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**Exploring the Character of Meursault from the Perspective of
Existentialism as Depicted in Albert Camus' Novel "The Stranger"**

إستكشاف شخصية ميروسولت من منظور الوجودية كما صورها البيرت كامو في رواية " الغريب "

**A Thesis Submitted in partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Master Degree in English language (Literature)**

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Dedication

I dedicate this achievement to my beloved parent, my amazing brothers, Mohiden, Yassen and Mohammed they always never leave me in every single step I take and to my wonderful friends.

Acknowledgments

The most beautiful song in the world is never to express how wonderful you are. First all sincere thankfulness to Allah the Almighty without him this thesis will not making. Thank for guidance in every phase of my life. I do appreciate to Dr. Hillary Marino Pitia for his attention, precious Suggestions; I realize that without his encouragement, this thesis would not have been completed. I also take this opportunity to thankful to Co-advisor for the corrections and suggestions that make this thesis better.

ABSTRACT

This study aimed at analyzing the main character of Mersault from existentialism perspective as portrayed by Albert in his novel “The Stranger” the novel tells about an absurdity. Meursault as the main character in the story differently sees life as the other characters do. He has his own values and beliefs, through his attitudes, speeches and others point of view. Meursault’s characteristics confirm some of existentialism through the main character. There are two problems formulations in this thesis. First, how this study analyzes the relation between inside and outside conflict of the main character and his impact on his behavior in his general life. Second the idea of existentialism is revealed through the main character in the novel. This study used descriptive analytical approach to answer the questions. The analysis of the Meursault is based on extracts drawn from the novel, The Stranger. Through analysis the researcher found Meursault though his own consciousness- creates his own values and determines a meaning for his life. The researcher recommended that those who interested in the analysis of the main character should critically read the novel, The Stranger.

Abstract (Arabic)

هدفت هذه الدراسة لتحليل الشخصية الرئيسية ميروسولت من منظور الوجودية كما صورها الكاتب ألبيرت في روايته "الغريب" تحكي الرواية عن العبثية. ميروسولت كشخصية رئيسية في الرواية يرى الحياة بطريقة مختلفة عن الآخرين لديه قيمه و معتقداته الخاصة من خلال سلوكه و خطابه و آرائه تؤكد سماته شكل من اشكال الوجودية. هنالك مشكلتان في ه الاطروحة أولاً كيف حلت هذه الدراسة العلاقة بين الصراع الداخلي و الخارجي لبطل القصة و اثره على سلوكه في حياته العامة. ثانياً فكرة الوجودية التي تم إبرازها عبر بطل القصة. الدراسة استخدمت المنهج الوصفي التحليلي للإجابة على مشكلات البحث و تحليل شخصية ميروسولت إستند علي مقتطفات مأخوذة من رواية "الغريب" و من خلال البحث توصل الباحث على أن وعي ميروسولت أدى إلي خلق قيم حددت معنى حياته و أوصى الباحث بأن المهتمين بتحليل الشخصية الرئيسية يجب قراءة رواية الغريب بأسلوب نقدي.

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Chapter one
Introduction

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Background:

This chapter contains the introduction of the study, background of the study, statement of the study problem, questions of the study, hypotheses of the study, objectives of the study, significance of the study, methodology and limits of the study.

1.1 Overview of the study:

Existentialism encompasses so many different trends and ideas that have appeared over the history of Western philosophy, thus making it difficult to distinguish it from other movements and philosophical systems. Due to this, one useful means of understanding existentialism is to examine what it *isn't*. For one thing, existentialism doesn't argue that the "good life" is a function of things like wealth, power, pleasure, or even happiness. This is not to say that existentialists reject happiness. Existentialism is not a philosophy of masochism, after all. However, existentialists will not argue that a person's life is good simply because they are happy—a happy person might be living a bad life while an unhappy person might be living a good life. The reason for this is that life is "good" for existentialists insofar as it is "authentic." Existentialists may differ somewhat on just what is needed for a life to be authentic, but for the most part, this will involve being conscious of the choices one makes, taking full responsibility for those choices, and understanding that nothing about one's life or the world is fixed and given. Hopefully, such a person will end up happier because of this, but that isn't a necessary consequence of authenticity—at least not in the short term.

1.2 Statement of the Study Problem:

There are some wounds that go so deep, they can spark one of the greatest human motivations. This study analyses the relation between the inside and outside conflicts of Meursault's character and their impact on his behavior and his life in general. And the idea of existentialism as revealed through the main character in the novel. The researcher enlightens readers with conflict which are mentioned in the 'Stranger' to give them complete set of thoughts, which will help the reader in understanding the odds in their own societies.

1.3 Questions of the Study

This study sets out to answer the following questions:

- 1- To what extent is Meursault as a main character portrayed in the Albert's novel, 'The Stranger'?
- 2- How is the idea of existentialism expressed in Meursault's character?
- 3- How far has the writer portrayed the world of the stranger as irrational?

1.4 Hypotheses of the Study

- 1- Meursault is portrayed as an existential character..
- 2- It expressed existentialism as intent to urge the audience to question life.
- 3- The writer's portrayal of the world of the stranger is irrational because he, despite all the effort to make all the claims laid for the stranger in the form of an honest and truthful man.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

This study aims at:

- 1- Highlighting how Meursault is portrayed as a main character in Albert's novel 'The Stranger'.

- 2- Investigating the notion of existentialism as expressed in Meursault character.
- 3- Exploring the portrayal of the world of the stranger as irrational by the writer.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The importance of this study arises from the idea that it helps in understanding the nature of human conflicts as a part of the life in the literary work. Also, it enriches the reader with the notion of existentialism in the novel, the stranger.

1.7 Methodology of Study

The researcher adopts the descriptive analytical approach with full information and sources from different and several previous studies by drawing data from previous studies as dictated by the nature of the study. The researcher attempts to support the analysis of the main character, in the novel.

1.8 Limits of the Study

The study is limited to an analysis of Meursault's character in Albert Camus novel 'The Stranger' as portrayed in the novel from the perspective of existentialism.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature review And previous studies

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2-0 Introduction:

In this chapter the researcher gives a short introduction to the biography of the author, of *The Stranger*, Summary of the novella, the definition of Existentialism, Theory of existentialism, Existentialism according to philosophy, Existentialism view and Existentialist literature, Conflicts in general, Internal and External conflict, and finally The idea of Existentialism as Revealed through the main character, in addition the research discusses previous studies related in the research topic.

