

THE REPRESENTATION OF CHILDHOOD IN ROALD DAHL'S THE BIG FRIENDLY GIANT

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Abstract: This study explores the representation of childhood in Roald Dahl's "The Big Friendly Giant" through the lens of Erik Erikson's psychosocial development theory, with a particular focus on the character of Sophie, an orphan who faces significant challenges. The research aims to analyze how Sophie's journey reflects key developmental stages, including trust vs. mistrust, autonomy vs. shame and doubt, initiative vs. guilt, and industry vs. inferiority. Through her evolving relationship with the BFG and her proactive role in confronting the giants, Sophie transitions from a fearful, passive child to a confident, assertive individual. This transformation illustrates a positive representation of childhood, emphasizing the importance of nurturing environments and supportive relationships in child development. The findings highlight the critical role of literature in shaping societal perceptions of childhood and suggest that narratives like Dahl's can foster resilience and self-assurance in children. This study also underscores how Sophie's resilience embodies hope, courage, and adaptability, which are vital for healthy psychosocial development.

Keywords: *Children Literature, Childhood, Character Analysis, Psychosocial Development*

INTRODUCTION

Childhood, normally acknowledged as a crucial stage in human development characterized by innocence, curiosity, and formative experiences. According to Montessori in her book entitled *The Secret of Childhood*, childhood is seen as a critical and essential period in individual formation, where children have a unique capacity to learn and explore naturally. The Montessori theory, focusing on the holistic development of children, is highly

relevant to this study of childhood as depicted in "The Big Friendly Giant". Montessori

detailed that an ideal childhood involves the child's freedom of exploration, an environment that stimulates holistic growth, and a deep appreciation for the uniqueness of each individual. Montessori emphasized the need for transformation in education, creating an environment that suits children's nature, providing directed freedom to learn, and respecting children's creativity and exploration. Childhood exists in various environment, ranging from familial environments to educational institutions and broader societal contexts. Sabudu, (2020:25) States "Every parent in the world expects the best way for their children when they start to learn whether about formal education or informal education". The experiences of childhood are shaped by cultural, social, and economic factors, influencing the perspectives and opportunities available to young individuals.

"The Big Friendly Giant", a literary creation of Roald Dahl, introduces a fantastical interpretation of childhood through the eyes of the central character, Shopie. Sophie, a lonely and cautious child raised in an orphanage, initially embodies fear and insecurity. However, her character undergoes significant growth through her friendship with the gentle giant, the BFG. As she transforms from a timid orphan into a brave and confident individual, Sophie exemplifies resilience and the transformative power of trust. Her journey highlights essential aspects of character development, showcasing how nurturing relationships can foster courage and moral conviction. Through Sophie, readers gain insights into childhood resilience, agency, and self-discovery, making her a compelling figure in understanding the psychosocial and emotional themes present in children's literature. Dahl's narrative infuses magic and whimsy into the everyday struggles and triumphs of childhood, creating a unique lens through which to explore the universal themes of innocence, friendship, and resilience. Childhood nowadays is influenced by rapid technological evolution, shifts in family structures, and global interconnectedness. This research is intriguing because it delves into childhood through Roald Dahl's narrative. Examining how "The Big Friendly Giant" portrays childhood compared to reality enriches our grasp of literature's societal impact. In a swiftly changing era, exploring contemporary childhood through literature offers insights into this crucial human development phase.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

The research design in this study is qualitative research, specifically focusing on the exploration of the representation of childhood in Roald Dahl's novel, "The Big Friendly Giant". Qualitative research is descriptive, Bogdan and Biklen (1992:30).

Data Collection

The data collection has two forms, that is primary data and secondary data. The primary data on this study is derived from a close reading and analysis of the text itself. Through an examination of character interactions, developmental arcs, and the portrayal of childhood experiences, the researcher explores how childhood is depicted within the narrative. The secondary sources such as scholarly articles and critical essays provide supplementary insights and a broader contextual understanding.

