. The dialogue above shows a woman reprimanding her husband for saying things that he thought were inappropriate to say to Meursault who was mourning at that time. And Meursault's answer and reaction shows that he has no problem with this, with the quote *"As a matter of fact, I found it rather interesting, what he'd been telling me; I hadn't thought of that before,"* as a form of not being offended by the old man. Which is in Lacan Symbolic order, desire arises and language becomes the frame of the Subject. Characterized by how the subject unconsciously utters words or sentences.

There is a data where Meursault who is going on holiday with Raymond and Marie. They went on holiday to the beach and stayed for a while at the place where Raymond's friend Masson lived. In this incident Meursault shows that he interested to getting married, and in this moment he

makes a different thought about married.

For the first time, perhaps, I seriously considered the possibility of marrying her. (Camus, 1946: 33)

The next data based on the paragraph above, it shows Meursault's interest in his girlfriend Marie who is talking and laughing with Masson's wife, and the quote above shows the Symbolic order in Meursault who seriously wants a marriage with his girlfriend Marie. Unlike before, where he seemed indifferent and didn't really seriously consider a relationship, especially marriage. This shows a change that occurs with Meursault, where he desires to marry the girl he loves.

There was an incident where Meursault, who was on holiday with Raymond at that time, had to experience an unpleasant incident. where after finishing lunch they went swimming at the beach. They decided to walk outside to get some fresh air, unexpectedly they met two Arabs who they had met at the bus stop before leaving for Masson's place. On their way, these two Arabs were already targeting Raymond and Raymond knew this, and a fight could not be avoided where one of them injured Raymond's face until the corner of his lips and hand were torn by the knife used by the Arab. Feeling unable to accept the situation, after being treated, Raymond went back out and looked for the two Arabs, followed by Masson and Meursault.

Raymond said to me: "Shall I plug him one?"

I thought quickly. If I told him not to, considering the mood he was in, he might very well fly into a temper and use his gun. So I said the first thing that came into my head.

"He hasn't spoken to you yet. It would be a lowdown trick to shoot him like that, in cold blood." (Camus, 1946: 37)

The next data is a quite precarious scene experienced by these three people (Meursault, Raymond, and Raymond

friend). And the conversation above shows Symbolic order that represent, where with swift action Meursault advises Raymond not to be careless by shooting a bullet at one of them. Meursault's efforts to believe Raymond in his words and how he is quite careful when speaking so that Raymond does not create chaos. That act from Meursault symbolised his way to make Raymond calm and thought first, his act shows that he won't make them pay attention and this holiday chaos of Raymond reckless action.

The another event where Meursault has spent six months in prison, after he shot the Arab. He has carried out various activities while in prison. Here Meursault begins to have the habit of imagining sharing things in his room and talking by himself in the cell.

So I learned that even after a single day's experience of the outside world a man could easily live a hundred years in prison. He'd have laid up enough memories never to be bored. Obviously, in one way, this was compensation. (Camus, 1946: 50)

For the paragraph above is the part of Symbolic order, where this quote is part of the symbolisation that has a meaning of how he has gone through many things in prison, through many experiences during his life and in prison he has learned many things.

His tone and the look of triumph on his face, as he glanced at me, were so marked that I felt as I hadn't felt for ages. I had a foolish desire to burst into tears. For the first time I'd realized how all these people loathed me. (Camus, 1946: 56)

The data above is part of Symbolic order, where he was in court, the prosecutor asked questions about Meursault's act at his mother's funeral and his reasons for sending his mother to "Home", asking questions that had nothing to do with the case. The underlined quote is symbolitaton of how frustrated Meursault in that situation

at that time, people hated him so much and criticized his character for not looking reflective at the funeral and not showing any sadness. As a form of frustration, he unconsciously expressed the thought of crying over his isolated situation.