2-1 Theoretical frame work:

Albert Camus was one of the most influential literary figures of the twentieth century. He grew up in Belcourt, a poor neighborhood in Algeria. Camus was just over a year old when his father was killed in the First World War. He was raised by his mother, who survived on a widow's pension and meagre wages from her work as a 'domestic', his grandmother, and other members of his extended family. Supported by a dedicated teacher, Louis Germain, the young Albert won a scholarship to attend secondary school in Algiers (Todd, Todd, O. (2000). *Albert Camus: A life* (B. Ivry, Trans.). New York: Carroll & Graf, p. 12). A bout of tuberculosis sharpened Camus' awareness of his own mortality but he was able to complete his schooling, after which he attended the University of Algiers, where he studied philosophy (Todd, Todd, O. (2000). *Albert Camus: A life* (B. Ivry, Trans.). New York: Carroll & Graf. pp. 18, 27). He married Simone Hié, who was suffering from a drug addiction, in 1934, but this union was short lived. With financial pressures mounting, he

completed a graduate diploma to qualify as a teacher in 1936. His literary interests still strong, Camus became immersed in the theatre, initially via the work of other artists. He joined the French Communist Party, but later in life would distance himself from Party orthodoxy, concerned at the dogmatism and lack of critique of human rights abuses among some of his former friends. *The stranger*, as examined by Richard Heraud(2013) in his article, is described by Camus as having a zero point; humankind's predicament is conceived of as being without hope or cause for nostalgia. What separates this text from Camus' philosophical tract, *the myth of Sisyphus*, is that Meursault, the protagonist of *the stranger*, suffers for his ideas, while in *the myth of Sisyphus*, it is Camus, the author, who must suffer for his ideas. The action and speech of both works are unframed by the supposition that there is no life after death, that one cannot believe in God and that one must act in full knowledge of the absurd fact that what one wants and how things are, are themselves incommensurable facts of one's existence. Each man responds to this disjunction and its absurd affirmation in distinctive ways. In Meursault's case, it is a Sahidul Islam (2018) states that in existentialism, is widely view that life starts without any specific reason and is lived through with lack of energy and desire. It's also defined as irrational meaningless and absurd immediate perception of life seems different but ultimate stance of life. Conscious acceptance of his situation that borders on indifference and a determination to restrict himself to the mere pleasure of the habits that his existence involves. Camus achieves this effect by delimiting the nature of Meursault's character such that consciousness is taken up with the circumstances of his existence; or at least what Meursault thinks these circumstances are. In this event, consciousness does not imply a need to respond to the gulf that separates what Meursault wants for himself and how the world presents him.

2-3 Summary of the Stranger Novella:

The Stranger, written by Albert Camus is a fictional novel set in Algiers in the early 1940's. The first-person narrator, Mr. Meursault, describes his life in a memoir-like fashion beginning the day after his mother died. In part one he begins by attending his mother's vigil and burial, during which time he never cries, refuses to see her body, and acts very indifferent about the entire process. His lack of empathy is highlighted when the following day he goes on a date with a girl named Marie who used to work in his office. They go swimming then see a comedy movie. Throughout their subsequent dates, Marie tries to elicit feelings from Meursault, but he refuses to acknowledge he has any. He won't tell her that he loves her. When asked if he wants to marry her, he agrees but admits he would have agreed to any number of women. Nonetheless, Marie stays faithful.

Meursault's neighbors seem to be fairly despicable people as Salamano abuses his dog, and Raymond abuses the prostitutes who work for him, yet Meursault doesn't mind being friendly with these men. Ray even invites Meursault and Marie to come to his friend's beach house with him. They all go and enjoy the water, but Raymond is worry of an Arab whose sister Raymond beat up. When Raymond, Meursault, and Masson first run into the Arab and his friend at the beach, Masson knocks one guy out while Raymond tries to hit the other, but ultimately Raymond is slashed on the arm and the mouth with a knife before they all scatter. After Raymond heads off to get stitches, Meursault returns to the beach, still carrying Raymond's gun from earlier, and runs into the same Arab who is sitting in the shady spot that Meursault hoped to occupy. Under tremendous heat and when the sun hits his eyes, Meursault fires the weapon five times and kills the Arab to end part one.

In part two Meursault is in jail awaiting trial. He is questioned about his lack of feelings regarding events, such as his mother's and the Arab's deaths. Meursault's only justification seems to be that physical problems inhibit his ability to feel emotions. Eleven months later at his trial, the prosecutor makes Meursault appear to be a cold, heartless killer. Despite wanting to defend himself, he is often hushed by his lawyer or receives laughter from the crowd when he finally tries to explain himself. Society does not understand how someone could care so little about the world.

The reason Meursault doesn't care is because basically he is an existentialist. He is focused on the present, knows he will die, and, therefore, feels nothing that he does matter. It is silly for him to become attached to things (like his mother) whom he knows will die too. He isn't interested in discussing things that he doesn't care about (such as God), so he becomes agitated with people who try to have religious discussions with him. Ultimately, the jury sentences him to death by beheading.

His time in jail does prove cathartic for Meursault as he shows more emotions than he ever did previously. Some fear escapes him as a magistrate attacks him with a crucifix, and he considers the certainty of the guillotine. He also shows frustration with his trial and his lawyer. Finally, anger emerges as he snaps at the chaplain who wants Meursault to call him "my father" when Meursault never knew his actual father. Therefore, despite the inclination to diagnose Meursault with a disorder which may cause him to behave the way he does, these behaviors change by the end, proving a diagnosis impossible. Part of the purpose of the book, therefore, may have been for Camus to show that some things don't have rational explanations and that society shouldn't try to fit everyone into neat little categories. Meursault was happy with his life. He didn't need to fit into society's expectations to feel fulfilled. Even if he remained a

stranger to everyone around him, including the reader who never even learns his first name, Meursault felt content with his life and his death.

In simple terms, *The Meursault Investigation* spotlights the historical realities of colonialism that *The Stranger* left in the shadows. But Daoud's too canny to be satisfied with simply critiquing Camus. He also learned from Camus, especially his ideas about individual responsibility. What makes Daoud's book so good is that, steeped in independent thinking, it offers an illuminating, if controversial portrait of today's Algeria.