Data Analysis

The data analysis process for this study involves a systematic and rigorous examination of the collected data to uncover patterns, themes, and insights regarding the representation of childhood in Roald Dahl's novel, *The Big Friendly Giant*. The analysis begins with organizing and categorizing the data, which includes significant passages, quotes, from the novel and supplementary sources. The researcher then conducts a careful reading and interpretation of the data. The Theoretical frameworks, Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory, employed to deepen the analysis and provide a theoretical lens through which to interpret the findings. The data analysis process aims to generate meaningful insights and contribute to the understanding of how childhood is represented in *The Big Friendly Giant*.

Findings and Discussion

Representation of Childhood Seen in The Character of Sophie

Sophie, the main character in "The Big Friendly Giant", is introduced as an orphan living in an orphanage in England. Her life experiences prior to meeting the BFG are marked by loneliness and a lack of affection. The orphanage is depicted as a harsh and cold

environment, serving as the backdrop for Sophie's early development. This setting plays a significant role in shaping her initial experiences and responses to the world around her.

To provide context for the theoretical framework, it is necessary to discuss Erik Erikson's stages of psychosocial development prior to analyzing the specific stages relevant to Sophie's journey in "The Big Friendly Giant". Erikson proposed eight stages of psychosocial development from infancy through old age, with each stage characterized by a unique developmental task or challenge faced by the individual, the eight stages are Trust vs Mistrust, Autonomy vs Shame and Doubt, Initiative vs Guilt, Industry vs Inferiority, Identity vs Role Confusion, Intimacy vs Isolation, Productivity vs Stagnation and Ego Integration vs Despair. While all eight stages influence an individual's overall psychosocial development, this analysis focuses on four key stages pertinent, that is Trust vs Mistrust, Autonomy vs Shame and Doubt, Initiative vs Guilt, and Industry vs Inferiority, to understanding Sophie's character growth in the story. These particular stages were selected due to their importance in examining Sophie's development.

Trust vs. Mistrust: Shopie's Trust Development

Sophie's journey begins in the first stage of psychosocial development described by Erikson, Trust versus Mistrust, which typically occurs in the first year of life but extends to significant early relationships throughout childhood. This stage focuses on developing a sense of trust in caregivers and one's environment. As an orphan, Sophie initially lacks a stable figure in her life, contributing to feelings of mistrust and insecurity. Through the interactions and relationship she builds with BFG, shopie can pass through the first stage of her psychosocial development.

The earliest part of Sophie's journey in "The Big Friendly Giant" is characterized by the development of trust. As a child, Sophie is naturally wary and fearful, given her upbringing in the orphanage under the stern and often cruel care of Mrs. Clonkers. Fosters an environment of mistrust, shaping Sophie's early emotional state. Her initial mistrust is a protective mechanism, leading her to be cautious of new experiences, including her first encounter with the BFG. This reflects Sophie's early emotional development, corresponding to Erikson's "Trust vs. Mistrust" stage. The mistrust Sophie experiences from a young age forces her to become more self-reliant, as she cannot rely on caregivers to provide warmth

or emotional support.

However, as the story progresses, her trust in the BFG begins to grow. The BFG reassures her, that statement:

'What sort of human beings do you eat?' she asked trembling.

'Me!' shouted the giant, his mighty voice making the glass jars rattle on their shelves

'Me gobbling up human beans! This I never! The others, yes! All the others is gobbling up them every night, but not me! I is freaky Giant! I is a nice and jumbly

*Giant! I is the only nice and jumbly Giant in Giant country! I is **THE BIG FRIENDLY GIANT!** I is the BFG. What is your name?'*

'My name is Shopie.' Shopie said, *hardly daring to believe the good news she had just heard.* (Dahl, 1988, p.20)

This reassurance marks the beginning of a deep bond of trust between them, and as Sophie begins to trust the BFG, she overcomes her initial fear. Her interaction with the BFG shows a potential shift. Her early interactions with the BFG are crucial to progressing through this stage. Sophie fears the giant for her safety. However, as she observes the BFG's gentle and kind nature, she begins to develop a sense of trust. It begins to break down her walls of mistrust. His caring attitude and protective actions create a safe environment for Sophie, fostering her ability to trust.