3. Real Order

According to Lacan, humans are imprisoned not in reality, but in a large glass world of signifiers (Sikana, 2005: 179). In this phase, this real supports fantasy, and fantasy protects the order of reality. Which is represented through events, sounds, small things from reality, which prove that we are not dreaming. Researchers found and analyze the data as follows:

For the present, it's almost as if Mother weren't really dead. The funeral will bring it home to me, put an official seal on it, so to speak... (Camus, 1946: 4)

The paragraph above, where Meursault's express feelings of thinking that his mother has not died. This is a form of real expression expressed by Meursault, where the fact is that his mother is no longer alive. According to Lacan, humans are imprisoned not in reality, but in a large glass world of signifiers (Sikana, 2005: 179). this Real supports fantasy, and fantasy protects the order of this Real. Which is represented through events, sounds, small things from reality, which prove that we are not dreaming.

Meursault express his feeling from his mother's departure in the form of a monologue. Where he thinks his Mother still alive.

Just one more thing; I gathered from your mother's friends that she wished to be buried with the rites of the Church. I've made arrangements for this; but I thought I should let you know."

I thanked him. So far as I knew, my mother, though not a professed atheist, had never given a thought to religion in her life. (Camus, 1946: 5)

Based on the paragraph above, it's the

Real order based on Lacanian theory. It can be said that the communication between mother and child was not very good, where simple things like this were only discovered after the mother died. And the fact that he found out that his Mother was Christian through this event, can shows that Meursault not close to his Mother.

In the next incident, Meursault shows interaction with the funeral attendant. It can be seen in the conversation that Meursault is not sure about his mother's age, when he was asked by the man. That can be show how individualist he was.

"Sun's pretty bad today, ain't it?"

"Yes," I said.

After a while he asked: "Is it your mother we're burying?"

"Yes," I said again.

"What was her age?"

"Well, she was getting on." As a matter of fact, I didn't know exactly how old she was. After that he kept silent. (Camus, 1946: 11)

The paragraph above is Meursault's answer the question of the man, the data shows that it's part of Real order. Through the conversation, it's a clear form of his ignorance regarding matters related to his mother. As normal people would give affection and will pay attention to their family, but Meursault's give a different action to his family. Where he seemed to only care about himself.

Through the other event before that show his desire through his character. He always show different thought from the other. He act like he want, he spoke what he want, he become a person who living according to what he wants. Like this event, he shows a different thought through his action.

He suggest I should go to the refectory for dinner; but I wasn't hungry. Then he proposed bringing me a mug of café au lait. As I am a very partial to café au lait I said, "Thanks," and a few minutes later he came back with a tray. I drank the coffee, and then I wanted a cigarette. But

I wasn't sure if I should smoke, under the circumstances—in Mother's presence. I thought it over; really, it didn't seem to matter, so I offered her a cigarette, and we both smoked. (Camus, 1946: 7)

From the paragraph above is Real order, it can be seen that Meursault acts according to what he wants. In this phase, Meursault's inner fantasy or desire to do something (smoking) is being realized. But first, Meursault realizes that perhaps his actions were inappropriate for him to do during a period of mourning as in the sentence, "But I wasn't sure if I should smoke, under the circumstances – in Mother's presence". Even though he was like that, he still did what he wanted and didn't think it was a problem.

For the other incident where Meursault is on a date with his girlfriend Marie Cordona. After swimming, Marie sees Meursault wearing a black tie as a sign of mourning. And through their conversation and Meursault desire to explain about his Mother dead make him look as a subject of emptiness like Lacan's theory.

When we had dressed, she stared at my black tie and asked if I was in mourning. I explained that my mother died. "When?" she asked, and I said, "Yesterday." She made no remark, though I thought she shrank away a little. I was just going to explain to her that it wasn't my fault, but I checked myself as I remembered having said the same thing to my employer, and realizing then it sounded rather foolish. (Camus, 1946: 14)

For the next data, based on the paragraph above shows Real order, where Meursault wants to explain that his mother's death was not his fault, but he realizes his previous mistake and the reaction he received after saying that so he decides not to repeat it when he is with Marie. This is a real action by Meursault who consciously avoids things he thinks are stupid or unnecessary. Here we can see the fragmentation of Meursault as a Subject,

because of previous events that made Meursault's image seen as strange.

