THE SYMBOLIC THOUGHT OF ASKA AND MAURA IN AURALASKA: A GEORGE HERBERT MEAD'S PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the thoughts of the main characters through the perspective of George Herbert Mead's symbolic interactionism, specifically impulse, perception, manipulation, and consummation. This research employs a qualitative method. The data sources are sentences or dialogues of the main characters in the novel. The findings indicate that the characters' thoughts in the novel demonstrate symbolic thinking abilities in their interactions, particularly in the main characters, Maura and Aska. The symbolic thought interaction highlights the strength of consideration by taking into account the cause-and-effect relationships related to each character's actions. In the symbolic concept of mind, the results show that Maura is the most prominent character as the subject in the novel, while Aska functions as the object.

Keywords: *symbolic interaction, mind, character*

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Introduction

Humans are multidimensional and complex beings who naturally seek cooperation and social interaction. Interaction is not only driven by economic, biological, and emotional needs but also by an inherent inclination to connect with others (Muslim A, 2013,

p. 484). The formation of ethnic groups and larger social communities stems from such interactions, demonstrating the fundamental process of socialization (Muslim A, 2013, p. 485). Socialization, in turn, cannot occur without interaction. Social interaction is a reciprocal process that involves action and reaction between individuals and groups, requiring both social contact and communication (Mulyadi & Liauw, 2020, p. 37). This dynamic nature of human interaction is central to symbolic interactionism, which examines how humans use symbols to create meaning in their interactions.

Symbolic interactionism, as introduced by George Herbert Mead, emphasizes that human interaction is mediated through the use of symbols and interpretation of meaning. Mead posited that individuals do not merely respond to external stimuli but actively construct meaning through communication processes (Ahmadi, 2005, p. 307). This theory is integral to understanding literature, particularly novels, where characters engage in dialogue and gestures laden with symbolic meaning. According to Mead, the concept of the "self" emerges from social interactions, wherein individuals internalize and interpret societal symbols (Ritzer, 2010, p. 280). This perspective aligns with literary studies, where texts serve as mediums for conveying symbolic interactions between characters.

Mead's most significant work in this field is found in his book Mind, Self, and Society. Mead identified three critical concepts that are necessary and interrelated in shaping symbolic interactionism. These three concepts and their relationships form the core of Mead's thoughts and are key terms in the theory. Symbolic interactionism specifically explains language, social interaction, and reflexivity. Mead elaborates on three important concepts of symbolic interactionism: Mind, Self, and Society

Mead (1934:267) viewed the mind not as an entity but as a social process. Mead defined the mind as the human ability that differentiates humans from other species, particularly in their use of symbols. He interpreted the mind as an internalized or implicit conversation between an individual and themselves using these symbols. For instance, in a fight between two people, if one clenches their fist, that gesture is not merely a sign but a symbol laden with meaning.

Generally, a clenched fist conveys multiple meanings, as the same symbol can have different interpretations depending on the context. If two angry individuals clench their fists, the gesture is a threat. If a young person on the roadside clenches their fist while trying to stop a bus, it signifies a desire to hitch a ride, even by hanging onto the back (Raho, 2021:127).

Aini (2017:23) explains that the mind emerges and develops through social processes and is an integral part of these processes. Social processes precede the mind rather than being a product of it. Therefore, the mind is

functionally rather than substantively defined. A unique characteristic of the mind is an individual's ability to generate not only a single response within themselves but also a response from the entire community. This is what Mead defines as the mind. Taking action means generating a specific organized response, and if someone possesses that response internally, they have what is called the mind. Thus, the mind differs from other logical concepts, such as memory, in Mead's work due to its ability to respond comprehensively to the community and develop organized reactions.

The processes of thinking, acting, and interacting are possible due to the significant symbols within a social group that carry shared meanings and evoke similar responses from both those who use and react to them. Mead also emphasized the flexibility of the mind, which allows interaction even when people do not fully understand the meaning of a given stimulus or symbol (Raho, 2021:129).

Mead's definition of the mind as a person's conversation with themselves does not reside within an individual. The mind is a social phenomenon that emerges and develops through social processes and is an integral part of them. Social processes precede the mind rather than being its product (Ritzer, 2010:280). The mind is defined functionally rather than substantively. Humans have a unique ability to generate responses within themselves, including not only individual responses but also responses from the entire community. This is what Mead calls the mind. Taking action means generating a specific organized response, and if someone possesses that response internally, they have what we call the mind.

