

COMPLICATIONS OF WILLIAM CHARACTER IN THE NOVEL "WILLIAM" BY RISA SARASWATI

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Keywords	Abstract
Novel William Psychoanalysis Inner conflict	<i>This study was conducted with the aim of analyzing the inner conflict experienced by the character William in Risa Saraswati's novel "William" from the perspective of Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis. The main focus of this study is to examine how the id, ego, and superego influence William's behaviour and psychological conflict. Content analysis was used to examine the parts of the novel that reveal William's psychological dynamics. The results of this study found that the imbalance between the id, ego, and superego experienced by William caused serious inner instability. This made William a child who lost his identity and turned into a person full of pretense. This condition shows the urgency of understanding a person's psychological condition when experiencing complex social pressures. This study affirms that the psychoanalytic approach is effective for understanding the psychological dynamics of characters in literary works. Through the character of William in this novel, the findings are highly significant, as they reveal the psychological and social realities occurring within society up to the present day. These findings also show that Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic study is relevant in a social context and in understanding the identity crisis and inner instability experienced by an individual.</i>
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INTRODUCTION

In literary works, analyzing the psychological condition of characters is important to understand the representation of human inner dynamics in narratives (Tyson, 2006). By analyzing the internal and external factors, this is not only a medium of entertainment. It is also a reflection of the social and psychological conditions of people's lives today. This is the main focus of this research, which is to understand the psychological condition of the character through the conflict he is facing. Literary works are a form of artistic expression conveyed in writing and represent the creative process of an author in response to the social reality of the author's life (Sirait et al., 2024). Therefore, analyzing the psychological condition of a character can help us deal with psychological problems in real life. Novels are also a form of life journey in which there is an event that is done or experienced by the character (Rachmanti & Septriana, 2024). One of the interesting literary works to be psychologically analyzed is the novel "William" by Risa Saraswati. The novel is set during the Dutch East Indies colonial period, with the main focus on the life of a Dutch-blooded boy named William Van Kemmen. Raised by a high-standard and

ambitious mother, and a weak and apathetic father, William grows up under social and family pressure that makes him suppress many of his feelings and pain.

The tension between his own desires and the demands of his environment is at the center of his inner conflict. In the story, William appears to be a sensitive, quiet child, yet full of empathy for the natives. He struggles to fit into an environment full of feudal and discriminatory values. When he forms a friendship with a native boy named Toto, he begins to feel the true meaning of life and love. However, pressure from his prestigious mother forces William to suppress his own feelings and sacrifice his friendship to maintain the family image. This event became one of the pivotal points in the formation of William's conflicted personality, especially in his process of balancing his own desires with his parents' expectations.

One psychological approach that is widely used by researchers in literary psychology is psychoanalysis developed by Sigmund Freud (Endraswara, 2008). William's situation is very relevant to be analyzed through Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalysis approach. Freud divided the human psychic structure into three main components, namely id (basic instincts and unconscious drives), ego (reality regulator), and superego (moral values and social norms). According to Ahmadi (2015), the id is a primitive and primeval human innate, the ego is a human personality structure that acts as a mediator between the id and the superego (mediator), and the superego is a punitive personality structure. These three structures interact and tug at each other in determining one's attitudes and decisions. Freud also mentioned that every human being has unconscious or commonly known as the subconscious, which will then control one's actions. In the reflection of the unconscious in the form of emotions, happiness, anger, sadness and so on (K. Bertens, 2016). In a study, it was concluded that id is a psychological condition of a person who relies on instinct to respond to things, especially in the face of problems, in order to feel happy. People tend to reject things that make them unhappy or that they don't want. The ego is completely controlled by the preconscious, which is the tendency that is influenced by the conscious and subconscious. The ego serves as a bridge between a person's desires and existing reality, and not all desires can be fulfilled. The superego is fully controlled by the conscious realm, acting as a mediator and controller so that the ego is not overly influenced by the id. The superego is in the realm of consciousness. These three aspects, namely the id, ego, and superego, are considered to work together in a balanced manner (Nafi'ah et al., 2022). In William, there is a clear battle between the id that wants to be free to express itself, the ego that tries to adjust to reality, and the superego that internalizes the demands of his mother and the social norms of the Dutch colonials. This internal conflict will be the center of attention in this research.

