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MIMETIC STUDY OF EXISTENTIAL REALITY IN SAPARDI DJOKO DAMONO'S SUNYI ADALAH MINUMAN KERAS

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Abstract || This study explores the mimetic representation of the protagonist's lived realities in Sapardi Djoko Damono's novel, Sunyi Adalah Minuman Keras, utilizing M.H. Abrams' mimetic approach. The research employs a qualitative descriptive method, with data collected through intensive reading and note-taking techniques. Content analysis was applied to consolidate, sample, code, reduce, and describe the textual data. The findings reveal 30 data points categorized into four distinct aspects of the protagonist's, Rara's, lived realities. First, the familial reality highlights the tension where her mother pressures her regarding marriage and grandchildren. Second, the romantic reality illustrates a sudden breakup caused by her partner's demands to stop her online book-selling activities. Third, the social reality exposes the destructive nature of false rumors, such as pregnancy, spread by peers in her neighborhood and online. Finally, the social media reality emerges as the most dominant aspect, comprising 15 data points. It depicts Rara's deep sense of alienation, exhaustion, and entrapment within the digital world. Although she relies on social media to promote her work and interact with fans, it offers only an illusion of connection, surrounded by a "lonely crowd" making arbitrary comments. Ultimately, the study concludes that the protagonist's existence is overwhelmingly consumed by the monotonous and isolating nature of modern technology, reflecting a profound contemporary social reality.

Keywords || Lived realities; Novel; Protagonist; Mimetic approach.

Abstrak || Penelitian ini mendeskripsikan representasi mimetik dari realitas kehidupan tokoh utama dalam novel Sunyi Adalah Minuman Keras karya Sapardi Djoko Damono dengan menggunakan pendekatan mimetik Abrams. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif, dengan teknik pengumpulan data berupa teknik membaca dan mencatat. Data yang terkumpul kemudian diolah menggunakan teknik analisis isi melalui tahapan menyatukan data, memilih sampel yang relevan, mengkode data, mereduksi data, menyimpulkan, dan mendeskripsikan data teks. Hasil penelitian mengungkapkan terdapat 30 data yang terbagi ke dalam empat aspek realitas kehidupan tokoh utama, yakni Rara. Pertama, realitas kehidupan keluarga (7 data) menyoroti ketegangan ketika sang ibu menuntutnya terkait masalah pernikahan dan keinginan memiliki cucu. Kedua, realitas kehidupan percintaan (5 data) menggambarkan kandasnya hubungan secara mendadak akibat tuntutan laki-laki pasangannya agar Rara berhenti dari aktivitas jual beli buku online. Ketiga, realitas kehidupan sosial (3 data) mengungkapkan dampak merusak dari tersebarnya kabar aneh dan tidak benar, seperti isu kehamilan, oleh teman dan tetangga. Terakhir, realitas kehidupan media sosial muncul sebagai aspek paling dominan dengan jumlah 15 data.

Katakunci || Realitas kehidupan; Novel; Tokoh utama; Pendekatan mimetik.

Introduction

Literature is a work of art written using language as a tool to convey ideas, feelings, or thoughts, crafted with beautiful language so that readers can enjoy it. According to Damono (in Sembada and Andalas, 2019), literature presents a depiction of life, and life itself is a social reality. Literature is also defined as any form of written work that utilizes the richness of language to describe, express, and communicate various aspects of human life, both personal and social.

A literary work is a creation produced by an author through a process of deep imagination, feeling, and thought, expressed in aesthetic language that holds specific values. Literary works encompass various forms such as prose, poetry, drama, and other forms that incorporate artistic elements in their delivery. Literary works are often viewed as a mirror of human life, whether in social, cultural, moral, or psychological aspects. Ratna (in Arifin et al., 2024) states that a literary work is a process of interaction between the author and the reader through the medium of language. Literature serves as a vessel for authors to pour out their ideas, thoughts, and soulful expressions. The quality of a literary work can be determined by the public's ability to understand the creation. A literary work possesses a style aligning with its author's personality and serves as a real depiction of the social conditions of a society.

The novel is a form of prose literature structured as a lengthy narrative that tells the life and experiences of main characters amidst complex conflicts or problems. As works of fiction, novels frequently highlight various aspects of human life that can influence readers to think more deeply about the values, morals, and realities surrounding them. Nurgiyantoro (in Rosdiani et al., 2021) defines a novel as a work of prose fiction of adequate length, neither too long nor too short. A novel can express things freely, presenting more content, intricacies, and details, while involving a multitude of complex issues. The novel is one of the most widely favored literary genres worldwide, owing to its capacity to convey emotionally moving stories and present an imaginative world closely intertwined with reality.

