



Exploration of Uncertainty and Waiting in the Short Story *Rencana Satu Kereta Bersama W Mabelle*: A Formalism and Psychological Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the themes of waiting and uncertainty in the short story “Rencana Satu Kereta Bersama W Mabelle” by Aravayana, using a formalist and Freudian psychological approach. The formalist approach identifies intrinsic elements such as structure, plot, symbolism, and style, while the Freudian psychological approach explores the personality aspects of the main character through the concepts of the Id, Ego, and Super-ego. This research is conducted qualitatively by analyzing the text of the short story as the primary object. The results reveal that the themes of waiting and uncertainty are represented through symbols such as the “train” and “unread chat,” symbolizing restrained communication and missed opportunities. The non-linear plot and poetic language strengthen the melancholic atmosphere of the story, depicting the main character’s feelings trapped in uncertainty. From the perspective of Freudian psychology, the main character experiences a conflict between the Id, which seeks attention from W Mabelle, the Ego, which balances hope and reality, and the Super-ego, which considers the morality of the relationship. This study contributes to understanding contemporary Indonesian literature through an integrative analysis of formalism and psychology, providing a deeper interpretation of the emotional dynamics in literary works. However, this study is limited to intrinsic analysis and the internal conflicts of the main character, suggesting the need for further studies involving socio-cultural context to enrich the understanding of the themes explored.

Keywords: uncertainty, waiting, short story, formalism, psychological

Eksplorasi Ketidakpastian dan Penantian dalam Cerpen *Rencana Satu Kereta Bersama W Mabelle*: Analisis Formalisme dan Psikologi

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis tema penantian dan ketidakpastian dalam cerpen *Rencana Satu Kereta Bersama W Mabelle* karya Aravayana dengan menggunakan pendekatan formalisme dan psikologi Freud. Pendekatan formalisme digunakan untuk mengidentifikasi unsur-unsur intrinsik, seperti struktur, alur, simbolisme, dan gaya bahasa, sedangkan pendekatan psikologi Freud menyoroti aspek kepribadian tokoh utama melalui konsep Id, Ego, dan Super-ego. Penelitian ini dilakukan secara kualitatif dengan menganalisis teks cerpen sebagai objek utama. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tema penantian dan ketidakpastian tercermin melalui simbol-simbol seperti “kereta” dan “chat yang tak terbaca,” yang melambangkan komunikasi tertahan dan kesempatan yang terlewatkan. Alur non-linear dan gaya bahasa puitis memperkuat suasana melankolis dalam cerita, menggambarkan perasaan tokoh utama yang terjebak dalam ketidakpastian. Dari perspektif psikologi Freud, tokoh utama mengalami konflik antara Id yang ingin mendapatkan perhatian dari W Mabelle, Ego yang mencoba menyeimbangkan harapan dengan kenyataan, dan Super-ego yang mempertimbangkan moralitas hubungan tersebut. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi dalam memahami karya sastra Indonesia kontemporer melalui analisis integratif antara formalisme dan psikologi, yang memungkinkan penafsiran lebih mendalam mengenai dinamika emosi dalam karya sastra. Namun, penelitian ini terbatas pada analisis intrinsik dan konflik internal tokoh utama, sehingga perlu kajian lebih lanjut yang melibatkan konteks sosial budaya untuk memperkaya pemahaman tema yang diangkat.

Kata Kunci: ketidakpastian, penantian, cerpen, formalisme, psikologi

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INTRODUCTION

Uncertainty and waiting are two themes that are often found in contemporary literature, reflecting the dynamics of human emotions amid social and technological changes. (Problem) Aravayana's short story 'Rencana Satu Kereta Bersama W Mabelle' describes explicitly the inner turmoil of a character who is faced with uncertainty in interpersonal relationships in the digital era. This condition is a crucial issue, where human relationships are increasingly dependent on technological communication that often creates ambiguity. This issue highlights the need for a deeper understanding of how uncertainty and waiting affect characters in literary narratives, especially in a modern context.

Research on the theme of uncertainty in literature has evolved, but approaches that combine formalism and psychological analysis to explore the meaning of symbolism and inner conflict are still relatively limited. Some previous studies have focused on elements of formalism that examine narrative structure, including plot development and character relationships in literary works (Al Matarneh, 2020). The use of language is essential in formalism. Techniques such as defamiliarization and various stylistic devices (e.g., metaphor, personification) enhance the emotional depth and complexity of the text. This method encourages a detailed examination of the text itself, enabling a deeper understanding of its literary qualities (Asika et al., 2015).