It occurred to me that somehow I'd got through another Sunday, that Mother now was buried, and tomorrow I'd be going back to work as usual. Really, nothing in my life had changed. (Camus, 1946: 17)

In the paragraph above, this part is Meursault's monologue that shows the Real order. Where he realized the reality of the life he had been through in the last week, alluding to the departure of his mother and the fact that tomorrow he would have to return to work as usual. Meursault's last sentence interprets that his life has not changed in the absence of his mother, his routine will continue as usual. This is in accordance with Lacan's understanding of Real order, where Real order is the fantasies that exist in the subject which are realized in language (Lukman, 2016:).

But I had to stop looking at them as Marie was shouting to me that we mustn't lose hope.

"Certainly not, " I answered.

"..."

"It'll all come right, you'll see, and then we shall get married." (Camus, 1946: 47)

The paragraph above where is Meursault's interaction with Marie when Marie visited him in prison. It can be seen in Meursault's answer to believe his lover that this will end and they will be get married. It appears that Meursault has a desire to marry his lover and believes that there is still hope for the two of them.

The other event that show Meursault realistic person, when he had the conversation with the employer. The employer said he would open a branch in Paris and he invited Meursault to try working in the city of Paris where the branch was opened. Meursault was no problem with the move, seeing Meursault's reaction, which seemed displeased or not concerned with the news, the employer's reaction seemed disappointed with Meursault's reaction by describing him as

someone who had a “lacked ambition” even though he was still young and he should be thinking about “changing his life”.

At this he looked rather hurt, and told me that I always shilly-shallied, and that lacked ambition—a grave defect, to his mind, when one was in business.

I returned to my work. I'd have preferred not to vex him, but I saw no reason for “changing my life.” By and large it wasn't an unpleasant one. As a student I'd had plenty of ambition of the kind he meant. But, when I had to drop my studies, I very soon realized all that was pretty futile. (Camus, 1946: 28)

Furthermore, based on the paragraph above is a conversation between the employer and Meursault himself that shows the Real order. This shows the form of Real order in Meursault, the reason he doesn't really want change in his life and why he is said to be someone with a “lacked ambition”. Where he realized that the ambition he once had was in the end in vain, which made him have no more expectations and no more ambition in his life.

The next incident or event that proof his desire through his action is where Meursault meets his lawyer, and the lawyer asks several questions about the case that befell Meursault. In the question and answer session, the lawyer said that the police testified that Meursault showed “great callousness” at his mother's funeral. Actually, the lawyer doesn't really care about what happens at the funeral, just that he tries to help Meursault to change the word “callousness”. And again the lawyer asked further whether he felt sad at that time.

..., I'd rather lost the habit of nothing my feelings, and hardly knew what to answer. I could truthfully say I'd been quite fond of Mother—but really that didn't mean much. All normal people, I added as on afterthought, had more or less desired the death of those they loved at some time another. (Camus, 1946: 41)

For the next data, this is the part of Real order. And the fragment above is Meursault's answer, which is part of the Real phase. Here Meursault's answer is a reality of life that he must accept, he loves his mother, of course. But he could not change the fate of his mother's death and it happened to everyone. Here Meursault again shows his perspective which sees based on existing reality.

There's a conversation between Meursault and Mr. Salamano. Where Meursault invites that old man to talk in his room about the disappearance of Mr. Salamano's dog in recent days, in the middle of their conversation about the disappearance of the dog. Mr. Salamano touches on the departure of Meursault's Mother and the response of the people around him to Meursault. when he is seen by people in his environment as living with a bad perception because he sent his mother to “Home”.

...that some of the people in the street said nasty things about me because I'd sent my mother to the Home.

“...”

I answered— why, I still don't know—that it surprised me to learn such a bad impression. As I couldn't afford to keep her here, it seemed the obvious thing to do, to send her to a home. “In any case,” I added, “for years she'd never had a word to say to me, and I could see she was moping, with no one to talk to.” (Camus, 1946: 31)

From the dialogue above is Real order, where Meursault shows that in the reality he loves his mother as proven by the reason he sent his mother to “home” so that his mother would have friends and not feel lonely anymore. But people see that Meursault action is strange, but for him it will be best for sending his Mother to ‘Home’.