Trust is further strengthened when the BFG consistently reassurance that he will protect Sophie from other, more dangerous giants. His willingness to hide and keep her safe reassures Sophie of his reliability and goodness. Erikson argued that consistent care and reliability are key to developing trust. The BFG's unwavering commitment to Sophie helps her feel safe and valued, which is essential to her psychological well-being. This newfound trust lays the foundation for Sophie, allowing her to form a secure attachment and reducing feelings of anxiety and mistrust, as demonstrated in the following statement:

'Now I came to think of it, I won't actually be here all that long,' Shopie said.

'I is afraid you will,' the BFG said.

'No, I won't, Shopie said. 'Those brutes out there are bound to catch me sooner or later and have me for tea.'

'I is never letting that happen,' the BFG said.' (Dahl, 1988, p.27)

Through her growing relationship with the BFG, Sophie starts to develop a sense of

security. The development of trust in this stage is crucial to Sophie's psychosocial growth, allowing her to move beyond her fear and experience the world with a sense of security. The development of trust also prepares Sophie to explore her environment and relationships with confidence. Erikson suggested that children who successfully progress through this stage will have the confidence to face future challenges. For Sophie, this newfound trust allows her to embark on adventures with the BFG, as he trusts in its ability to protect and guide her. This foundation of trust is important because it supports her ability to progress through the next stage of psychosocial development. The following are the results of the Shpee development stage.

At the beginning of the story, as an orphan, Sophie may have felt vulnerable and helpless, living in a situation where she had little control over her life. However, when she confidently declares:

'We'll go to the Queen! It's a terrific idea! If I went and told the Queen about these disgusting man-eating giant, I'm sure she'd do something about it !' (Dahl, 1988, p.81)

It shows how far she has come in terms of taking control of her circumstances. This suggestion reflects her newfound sense of security, not only in her surroundings but also in herself. Sophie now feels secure enough to propose a bold plan to approach one of the most powerful figures in the world. Her confidence in this idea shows her growing belief in her own ability to make a difference, which stands in stark contrast to her previous reliance on others, especially the BFG, for protection and guidance. This shift from relying on others to taking proactive action shows an increasing inner strength and a belief that she is no longer a passive observer but someone who can influence outcomes. Sophie's willingness to propose such a bold course of action, despite the risk of meeting the Queen and the BFG's expressed doubts, underscores her growing courage. Rather than fearing failure or danger, she confidently steps forward, confident that facing the problem head-on by seeking help from an authority figure will lead to a solution. This confidence marks a significant turning point in her emotional development, as she transitions from the frightened child who once watched helplessly from the window of her orphanage to a brave and confident person ready to take on extraordinary challenges. Sophie's courage stems from the security she has gained through her experiences, as she now trusts her ability to

overcome threats and stand up for herself, demonstrating a significant transformation in her character.

Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt: Sophie's Autonomy Development

Sophie's increasing independence in *The BFG* reflects her development according to Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory, particularly in the stage of Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt. During this phase, people, particularly kids, develop the ability to express their desires, make choices, and manage their behavior. Erikson claimed that effectively progressing through this phase brings about the growth of independence and confidence in oneself, but if unsuccessful, it may lead to feelings of embarrassment and lack of self-assurance. Despite her age and the scary world she lives in, Sophie consistently shows her independence in different circumstances. She shows leadership by taking control, making choices, and defending her beliefs. In the novel, there is a thorough account of Sophie showcasing independence during crucial moments.

Sophie demonstrates significant autonomy when she confidently takes charge of the plan to meet the Queen. Despite being a young girl thrust into a world dominated by giants, Sophie does not allow herself to be overwhelmed by fear or uncertainty. Instead, she actively participates in strategizing and decision-making. She tells the BFG:

'Is you helping me to find this palace?' the BFG asked, 'I has never dared to go hide and sneaking around london in my life.'

"I'll show you the way," Shopie said confidently.

'I is frightened of London,' the BFG said.