However, some critics argue that it may overlook the wider social and historical contexts that influence the creation and interpretation of texts. This perspective suggests that a more holistic approach can enrich the understanding of literature beyond its formal elements (Tulaganova, 2022). On the other hand, psychological analysis in literary works offers deep insights into the emotional conflicts and motivations of characters by exploring the unconscious desires and anxieties that shape the narrative. This approach, rooted in psychoanalytic theory, allows for a deeper understanding of characters and authors, revealing

layers of meaning that may not be immediately apparent. The following section outlines key aspects of this analysis. Psychoanalysis argues that literary texts are manifestations of the unconscious of the author and reader, revealing repressed desires and conflicts (El Hajj, 2020). Psychological diagnosis in literature from 1890 to 1955 illustrates how evolving classifications of mental life reflected societal anxieties regarding race, gender, and sexuality that influenced literary innovation, revealing emotional conflicts and character motivations (Mendelman, 2021).

However, it is rare to find research that comprehensively connects these two approaches in a single work of contemporary literature. There is a lack of integrative exploration between structural and psychological aspects in revealing the meaning of uncertainty and waiting. Most previous studies in literary works have focused on a single approach, thus not fully answering how the two elements reinforce each other in shaping the reader's emotional experience. In fact, in the short story 'Rencana Satu Kereta Bersama W Mabelle', this theme becomes central and is expressed through symbolic language and the inner complexity of the main character. This lacuna provides a research opportunity that combines a formalist approach to explore the structure and symbols in the text and a psychological approach to unravel the character's motivations and emotions.

The concept offered in this study is the use of formalist analysis to identify the short stories' intrinsic elements, such as symbolism and plot, that reflect the theme of uncertainty. On the other hand, psychological analysis is focused on interpreting the characters' emotional state in dealing with waiting, as a response to uncertainty in relationships. These two approaches are expected to fill the gaps in previous research by offering a more holistic view.

The purpose of this study is to reveal how the themes of uncertainty and waiting are represented through symbolism and emotional conflict in the short story Rencana Satu Kereta



Bersama W Mabelle. This research is expected to provide a deeper understanding of the use of symbols and psychological dynamics in contemporary Indonesian literature, as well as enrich literary studies with an integrative perspective between formalism and psychology.

Russian formalism was pioneered by a group of literary theorists in the early 20th century, including figures such as Viktor Shklovsky, Roman Jakobson, Boris Eikhenbaum, and Yury Tynyanov (Berezhnaya, 2022; Lvoff, 2023; Womack, 2022). They shifted the focus of literary study from the external context to the text itself, emphasizing the importance of language and its structure. Their approach aims to analyze literature through its formal elements, thereby establishing a method that prioritizes the text over authorial intent or reader response. (Maloku & Avdyli, 2023)

In literary studies, Russian Formalism is a way of thinking that sees literature as a formal expression. The formalist approach allows the reader to see a new world when something familiar in everyday language is made unusual in literary language. (Athaillah, 2021). Formalism was born in Russia as a reaction to positivism that paid attention to biographical “information”. Apart from being a reaction to positivism, the birth of formalism also coincided with the growing trend of rejection of traditional approaches that always pay attention to the relationship of literary works with the disciplines of history, psychology, and sociology. (Manshur, 2019). Several experts have written about this formalism theory, namely Erlich (1954); Erlich (1973); Erlich (1980); Pilshchikov (2022); Steiner (1980); Steiner (2016); Striedter (1989); Lemon & Reis (1965); Gorman (2017); and Thompson (1971).

This formalist theory aims to find out the integration of elements contained in literary works, especially about the plot. This approach sees the work as autonomous (standing alone, having its own world). This approach only uses facts or information in the work itself, without taking information from the author’s biography or social/cultural background (Pratiwi, 2022). In the

Formalism approach, regardless of the value or opinion of the author or reader, to find the meaning, an analysis of a literary work must be done. (Firmansyah et al., 2022). Formalists tend to study literary texts formally through language structures (Tarigan et al., 2021; Rokhmansyah, 2017).

