

CULTURAL INFLUENCES ON ROMANCE: A STUDY OF EXTERNAL FACTORS IN MAKOTO SHINKAI'S *YOUR NAME*

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Abstract

The novel 'Your Name' by Makoto Shinkai is a popular Japanese romance story that revolves around the body swap phenomenon between two high school students, Taki and Mitsuha, who live in different places and have different backgrounds. The novel explores the psychological aspects of their relationship, such as their identity, personality, emotions, and communication, as well as the external factors that affect their romance, such as their culture, environment, and destiny. This research paper aims to analyze the romantic conflicts that arise from the psychological and external factors in the novel, and to examine their relevance in the lives of contemporary college students who may face similar challenges in their romantic relationships. The research method used is a qualitative approach, using Freud's theory of personality. The data sources are the novel itself and some related literature. The data analysis is done by identifying, categorizing, and interpreting the data based on the research questions and the theoretical framework. The results of the analysis show that the romantic conflicts in the novel are caused by the following factors: the id-ego-superego dynamics, the identity crisis, and the communication barriers. The research also finds that these factors are relevant in the lives of contemporary college students, who may experience similar conflicts in their romantic relationships due to the influence of globalization, technology, social media, and individualism. The research concludes that the novel 'Your Name' provides a realistic and relatable portrayal of the romantic conflicts that may occur in modern society, and that the novel can be used as a source of inspiration and guidance for college students who want to overcome their romantic problems and achieve a harmonious and fulfilling relationship.

Keywords: Psychological, Main Character, Conflict Romance

INTRODUCTION

Literature is an inseparable part of the reality of life. Literary works, especially in the forms of prose and drama, contain conflicts, events, characters, and messages related to human life (Endrawasa, 2013: 14). According to this definition, literary works are expressions of a society that can reveal the perspectives of that



society. Speaking of literary works, especially prose, it is certainly familiar to mention the term novel.

A novel is an expression of fragments of human life (in a longer span) where conflicts occur, ultimately leading to changes in the life paths of the characters involved (Esten, 2013:7). Based on this definition, a novel is a literary work that contains expressions of human life involving conflicts. Novels also have many genres similar to film genres, such as slice of life, thriller, drama, comedy, education, romance, and many more. In the journal discussing the novel 'Your Name' the author Makoto Shinkai adopts the romance slice of life genre, which is highly favored by today is young generation.

Romanticism in novels often creates complex and intriguing conflicts. Specifically, the romantic conflict in the novel 'Your Name' can provide valuable insights into how this conflict may reflect and influence the lives of current college students. The continuation of this topic allows for further research on the psychological aspects of romantic conflict in literary works and how it relates to the experiences of current students,

The psychological condition of a person is very influential when he or she wants to establish a romantic relationship. A person's personality determines the success of a relationship because unconsciously, the subconscious has controlled most of human behaviour (Freud, 1986). Based on this, the writer wants to know what things influence the main character and what changes the main character experiences when the main conflict occurs.

The novel "Your Name" (Kimi no Nawa) itself is a work written by the Japanese author Makoto Shinkai in June 2016. This novel tells the story of Mitsuha Miyamizu, a high school girl who lives in Itomori village which is located in the mountainous area of Gifu. She felt bored with his life in the village and she wished he could be a man living in the city. One day, she dreamed that he turned into a man. And when he woke up from his sleep, he was shocked because he was in the room of a man who was a stranger to her. It turns out, the man's name is Taki Tachibana

who is a high school student who lives in Tokyo City. Mitsuha realizes that she is dreaming of being Taki and instead Taki realizes that he is in Mitsuha's body. Instantly both of their lives changed. This need for affiliation is a fundamental requirement that exists from childhood. This need serves as a motive for individuals to seek and maintain relationships with others (Baron & Byrne, 2003).

There are some previous studies that have the same topic as this research. Firman (2013) wrote his research *Analysis of Conflict in Veronica Roth's Novel "Divergent"*. The objective of this research is to find out the types of the conflict and the cause of the conflict that happened in the main character in the novel. This research used the intrinsic approach and structuralism theory by Robert Stanton as the technique of analyzing data to analyze the main character and to find out the types of the conflict and cause of the conflict in the novel.

The second study is conducted by Wia Annisa (2016) in her research *The Analysis of Psychological Conflicts of The Main Character and Moral Values as Seen in Mitch Albom's Novel For One More Day*. This study is intended to describe the psychological conflicts of the main character in Mitch Albom's novel, For One More Day viewed from Sigmund Freud's theory. It also tries to describe moral values seen in For One More Day novel.