Don't be,' Shopie said. 'It's full of tiny dark streets and there are very few people about in the witching hour,' (Dahl, 1988 p.84)

Taking ownership of guiding the BFG through the unfamiliar streets of London. In Erikson's theory, this moment highlights the development of Sophie's autonomy, as she demonstrates not only self-reliance but also the ability to trust in her knowledge and instincts. She steps into a leadership role despite the intimidating circumstances, making decisions and guiding the much larger, more powerful BFG. This is crucial to her development, as it shows she is not crippled by doubt but has learned to assert herself. Rather than passively relying on the BFG or shrinking from responsibility, Sophie takes

control, helping to shape the direction of their mission. This illustrates her growing competence and confidence, core elements of autonomy. Moreover, the fact that Sophie, an orphan and a child, is leading an enormous giant through the streets of London signifies her strong sense of agency and belief in her own capabilities.

'I'm ready!' Sophie cried. Her heart was beginning to thump at the thought of what they were about to do. It really was a wild and crazy thing. Perhaps they would both be thrown into prison. (Dahl, 1988, p.89)

Sophie's declaration of her readiness, in the face of a daunting mission, reflects her deepening autonomy. In this instance, despite the dangerous and nerve-wracking nature of the task ahead, Sophie does not allow fear to dictate her actions. Erikson's theory emphasizes that developing autonomy involves learning to balance one's emotions, especially in moments of fear and anxiety. Sophie exemplifies this by pushing through her apprehension and focusing on the task at hand. Her ability to overcome doubt and fear demonstrates a key aspect of autonomy: trusting one's own capacity to handle difficult situations. Sophie does not rely on external reassurance or wait for someone else to take the lead. Instead, she asserts her readiness to move forward and face the dangers that lie ahead. This decision is particularly significant because it contrasts with the natural human instinct to withdraw or hesitate in moments of fear, especially for a child her age. By stepping up and confirming her readiness to act, Sophie showcases a level of emotional regulation and independence that is critical in Erikson's model. Her actions send a clear message: she will not allow fear to hold her back. This sense of empowerment is central to her ability to contribute meaningfully to the plan and further solidifies her role as an active participant in their journey. The moment also underscores a broader theme in Erikson's theory: that autonomy fosters resilience. Sophie's decision to proceed, despite her fears, demonstrates the strength and determination that autonomy can cultivate in an individual, preparing them to face future challenges with greater confidence.

One of the most defining moments of Sophie's autonomy occurs when she refuses to be passive in the face of the giant's actions. She declares:

She and The Big Friendly Giant sat quietly side by side on the blue rock in the gathering dusk. Sophie had never felt so helpless in her life. After a while she stood up and cried out, 'I can't stand it! Just think of those poor girls and boys who are

going to be eaten alive in a few hours time! We can't just sit here and do nothing! We've got to go after those brutes!" (Dahl, 1988, p.79)

This is a powerful assertion of independence. According to Erikson, a crucial part of developing autonomy is learning to take action rather than remaining passive or waiting for others to intervene. Sophie's insistence on taking immediate action shows that she feels capable of influencing the situation and does not want to be a bystander. This moment is significant because it reveals Sophie's growing belief in her own ability to change the course of events, despite the overwhelming odds. By pushing for a proactive approach, Sophie demonstrates that she has internalized the idea that she can and should take charge of her circumstances. In Erikson's model, autonomy is about moving beyond helplessness and embracing agency this is exactly what Sophie does in this scene. Her demand for action is not only a rejection of passivity but also a reflection of her confidence in herself and in the BFG's ability to succeed. Rather than succumbing to feelings of helplessness, which could lead to doubt and frustration, Sophie channels her energy into motivating others to act, further highlighting her leadership qualities. This moment also underscores her refusal to accept a victim mentality. Instead of being paralyzed by the fear of what the giants might do, Sophie actively seeks a solution, embodying the core of Erikson's autonomy stage. She sees herself as part of the solution, someone who can contribute to changing the situation, rather than someone who simply reacts to the actions of others.