A number of previous studies have proven that Freud's psychoanalytic theory is very relevant to literary studies. For example, research conducted to analyze the main character in the novel *"Diam-Diam Saling Cinta"* by Arafat Nur found that the main character has a personality complexity that reflects the interaction between the unconscious drive (id), the ego's desire to fulfil desires, and the moral values carried by the superego (Nurfarahana et al., 2024). Another study was also conducted on the main character in the novel *"Maryam"* This study also highlights the internal and external conflicts experienced by Maryam in the novel *"Maryam"* by Okky Madasari, which is related to differences in religious values and social pressure, can affect life decisions and character development (Ayu Lestari & Hana Ghina Hanifah, 2024). It was also found that this theory is relevant to the main character in the novel *"Sang Alkemis"* by Paulo Coelho. There are many actions that are influenced by id, ego, and superego, such as the desire to always be by the side of the woman he loves (Rachman & Nurmalia, 2022). Humans often experience excessive anxiety and unconsciously use various ways to overcome it (Liana et al., 2025). The three personality structures react to each other and are then influenced by external forces from outside a person that force humans to feel anxiety (Hall & Lindzay, 2000). This also proves that ego defence plays a role in one's mental development. In general, an

unrealized id will make a person upset and it is in this condition that the ego is encouraged to take a role, then perform an intrusive action (Fatawi & Nurwidiya, 2019). Another study also found that the entire id cannot be fully realized by the ego because it is controlled by the superego (Lainah & Surayya Hanum, 2024). As in the results of the research on Amanda's character in the novel "A untuk Amanda" by Annisa Ihsani. Where Amanda manages to filter id by working harder and her superego controls her (Afriliana et al., 2024). The superego will overcome all the desires of the id that cannot be controlled by these characters and act in accordance with the values that apply in community life (Sibuea et al., 2024). However, similar studies on the novel "William" have not been conducted. In fact, this novel has a strong psychological complexity and is worth analyzing through the lens of psychoanalysis to dig deeper into the characters' psychological development.

With this background, the questions to be answered in this research are: *How do the personality structures of the id, ego, and superego shape the inner conflict of William in the novel "William" by Risa Saraswati?* This question will be the basis for exploring the psychic workings of the main character and its impact on the actions and life choices taken throughout the story.

One of the relevant approaches to reading the inner side of characters is Psychoanalysis. Characters in stories are often faced with complicated situations that affect their thinking, feelings and actions. In this case, the literary work acts as a multi-layered representation of internal human conflict.

Risa Saraswati's novel "William" is one such work. The story in this novel not only describes the colonial atmosphere of the Dutch East Indies with all its feudal values but also shows how a child named William has to live under constant pressure from his family, especially his mother. This situation presents many potential psychological conflicts that are interesting to examine, especially through Sigmund Freud's personality theory. William, as the main character, is described as having repressed emotions, confusion in making decisions, and alienation from his social environment and family.

Through a psychoanalytic approach, this research seeks to delve deeper into William's psychological state. The researcher wants to understand how the personality structures of the id, ego, and superego tug at each other in shaping his actions, and how the tension between personal drive and environmental demands shapes William's character, who is full of inner wounds. This approach allows a more in-depth analysis and is not solely based on what is seen in the narrative text and dialog text.

This research has two main benefits, namely theoretical benefits and practical benefits. Theoretically, this research can enrich the scientific repertoire in the field of literary studies, especially in the use of the psychoanalytic approach as a tool to analyze characters and their inner conflicts. Freud's theory is expected to be able to show that the human psychological structure developed by Freud has high relevance when applied to reading fictional characters. Practically, this research can provide readers with a broader understanding of the importance of psychological aspects in shaping one's personality and decisions. Readers can see that the actions of characters in novels are not just part of the storyline, but are the result of complex inner struggles. This study can also be a reference for students or other researchers who want to study novels set in colonial history or novels with strong psychological conflicts from a similar perspective.