The last study was conducted by Puspita Dewi, et al. (2023) mentioned *Critical Analysis of The Romanticism of The Novel "The Fault in Our Stars" by Using Reader Response*. The aim of this research is to describe the state of situation in a systematic and factual manner. For the data that has been analyzed, there are 5 body language points written in the hall of building c. This research used a qualitative approach and theory by Gary Chapman as the technique of analyzing data.

The writer is interested in Makoto Shinkai's work because in the novel Your Name, Makoto Shinkai is able to depict the feelings of the relationship between two people who love each other, but are separated by distance, time, and fate. He also often incorporates natural elements into his works, such as the sky, clouds, rain and comets, which give a beautiful and magical impression when imagined by the reader.

Makoto Shinkai is also a talented person, many of his works have been adapted into films and received many awards.

This study aims to analyze the novel “Your Name” by Makoto Shinkai from the perspective of romantic psychology. The novel tells the story of the love between Taki and Mitsuha, two teenagers who mysteriously swap bodies. This study wants to find out the relationship between the romantic story of Taki and Mitsuha and the romantic story of college students today, who may face various challenges and conflicts in their relationships. This study also wants to describe the personality structure of the two main characters in this novel, namely Taki and Mitsuha, and how their personality structure affects their interaction and feelings towards each other.

This research is a descriptive qualitative research. A qualitative approach was chosen to understand the experience of the research subject (Daniel, 2023). In qualitative research, theory is usually used as description of attitudes and behaviors (Wilany, 2017). This research uses a psychological approach by using Sigmund Freud's personality theory to analyze the psychological aspects of the romantic conflicts that occur between Taki Tachibana and Mitsuha Miyamizu. The data used for this research came from the internet, such as ebooks, articles, and online novels. The writer read the entire novel “Your Name” and tried to understand the content of the novel. In addition, the writer also conducted interviews with several students who were in a relationship to find out what their relationship was like and whether there was any relevance to the novel that the writer discussed previously.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Human beings are social creatures. The advantage of humans as social beings lies in their willingness to help others. The behavior of helping provides benefits and advantages to others. In the novel 'Your Name,' the relationship between Taki and Mitsuha is highly complex. This is because they both live in different dimensions of time. Human beings are social creatures. The advantage of humans as social beings lies in their willingness to help others. The behavior of helping provides benefits and

advantages to others. The beginning of the story explains that they both wake up and live their lives in different bodies, assisting each other in their respective lives. They also have to adapt to different lives and environments, facing various problems and difficulties arising from the exchange of bodies. On the other hand, difficult communication leads to many challenging issues and misunderstandings between them.

Communication

People often have specific intentions and desires they want to achieve together, so as to convey a message to others. There are many ways to do this, and one of them is through communication activities. One function of communication is to create a frame of reference that can be used to understand the situations and conditions in the environment (Mulyana, 2016). During the transition of the souls of the two characters in the novel, communication is certainly involved. They communicate using various methods, from writing notes on paper, diaries, to even writing directly on visible parts of the body, such as the forehead and hands. In real life, especially in a campus environment, students sometimes do the same, like writing texts in telegram or on social media. This is related to what happens in the novel "Your Name," but at the same time, it is not from the past or the future.

Romantic Conflict

Basically, humans are social beings who adapt to stay connected with others to fulfill their needs (Dwijayani and Wilani 2019). One of the social needs of humans is to have intensive social relationships with others. The romantic story in the novel "Kimi no Nawa" initially did not occur between Taki and Mitsuha. This is because Taki and Mitsuha are two individuals who are not acquainted with each other, and the main thing that makes humans build relationships is getting to know each other. In the novel, Mitsuha is a girl who does not have romantic relationships with others but has a good relationship with her two friends, Tessie and Sayaka. On the other hand, Taki is a man who goes to school and works at the same time. In his work environment, he is acquainted with a girl named Okudera, who is a senior at his workplace. Taki had a special relationship with this senior colleague. When they

swapped bodies with Mitsuha, what made Senior Okudera happy was known by Mitsuha. This is because Mitsuha is actually a girl, which helps Taki understand how to treat a woman properly. This is in contrast to Taki, who is a man and does not yet understand how to treat women correctly. This also becomes a conflict in the novel because their souls swap, and they become two different personalities in the same body for some time.

*A corner of my mind catches the tail of an inconceivable conclusion.
Could this be...?
In my dreams, are this girl and I—
In my dreams, are this boy and I—
—switching bodies?! (Chapter 3, p. 45-46)*

This is where the romantic conflict between Taki and Mitsuha begins, where they start to realize that the dreams they have been having are reality, where they switching bodies with each other due to a mysterious event that happened.