The another incident that make his life would be different, when Meursault goes alone to walk on the beach after he accompanies Raymond to meet the two

Arabs who injured him, on his way to enjoy the fresh air. He met one of the Arabs, at first he seemed hesitant to continue his walk, but the hot sun made him want to continue walking and he also thought that it was not a problem for him to walk there because he didn't have any problems with them. But unfortunately for him, the Arab took out a knife from his trouser pocket, and Meursault, who at that time was still holding Raymond's revolver, was ready from behind his trouser pocket. The reason Meursault was able to hold Raymond's revolver was because Meursault was worried that the man would shoot one of the two Arabs while he was talking to them personally. And now Meursault, who is still holding the firearm, uses it when he feels threatened by the Arab.

The trigger gave, and the smooth underbelly of the butt jogged my palm. And so, with that crisp, whipcrack sound, it all began. I shook off my sweat and the clinging veil of light. I knew I'd shattered the balance of the day, the spacious calm of this beach on which I had been happy. But I fired four shots more into the inert body, on which they left no visible trace. And each successive shot was another loud, fateful rap on the door of my undoing. (Camus, 1946: 39)

The following data shows that the sentence above is a form of Real order from Meursault where he fires a bullet at the Arab he met before, he realizes that his action will change his day and his life. The fact that he realized but still did it due to the fierce heat of the sun made him shoot the Arab man. And for the people who hear the reason why he still shooting the Arabs, will think his actions doesn't make sense. But that his reason for shooting that man.

The next incident where Meursault was tried at his trial, was questioned and even made him trapped by questions that ultimately did not related to the case. In this case, society sees Meursault as a person who is heartless even towards his own mother.

He began by asking bluntly if I'd loved my Mother.

"Yes," I replied, "like everybody else." The clerk behind me, who had been typing away at a steady pace, must just then hit the wrong keys, as I heard him pushing the carrier back and crossing something out. (Camus, 1945: 42)

The paragraph above is Real order, it's represent how people see through his behaviour, they think that Meursault doesn't love his Mother. But it turns out he dismisses people's bad thoughts about his behaviour which is considered not to show love for his mother, it's proven by how the clerk behind Meursault typing wrongly about what Meursault said.

CONCLUSION

Desire, as a fundamental aspect of human nature, is portrayed vividly through the character of Meursault in Albert Camus's novel, *The Stranger*. Meursault is depicted as an individual devoid of conventional emotions and ambitions, leading to his perception as an outsider by those around him. His irrational decision-making and passive acceptance of events mark him as an enigmatic figure, challenging societal norms and conventions. This portrayal prompts a deeper examination of Meursault's desires and motivations within the symbolic order of the narrative.

As a result, researcher found the desire of Meursault through his personality and his behaviour in symbolic order, the desire that exists within him. At the Symbolic stage, Meursault always speaks what is in his head without thinking about the impact that will occur, and how he describes the people around him and the problems he faces so casually. Even when he was in the interrogation room for his murder case, he didn't think about looking for a lawyer because he thought that the problem he had committed was not a big thing and was very

simple. Of course, this is very contrary to existing legal norms.

Meursault himself certainly has thoughts like the other, at the Symbolic stage some of Meursault's actions are in wanting a married life with his girlfriend Marie, then Meursault looks very indifferent and does not show any sorrow for his mother's departure. But behind it all, he is actually still a child, and it is clear that his mother's departure has made him miss his late mother. Not all of Meursault's words and behavior are completely deviant, he also has an effort to please the people around him either just through his words or actions. Individuals who do things simply and on the basis of kinship, and this is how the Symbolic order works.

In this Real order that we can slowly understand Meursault, where he begins to see the world realistically, making him a character who has no desires or ambitions in this world. He did it because it was his destiny, that's why he didn't want any changes in his life. He himself admits that this is why he is not ambitious. For him, no matter how much ambition he has in life, it will ultimately be in vain. This also means that Meursault is considered a strange person by several people around him.

And the results of this research reach the conclusion that Meursault's desire is to live life according to his own wishes, to become a person who is not a social formation. It can be seen from the personalities he shows and the reasons for each of his actions, where there are several aspects that are not in line with existing norms. Actually, he behaves like that because he sees life realistically, he acts according to what he thinks without being someone who is not a social formation. And with Meursault's character being quite extreme, it shows that Meursault is a character who desires to live according to his wishes and what he want.

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