The purpose of this study is to analyze William's character using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic approach, specifically by tracing the dynamics between the id, ego, and superego in him. This research is expected to not only provide a new understanding of William's character, but also contribute a new perspective in literary studies that emphasizes the importance of understanding the character's inner conflict as part of the representation of human psychological reality as well as filling the void of literature that has not much connected developmental trauma in colonial families with psychological representations in Indonesian literature. The results of this research are also expected to increase appreciation of literature as a reflective medium that records the social and

psychological development of society. In the context of education, this research can be an example that literary and psychological approaches can go hand in hand to form a complete understanding of literary works. As well as being able to provide a deeper understanding of the impact of family pressure on a child's psychological development. Considering the role of parents is very important in the psychological and mental development of children (Wahyuni et al., 2024).

METHOD

This research is qualitative research with an analytical descriptive approach. Qualitative research according to Miles is data expressed in words rather than numbers (Hardani et al., 2020). The research focuses on one literary work, namely the novel "*William*" by Risa Saraswati, as the main object. In this study, the researcher conducted an in-depth reading of the text and examined the dynamics of the main character through Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalytic perspective. This research does not aim to test hypotheses, but rather to explore the meanings hidden in the actions, speech, and stories of inner conflict experienced by William.

As part of the literature study, this research also involved reading several scientific journals and theoretical references related to Psychoanalysis and character studies in literature. This step is important to provide a strong and in-depth theoretical framework. The analysis was conducted by linking excerpts from the novel relevant to the concepts of id, ego, and superego, and supported by references from previous studies that are in line with this approach. Thus, this research not only relies on the subjective interpretation of the researcher but also strengthens the reading with a clear theoretical basis and relevant scientific studies. This is done to produce an objective, sharp, and academically accountable analysis.

The method used in this research is a qualitative method with content analysis techniques on literary texts. The researcher used the read and write technique, namely by reading the entire contents of the novel and recording the parts that show the psychological dynamics of William's character, narrative quotes, dialogues, and scenes that contain inner conflicts, and analyzed based on the concepts of id, ego, and superego in Freud's psychoanalysis theory.

The first step in the analysis process was to identify William's personality characteristics from the beginning to the end of the story. After that, the researcher mapped out the parts that reflect the drives of the id, ego, and superego. This analysis was done systematically to see how the three structures shaped William's inner conflict and influenced his character changes and actions. In addition to reading the novel, the researcher also supported the analysis process with a literature study of scientific journals that discuss psychoanalysis in literature, as well as previous research that examines fictional characters from the same perspective. These references help strengthen the argument and provide relevant comparisons.

The character analysis technique is carried out by looking at the elements of the character's personality, family background, social relationships, and character development in the storyline. The main focus of this research remains on an in-depth reading of the character William as the main object of study, and how his entire life experience reflects a complex psychological upheaval.

With this systematic and theoretical approach, the research is expected to present a solid analysis, not only descriptive, but also interpretive and reflection on human psychological reality in literary works.

RESULT

This study aims to analyze the development of the main character's personality in the novel "*William*" by Risa Saraswati using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis theory. The main focus of this study lies on how the psychic structures of id, ego, and superego

influence each other and create inner conflicts in the character William Van Kemmen. In this reading, the researcher observes various actions, dialogues, and narratives that reveal William's inner condition throughout the story.

1. Id: William's Instinctive Drives and Personal Desires

According to Freud, the id is the part of the human personality that works on the pleasure principle. It houses all instinctive urges, spontaneous desires, and primitive cravings that want to be fulfilled immediately. In William, the id appears in the form of his desire to be loved, accepted, and live freely without social and family pressure. An example of id appears when William says softly his feelings of wanting to be treated like a child his age:

"William looked disappointed at his mama's statement. His head was bowed in Johan's arms. 'But I was never treated like a child by you, and you never gave in to my wishes, Mama,' he said softly."

This statement illustrates William's basic desire to be cared for and treated with affection. He did not want possessions or social status, but to be understood and appreciated as a child.

Another example of Id's drive also appears when William decides to go to his best friend Toto's house secretly. William's desire to maintain a relationship with his best friend is also a manifestation of id. Toto is the only friend who makes him feel "alive" and himself. When he sneaks into the village to meet Toto, it is a form of unconscious rebellion against the social hierarchy system that separates them based on race and status.