To that end, Daoud invents a second murder — this time of a Frenchman who pointedly *is* named — and this crime's ripples lead Harun to ruminate on Algeria's tragically absurd history. Even as Harun acknowledges the soul-warping tyranny of French rule, he uses his story to ponder how the Algerians themselves have made a mess of things since independence in 1962. They've devoured the countryside to no good purpose, fetishized an earlier generation of freedom fighters, and fallen into a fervent Islamism that keeps them backward. "Religion is public transportation I never use," Harun tells us jauntily, presumably echoing Daoud's own sentiments.

Not surprisingly, such lines have made Daoud enemies in Algeria, where there have been the now-routine calls for his death. Of course, such an excessive response to a fine novel only serves to underscore the historical absurdity that *The Meursault Investigation* is talking about. Harun may be wiser, more conscious, and more humane than Meursault, but these two fictional characters share one important quality in common with the real life Kamel Daoud. Walking the streets and beaches of their Algerian homeland, they all feel like strangers. But an experience. Or what about society itself? Could society be a stranger, approachable within the set dynamic that the courts seem to impose? Finally, in

the end Camus is really offering a question of does it even matter-after all, we are all going to die.

2-4 Definition of Existentialism:

Existentialism, according to Sahidul Islam (2018) it is widely viewed that life starts without any specific reason and is lived through with lack of energy and desire. It is also defined as irrational meaningless and absurd immediate perception of life seems different but ultimate stance of life. Moreover, existentialism claims itself to be superior on basis human life from determinism. Apparently, the existentialism tends to enjoy absolute freedom independent of any external influence. Also its psychological practices, it can be observed as rationality and depends on taking moral responsibility action. It means, to the existentialists, freedom, a manifestation of psychological quality, functions as the sole principle of moral values guided by personal sincerity and autonomy. But if freedom includes the concepts like „personal sincerity“ and „autonomy“, defined through social essences, it becomes no longer uncurbed exercise of human will rather it works like an illusion of freedom under a kind of self-imposed regulations. Albert Camus, despite being an existentialist, does not want to define life as such rather he takes life as it is which must be lived through, suffered, defied yet cannot be explained adequately. Meursault, the protagonist of Albert Camus“ he Stranger (1942), reflects conflicts in terms of his existence and essence of society. Though he apparently seems to be psychologically free, he cannot wield his freedom under social realities. Moreover, through his trial the novelist implies that social essence stands against individual freedom and feelings. The judicial system appears to be fake and biased where justice as the system is a sarcasm and not interested in the murder he committed; rather the system is considering him as a threat based on some peculiar traits. His non-conformity to the current codes has been the real cause behind his execution, and it takes to another point that legal system is not

here to judge right and wrong, rather to ensure conformity and to nail peculiarity with the best possible steps. Thus social essence as appeared in the novel ceases to accept harmony and tolerance in varieties. It only accepts uniformity at the cost of individual freedom. As an existential character Meursault seems to have been unaffected by socio-economic factors of the society. The society where Meursault lives has a potential impact on him leading to his absurdity, causing him to turn to alienation only when he loses all of his faith in all existing external structures or essences of society.

2-5 Theory of Existentialism:

Talking about theories on existentialism, we will find a list of philosopher names such as Soren Kierkegaard, Jean Paul Sartre, Friedrich Nietzsche, Heidegger and also Albert Camus. Each of the philosopher's brings a different theory or concept of existentialism but indeed their thought rooted from the same philosopher question of life. Albert Camus, one of those philosophers, begins his philosophical thought by questioning the meaning of life as what the other philosopher does.

Here, in this part, the researcher will review some views of existentialism and theory of existentialism. The theory is not only taken from Albert Camus the writer of the Novel. But also from Jean Paul and Friedrich Nietzsche these two philosopher are chosen since they have big influences in Camus philosophical thought.

2.6 Existentialism according to philosophy:

Although often treated as a philosophical school of thought, it would be more accurate to describe existentialism as a trend or tendency that can be found throughout the history of philosophy. If existentialism were a theory, it would be unusual in that it would be a theory that is opposed to philosophical theories.

More specifically, existentialism displays hostility towards abstract theories or systems that propose to describe all of the intricacies and difficulties of human life through more-or-less simplistic formulas. Such abstract systems tend to obscure the fact that life is a rather rough-and-tumble affair, often very messy and problematic. For existentialists, there is no single theory that can contain the whole of the experience of human life.

Existentialism is also not caught up in the idea that everything in life can be made better by science. This doesn't mean that existentialists are automatically anti-science or anti-technology; rather, they judge the value of any science or technology based on how it might affect a person's ability to live an authentic life. If science and technology help people avoid taking responsibility for their choices and help them pretend that they are not free, then existentialists will argue that there is a serious problem here. Existentialists also reject both the arguments that people are good by nature but are ruined by society or culture, and that people are sinful by nature but can be helped to overcome sin through proper religious beliefs. Yes, even Christian existentialists tend to reject the latter proposition, despite the fact that it fits with traditional. The reason is that existentialists, especially, reject the idea that there is any fixed human nature to begin with, whether good or evil.

2.7 Nietzsche's theory on Existentialism:

According to Nietzsche, Existentialism cannot be separated from his influence among existentialism is no longer questionable.

Sartre, Heidegger, Jaspers and Camus are the existentialists who are influenced by Nietzsche's thought.

In Camus' work, *The Stranger*, Nietzsche's idea of existentialism appears. One of his existentialism concepts is known as 'God is Dead' in this concept,

Nietzsche tries to explore his atheism in very radical way. (Kaufman 1956-22).

2.7 Sartre's theory on existentialism:

In Camus philosophical thought, Jean Paul Sartre has his own role. Camus and Sartre recognized each other when they were involved in a communist party. Yet their relationship was broken after some years. According to Sartre 'If God does not exist, everything would be permitted and man cannot find anything to depend on, except to depend on himself (Kaufman 1956-295).

2.8 Freud and the Unconscious

Freud's greatest achievement was in making it publicly known that the question WHO AM I is not nearly as easily answered as we once thought. Far from being who we think we are, a great deal of our psychic activity goes on, on an unconscious level.