Initiative vs. Guilt: Shopie's Initiative Development

Sophie's journey in "The BFG" by Roald Dahl demonstrates her development of initiative, a key aspect of Erikson's "Initiative versus Guilt" stage of psychosocial development. This stage typically occurs between ages three to five and involves cultivating initiative through planning and undertaking new projects. Successfully navigating this stage results in a sense of purpose and the ability to lead others. For Sophie, this stage is marked by her growing leadership skills and willingness to take bold action.

In this stage, children can either gain initiative by leading situations and carrying out plans, or feel guilt if they think they are going too far. Sophie, despite being a child, always displays courageous determination and leadership, particularly in her dealings with the BFG and her strategy to eliminate the man-eating giants. Sophie stands out in three

crucial instances: leading the BFG to London, suggesting the Queen dream plan, and specifying the dream intricacies. Her developing understanding of responsibility, self-assurance, and ability to lead are evident in her behaviors, in accordance with Erikson's Initiative vs. Guilt phase.

Sophie displays strong leadership skills when she leads the BFG to London, particularly when he is unsure. On their way to the Queen's Palace, the BFG starts feeling anxious about finding his way in the human world, where his massive size might lead to fear. Sophie quickly takes charge, asserting with confidence:

'You mean we is nearly at the Queen's Palace?' cried the BFG.

'It's just across the road, Sophie whispered. 'this is where I take over.'

'Which way?' the BFG asked.

'Straight ahead.' (Dahl, 1988, p.94-95)

Displaying a willingness to lead in a moment of uncertainty. This demonstrates initiative as she takes charge and leads the way without relying on the BFG to come up with a solution or a different approach. The importance of this moment lies in the fact that a small child named Sophie is taking charge of a giant, which flips the usual power dynamic between them. Even though she is young and lacks experience in handling big responsibilities, she assumes a leadership position with confidence and certainty. This demonstrates her readiness for facing challenges as well as her confidence in leading a larger-than-life personality. By assuming control, Sophie demonstrates her unwillingness to simply be a passive observer in the narrative. She acknowledges the importance of taking action and takes responsibility, demonstrating Erikson's concept of initiative, when children start to assert themselves in different situations, build self-assurance, and become more decisive.

Leading the BFG to London is also the beginning of Sophie's strategy to halt the giants. Her ability to take the lead shows that she grasps the seriousness of the situation and is ready to be in control. During this activity, Sophie is demonstrating leadership, a crucial ability during the Initiative vs. Guilt phase, by taking charge of not only her own behavior but also influencing the overall course of events in her surroundings. Her ability to think fast and make firm decisions is essential for progressing their mission.

Sophie demonstrates more of her leadership skills by suggesting to convey their

message to the Queen in a dream. Instead of depending on usual communication methods or just hoping the Queen will trust their incredible story, Sophie takes action by proposing a clever strategy. She expresses:

'Now hold on a sec,' Sophie said. 'Just you and a sec because I've got another idea.'

'Your idea is full of crodwwoggle,' the BFG said.

'Not this one,' Sophie said. "you said that if we tell the Queen, she would never believe us?'

'I is certain she wouldn't,' the BFG said.

'But we aren't going to tell her!' Sophie said excitedly. 'we don't have to tell her! We'll make her dream it!' (Dahl, 1988, p.81)

This moment showcases her talent in creative and strategic thinking. Sophie knows the power of dreams, so by framing their story within the Queen's dream, they can overcome doubt and cynicism. Sophie, not the BFG, comes up with this crucial idea that is essential for their success. This demonstrates her ingenuity and increasing capability to handle complicated tasks. Sophie's effort isn't just about coming up with a good idea; it's about knowing how to implement that idea successfully. She takes initiative and doesn't rely on the BFG to come up with a plan or respond passively to the challenges ahead. Alternatively, she moves ahead with a proactive resolution, indicating her willingness to take charge. This element of initiative is closely linked to Erikson's stage, in which children gain confidence by creating and following through on their own ideas.

Moreover, Sophie's resolution showcases a profound comprehension of influence and compassion. She suggests a way for the Queen to easily understand the giants' existence without being skeptical. Sophie's strong leadership is also highlighted by her emotional intelligence, which includes the skill of empathizing and considering how the Queen will react.