The main character in a novel is the character who serves as the focal point of the story, playing a crucial role in driving the plot and conveying the theme intended by the author. This main character often possesses a complex personality with motivations, desires, and internal conflicts that affect the course of the story.

Life reality is the actual condition or situation experienced by human beings in their daily lives. This encompasses daily experiences, challenges, joys, sorrows, hopes, and fears, all of which interact with one another. Understanding a reality can help individuals develop self-awareness, manage social relationships, and achieve life goals. Life is often viewed as a journey fraught with choices, decisions, and consequences. Within it lies the struggle to meet basic needs as well as the search for deeper meaning, such as life purpose and personal fulfillment.

Mimetic study is a discipline that examines how literary and cultural artworks imitate, depict, and represent reality. The term mimetic originates from the Greek word "mimesis," which means copying or imitation. A mimetic study critically analyzes how art, literature, or culture imitates or depicts reality. According to Abrams (in Sefia and Septiaji, 2018), the mimetic approach is a criticism that views literary works as a reflection of the reality of human life. According to Abrams, critics in this category view literary works as imitations of aspects of nature.

Sunyi Adalah Minuman Keras is a novel by Sapardi Djoko Damono, a prominent Indonesian literary figure renowned as a poet, lecturer, literary observer, and literary critic. Sapardi Djoko Damono has received numerous awards for his works, both domestically and internationally. One of his novels, titled *Sunyi Adalah Minuman Keras*, which serves as the object of this research, explores the themes of loneliness and the search for the meaning of life through the inner reflections of a character entangled in solitude. The main character in this story seeks ways to forget the loneliness and boredom in her life. In this novel, researchers can observe how social changes affect individuals' personal lives, and how tensions within society trigger feelings of dissatisfaction and isolation in certain characters. The main character's life is inseparable from the influence of the internet and social media; day by day, she is preoccupied with promoting her work and responding to fans, performed as a monotonous routine that must be completed before the day ends. Her life becomes increasingly absorbed in technology that offers pseudo-happiness, until she realizes that social media continues to consume her day by day. No one truly understands or listens to her feelings. Through her posts on the bustling social media platforms, she attempts to overcome her loneliness by pouring out all her thoughts and feelings, hoping to rise above the solitude she experiences.

Theoretical Framework

Literature is a written work that possesses aesthetic, moral, and intellectual values. Literature expresses creatively by combining language, imagination, and human experience. According to Teeuw (in Syarifudin and Nursalim, 2019), literature (sastra) originates from Sanskrit, which is a combination of "sas," meaning to direct, teach, and give guidance, while "tra" indicates a tool or means. Thus, literature means a tool used for teaching, as a manual, or as a medium of instruction. The perspective of Astuti et al. (2017, p. 176) states that literature is a form of creative artwork whose object is humans and their lives, using language as its medium. As a creative art that uses humans and all facets of their lives as its object, it is not merely a medium to convey human ideas, theories, or systems of thought. As a creative work, literature must be able to produce beautiful creations and strive to channel the human need for beauty. Meanwhile, according to Wellek and Warren (in Al-Ma'ruf and Nugrahani, 2017), literature is a work of art, a human creative work that contains aesthetic value. As a manifestation of cultural art, literature has its own world, which is the embodiment of life as a result of the author's observation of the surrounding life.

A literary work is a human creation in written form that holds aesthetic value and expresses thoughts, feelings, and imagination through language. According to Juni (2019), literary works are divided into six types: poetry, short stories, novels, dramas or plays, prose, and monologues.

1. Poetry

Poetry is a form of literary work that uses dense, beautiful, and meaningful language. Typically, poetry expresses the feelings, thoughts, or imagination of the poet with a distinct language style, such as the use of metaphors, personification, and symbolism. Pradopo (in City et al., 2018,) suggests that poetry is a literary work that can be analyzed from various aspects or perspectives. These aspects can include the structure and elements of poetry, its types, and its varieties, or aspects from a historical perspective that contain poetic devices. According to Rae et al. (in Awa and Nurhayati, 2024), poetry is a work of art used by poets to express their hearts, which can be heard, read, and felt by poetry readers, bound by rhythm and rhyme in each stanza.