2.9 Freud and Cultural Conditioning

First we must look at Freud within the culture in which he was born. Each and every person born into this world is conditioned by the society she or he is born into and Freud was no exception. Who we are is very definitely modified, not only by our needing to be acceptable to the people we come into contact with, but by the particular way in which our particular society lives. What was acceptable in Roman Times would be unlikely to be so now. Freud seemed to be a bit blind to this, possibly because most of his clients came from the same social class as him. The culture he was born into was bourgeoisie capitalist society and there is no doubt that his work is limited by his largely uncritical acceptance of it. He directly experienced this when he discovered that many of his "hysterical" patients had suffered from incest or other sexual abuse as children. When he tried to get this recognized by

society, the pressure from his peers became so unbearable, that he turned this into his well-known "Oedipus complex" - very much an idea related to his time. Freud then was concerned with individual psychology. Although he accepted that people would be affected by the people with whom they associated, he nonetheless did not concern himself with the collective psychic forces, which affect all of us; Carl Jung of course took this up.

2.9 Freud and Basic Impulses

Freud saw humans as having two basic impulses. The first being for pleasure, the second being self-preservation. He believed that all of our impulses are sexually motivated although we may redirect this energy into other activities. He was the first person to talk about the unconscious and Freud thinks this is his greatest legacy. He discovered that as well as our conscious activity, each person has a great deal of psychic activity going on, of which he or she is largely unaware of it. He believed that the pleasure principal and largely sexual pleasure was the motivating force behind the activity going on in the unconscious. To Freud then, "Man" had two primary motivations, self-preservation and sex. He saw people as primarily motivated by biological motivations, which he called the Id; a baby would be 100% Id. However within a very short time the child would discover that it was not safe to follow its basic impulses as these frequently lead to psychic and physical pain. Here Freud has tapped into what is universally found within depth psychology and Eastern Religions, that is that at some point we recognize that it is not safe to be spontaneously who we are. Freud saw the young child then developing what he called a "Superego". This is a part of oneself that accepts as real what one has been taught from one's parents and society. A person will integrate this and act as if this is what they themselves really believe. This he called the Reality Principle. Again, another good idea sounds similar to Carl Rogers's view of "false self-concept". If Freud had not

thought society were so good he could have come up with some good healing, not to say political ideas here! Freud however believed that this process was necessary for civilization. An advantage was that people could direct the unfulfilled pleasure principle into other activities such as intellectual pursuits, the arts, music and so on which create culture. The disadvantage he saw was that if it was impossible to come to a workable compromise in one's psyche all kinds of problems would happen. These could range from anxiety to psychosomatic illnesses to much more serious problems. There is a difference between who we are and who we think we are; Freud showed that there is often a great difference between what we feel and believe and what we think we feel and believe! There is a great difference between who a person really is and who they think they are. We have a need to rationalize unconscious processes to keep the self-image that we have built intact. For example, a person may go to watch porn movies claiming he wants to see what is going on so that he can stop it and protect our morals when really, sometimes even unbeknown to himself, he is really going because he enjoys the porn. Our motivations can often be quite different to our awareness. Freud showed that there is a great difference between who we are in our instinctual selves and who we need to become in order to function effectively in the society. We are far less aware of our own thoughts and inclinations than we once believed. He believed that by becoming more aware of our unconscious through dreams and being analyzed we could become more conscious, mature and independent. There is no question that Freud's work was revolutionary for his time. However it suffers both from his inability to see how he himself was affected by his culture and from the fact that he believed the Id was mainly full of nasty things. He also, Freud believe makes a mistake in seeing the pleasure principle as primarily sexual, although at the same time Freud think he was very near the truth.

2.10 Existentialism view and Existentialist literature:

According to Holman in his book, *A Hand book to literature existentialism* is 'A group of attitudes (current in philosophical, religious and artistic thought during and after the second world war) that emphasizes existence rather than essence and see the inadequacy of human reason to explain the enigma of universe as basic of philosophical question'(1986-199).

According to the book existentialism is defined as some attitudes that based on philosophy, religious and artistic thought. The exist dunning and after the second world. The thought emphasizes on humans existence.

Human's existence is considered more prior than human's essence. It observes the human's inability to explain the mystery of the Universe furthermore, the important point is human beings awareness of their situation that they have a total freedom but the same time they also are completely responsible for their act and decision (Holman and Harmon, 1986-199).

2.11 Major themes of The Stranger

Major themes of *The Stranger* include alienation, absurdity, and French colonialism. Meursault is the titular stranger, a young shipping clerk living in Algiers in the 1940s, when it was still a French colony. Meursault's life is dull and empty, and Meursault takes little pleasure in living. He believes that the world is an absurd place ungoverned by reason and that his actions—including killing the Arab man—mean nothing. Meursault's beliefs reflect Camus' existential philosophy.

One of the themes of *The Stranger* is human alienation from oneself, each other, and from society as a whole. Meursault, the protagonist, is a symbol of this alienation because he is a Frenchman living in Algeria, a Muslim country

in which he does not really fit in. He is also so alienated from himself that he does not mourn his mother's death at the beginning of the novel. The novel begins, "Maman died today. Or yesterday maybe, I don't know" (page 3). He is so alienated and distanced from his emotions that he is unable to mourn his mother's death.

Another related theme is the meaninglessness of existence. Camus was an existentialist writer, who believed that humans must make their own meaning in a world that is essentially without meaning. *The Stranger* has many absurd elements to it, such as the way in which Meursault's response to the magistrate waving the crucifix about his head is to think, "I was hot and there were big flies in his office that kept landing on my face" (page 68). The magistrate tries to convince Meursault that God will forgive him for committing a murder, but Meursault finds the magistrate's reasoning absurd and meaningless because Meursault does not believe in God. Even the murder that Meursault commits is meaningless, and he does not provide any reason for killing his victim aside from his feeling pestered by the sun. His actions are without reason, as he feels as though he lives in an absurd world in which nothing is governed by reason.

Previous Studies

2-2-1 Study One:

According to Md. Sahidul Islam¹, (2018) conducted study entitled: Albert Camus Meursault in The Outsider ‘An Existential Hero and Beyond. ‘The objective of this study is to analyze Albert Camus’ Meursault in The Outsider from existential point of view considering all major features of existentialism. The study also investigates Meursault, the protagonist, as a character beyond this perimeter. Meursault, an individual marginalized for the exploitative nature of society, is characterized as socially isolated and emotionally detached who seems to regard life meaningless. A sense of alienation springing from social factors is primarily responsible for his isolation and emotional detachment from social life. But for having distinctiveness as an individual, he neither plays the games of society nor accepts the vague appearances and values manufactured by society.