Literature is an artistic expression that reflects human experiences, emotions, and mental activities. As Kartikasari & Suprapto (2018, p. 2) assert, literary works serve as records of human thought and creativity, enabling audiences to gain a deeper understanding through aesthetic expressions. Novels, as an extended form of literature, integrate intrinsic elements such as character, setting, plot, theme, and perspective to depict complex social interactions. These elements collectively construct a fictional reality that resonates with readers by mirroring real-life social behaviors and relationships (Aminuddin, 2011, p. 79). The significance of symbolic interactionism in literature is evident in the way narratives unfold through character interactions, where symbols play a crucial role in shaping meaning.

The Indonesian literary landscape has witnessed the emergence of contemporary novels that explore symbolic interactions, one of which is Auralaska by L. Dela Fimeta. The novel, which gained popularity on the Wattpad platform before being published by Coconut Books, tells the story of an arranged marriage between Maura, a cheerful model, and Aska, a reserved CEO. Their contrasting personalities lead to a series of conflicts and gradual

transformations, illustrating the process of understanding and acceptance through symbolic exchanges. The novel's success highlights its ability to engage readers by portraying the intricacies of human relationships through dialogue, gestures, and social interactions.

Mead's symbolic interactionism provides a theoretical framework for analyzing Auralaska, particularly in understanding how characters communicate and construct meaning within their social contexts. According to Cahyo (2023, p. 2), human life is inherently interdependent, and social interactions rely on shared symbols for effective communication. In the novel, Aska and Maura's evolving relationship exemplifies this process, as they navigate their differences through verbal and nonverbal exchanges that signify their emotional and psychological developments. The analysis of symbolic interaction in Auralaska contributes to a broader understanding of how literature encapsulates human communication and meaning-making.

This study aims to explore the application of symbolic interactionism in Auralaska, focusing on how the novel's characters utilize symbols in their interactions. By examining the dialogues, gestures, and relational dynamics within the novel, this research seeks to highlight the significance of Mead's theory in literary analysis. Furthermore, this study addresses the research gap in understanding contemporary Indonesian literature through the lens of symbolic interactionism, demonstrating its relevance in both sociological and literary contexts. The findings will contribute to the discourse on how novels serve as representations of human interactions and the construction of meaning through symbolic exchanges.

Research Methods

According to Sukardi (2003, p. 3), research is defined as a method of observation or inquiry aimed at finding answers to problems or discovering new knowledge. Research is also a scientific process that encompasses formal and intensive characteristics. The formal and intensive nature of research arises because it adheres to specific rules, sequences, and presentation methods to ensure valid and beneficial results for human life.

In research, methodology is a crucial component. Research methodology is defined as a scientific method for obtaining data with specific purposes and applications. According to Endraswara (2013, p. 8), literary research methodology is a selected approach that considers the form, content, and nature of literature as the subject of study. There are various research methodologies, with quantitative and qualitative methods being the most commonly used. Qualitative research prioritizes processes, which are carried out gradually and systematically. This study employs a qualitative

method because the data collected consists of words rather than numbers. This method is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words.

Data Collection

Research must be supported by accurate data to yield reliable results. The data in this study are qualitative in nature. Qualitative data consist of words or actions related to certain events. In qualitative research, the primary sources of data include words and actions, while supplementary data include documents and other materials. The primary data source in this study is the novel Auralaska by L. Dela Fimeta, published by Coconut Books in Depok, West Java, in 2021. Auralaska consists of 369 pages and 44 chapters. The novel presents a deep narrative about romance, immersing readers in both sorrowful and joyful situations. The data analyzed in this study comprise excerpts from Auralaska. However, not all sentences in the novel will be used as research data; only selected excerpts relevant to the research focus—specifically, the thoughts of the characters Maura and Aska, which shape symbolic interaction—will be analyzed.

The main instrument used in this study is the researcher as the primary data collector. The researcher conducts in-depth reading and analysis of the novel Auralaska to identify and interpret relevant textual evidence. Additionally, supporting instruments include documentation methods and coding techniques to categorize data based on research objectives.

Data collection is a crucial aspect of scientific research, as research outcomes depend on the data collection techniques employed. According to Sahir (2022, p. 45), data collection techniques involve narrowing the research scope, gathering information through observations, structured and unstructured interviews, documentation, visual materials, and designing protocols for recording and documenting information. Thus, data collection techniques can be defined as methods used to gather data to answer the research questions.