Furthermore, Sophie goes beyond just creating the dream idea and provides specific instructions on what should be incorporated into the dream. She says:

'Put that in the dream,' Sophie said. 'and then ... then the dream must say that when their tummies are full, they will go galloping back to Giant Country where no one can find them.'

'Is that all?' the BFG said.

'certainly not,' Shopie said. 'You must then explain to the Queen in her dream that there is a Big Friendly Giant who can tell her where all those beasts are living, so that she can send her soldiers and her armies to capture them once and for all. And now let her dream one last and very important thing. Let her dream that there is a little girl called Shopie sitting on her window-sill who will tell her where the Big Friendly Giant is hiding.' (Dahl, 1988, p.83)

This statement reveals Sophie's meticulousness and her capacity to strategically plan how to make sure the Queen comprehensively grasps the circumstance. Sophie's precise description of the dream's message shows her thorough grasp of the significance of clear and specific communication. She acknowledges that unclear dreams could confuse the Queen, so she makes sure the dream gives precise instructions, outlining how she can assist the Queen in locating the BFG. Sophie's thorough consideration of every detail indicates advanced planning and foresight for the mission's success. Sophie's increasing personal responsibility is also demonstrated in her ability to give these detailed instructions. She understands the importance of the dream in their success, and she does not leave anything to luck. Sophie shows a high level of initiative by managing this process and making sure all required information is included. She assumes responsibility for the plan and doesn't depend on the BFG or any other person to complete missing parts. This is a crucial aspect of leadership, demonstrating that Sophie is not just willing to generate ideas but also committed to seeing them implemented with careful execution.

During Erikson's stage of Initiative vs. Guilt, kids start to manage their actions and the results of their endeavors. Sophie's leadership in outlining the dream illustrates this point perfectly, as she demonstrates a thorough grasp of the risks involved and assumes complete accountability for making sure their strategy is flawless. This high level of accountability and forward thinking is a key characteristic of strong drive, as it demands both originality and tactical decision making. Sophie shows great initiative and leadership during crucial moments such as leading the BFG to London, crafting the dream for the Queen, and specifying the dream's specifics. She takes the lead in developing a strategic plan and ensures that the dream's details are executed accurately when the BFG is unsure. These behaviors show how her sense of responsibility, confidence, and capability to influence her surroundings are increasing. By observing Sophie's behavior, we can see her

navigating through Erikson's stage of Initiative vs. Guilt, during which she discovers how to assert her independence, guide others, and take charge in order to achieve significant outcomes. This not just progresses the storyline of *The BFG*, but also showcases Sophie's development as a young leader.

Industry vs. Inferiority: Shopie's Industrious Development

Sophie's journey in "*The BFG*" by Roald Dahl demonstrates her progression through Erikson's stage of industry versus inferiority, a crucial phase of psychosocial development for children aged five through twelve. During this stage, children develop the ability to work productively and gain a sense of self-efficacy. Successfully navigating this stage fosters feelings of pride and accomplishment, while failure can result in feelings of inadequacy. For the character Sophie in the story, this stage is marked by her growing competence and meaningful contributions to their shared goals.

Sophie's transformation from a shy orphan to a brave and inventive hero is a key focus in Roald Dahl's *The BFG*. A crucial moment in her growth comes when she rescues a soldier from being consumed by the Fleshlumpeater, the deadliest giant.

Her mind was racing. She must do something! She must! She must! She remembered the sapphire brooch the Queen had pinned on to her chest. Quickly, she undid it.

Shopie ran up behind the Fleshlumpeater. She was holding the brooch between her fingers. When she was right up close to the great naked hairy legs, she rammed the three-inch long pin of the brooch as hard as she could into the Fleshlumpeater's right ankle. It went deep into the flesh and stayed there.

The giant gave a roar of pain and jumped high in the air. He dropped the soldier and made a grab for his ankle. (Dahhl, 1988, p.131)

This demonstration of courage highlights Sophie's increasing sense of accountability and also demonstrates her psychological development, as seen through the framework of Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory. Sophie's behaviors correspond to Erikson's stage four, which involves children facing the task of learning new skills and making a positive impact on society. Sophie's ability to think fast and stay determined in a life-threatening situation shows her progression from feeling inadequate to feeling skilled and hardworking.