The researcher pointed out that the indifference of Meursault and his existential crisis intensifies. He is not confined within any structure, rather he goes beyond. The study finds out that Meursault is equally an existential hero and a mirror reflecting the ugly truth of society. Thus, the study helps the readers to grow a critical and analytical understanding of their own society through the eyes of Meursault.

2.2.2 The Study Two

According to Kar, (2018) conducted the study entitled: In *the Outsider* (1942), his classic existentialist novel, Camus explores the alienation of an individual who refuses to conform to social norms. Meursault, his anti-hero, will not lie. When his mother dies, he refuses to show his emotions simply to satisfy the expectations of others. And when he commits a random act of violence on a sun-drenched beach near Algiers, his lack of remorse compounds his guilt in the eyes of society and the law. Yet, he is as much a victim as a criminal.

The researcher accepts dying for truth and tried to present this character the only Christ. Camus does not claim that Meursault is exemplary hero, a model of behavior for the other. Throughout point of the researcher he saw that Meursault is a man who refuses to play social games and refuses to lie about himself, Social Behaviors, perhaps more than other living creatures, humans spend most of their waking lives in social interaction (talking, fighting, making love, and so forth); therefore, to have a more thorough understanding of psychology, it is important to know how people interact. Albert Camus' portrayal of a man confronting the absurd, and revolting against the injustice of society, depicts the paradox of man's joy in life when faced with the *tender indifference* of the world.

2.2.3 Study Three

According to Hooti1 (2012), who conducted this study entitled: Albert Camus the Stranger Unreflective Feeling Indifference. 'Has always been deemed as one of the pioneers of the coterie of literary pieces to proffer infinite number of hidden meanings and implications. Many critics have also pointed out these undertones in a variety of styles that culminated in challenging ideas and studies. Many have introduced Meursault as the lackluster statue of an emotionless figure, who lives like a soulless

creature and many others, considering this idea, have suggested an honest and truthful Meursault. However, this paper argues that a strong undercurrent runs throughout the novel that proves Meursault possessive of feeling and emotion and contradicts the view of the truthful and honest Meursault. More importantly, this essay tends to highlight the subtle point that the leading character lacks the humanistic reflectivity of the emotions/feelings and suffers from deep-seated sense of indifference as an innate drive that leads him to fatal actions and tragic ending.

2.2.4 Study Four

According Gnanasekaran (2014) conducted the study entitled: Psychological interpretation of the Novel the Stranger by Camus‘Of all the critical approaches to literature, the psychological has been one of the most controversial and for many readers the least appreciated. Yet, for all the difficulties involved in its application to interpretive analysis, the psychological approach can be fascinating and rewarding. This psychological interpretation is an excellent tool for reading between the lines. The proposed work titled “Psychological Interpretation of Camus’s The Stranger” aims to explore the consciousness of the author and his work. It was published in July 1942 and a few month later [The Myth of Sisyphus] an essay that raises the problem of how to live in a world without clear meaning. His early works are based on the assumption that there are no absolute moral values that life is a matter of living from day to day, trying to find happiness. Albert Camus through this novel The Stranger brings out various concepts like existentialism, nothingness, death of god etc. what the dissertation aims to do is to provide an in-depth understanding of Absurdism, Existentialism, Freudian concept of unconscious mind and some psychological problem based on the novel with the help of psychological interpretation and psychoanalytic criticism.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

3.0 Introduction (This chapter)

This study focuses on literary works, the researcher uses the descriptive analytical approach to solve the problems that were already formulated in the previous chapters, and it means that the researcher uses the references in order to support the analysis. In this thesis, there are two kinds of data that were used. The primary data through reading book of (The stranger). While the secondary data were several comments by critics on the novel and the researcher takes from books and articles and also some books were used to support the secondary data.

According to researcher there are some steps taken in the analysis part, reading the novel in details. Having been interested in the story in the novel, other thesis and other data related to the Stranger were read to gain to insight an original topic to be discussed in the thesis. Other books, such as A Glossary of literary terms, and Understanding Unseen. The researcher also employed other data concerning on philosophy and literature.

Secondary, analyzing data. The analysis process is done by solving the problem of the relation between the inside and outside conflict of Meursault character, and the impact on his behavior and his life in general as raised in the previous chapters.

The second problem formulation was solved by giving full attention to the main character characteristic's that show the idea of existentialism through the main character.

Third, drawing conclusion as the final step of the research, this process was done by summarizing to solve the problem formulations and selecting the important points of the research.

CHAPTER FOUR

Analysis from a critical point of view

CHAPTER FOUR

Analysis from a critical point of view

4.0 Introduction:

This thesis concerns the main character of the novel and his importance in delivering Camus idea of existentialism. This discussion is divided in two parts. First, this study answers the questions related to the main characters. Secondly, it will discuss the idea of existentialism revealed through the Meursault character. So the idea of existentialism in the novel is seen in the way of the main character view on others and around his environment, his response to the events he faces and his attitudes that are absurd.

4.1 The Idea of Existentialism as Revealed Through the Main Character:

Albert Camus is a philosopher who is famous with his ideas on existentialism he is also known as an absurdist character because his theory of existentialism is not surprising any more that his work is always connected with existentialism Camus existentialism focuses on human beings condition when they start to question the meaning of life and his or her existence. On this stage human being will feel absurd. It is what so called as absurdity.

In this work. (The Stranger), Camus offers this idea of existentialism. The stranger is story about a man who lives in absurdity. The main character in this story absurdly lives his life. He does not feel sad when this mother died. Furthermore. On the day after the funeral. he goes to swim, watches a movies with girl and has sex. At the end of the story the main character even kill a person as the response of the glare of the sun. He does not have

certain motive in killing the person. He also does not have remorse of killing the person.

4.3 Meursault's characteristics

1-Honest

Meursault is an honest man. He never lies about his own feeling, when Marry, his girlfriend asks him whether he loves her or not, Meursault tells her that he thinks that he does not love her. **‘.....she wanted to know if I love her. I answered the same way I had the last time that it didn't mean anything but that I probably didn't love her’(1942:41).**

In this case, Meursault tells the truth about his feeling. He feels that he could not feel love toward Marie.

