

PSYCHOANALYSIS OF MAIN CHARACTER'S IN THE MOVIE SOUL

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Abstract

This article examined psychoanalysis research into the actions of the main character. The research used data from the 2020 release of the film Soul. The four types of Lacan psychoanalysis—the mirror stage, desire and lack, transference, the real, and the symbolic—were applied in this study as theory concepts in psychology. This study used a qualitative descriptive methodology, focusing on psychoanalysis detail as a classification technique and using librarian research to collect data.

Keywords: Psychoanalysis, Lacan, Movie, Soul.

Introduction

Nowadays, movies are one of the most popular entertainment media. Not only as an entertainer, the surface of the moving and narrative image is also fond of being used as a material for psychoanalytic exploration. Many movies carry the theme of personality, personality is an important part of every human being. The term "personality" refers to the traits, interests, self-concepts, abilities, and emotional patterns that make up a person's particular way of adjusting to life.

Psychoanalysis is a theory that studies the mind, behavior, and culture of a human being. The theories are very diverse, depending on the person who came up with it. There are Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, Jacques Lacan and many others.

In this article, the researcher uses Lacan's psychoanalysis. Lacan developed Sigmund Freud's theory based on semiology and focused on the unconscious. (Jacques Lacan:1936) discusses the intricate relationship between the human mind and cinema. Just as a mirror shows our own reflection, cinema reflects back our deepest desires, fears and fantasies. Each person perceives emotional responses depending on their ego. Lacan have six types of psychoanalysis, which are:

1. The Mirror Stage

This is his first theory published in 1936. In this theory talks about ego (moi) which refers to the formation of children aged 6-18 months who are just beginning to recognize themselves in front of a mirror by identifying some parts of their body or called as self-recognition. This is one of the critical steps in ego development and individual's sense of identity.

2. The Imaginary, Symbolic, Real

Lacan proposed a tripartite model of human psyche, consisting of the Imaginary, Symbolism and Real orders. These three categories represent different aspects of human experience and mental life. The Imaginary is associated with the self and the mirror stage, the Symbolic involves language and socialization, and the Real represents the ungraspable.

3. The Unconscious and Language

Lacan believed that many of our psychological problems had their roots in linguistic and symbolic processes and that the unconscious is structured similarly to a language. This means unconscious is build like a semiotic system. When you can figure out how to put together drawings, numbers, and syllables.

4. Desire and Lack

In Lacan's theory of desire, "lack" (manque) is central to the idea. He maintained that because desire is inescapably linked to what is lacking, it can never be completely fulfilled. His theory of human subjectivity and how people relate to one another and the outside world is centered upon this notion.

5. The Oedipus Complex

Lacan preserved the significance of Freud's Oedipus complex. Within his own framework, he reinterpreted it, emphasizing the significance of language and the symbolic order in a child's growth and their bond with their parents.

6. The Role of the Analyst

Lacan see the psychoanalyst as a crucial figure in the therapeutic process. The analyst helps the patient understand their own psychological conflicts and aspirations by interpreting their words and unconscious desires. The patient is intended to move toward self-discovery through the analyst's interpretations.

7. Transference and Countertransference

This type of psychoanalysis is talks about how the language can be transferred and understood properly from one subject to another. Lacan placed particular emphasis on the phenomenon of transference, where patients transfer feelings and attitudes from past relationships onto the analyst. In Lacanian analysis, countertransference—the analyst's emotional responses to the patient—is also crucial.

The research took a Pixar movie called *Soul* as an object for this theory analysis. This movie was released on October 11, 2020 which tells the story of Joe Gardner, a jazz music teacher who has a dream of becoming a famous musician. But things never worked out the way he had planned, there were always “something” that prevented him from achieving his dreams. He struggle with his identity and began to questioning his own worth to live. Until finally he had an accident and brought him to another realm. On his journey he faced many things, he finally begins to discover what the meaning of soul life really is.

Methods

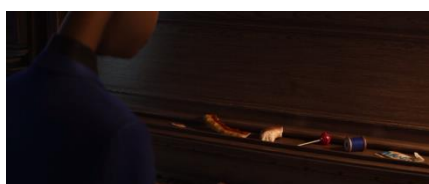
This research uses “Joe” as the object of the research and *Soul* movie as its source of data, based on the dialogue and characters that shown in the movie. The method used in this research is qualitative descriptive method.

Result and Discussion

NO	Psychoanalysis Type	Frequency
1	Mirror Stage	7
2	Desire and Lack	15
3	Transference	4
4	The Real and the Symbolic	3
	Total Data	29

Tabel 1

1. The Mirror Stage:



In “Soul”, the main character, Joe Gradner, grapples with questions of identity and self-worth. The concept of the mirror stage, where an individual forms their ego by identifying with their reflection, is indirectly relevant. Joe’s journey involves self-discovery and a quest for a deeper understanding of who he is and what gives his life meaning.

2. Desire and Lack:



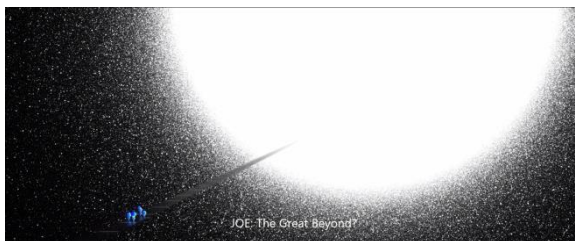
The movie touches on themes of desire and lack as Joe’s lifelong passion for jazz music becomes a central element. His desire to become a successful jazz musician represents his quest for fulfillment and purpose. This desire is never fully satisfied, reflecting the Lacanian idea that desire is rooted in lack and is a perpetual, unattainable pursuit.

3. Transference:



Joe's relationship with 22, a soul who hasn't yet found their purpose, can be interpreted as a form of transference. As Joe tries to mentor and guide 22, he projects his own desires and aspirations onto them, hoping to find a sense of meaning and purpose through helping 22 find their "spark."

4. The Real and the Symbolic:



The mystical and metaphysical aspects of the film, such as the Great Before and the Zone, can be seen as representations of the Real in Lacanian terms. These are domains beyond ordinary human understanding and language, symbolizing the ungraspable and ineffable aspects of existence. While “Soul” isn’t explicitly grounded in Lacanian psychoanalysis, it raises philosophical and psychological questions about identity, desire, and purpose, making it amenable to Lacanian interpretation. Interpreting movies in this way can provide insight into how they explore complex human experiences and concepts. That kind of interpretations are subjective and open to various perspectives.

In this research desire and lack is the most shown by soul movies compared to other types. This study is supported by Tampubolon, N. J., & Arianto, T. (2022) that analyse the fulfillment character’s desire in joker movie.

Conclusion

The result of this study is indicate that in Soul movie there are four types of Jacques Lacan psychological concepts appeared, which are the mirror stage, desire and lack, transference, the real and

the symbolic. This movie has strong desire that dominates almost the entire story. Someone who has a big dream and never stops doing everything possible until his dream is realized. Furthermore, some scenes show that because of the selfishness of his desire he unconsciously harms others, this correlates with the lack part of the desire itself.

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