2. Short Story

A short story is a form of prose literature that is relatively short in length, usually consisting of only a few thousand words. According to Sugiarto (in Maryanti et al., 2019), a short story is a work of prose fiction that can be finished in "one sitting." Agustina et al. (2020) also state that a short story is a brief, dense narrative that goes straight to the point. A short story is a type of literary work that tells about life through a short piece of writing. It is a story that recounts an event filled with conflict.

3. Novel

A novel is a form of prose literature that is longer and more complex than a short story, featuring an in-depth plot that involves multiple characters and conflicts. A novel tells the life journey of the main character in facing various events that develop certain characters and themes, such as love, struggle, or social issues. According to Nurgiyantoro (in Vitasari and Pasaribu, 2020), a novel as a literary work offers a world—a world containing an idealized model of life, an imaginative world, built through its various intrinsic elements. According to Ariska and Amelysa (2020), a novel is a lengthy prose composition that contains a series of life stories of a person and the people around them, highlighting the nature or character and traits of each actor. A novel consists of specific chapters and sub-chapters according to its storyline.

4. Drama or Play

Drama is a literary genre presented through dialogue and actions performed by characters on stage. Drama usually depicts conflicts or life events involving interactions and emotions between characters. According to Wijayanto (in Salama et al., 2023), drama is a performing art production containing a relatable story so that it is easy for the public to watch. According to Hasanudin (in Wahid and Solihat, 2020), drama is a story or an imitation of human behavior that is staged. Based on this reality, drama as a concept is more focused on the performing arts, which is more dominant than its literary aspect.

5. Prose

Prose is a form of literary work composed using ordinary language, without the arrangement of rhythm or rhyme found in poetry. Prose conveys stories, ideas, or information directly and clearly. According to Hairuddin and Radmila (2018), prose is a free

composition that is not bound by the number of lines, the number of syllables in each line, nor is it bound by rhythm and rhyme like poetry. Prose differs from poetry because it possesses a greater variation in rhythm, and its language aligns more closely with its lexical meaning. The word prose comes from the Latin "prosa," which means "straightforward." According to Zainudin (in Felta, 2021), prose is the clear expression of events by outlining all thoughts and feelings, and it is not bound by specific conditions in a literary work.

6. Monologue

A monologue is an expression of thoughts or feelings conveyed by a person without speaking to anyone else. This is often seen in literature, drama, or theatrical performances, where a character speaks directly to the audience or to themselves, recounting internal conflicts, reflections, or explanations regarding a particular situation. According to Nahda and Maspupah (2021), a monologue is a conversation carried out alone in a drama. Therefore, only one person is speaking, and only that person can determine the main topic of discussion. Such a conversation is also referred to as communication carried out by one person, or simply talking to oneself. According to Marciano (2019), a monologue is talking to oneself, and its opposite is a dialogue. A monologue is also the spoken voice of the conscience, and ideally, it should be audible to the audience from the very front row to the very back row of the theater.

7. Intrinsic Elements of Literary Works

Intrinsic elements are the components contained within a literary work, such as a novel, poem, or drama, that shape the structure and meaning of the work. According to Kosasih (in Permana et al., 2019), intrinsic elements are also called the story structure, which includes the elements found within a literary work such as theme, characterization, plot, setting, point of view, and message (*amanat*). In literary analysis, understanding intrinsic elements is highly important to comprehend how the literary work itself functions and how the meaning embedded within it can be interpreted.

8. Character and Characterization

In a novel, characters play an important role in the storyline, while characterization is the clear depiction of a person presented in a story.

According to Nurgiyantoro (in Magdalena et al., 2021), a story character is a person featured in a narrative or dramatic work who is interpreted by the reader as possessing certain moral qualities and tendencies, as expressed through their speech and actions. According to Nilawijaya et al. (2022), character and characterization refer to how the author describes or portrays a character in the story they write. In characterization, a character's nature or traits can be observed through their dialogue, explanations about the character, and physical descriptions. According to Kemal (in Mardhiah et al., 2019), characters in a story are just like humans in our daily lives; they always possess certain traits.