1- Brave

Meursault is also a brave man. His bravery can be seen through his action and his nature of being honest. His bravery can be seen when he honestly said that he kills the Arab as his response toward the glare of the sun. In the last sentences he shows his bravery by saying

‘I felt that I had been happy and that I was happy again. For everything to be consummated, for me to feel less alone, I had only to wish that there be a large crowd of spectators the day of my execution and that they greet me with cries of hate’’(1942:123).

In this question, it is clearly seen that Meursault faces his death bravely. To get his head cut off, moreover in front of many people, is a tragic thing to happen, but he faces his tragic death bravely.

2- Atheist

Another thing that differs Meursault from other character is his view towards God. Meursault is a man who does not believe in God's existence. His disbelief toward God's existence is seen when he was persuaded to

depend his life on God since God is considered as the One who owns the ability to help him out of his problem. He was also forced to ask for God's forgiveness for what he had done, killing a person. Meursault responds saying that he does not believe in God.

"...and asking me if I believed in God. I said no. I sat down indignantly. He said it was impossible; all men believed in God, even those who turn their backs on him" (1942:69).

It is obvious that he does not believe in God. He also refuses to discuss about God and asks the chaplain to leave him since he does not want to waste his time talking about God.

"He wanted to talk to me about God a gain, but I went up to him and made one last attempt to explain to him that I had only a little time and I didn't want to waste it on God..."(1942:120).

3- Independent

Meursault shows himself as an independent man. He does not want to depend his life on someone else. There are two things that people usually depend their life on. They are; God and other human beings. According to Meursault, to depend on God or not is a choice (1942:69).

4- Responsible

Meursault is a responsible man. He is aware that people judge him as a guilty man and he has to be responsible of what he had done. His responsibility can be seen in his own speech.

"All they had told me that I was guilty. I was paying for it, and nothing more could be asked for me" (1942:118). His speech proves that he is a responsible man.

5- A man who breaks social value

Meursault is a man who breaks social value. He refuses the social determination. His being different is seen in his attitudes at his mother's funeral. He refuses to see his mother's dead body. Although he knows that it breaks the social tradition, he insists on doing it.

“.....but I'm supposed to unscrew the casket so you can see here.” He was moving to the casket when I stopped him. He said “you don't want to? I answered’ ’No” he was quiet and I was embarrassed because I felt I shouldn't have said that” (1942:6).

This quotation shows that actually Meursault knows that his refusal to see his mother dead body is unusual and it breaks society's tradition.

4.5 The conflicts of the main character in novel

1. Meursault's view toward death

The story begins with the death of Meursault mother and journey to the place where his mother will be buried. Meursault gives reaction about his mother's death. The absurd feeling can be felt when the news of his mother's death arrived. His responds to it calmly.

” Maman died today. Or yesterday maybe, I don't know. I got telegram from the home: 'mother deceased. Funeral tomorrow. Faithfully yours ” (1942-3).

This statement clearly shows that his mother death does not give a big influence on Meursault. He does not feel sad consider it as ordinary things to happen. Another proof of him he does not want to see his mother for last time and he had smoke, slept during the vigil and had some coffee and smoke cigarettes.

2-Meursault's view toward God

As discussed in the first part of the analysis, Meursault is describe as a man who does not believe in God existence. He is man who lives with

theism belief. He believes that a man does not need anything else to help him running his life. A man has to depend his life on God by living religious belief. Meursault's chooses to have his own belief. He lives apart from God and prefers not to have religion.

In the story, Meursault describes through his speech. **“He wanted to talk to me about God again. But I went up him and made one last attempt to explain to him that I had only little time and I didn't want to waste on God”**(1942-120).

Meursault refuses to believe in God according his thought that God is only human's imagination because no one can feel God existence. God cannot be touch or smelt put the researcher dis agree Meursault idea he think that a life entirely a part from God.

3-Meursault's view towards social behaviors

Social Behaviors, perhaps more than other living creatures, humans spend most of their waking lives in social interaction (talking, fighting, making love, and so forth); therefore, to have a more thorough understanding of psychology, it is important to know how people interact. Social psychology is that branch of psychology that deals with people as social beings; the social psychologist studies both the private psychological experiences that influence how we behave with others (**why we are attracted toward certain people, why we cooperate with certain individual or aggress against them**), as well as the ways in which people-- both individually and in groups-- change their behavior as a result of the social context in which they act (Frank, 1980, 1984). COMPLIANCE: We have certainly seen that there are various ways in which people will conform and obey because of great pressures exerted on them by others. As one team of researchers observed: " **If a person is subjected to enough social pressure, offered enough reward, threatened with enough pain, or given enough convincing reasons, he**

will, under most circumstances, eventually yield and perform the required act" (Freedman, Wallington, and Bless, 1967). There is ample evidence to support this conclusion. For an instance, in Camus's *The Stranger*, Meursault conforms because of great pressure from the magistrate. **" While I was talking, he thrust the crucifix again just under my nose and shouted: " I, anyhow, am a Christian. And I pray Him to forgive you for your sins. My poor young man, how can you not believe that he suffered for your sake?"** I noticed that his manner seemed genuinely solicitous when he said, " My poor young man"-- but I was beginning to have enough of it. The room was growing steadily hotter. As I usually do when I want to get rid of someone whose conversation bores me I pretended to agree. At which, rather to my surprise, his face lit up".

4-Meursault's view toward love

The concept of love is also being explored in the novel through Meursault's view toward love. Camus **"states that love can blind peoples mind and make people forget their own existence"** Meursault describe as someone who seems ignore his lover. It is proven in his statement that he does not love Marie **".....she wanted to know if I love her. I answered the same way I had the last time that it didn't mean anything but that I probably didn't love her"** (1942-41).

Meursault does not really regard love. In his opinion through above statement he does not want to be blind by love her, he want to be free from other. According to Meursault, love not a serious its seems that when Marie asked him if he love her. **"That evening Marie came to see me and asked if I wanted to marry her. I said it didn't make any difference to me and that we could if she wanted to, then she wanted to know if I loved her. I answered the same way I had the last time,**

that it didn't mean anything but that probably I didn't love her" (1942-41).

5-Meursault, s view towards freedom

Freedom seems to be the main focus in existentialism according to Nietzsche "Man is ordinary man, a person who obeys the rules around him, who follows values given by society and fulfills the society's demands. In this sense, Meursault is regarded as "super man" since he bravely performs his instinct. He does obey the society's rule by killing the Arab Meursault does not feel any remorse of what he has done. According to him what he has done is not a serious matter.