Furthermore, Sigmund Freud’s psychoanalytic theory has also significantly influenced literary studies. Freud’s psychological theories provide a framework for interpreting texts through the lens of human psychology. Freud’s concepts have been applied to understand deeper meanings and motivations in literary works. This approach allows for the exploration of the psychological dimensions of characters, writers, and readers, offering insight into the human psyche and its representation in literature. As described by Rezaei & Seyyedrezaei (2013), Freud’s ideas became the basis of literary criticism, particularly through psychoanalytic criticism. He argued that an author’s motivation comes from latent desires formed in childhood, which manifest in their literary works. This approach examines the interaction between the conscious and unconscious mind, revealing how emotional and psychological disturbances affect literature. Freud’s theory also suggests that symbols in texts can represent deeper sexual and psychological meanings, thus enriching the interpretation of literary works through a psychological lens. The same thing was conveyed by Arsene (2023), who argues that psychoanalysis is an important tool for understanding literary themes and character motivation.

Freud’s psychological theory is a framework for understanding personality (Mawuntu et al., 2023). Freud’s psychological theory identifies three components of personality: id, ego and superego. In literary analysis, the id represents primitive desires and instincts, which are often suppressed by societal norms. The superego embodies the moral values and expectations of society, while the ego mediates between the urges of the id and the constraints of the superego, striving to achieve balance. Psychoanalytic criticism explores how these elements influence



character behavior and motivation, uncovering deeper meanings in literary texts through the interplay between unconscious desires and conscious moral judgments. (Niaz et al., 2019; Raminda & Prihandini, 2024). Furthermore, the concepts of id, ego, and superego, serve as a framework for analyzing characters in literature. (Nazim Jamal & JaF, 2023; Giordano, 2020)

METHOD

This research aims to analyze the theme of uncertainty and waiting which makes the short story entitled 'Rencana Satu Kereta Bersama W Mabelle' by Aravayana as the object of research. This research is a descriptive qualitative research with a literature study research technique that focuses on the intrinsic elements (structure, symbols and plot) and the emotional conflicts of the characters.

The main data in this research is the text of a short story entitled 'Rencana Satu Kereta Bersama W Mabelle' by Aravayana. Data collection is done by transcribing data from the short story text through intensive reading, identification, and collection of text quotations related to intrinsic elements and social conflicts.

Data analysis in this study used a formalism approach to study the intrinsic elements of the text to study the intrinsic elements of the text emphasizing the analysis of literary works through their language and structure, not external context. This method, rooted in Russian Formalism, focuses on the internal mechanisms of the text, including the style and techniques used by the author (Botifar & Zulyani, 2023). By prioritizing the text itself, formalism seeks to uncover the unique literary qualities that define the art of a work. And psychological approaches with the application of Freud's theories, such as unconscious trauma and childhood, help to uncover the psychological dimensions of characters (Botaliæ & Žuniæ, 2024).

Data validity is maintained by the technique of source triangulation through theoretical review of related literature, both in the field of formalism

and literary psychology, to ensure in-depth and interpretation.

RESULT

This research analyzes the short story 'Rencana Satu Kereta Bersama W Mabelle' with the approach of formalism and Freud's theoretical review of related literature, both in the field of formalism and literary psychology, to ensure in-depth and interpretation. Results and Discussion This research analyzes the short story 'Rencana Satu Kereta Bersama W Mabelle' with the approach of formalism and Freud's psychology, especially in identifying intrinsic elements (structure, plot, symbolism) and psychological aspects (Id, Ego, Super-ego) in the main character.

The results of this analysis show that the short story 'Rencana Satu Kereta Bersama W Mabelle' reflects the emotional complexity of waiting and uncertainty through plot structure, symbolism, and psychological characterization of the main character. The formalist approach helps to identify symbols that reveal the theme of the story, such as "train" and "unreadable chat," which represent opportunities passed and communication held back.

Meanwhile, psychological analysis using Freud's theory shows the inner conflict between the Id, which wants to keep trying, the Ego, which controls impulses realistically, and the Super-ego, which considers relationship ethics. The interaction of Id, Ego, and Super-ego illustrates the psychological dynamics of the main character who tries to balance between personal desires and reality.

Thus, this short story succeeds in depicting the theme of uncertainty and waiting deeply through the intrinsic elements and psychological structure of the characters. This result shows that literary works not only present stories, but also convey complex and meaningful internal conflicts.