9. Abrams' Mimetic Approach

According to Abrams (in Sabila et al., 2019), a literary work is an imitation of the reality of society's life outside the work itself. This approach examines the relationship between literary works and the actual phenomena of reality. Within the mimetic approach, many aspects of life can be assessed, including social, economic, and religious aspects, among others. This mimetic approach focuses literary studies on the relationship between the work and the reality outside of literature. Abrams states (in Paramitha and Herawati, 2020) that mimetic criticism views literary works as an imitation of reality. Abrams also notes that the mimetic approach is a method of literary study that emphasizes its analysis on the connection between the work and the reality external to literature. In literary works, the link between reality and fiction is considered essential by literary scholars. Both cannot be separated and mutually require one another. In other words, a literary work (fiction) must undoubtedly stem from a reality in the real world. According to Abrams (in Anisah, 2018), the fundamental premise of mimetics is the world of experience, meaning that the literary work itself cannot represent actual reality but rather serves solely as an imitation of reality. Based on this theoretical foundation, the aim of this research is to describe and analyze the mimetic representation of the protagonist's lived realities in Sapardi Djoko Damono's novel *Sunyi Adalah Minuman Keras* using M.H. Abrams' mimetic approach.

Methodology

This research employs a qualitative descriptive method. The qualitative descriptive method is used to provide an overview and explanation of the conditions or phenomena experienced. According to Moleong (in

Mulkayat, 2022), qualitative research is a type of research that aims to explain the phenomena experienced by the research subjects, such as actions, perceptions, motivations, behaviors, and others. This is done in a specific, natural way through descriptive means in the form of words and language, by understanding the context and utilizing various natural methods.

In this study, the researcher utilizes the content analysis technique. According to Krippendorff (in Suparni, 2024), content analysis is a research technique used to process data, involving several steps: consolidating data, selecting relevant samples, making notes or codes for the data, reducing data, drawing conclusions, and describing. The intended analysis steps are as follows:

1. In the initial stage of analysis, the researcher collected and consolidated relevant data from Sapardi Djoko Damono's novel *Sunyi Adalah Minuman Keras*, such as dialogues, narratives, and descriptions related to the concept of the protagonist's lived realities through Abrams' mimetic approach.
2. In the second stage of analysis, the researcher conducted a sampling process by selecting and matching relevant text excerpts from the novel, such as dialogues between characters or narrator descriptions containing elements of the protagonist's lived realities. This was done to maintain the focus of the analysis and simplify the investigation, allowing the researcher to focus on the most important and relevant data for further analysis.
3. In the third stage, the researcher carried out a data recording or coding process by arranging the data systematically in the form of tables. This ensured the data was well-organized, which ultimately facilitated the subsequent explanation and data analysis processes. Thus, the researcher could obtain a clearer and more structured overview of the collected data.
4. In the fourth stage, the researcher filtered the data by eliminating data irrelevant to the research focus, such as excerpts unrelated to the protagonist's lived realities examined through Abrams' mimetic approach. As a result, the remaining data were only those truly relevant and aligned with the research objectives, which were then further analyzed to obtain more accurate and effective results. This process aimed to simplify and focus the data so that the analysis became more directed and meaningful.
5. In the fifth stage, the researcher drew conclusions by explaining how Sapardi Djoko Damono depicted the protagonist's lived realities in the novel *Sunyi Adalah Minuman Keras*. By employing Abrams'

mimetic approach to understand how the author portrayed reality through his writing, the researcher was able to provide a more profound interpretation of the meaning and messages embedded in the novel.

6. After the analysis was completed, the researcher presented the results in the form of a structured scientific narrative. This narrative elaborates in detail on the protagonist's lived realities in Sapardi Djoko Damono's novel *Sunyi Adalah Minuman Keras*, utilizing Abrams' mimetic approach to provide a more comprehensive and in-depth picture of how the author depicted reality. The analytical results, compiled into a narrative, help readers clearly understand the research findings and the resulting interpretations.

Results

Based on the research conducted by the researcher, data on the protagonist's lived realities were obtained using Abrams' mimetic approach. Subsequently, the acquired data were analyzed to achieve the expected research outcomes. The data findings discovered by the researcher are as follows:

Table 1. Classification of the Protagonist's Lived Realities in *Sunyi Adalah Minuman Keras*

No	Aspect of Lived Reality	Number of Data Points	Percentage (%)
1	Social Media Reality	15	50%
2	Familial Reality	7	23.3%
3	Romantic Reality	5	16.7%
4	Social Reality	3	10%
Total		**30**	**100%**

1. Description of the Object Data of the Protagonist's Lived Realities in Sapardi Djoko Damono's Novel Sunyi Adalah Minuman Keras (Abrams' Mimetic Approach)

a. Familial Lived Reality

The reality of family life relates to the interactions that occur within the family environment, encompassing relationships among family members, the roles and responsibilities of each member, as well as the dynamics and conflicts that may arise within the family. The family can be a source of support, affection, and security for its members, but it can also be a source of stress, conflict, and tension.