If it is related to the romanticism of students that occurs in the present, many couples do not understand how to treat their partners well and tend to communicate one-way (One-way Communication) and do not communicate two-way (assertive communication) which is an important thing in living a good relationship so that both parties understand each other's wishes. Assertive communication skills are very much needed in this case because assertive communication is useful for increasing individual effectiveness (Irsyadi, 2009).

Id

Id is one of the components of personality that exists in humans. Id is also often referred to as the pleasure principle because Id always demands oneself to find pleasure by relieving anger and tension. Therefore, this Id cannot be reached by the conscious mind because Id works on the subconscious mind of humans. Id has two processes to produce pleasure, namely: reflex and primary process. Id greatly influences Taki and Mitsuha when they exchange bodies. They feel confused, shocked, and annoyed by the situation they do not understand. This shows that their id reacts spontaneously to their basic impulses, needs, and desires. Their id wants to return to their original bodies and live their normal lives without caring about

what happens to their bodies and lives.

The moment I murmur the words, I notice a strange heaviness in my throat. By reflex, I put a hand to it. The throat my fingers find is hard and angular. "Hmm?" My voice slips out again, and it's really low. I look down at myself.

...They're gone. (Chapter 3, p. 27-28)

This explains that Mitsuha was confused at that time. She woke up in a room that was unfamiliar to her and realized that she had become a boy. She tried to adapt and start life as Taki.

I'm quite healthy! Below are faint shadows of ribs, and then the soft curves of the waist. I haven't seen one in the flesh yet, but this is definitely a girl's body.

...A girl?

I'm...a girl?

Abruptly, the drowsy fog enveloping my body is gone. My head clears instantly, then plunges into confusion.

I can't take it, and I scream. (Chapter 2, p. 8)

Same as Mitsuha, Taki is confused and shocked here because he suddenly becomes a woman. He is also surprised when he is called brother by Mitsuha's younger sister.

I run down the steps, taking them two at a time, slam on the brakes under the torii gate on the landing, and suck in a huge lungful of chilly night air. Then I expel the cluttered mess in my chest along with it.

"I'm sick of this town! I'm sick of this life! Make me a hot guy in Tokyo in my next life, puhleeeeee!" (Chapter 2, p. 25)

From the quotation, Mitsuha has a strong id because she is bored with her life in Itomori village and she hopes to be reborn as a handsome boy who lives in Tokyo in her next life. This shows that Mitsuha has a strong urge to change her fate and seek happiness without thinking about what will happen in the future.

"I can't explain it, but it's starting to feel like I'm on the wrong track," I mutter, half to myself. It might be better to go back to Tokyo and rework

my strategy. It would be one thing if I had photos, but expecting to find the town with sketches like these might have been asking too much. At least, that's how it starts to seem when I pick up my sketchbook and gaze at it. It's a completely ordinary country town, with the sort of houses you see everywhere scattered around a round lake. Even though it felt so solid to me when I finished drawing it, it looks like an anonymous, mediocre landscape now. (Chapter 4, p. 71)

This quote explains how Taki has a strong id and meet Mitsuha by looking for Mitsuha's residence. Taki feels that he has to find the city, even though he doesn't know any information about the city, what the name of the city is and whether the city really exists or not.

Date with Okudera-senpai in Roppongi tomorrow! She'll be waiting in front of Yotsuya Station at 10:30. It's a date I want to go on, but if I'm unlucky and it ends up being you, be grateful and enjoy it.(Chapter 3, p. 57)

In this quotation, Mitsuha's id wants to go on a date with Okudera-senpai. But unfortunately, at that time they were not swapping bodies with each other. Even so, Mitsuha is still happy even though Taki has to do it.

Ego

Ego is a personality process that can influence to control all actions that will be done by humans. Ego is a process of thinking realistically because ego adheres to the principle of reality. This ego is tasked with planning whether this id will be done or left alone. Simply put, ego is a mediator between id and superego. With the ego, a person is able to determine and place himself in relation to his surroundings. In the novel, when Taki and Mitsuha switch bodies, they have to adapt to different lives and environments, and face various problems and difficulties that arise from their body swap. This shows that their ego tries to balance the demands of their id and superego. Their ego tries to regulate and control their id, so that they do not act as they please and cause problems or losses for themselves. They set some rules when their bodies switch.

Anyway, we're lucky we figured out a way to communicate at all. We

both need to keep each other's lives intact and undisturbed... So we set rules.

(Chapter 3, p. 48)

In this quote, they set certain rules to keep their lives with each other intact. Their ego here tries to regulate and control their id, so that they do not act as they please and cause problems or losses for themselves or others.