"Instead of walking to school, William directed his steps to the village where Toto lived."

This action shows a deep personal desire to repair the relationship with his best friend, regardless of the social consequences he may face from his family, especially his mother. All that matters to William is that his desire to meet his best friend is fulfilled. However, as will be discussed in the next section, the id drive does not last long as William's superego begins to develop and emphasize his desire.

2. Ego: The Mediator Between Desire and Reality

The ego is an aspect of personality that works based on the reality principle. Its function is to mediate the desires of the id with the conditions of the real world, so that a person can act rationally and be accepted by society. In William, the ego plays an important role when he starts to adjust to a new environment, even though many things are not in accordance with his wishes. The ego works when he tries to restrain his desires from going against the will of his parents, especially his mother, who is very dominant.

One clear example of ego at work is when William wanted to bring his favourite violin to school. He knew it would cause trouble, but still tried to convince his mother that he would use it wisely:

"Relax, Mama. I won't play it during school hours. I understand that," he replied still with a doubtful look.

However, when his mother reprimanded him in a sharp tone, William did not reply. He prefers to remain silent and obey his mother's orders even though he feels hurt inside. This shows that the ego tries to maintain a balance between personal desire (bringing the violin to school) and external pressure (his mother's order).

"Without looking at her parents, the child hurried back into her room to put Nouval away. His heart ached at his mother's words, but his lips did not dare to argue."

This situation shows that William's ego chooses to restrain his desires and conform in order to maintain order in his family. He learns to hide his desires and suppress his emotional desires to avoid conflict.

The role of the ego is also seen when William tries to behave in accordance with his mother's wishes, even though it is not in line with his personal values. He is no longer true to himself, but prefers to appear "good" in the eyes of others, as a form of self-defence against rejection and shame.

3. Superego: Moral and Social Pressures from the Environment

The superego in Freud's theory is the part of the personality that absorbs prevailing moral and social values. In this novel, William's superego is formed from his family environment, especially from his mother, who prioritizes appearance, social status, and family reputation.

His mother, Maria Van Kemmen, was not only a mother figure but also a representation of strong social pressure. She demanded that William always behave politely, excel, and not associate with "natives" like Toto. These values were so ingrained in William that he began to internalize the pressure.

Superego pressure is felt when William starts to change himself to make his mother proud. He sacrifices himself, even his relationship with Toto, his only native friend, to fulfil his mother's wishes.

William's change in attitude towards Toto is evidence that the superego is beginning to play its role. When he denies his relationship with his best friend in order to maintain the family's good name, it is not because he no longer cares, but because his superego has suppressed the id's desire:

"Who are you? Don't just call me names! You're so impolite! I've never seen you, let alone known you. Apologize to me right now for daring to embarrass me like this! Apologize quickly!"

This dialogue shows how William suppresses his true self in order to maintain his image as the son of a Dutch nobleman. At this point, the superego wins over the id and ego, and William turns into an "ideal" child in the version of his parents, especially the mother. William no longer acts out of conscience, but to fulfil the moral standards instilled by his mother. He chooses to lie about his feelings and ruin his relationship with Toto for the sake of a good social appearance.

However, the change was not without its wounds. Superego did not necessarily make William happy. Instead, he became increasingly depressed and distant from himself. He learned to harbour guilt, was afraid to disappoint, and lived in the shadow of his parents' expectations. In other words, the superego not only controls behaviour but also torments William's inner self. Inside himself, William still feels empty and depressed. This is addressed in the following narrative:

"William's eyes often looked empty, even though his lips were smiling broadly. There was a war within, whether he would always behave the way Maria wanted or go back to being himself."

This narrative illustrates how strongly the superego controls William, to the point where he loses himself and lives in a social mask that he does not want.

4. Inner Conflict Due to Psychic Imbalance

The battle between the id, ego and superego creates tension within William. When the suppressive superego blocks the id's drive to be free and loving, and the ego fails to bridge the two, inner conflict arises. William becomes moody, withdrawn, and loses his zest for life.

This conflict can be seen in William's drastic change in attitude. From a once cheerful and carefree child, he turned into a person full of pretense, often appearing confused and disoriented. He seemed to lose his center of control because he was constantly under pressure.