> **Data 1** *"Why are you only busy with your toys, Rara? Why don't you think about the fact that your mother wants grandchildren? That you have the heart to stay up until morning just to play around on your laptop? That the neighbors always bother me with, when is Rara getting married?"* (Damono, 2021, p. 6)

The excerpt demonstrates the familial lived reality, showing that Rara's mother has profound concerns and high expectations for Rara regarding marriage. Her mother feels that Rara is too focused on her hobbies and online activities, neglecting to think about her future and her family.

b. Romantic Lived Reality

In the reality of romantic life, individuals involved in a romantic relationship must face various challenges and opportunities. They must learn to communicate effectively, build trust, and resolve conflicts that may arise in the relationship. Romance can also bring happiness to the individuals involved. However, the romantic lived reality can also be fraught with challenges and difficulties.

> **Data 1** *"The man once loved her, and perhaps I did too. But their relationship ended abruptly because the man demanded her to step back from her book-selling activities, which she indeed did somewhat excessively. To the point where he once said you have sold yourself for the sake of quantity."* (Damono, 2021, p. 3)

This excerpt illustrates the romantic lived reality, indicating that the man and Rara once had a relationship and deeply loved each other. However, their relationship ended abruptly due to differing opinions regarding Rara's activities. The man disliked Rara's activities being overly focused on selling books; he likely felt that Rara spent too much time and energy on these activities and demanded her to step back. This made Rara feel dissatisfied and perhaps feel that her freedom was being restricted.

c. Social Lived Reality

The reality of social life refers to the daily experiences and interactions encountered by individuals and groups within society. This encompasses various aspects of social life, such as social trust, interaction, and communication. Understanding the social lived reality can aid in comprehending how individuals and groups interact to form a society, as well as how to build a more just and harmonious society.

> **Data 1** *"It was her friend who spread bizarre rumors about her. On social media and through the neighbors' gossip. It reached the point where on social media, someone dared to ask—yes, ask, not insult—whether the news of her pregnancy was true."* (Damono, 2021, p. 4)

The excerpt above depicts the social lived reality, explaining that Rara's friend, who was also the wife of a man she was once close to, had actually spread false rumors about Rara. This rumor spread widely, not only through word of mouth among neighbors but also on social media. Many asked out of curiosity; naturally, the spread of this false news could damage Rara's reputation and privacy.

d. Social Media Lived Reality

The reality of social media life relates to the experiences and interactions that occur within digital spaces, where individuals and groups can share information and build relationships with others who share similar interests and concerns. Social media has become an essential part of many people's daily lives and has transformed the way people interact, communicate, and build relationships. In the social media lived reality, individuals can possess online profiles that represent themselves, and they can interact through posts, comments, and messages.

> **Data 1** *"...far from all types of social media that she once felt were becoming increasingly suffocating, like a marketplace, which had once made her hesitate whether to just leave the crowd behind or defend it fiercely because it had become an inseparable part of her fantasies about life."* (Damono, 2021, p. 4)

The excerpt above portrays the social media lived reality, specifically the feelings of the character Rara, who feels exhausted and trapped in the world of social media. She hesitates whether she should abandon social media or continue using it, as social media has become an integral part of her life.

Discussion

This study delineates the mimetic representation of the protagonist's lived realities in Sapardi Djoko Damono's novel, *Sunyi Adalah Minuman Keras*, by employing M.H. Abrams' mimetic approach. Based on textual analysis, the research successfully categorized the data into four distinct dimensions of lived reality: familial, romantic, social, and social media. The distribution of these findings provides a profound focal point for academic discussion, reinforcing the foundational premise of the applied theory. According to Abrams, a literary work is essentially a mimesis, or an imitation, of the universe and the dynamic reality of human life existing outside the textual boundaries. Literature does not emerge from a vacuum; rather, it serves as a critical mirror reflecting the world of experience and the socio-historical conditions that encapsulate the author's contemporary environment.

In the context of this novel, the findings indicate an overwhelming predominance of the social media reality, which constitutes the majority of the findings with 15 data points. This statistical dominance is a deliberate mimetic reflection of the *zeitgeist*, or the defining spirit of the modern era. Sapardi Djoko Damono accurately captures and represents the harsh, often paradoxical reality of contemporary society. The protagonist, Rara, is depicted as an individual deeply entangled in the digital sphere, utilizing platforms to promote her work and interact with fans. However, instead of finding genuine connection, this massive digital interaction breeds a suffocating sense of loneliness, as she feels trapped in a monotonous routine that must be completed daily. The author brilliantly mirrors the modern human condition, where individuals are constantly surrounded by a "lonely crowd" making arbitrary comments, offering only an illusion of connection. This dominant aspect perfectly exemplifies Abrams' theory, showing how literature imitates the pressing technological disruptions and psychological alienations of its specific time.