"I can't explain it, but it's starting to feel like I'm on the wrong track," I mutter, half to myself. It might be better to go back to Tokyo and rework my strategy. It would be one thing if I had photos, but expecting to find the town with sketches like these might have been asking too much. At least, that's how it starts to seem when I pick up my sketchbook and gaze at it. It's a completely ordinary country town, with the sort of houses you see everywhere scattered around a round lake. Even though it felt so solid to me when I finished drawing it, it looks like an anonymous, mediocre landscape now. (Chapter 4, p. 71)

This quote explains that Taki's ego realizes that finding the town of Itomori is not an easy thing to do. He has to consider many factors rather than prioritizing his id to find Mitsuha who disappeared. Taki also realizes that the sketches he made from his memory are not accurate enough to identify the town.

*"That thing's comin' down? For real?!" Tesshi asks, looking up at the sky. We're in front of the substation's chain-link fence, gazing at the glittering comet.
"It will! I saw it happen!"
As I speak, I look him straight in the eye. We've got two hours until it falls.
There's no time to explain.
For a moment, Tesshi looks dubious. Then, with a sharp "Hah!" he grins. His smile looks like something he's mustered out of sheer desperation.
"You saw it, huh?! Then I guess we've gotta do this!" (Chapter 7, p. 129)*

The quote explains that Mitsuha's ego works based on reality, Mitsuha knows that the comet will fall and destroy her village. She does not only care about her own desires, but also the interests and desires of Taki. She tries to save her village in a way that can be done based on the situation at that time.

Superego

Freud (as cited in Husin, 2017) argued that the superego is the moral or ethics that is controlled by the principles of morality and idealism that are contrary to the principle of pleasure id and the principle of reality ego. The function of the super ego itself is to determine right or wrong so that a person can act in accordance with the norms prevailing in society. In the novel, the superego demands that they must maintain their reputation in front of family, friends, and others when they are swapping bodies.

This time every year, the Miyamizu Shrine holds its harvest festival, and Yotsuha and I have the misfortune of being the stars of the show. On this day, we wear crisp shrine maiden outfits, paint on bright-red lip rouge and wear jingly hair ornaments, go out in front of the standing audience at the kagura hall, and dance the dance Gran taught us. It's one of the traditions whose meaning was lost in the fire, and it's performed by two people, moving in sync. We're both holding bells with colorful cords tied to them. We ring them, twirling around and around, making the cords flare out and trail behind us. (Chapter 2, p. 21-22)

The quote above shows how Mitsuha has a strong superego within herself. She has to obey the norms and rules that exist in her environment and culture. She also does not want to disappoint her family's expectations because she has to fulfill her duty as a shrine maiden who practices Shinto.

I reach for her breasts. This is my body today. Nothing wrong with touching my own body, I think, just like always. Only. Except. But... My hands pause, and I mutter quietly: "...Guess I shouldn't." (Chapter 3, p. 51)

In this quote, Taki tries to push his superego to not violate Mitsuha's personal boundaries, such as not touching Mitsuha's sensitive body parts. He does this to respect Mitsuha and also to obey the norms that prevail in society.

After reading the novel, the writer found some sentences and dialogues that show the conflict that occurred between Taki and Mitsuha. The writer also found some evidence that shows the personality changes that Taki and Mitsuha experienced when they swapped bodies. Based on Freud's theory, a person's personality can be divided into three types, namely Id, Ego, and SuperEgo.

CONCLUSION

This research explores the novel "Your Name" by Makoto Shinkai from the perspective of romantic psychology. The novel depicts the love story between Taki and Mitsuha, two teenagers who mysteriously swap bodies. The research focuses on romantic conflicts, communication, and the personality structure of the main characters.

In the novel, romantic conflict arises due to the body exchange between Taki and Mitsuha, who live in different time dimensions. They must adapt to different lives and environments, facing problems and difficulties, as well as overcoming miscommunication.

Communication, as a crucial element in relationships, is explained through various means used by Taki and Mitsuha in the novel, such as writing notes and communicating through social media. This parallel is connected to the current lives of students who often encounter challenges in communicating in their relationships.

Psychological analysis highlights the concepts of Id, Ego, and Super Ego that influence the behavior of Taki and Mitsuha when swapping bodies. Their Id reflects basic impulses and needs, while the Ego plays a role in controlling their actions and balancing the conflict between the Id and Super Ego, which demands them to maintain a reputation in society.

This research employs a qualitative approach and Sigmund Freud's personality theory. Data is obtained from the novel, articles, and interviews with students in relationships. Overall, the study aims to provide a deeper understanding of romantic conflicts in literary works and their connection to the real lives of current students.

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