DISCUSSION

Structure and Flow (Formalism Approach)

- 1) Structure: The short story consists of sections that flow between conversations, reflective narratives, and flashbacks that imply the emotions and thoughts of the main character. This fragmented structure creates an ambiguous and doubtful atmosphere, in keeping with the theme of waiting and uncertainty.
- 2) Flow: The short story uses a mixed plot with a forward-backward technique, which displays the inner turmoil of the main character. In the beginning, the character is described as sending an unrequited “chat” to W Mabelle, triggering the central conflict. The plot then shifts to reflective dialog and introspective moments about nature and travel, which become metaphors for the uncertainty he feels.

Quote: “The man might have been misled. To this day, the ‘chat’ he sent to W Mabelle has never been read”. This quote shows the beginning of the uncertainty experienced by the main character.

Symbolism (Formalism Approach)

- 1) The train: The train in the story symbolizes the journey of life and decisions that may never have a clear ending. The protagonist delays the journey with W Mabelle, which symbolizes the opportunities she lets pass.
- 2) Unreadable Chat: W Mabelle’s unreadable “chat” depicts stifled communication, a symbol of unanswered feelings and unfulfilled expectations.

Quote: “To the this day ‘chat’ she sent to W Mabelle has never been read”. This symbol shows the uncertain waiting and inner frustration of the main character.

Diction and Style (Formalism Approach)

- 1) The short story uses poetic and reflective diction, such as “long pause,” “misled,” and “butterflies moving from flower to flower,” which reflect doubt and waiting.
- 2) Metaphorical Language Style: Metaphorical language adds depth to the story, showing times and relationships that are difficult for the main character to understand.

Quote: “Time is like a butterfly that moves from one flower blossom to another. This hints at the concept of time as something that cannot be controlled or ascertained, reflecting the uncertainty of the main character.

Freud’s Psychological Analysis (Id, Ego, Super-Ego)

- 1) Id: The Id impulse of the main character is seen in his desire to be close to and get attention from W Mabelle. This feeling drives her to keep waiting, despite not getting a reply. This reveals the impulsive aspect of the Id which seeks satisfaction without logical consideration.

Quote: “It was possible that the man had been misled. To this day the ‘chat’ he sent to W Mabelle has never been read”. The urge to get attention and reply is a reflection of the dominant Id.

- 2) Ego: The Ego function is seen when the main character begins to consider reality and withdraw. Ego comes into play when the character chooses not to drive W Mabelle home and begins to think realistically about the possibility of their relationship.

Quote: “Not so. On the intercity train that afternoon, the man mused about forests, rivers and the sea”. The choice to leave this situation alone reflects the influence of the realistic Ego.

- 3) Super-ego: The super-ego plays a role in the moral judgment of the protagonist who chooses not to engage in an uncertain relationship. The super-ego is seen when



the protagonist thinks that uncertainty will not end well.

Quote: "I'm just avoiding the possibility of going to a destination with someone else. There's no point. It would never end well". This statement shows the influence of the Super-ego which prioritizes ethical considerations and appropriateness.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that the short story 'Rencana Satu Kereta Bersama W Mabelle' by Aravayana illustrates the complexity of the theme of waiting and uncertainty through the formalism approach and Freud's psychological analysis. The most important finding of this study is the presence of deep symbolism in intrinsic elements such as "train" and "unreadable chat," which represent the uncertainty of the main character's relationship. The non-linear plot and the use of reflective diction and poetic language reinforce the emotions experienced by the protagonist, creating a sense of melancholy in line with the theme of the story. Freud's psychological analysis further reveals the inner conflict between the Id, Ego, and Superego in the protagonist, who struggles to balance her desire for closeness, her sense of reality, and her moral judgment.

The added value or contribution of this research is the integrative approach between formalism theory and Freud's psychology, which allows the analysis of this short story from two perspectives at once, analyzing the structure and symbolism and understanding the dynamics of the character's personality. This approach enriches the analysis of contemporary Indonesian literature, especially in understanding psychological themes reflected through intrinsic elements in the work.

The limitation of this study lies in the scope of the analysis, which focuses on intrinsic elements and the internal conflict of the main character without considering broader sociocultural aspects. For future research, it is recommended to incorporate external analysis, such as the social

context or cultural background of the author, to broaden the understanding of the theme of uncertainty and how this work reflects the dynamics of human relationships in modern society.

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