Meursault's responsibility is also seen as attitude of existentialist according to **Sartre**, man has to be responsible for commitment and he is action he takes (1956-304).

Meursault is a man who holds his commitment and he is responsible. His responsibility is seen through his own speech in trial "**I told him I didn't know what a sin was. All they had told me that I was guilty. I was guilty, I was paying for it, and nothing more could be asking from me"** (1942-118).

In this obvious that Meursault is clarify his responsible for his action; he accepts his punishment as the consequences of his action.

4-4Internal and external conflicts in "The Stranger"

The novel began and ended with a conflict with many in between. The novel started with the death of Meursault's mother, and ended with him in prison awaiting execution. Meursault faced many unexpected challenges in life that did not always end in his favor. The first challenge Meursault faced was the death of his mother. With that came both

internal and external conflicts. Meursault was facing his emotions of the death along with the external forces. He faced the other people, and the burning sun while walking to the church. “She said, ‘**If you go slowly, you risk getting sunstroke. But if you go too fast, you work up a sweat and then catch a chill inside the church.**’ She was right. There was no way out.” Even nature was against Meursault. Another conflict that occurred Meursault was not directly involved. Raymond taught his ex-girlfriend who had cheated on him a lesson. Although this seems to have nothing to do with Meursault, he was the one who wrote the letter to get the ex to come back so he could teach the lesson. This was a physical conflict that occurred that indirectly involved Meursault. The murder of an Arab was the most significant conflict. Meursault shot the Arab after he had been after Raymond. Meursault does not know what possessed him to do such a thing. He felt nothing before during and after the incident. This conflict changed his life forever. Meursault was arrested and put in jail to await a trial for murder. While in prison he faced the internal conflicts. He no longer had the freedom he had grown accustomed to before his arrest. ” **When I was first imprisoned, the hardest thing was that my thoughts were still those of a free man.” He was trapped in a little cell with nothing but a small window as a bench to sleep on. “...all of a sudden I would feel just how closed in I was by the walls of my cell.”** After the trial and the conviction, Meursault had to establish a way to deal with his emotions. He was to face execution, and that’s not an easy thing for someone to handle. One decision and one conflict lead to a whole lot more.

4.5 Irrational Society in the Stranger

Over the past few decades, innumerable articles and books have been published offering various critical reviews of this literary piece. Generally, much of the scholarship laid stress on the purposeless and absurd outlook of Camus's works, particularly, *The Stranger*. Many scholars, as clichéd, contend "the [main] aim of *The Stranger* [as] the exact sensation of absurdity" (Bloom 2008: 55) or a perfected "**network of thematic and stylistic devices that enforce the impression of absurdity**" (61) while Camus names absurdity as the impassable gulf, which exists between man and the world. In another commentary, Sartre radically ushers his verdict that must "distinguishes *The Stranger* [as something] between the *notion* and *feeling* of absurd", which in fact "plunges us without comment into the climate of the absurd" (qtd. in Bloom 2001: 10). Needless to mention Greenblatt's idea of New Historicism that might have streamed as the political undertones that Camus seethed adroitly into the novel, which caused the "**German censors to refuse publication, seeing the essay as an attack on local patriotism**" (King, 2010: 44).

We can also trace the vestiges of other phenomenal literary movements like pastiche (postmodernism) in which Camus imitates the technique of authors like Ernest Hemingway and John Steinbeck to describe a man with no apparent inner life or/and empathy. Bronner too, claims that, in *The Stranger*, Camus "**fuses the modernism of André Malraux and the classical prose of André Gide with an exoticism both often shared in their writings**" (1999:147), which are the long-occupied labels of Camus's works as well. Eventually, the most thought-to-biological appreciation of the novel has been peaked to the idea of the honest and

innocent Meursault that even Camus himself marked it off as plausible. He explains: “The hero of the book is condemned because he does not play the Noorbakhsh Hooti and Pouria Torkamaneh 2012 game” simply because “he refuses to lie” (qtd. in Solomon, 2006:24). This approach of declaring the protagonist as truthful has been endorsed extensively through which, Meursault’s characteristics “appear to be a kind of total sincerity which disconcerts us because it is virtually unknown in our world” (Bespaloff, 1962: 93).

However, despite all the efforts made and all the claims laid for cementing Meursault in the frame of an honest and truthful man, this interpretation is unconvincing in spite of the authoritative fact that the author has validated it himself. To begin with, the entire proposition of Meursault’s honesty and the truth about his feelings needs to be redefined by a completely new context of comprehending of what ‘feeling’ is. He is a stranger not because he does not play the game of the other people, like lying, but simply because he is a stranger to himself; alienated from all the innate reflective qualities and feelings of an individual, despite large number of appraisals that assessed Meursault as a character who lacks all sort of feelings. In fact, most readers hold the leading character to be the paragon of innocence and honesty, since they mostly fail to point that these features are attributed to the reservoir of feelings, which is in essence, left ‘deactivated’ in the canyons of his heart. Therefore, this paper, briefly, contradicts and dims the panorama of the innocent and truthful Meursault and argues that the main character is fund of feelings and emotions, but is the demonstration of unreflectively and indifference, for it is only with judgment and reflection that human beings give credence and validity to their feelings.

If this stranger has been defended as the omen of pure and honest feelings, it has also been asserted that Meursault has no feelings, which is certainly

not true in one sense. He enjoys the warmth of the sun and Marie's company while going swimming. He even enjoys smoking just a few hours after his mother's death in the morgue. He is annoyed by the sun and by the fact that it is Sunday.

Therefore, he certainly feels his surroundings and is totally aware of his inner feelings and thoughts. He does also prove his consciousness to be still in effect. Proven guilty, Meursault condemns the jury and everybody else in court as being obsessive more about his apathy toward his mother's death rather than being charged with murder. He reproaches most of the dialogues to be centering upon him as being 'soulless' as the cause-célèbre issue and finally says "**the futility of what was happening [back in the court] seemed to take me by the throat, I felt like vomiting, and I had only one idea: to get it over, to go back to my cell, and sleep**" (Camus,1942:65), which alludes to him as possessive of emotions and consciousness that nonetheless operate as profoundly silenced.