"William's eyes often looked blank, even though his lips were smiling broadly".

The sentence reflects that what she performs does not match what she feels. This psychic conflict is a manifestation of the imbalance in her personality structure. She has suppressed her own desires and emotions too much in order to fulfil her social and family expectations.

In the scene where he tries to make his mother happy by playing his violin:

"At the doorstep of his mother's room, the boy played a song that he had composed before. The song was about his longing for his mother, who was always there in his imagination."

The songs he played were not just entertainment, but a form of expression of his pent-up thoughts. Music became the only medium to release his feelings that he could not express verbally due to the enormous social pressure.

In some scenes, William even seems resigned to his life, as if he no longer has control over it. He begins to live like a puppet controlled by his parents. This further shows that the pressure of superego and weak ego have eroded his existence as a complete individual.

5. Character Transformation: From Free Child to Symbol of Obedience

As the story progresses, William undergoes a personality transformation. In the beginning, he is portrayed as a critical, compassionate, and highly empathetic child. But in the end, he turns into an absolutely obedient child, even losing his identity. William turned into a figure that fit his mother's description. He became obedient, polite, neat, and proud. However, this transformation was not the result of happiness, but rather the result of a long stress that never really resolved.

"From that day on, it was clear that William Van Kemmen became a very different child. He became a child who always tried to fulfill his mother's wishes."

This change shows that superego pressure has dominated. Despite outwardly appearing perfect and proud, inside William is growing emptiness and deep sadness. This appears to be the success of his mother's education. Still, it is actually a defeat for William's humanity. He is no longer free to be himself, has no space to be honest about his feelings, and must suppress everything he loves, including his best friend and music.

Once an emotional outlet, music has turned into a tool to please his mother. Even the songs he creates are no longer about himself, but about the hopes of others.

6. Symbolism in the Novel: Violins, Names, and Music as Psychic Representations

In the novel "William" by Risa Saraswati, she inserts a number of symbols that represent the psychological condition of her characters. One of the most prominent symbols is the violin. William's violin is not just a musical instrument, but a symbol of emotional attachment to childhood, Opa Nouval, and freedom of expression. When his

mother tells him to keep the violin, it is not just an ordinary prohibition, but a repressive act against William's own identity.

"Oh my, are you going to bring that ugly thing to school? No, William, don't embarrass me!" cried Maria worriedly.

This statement confirms that the violin, an object that has emotional and personal value to William, is not accepted in a social environment that only values symbols of luxury. This symbol shows how social pressure forces a person to disconnect from their emotional roots.

The symbol is the name. William is often only referred to by his first name without any family identity when with Toto. However, when in his family circle, he is referred to in full as "William Van Kemmen", reflecting the pressures of social status and colonial family expectations.

Music also became a symbol of escape and sublimation for William. He could not tell the truth, but through music he expressed his deepest feelings. This is in accordance with Freud's concept of sublimation, which is the release of urges into art or socially accepted forms of expression.

7. Relationship with Colonialism: Structural Oppression and Multiple Identities

The story's setting in the Dutch East Indies adds a strong colonial dimension to William's character development. As a child of Dutch blood, William is in the upper social class, but his sympathy and empathy for the natives make him trapped in a conflict of dual identity. He is not fully colonial, but also cannot be part of the indigenous world.

These feelings were exacerbated by the colonial social system that explicitly placed William as a representation of power and class. When he wanted to play with Toto, he was considered "downgraded", a term often used in colonial society to maintain the boundaries between classes.

This relationship shows that William's inner conflict is not only personal, but also systematic. He is a victim of the rigid colonial structure, where human values are often sacrificed to maintain the hierarchy of power.

8. The Inner Condition as a Social Critique of Family Authority and the Class System

Apart from being a personal story, William's inner conflict can also be read as a social critique of the authoritarian family system and oppressive social stratification. Maria, his mother, is not only a mother figure but also a symbol of the harsh, rigid and demanding colonial society. Through Maria's character, the author shows how conditional love and excessive expectations can destroy a person's identity.

Criticism of the class system also emerges when William is forced away from Toto, not because of personal conflict, but because of social status. This implies that the social boundaries created by the colonial system contribute to the emotional rift between people.