This moment is important as Sophie, a little orphan, finds herself in a frightening

situation where she must act swiftly to stop the giant from eating the soldier. Her cleverness was demonstrated through her quick decision to use a brooch, a common item, as a weapon. Even though she is small and faces seemingly impossible challenges, Sophie manages to take charge of the situation, proving her ability to make quick decisions when confronted with danger. Her readiness to face a massive challenge in order to defend someone else showcases her growing sense of duty and diligence, a trait Erikson views as significant in the Industry vs. Inferiority stage of psychosocial and social growth. At this point, children should be able to build confidence by acquiring new abilities, overcoming challenges, and making valuable contributions to the community. Sophie's behavior in this moment shows how she has developed by depending on her smarts and bravery to navigate through a perilous environment.

Then the climactic moments reflecting this stage is when Sophie and the BFG successfully capture the giants.

'Well done you!' Sophie cried.

'Well done you!' said the BFG, smiling down at the little girl. 'You is saving all of our lives!' (Dahl, 1988, p.133)

This statement reflects Sophie's sense of pride and accomplishment, illustrating her belief that their combined efforts have paid off. Sophie demonstrates an industrious spirit through her active involvement in planning and executing the plan to stop the giants. She proposes not only the idea to approach the Queen but also helps devise the strategy for capturing the giants. Her formulated plan and practical implementation highlight her developing productivity and problem-solving skills.

The positive reinforcement Sophie receives from the BFG and the Queen further bolsters her sense of self-efficacy. When praised by the BFG for her success, it reinforces Sophie's belief in her own abilities, emphasizing as Erikson does the importance of encouragement during this developmental phase for fostering a sense of industry. Every country gave their congratulations and also gifts to both of them for their success, especially the Queen.

The Queen herself gave orders that a special house with tremendous high ceilings and enormous doors should immediately be built in Windsor Great Park, next to her own castle, for the BFG to live in. and a pretty little cottage was put up next door

for Sophie. the BFG's house was to have a special dream-storing room with hundreds of shelves in it where he could put his beloved bottles. What is more, he was given the title of The Royal Dream-Blower. (Dahl, 1988, p.140-141)

This external validation from such an authoritative figure reinforces Sophie's self-esteem and sense of accomplishment, demonstrating that her efforts have been recognized and appreciated. Additionally, when Sophie reflects on the capture of the giants, she realizes that they have prevented further harm to children. This moment marks the culmination of her industrious efforts and shows that she has successfully navigated Erikson's stage of industry, overcoming any feelings of inferiority that might have held her back earlier in the novel. Sophie's contributions extend beyond planning, as she plays an active role in capturing the giants as well. Her involvement from strategizing to execution demonstrates her industrious spirit and work ethic toward their shared goal. As Erikson posits, actively participating builds a sense of industry by showing efforts can achieve tangible success.

By overcoming setbacks through adaptability and perseverance, Sophie's sense of competence is further strengthened. Erikson highlights that developing a sense of industry involves working through challenges and achieving one's goals. By the novel's end, Sophie has achieved a strong sense of industry marked by her success in stopping the giants and protecting children, feeling pride rather than the prior inferiority. Sophie has thus navigated the stage of industry versus inferiority through her industrious efforts and growing competence.

CONCLUSION

This study has explored the representation of childhood in Roald Dahl's "The Big Friendly Giant" through the lens of Erik Erikson's psychosocial development theory, focusing on the character of Sophie. The analysis reveals that Sophie transitions from a state of fear and passivity to one of confidence and proactivity, effectively navigating the stages of trust vs. mistrust, autonomy vs. shame and doubt, initiative vs. guilt, and industry vs. inferiority. By actively participating in the plan to capture the giants, Sophie demonstrates her growing sense of industry and competence, ultimately feeling pride in her accomplishments rather than inferiority. The findings underscore the significance of

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literature in shaping societal perceptions of childhood and highlight the potential for narratives like Dahl's to foster self-assurance and resilience in children.

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