Generally, Meursault's feelings should be treated as absolutely autonomous; unconcerned with reflection. In the first part of the novel, we are encountered with the inert and stagnant-minded Meursault, who plays the role of a space from which the reader watches his frozen world disclose itself. It is a simple world without response, interpretation, and reflection. He resides in the same planet along with other people, but rarely does he live emotionally with others, instilling himself as pure experience without the slightest reflection, causing him to develop and maintain a sort of doppelganger, doubled in nature comprising of an isolated soul mingled with a decent-faced mien assuring everyone as the statue of sincerity and honesty. When Marie asks if he loves her and wants to marry her, he weirdly replies, "**That sort of question had no meaning, but he 'supposed' he didn't**" (24) and causes Marie's sadness (merged with consternation).Setting the collection of his impassivity, he thinks no

thoughts and feels no feelings upon his mother's death, smokes cigarette, meets Marie the following day and goes swimming with her, which are again the proof of his indifference. In fact, he can feel desire but not love; he feels fondness for his mother but not grief; he has thoughts but does not think; he exists but does not think of himself as existing. That is what makes him strange, even to us as we read and try to make sense of his feeling system. He also admonishes himself in the mortuary, when his mother's friends in the nursing home come by to offer their words of consolation; he feels paranoid and gets the "absurd impression that they had come to sit in judgment on [him]" (8) since he is not shedding any tears and seems indifferent. It is not much to surprise to treat Meursault as a reflective transcendental narrator and the unreflective bearer of experience in part I who only thinks quiescent thoughts that cannot be involved in the process of judgment or reaction.

Therefore, the climax of the story creates a renaissance in Meursault's feelings and flickers on his judgments and inner reflections. He can be described as "the man who...", but he himself has no self-image until his trial shoves him back into prison where he can finally judge himself. Chaplain's final words referring to Meursault's hardened heart his consciousness and throw him into a sort of Baudrillard's Hyper reality that takes effect on Meursault, splits all the illusions of reality/unreality and reflectivity/unreflectively created by his doubled nature, and shines on the fragments between his static feelings and reflective emotions.

In the case of "*The Stranger*", Meursault, too, is, in part, the convicted criminal of this unyielding law. He murders and shows no sadness upon his mother's death since he suffers from the sentimental nineteenth century feeling of *mal du siècle* (world-weariness). Killing the Arab guy certainly is the evidence of his sub- or inhumane course of action and the law enforcement does not fail to include him in the group of related criminals.

In addition, what the law takes advantage of to pronounce him guilty is his apparent lack of feeling and ‘soullessness’, not exclusively his act of killing another person. More importantly, when being asked if he feels sorry about the crime, he says he does not feel remorseful.

Factually, he is guilty, in part, since he committed the act of murder, which is in essence unlawful, but considering his time of murder in part I that was declarative of his lack of emotion and reflectivity he can be stated to be temporarily innocent. Logically speaking, he is guilty of both his indifference and living in a society that has no values to offer, where everybody bows insincerely to their pre-established customs and undesirable relations, while he defies. Unreflective to all the customs and rules, he fails to understand that he does have to cry when his mother dies, though dishonestly, and this provides the court too useful an asset to announce him guilty of the crime he felt nothing for. To make matters worse, he cannot even stand up against the jury for alleviating the extremity of his punishment, since he is both captured by his apathy and the fact that though it is all about him being penalized, he is never given the real opportunity to defend himself.

Chapter Five

**Main findings, Conclusions, Recommendations, And Suggestions
for Furthers Studies**

Chapter Five

Main findings, Conclusions, Recommendations, And Suggestions for Furthers Studies

5.0 Introduction

In this chapter researcher gives Main finding, Conclusion, Recommendations and Suggestions of The Study and endings his thesis.

5.1 Main Findings of the Study

- 1- The Stranger: The main characters is going through enormous big changes neither is expected of indifferent to the change.
- 2- Happiness in Facing Ones Fate.
- 3- Judging people: no one is perfect.
- 4- Mersault: though his own consciousness- creates his own values and determines a meaning for his life.
- 5- Existence comes before essence.
- 6- The work: tackle a wide range of moral issues in the world.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS:

Meursault is a man who has his idea of honesty: being true to his Meursault is a man who has his impressions that usually come immediately, refusing to exaggerate or give consistency to his emotions, refusing to say more than what he knows. He lives by this one principle, which has nothing to do with the behavior that society expects. Since he is tired, for example, he sleeps at the vigil for his mother; he does not try to create a good impression. He is 'vexed' that the murder occurred, but will not admit to feeling remorse, because he can only be true to his present emotions, and cannot pretend to change the part. Meursault's principle does not permit him to judge others, for how can he claim to know anyone feelings when he refuses to analyze his own emotions? Because he is true to his belief,

Meursault is judged a monster by society and is condemned to die. He accepts this role; like Christ he dies for his belief. By saying that Meursault is the only Christ we deserve, Camus suggests that Meursault's principle of simple honesty to himself is the only guideline mankind can have. There are no abstract moral rules to be taught. Nor, according to Camus, can anyone die for our sins and promise immortality. That is a false hope. Meursault knows that the only happiness lies in accepting the present. His life recalls that of Christ, not as a God or savior, but as a man whose example of living by his beliefs could inspire others. Meursault is not, however, a figure of dignity, but a simple man. *The Stranger* has often been considered one of the best novels written in French during the twentieth century. This dissertation has shown not only the psychological interpretations of the novel but also how skillfully Camus has constructed the plot to show his ideas, how well the way in which Meursault tells his story expresses his personal vision of life. As an unheroic exemplar of the sensibility of an era, Meursault has an enduring place among the characters of world fiction.

5.3 Recommendations

The researcher has come to propose the following recommendations:

- 1- The researcher highly recommends those who are interested in the analysis the main character in this novel to critically read the novel of *The Stranger* and then read the psychological interpretation of the writer.
- 2- The researcher also recommends those who are interested in conducting studies in this area, to have firstly intensifying their reading and understanding of the novel “*The Stranger*” goals of writing it.
- 3- Finally the researcher recommends the readers to take care when dealing. With the unconscious.

5.3 Suggestions for Further Studies

The researcher suggests the following points for further studies:

- 1- Researcher requests from other to put more highlight for Meursault character when they went to analyze this character.
- 2- The impacts of the conflict upon the character in *The Stranger*.
- 3- The dark side of human soul in *The Stranger*.
- 4- Take care when dealing with the unconscious.

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