William's depressed state of mind, his split identity, and his personality change into a 'proud' child who has lost his freedom are all forms of satire against the dominating system.

DISCUSSION

Through the character of William, Risa Saraswati illustrates the complexity of inner conflicts rooted in social, cultural, and family pressures. This conflict can be analyzed in depth using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis theory that emphasizes the interaction between three psychic structures: the id, ego, and superego. These three structures not only function as psychic structures but also reflect real psychological dynamics in the formation of fictional characters. In this case, William becomes an actual representation

of an individual experiencing dissonance between instinctive urges and oppressive social norms.

The main findings in this study show that William's id is characterized by the drive to be loved, to express himself freely, and to establish warm social relationships, particularly with his native friend, Toto. However, these urges are constantly suppressed by the superego, which is shaped by moral, social and family values, especially the role of his perfectionist mother. The ego, as a mediator, fails to balance these two conflicting forces, resulting in William experiencing emotional conflict and losing his identity.

The structural conflict in William's personality aligns with Freud's principles of psychoanalysis, where an imbalance between the id, ego, and superego can lead to psychological disorders such as anxiety, repression, and identity dissociation. As explained by Jaenudin (2015), this kind of psychological tension often leads to unhealthy ego defenses, such as repression, rationalization, or even emotional seclusion-all of which mechanisms are visible in William's changing demeanour, which becomes increasingly introverted and superficial.

This finding reinforces the results of a previous study by Lestari & Hanifah (2024) on the character Maryam, who experienced social pressure based on religious values and traditions. Just like William, Maryam shows a conflict between personal drive and environmental demands. However, in William's case, superego pressure is not only moral, but also colonial and structural. This expands the understanding that superego structures can be formed not only from parents, but also from the dominating socio-political system, such as in a colonial context.

Another study shows that the id often manifests itself through spontaneous actions and unconscious rebellion (Afriliana et al., 2024). William's reckless visit to Toto is a manifestation of a strong id, but is ultimately subdued by the superego. Meanwhile, the music and violin that symbolize William's emotions reflect the mechanism of sublimation, which is how the ego channels unconscious urges into art - a concept that is highly relevant in Freud's theory.

William's inner conflict cannot be separated from the colonial structure that emphasizes social class and racial discrimination. With his position as a Dutch boy who has empathy for the natives, William lives in a state of conflict dual identity. This approaches the concept of overdetermination in Lacanian psychoanalysis, where one symptom (inner conflict) is determined by many factors: personal, social, and ideological. The character of Maria, the mother, acts as an external superego that reinforces social domination. When William denies Toto in public, he not only suppresses his id but also enforces colonial social values, signalling the victory of the superego and the destruction of the authentic self.

The main contribution of this study lies in the interdisciplinary application of Freud's theory-not only in the context of individual psychology, but also as a reading tool for social and cultural critique. William, as a fictional character, shows that psychological trauma does not stand alone, but is the result of the intervention of social values, authoritarian parenting, and class construction. By placing these findings in a broader research context, this study demonstrates that the psychoanalytic approach in literature is not only relevant for uncovering characters' motivations but also for understanding oppressive social structures. This is in line with Tyson's (2020) opinion that literature is a field of representation of ideological and psychological conflicts.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the novel "*William*" by Risa Saraswati using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic approach, it can be concluded that the imbalance between the id, ego, and superego personality structures forms William's inner conflict. William's id, which represents the urge to be loved, to express freely, and to form emotional relationships, especially with his best friend Toto, is hampered by the superego that applies moral and

social values from his strict mother and the colonial environment that demands obedience and status. The ego as the arbiter fails to function effectively, so William chooses to suppress his personal desires and live in unreal obedience. This inner tension results in a character transformation from an empathic child to an introverted, pretentious, and lost person. Symbols such as the violin and music become sublimation media that reflect his inner conflict. At the same time, William's dual identity as the son of a Dutch aristocrat who empathizes with the natives shows that his psychological conflict is not only personal, but also structural. Thus, William's character reflects how psychological pressure in the family and social system can shape a fragile personality, and emphasizes the relevance of Freud's theory in understanding the complexity of the human psyche in literary works.

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