Furthermore, the other three dimensions of reality discovered in the text complement and exacerbate this central theme of modern alienation, constructing a comprehensive *verisimilitude* of the protagonist's life. The familial reality, supported by 7 data points, highlights the traditional domestic pressures Rara faces, particularly her mother's persistent demands regarding marriage and grandchildren. The romantic reality, evidenced by 5 data points, illustrates the collapse of a deeply emotional bond due to her partner's sudden demands that

she cease her online book-selling activities. Additionally, the social reality, comprising 3 data points, exposes the destructive nature of societal interactions, specifically the rapid spread of malicious and false rumors about her alleged pregnancy by peers and neighbors. Together, these three spheres of reality create an oppressive environment. This overwhelming pressure logically drives the protagonist to seek refuge in the digital world, which tragically only deepens her profound sense of isolation.

To establish the academic novelty and significance of this research, a comprehensive comparison was conducted with previous scholarly literature, most notably a study conducted by Sabila (2019) from Universitas Nasional titled *Realitas Kehidupan Dalam Novel "Pertemuan Jodoh" Karya Abdoel Moeis (Pendekatan Mimetik Abrams)*. From a theoretical perspective, both investigations share significant similarities, as they both rigorously apply M.H. Abrams' mimetic approach and utilize a qualitative descriptive research design to deconstruct the reality of life embedded within a specific literary text. However, a critical methodological divergence exists in the instrumentation for data collection and processing. Sabila (2019) relied on a mixed-method qualitative approach that included literature reviews, observational note-taking, interviews, and dialectical analysis techniques. Conversely, this current study strictly utilizes a pure textual content analysis framework, systematically consolidating data, selecting relevant textual samples, coding data, and reducing irrelevant information to draw conclusions.

The most crucial distinction between the two studies, establishing the profound novelty of this current research, lies in the thematic focus and the socio-historical objects of study. The difference in the chosen literary works yields highly contrasting mimetic reflections of human civilization. Sabila's (2019) research on Abdoel Moeis' work captures the reality of a bygone era, focusing on the lived realities of that specific time. In stark contrast, this research on Sapardi Djoko Damono's contemporary novel demonstrates the remarkable elasticity and enduring relevance of Abrams' mimetic theory in dissecting postmodern human reality. It highlights a fundamental shift in the human experience, showing that the modern protagonist's reality is no longer predominantly defined by physical community interactions, but is instead overwhelmingly colonized by the virtual, pseudo-realities of social media.

Conclusion

Based on the research and discussion regarding the lived realities of the protagonist in Sapardi Djoko Damono's *Sunyi Adalah Minuman Keras*, this study concludes that there are 30 data points reflecting the protagonist's lived realities through the lens of M.H. Abrams' mimetic approach. These data points are categorized into four distinct dimensions: familial reality (7 data), romantic reality (5 data), social reality (3 data), and social media reality (15 data). The findings reveal that social media reality is the most dominant aspect, indicating that the protagonist's existential struggle is fundamentally tethered to the digital space. In contrast, romantic and social realities constitute the least represented aspects, suggesting that for the protagonist, traditional interpersonal interactions have been largely superseded by the complexities of the virtual world.

This study has certain limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the analysis is strictly focused on a mimetic lens, which prioritizes the correspondence between the literary text and social reality, thereby potentially overlooking other interpretative layers such as the psychological (psychoanalytic) or structural nuances of the novel. Second, the sample size of 30 data points, while sufficient for a qualitative descriptive study, limits the ability to generalize the findings to all forms of contemporary Indonesian literature. Finally, the scope of this research is confined to the protagonist's perspective, which may offer only a partial view of the novel's broader societal critique.

For future research, it is recommended to expand the analytical framework by incorporating other critical theories, such as digital humanities or feminist literary criticism, to further uncover the multifaceted issues within Sapardi Djoko Damono's works. Researchers are also encouraged to broaden the scope of study by including secondary characters to gain a more holistic understanding of the social interactions depicted. Furthermore, longitudinal studies focusing on the evolution of digital-themed literature in Indonesia would be highly beneficial to provide a deeper understanding of how authors navigate the shift from physical to virtual realities in contemporary fiction.

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