The data collection techniques in this study are as follows: (1) The researcher reads the research object, namely Auralaska by L. Dela Fimeta, both heuristically and hermeneutically. (2) The researcher identifies relevant parts or data from the novel that align with the research focus. (3) The researcher codes the data deemed relevant to the research problem in Auralaska, particularly regarding thoughts in symbolic interaction, namely impulse (IE), perception (PI), manipulation (MI), and consummation (KI). The researcher categorizes and analyzes the research findings based on the theoretical concepts used in this study.

Data analysis

Data analysis is the process of inspecting, cleansing, transforming, and modeling data with the goal of discovering useful information, informing conclusions, and supporting decision-making. In this study, the data analysis process involves several steps: (1) Organizing the collected data by categorizing excerpts that reflect symbolic interaction in Auralaska, (2) Analyzing the selected data using theoretical frameworks related to symbolic interaction, (3) Interpreting the findings to understand how the thoughts of Maura and Aska contribute to the narrative and character development, and (4) Drawing conclusions based on the patterns and themes identified in the analysis. By following this structured research methodology, the study ensures a systematic and credible approach to analyzing Auralaska and its symbolic

Results and Discussion

Results

The analysis of the novel Auralaska by L. Dela Fimeta demonstrates the application of mind theory in the thought processes of the main character, Maura. The findings reveal that Maura's experiences and internal conflicts align with the four stages of mind theory: impulse, perception, manipulation, and consummation.

In the excerpt where Maura expresses doubt about her arranged marriage, the mind theory stages are evident. The impulse is triggered by her upcoming wedding, followed by perception when she acknowledges her uncertainty. Manipulation occurs as she attempts to rationalize her feelings, culminating in consummation when she openly voices her fears about the marriage's potential failure.

Similarly, when Maura is confronted with her father's coercion regarding work leave, the process unfolds systematically. Her father's ultimatum serves as the impulse, while her immediate reaction reflects perception. Manipulation is present in her attempt to resist, but consummation is reached when she ultimately concedes.

Other instances further reinforce these patterns, such as Maura's nervousness upon public admiration, her conflicted emotions towards Aska, and her actions driven by concern for his well-being'

Discussion (Cambria, 12 pt, bold, italicized)

Mind or thought is the thinking process present in every human being as a social actor. Humans, as active and considerate individuals, think before

taking actions related to external impulses or their own inner urges. As beings that constantly interact, humans possess the ability to use and understand symbols, enabling them to respond through actions. Certain aspects within a person's mind serve as a bridge between response and stimulus before an action is ultimately taken. In the novel Auralaska by L. Dela Fimeta, the main character's thought process is evident in the following excerpt:

> _"Dua hari lagi gue nikah," ucap Maura. Kara tidak kaget lagi karena dia sudah mengetahui bahwa Maura dijodohkan oleh keluarganya dan akan menikah pada tanggal yang sudah ditentukan. "Jadi ini penyebabnya?" tanya Kara. "Gue ragu, Kar," ucap Maura tiba-tiba. "Ragu kemapa. Ra? Jangan bercanda deh, pernikahan lo udah dekat." Ucap Kara. Terdengar helaan napas dari bibir Maura. "Gue juga nggak tau. Gue merasa dihati gue ada yang nggak beres" ucap Maura, tentu saja membuat Kara sedikit khawatir (Fimeta, 2021,p. 5)_

> _"Two more days until my wedding," Maura said. Kara was no longer surprised, as she already knew that Maura had been arranged to marry by her family on a predetermined date._
> _"So this is the reason?" Kara asked._
> _"I'm having doubts, Kar," Maura suddenly said._
> _"Doubts about what, Ra? Don't joke around, your wedding is coming up soon," Kara replied._
> _A sigh escaped Maura's lips._
> _"I don't know either. I feel like something isn't right in my heart," Maura said, which, of course, made Kara a little worried._ (Fimeta, 2021,p. 5)

In relation to mind theory, it explains that every individual has the ability to use symbols. This is evident in the excerpt: _"Two more days until my wedding," Maura said._ In this context, the verbal symbol is Maura herself providing information to her friend Kara that she is about to get married. Maura initiates this discussion due to her inner urge, or impulse. Once the impulse is understood, the next stage is perception, which refers to the stimulus occurring after the impulse. This is demonstrated in the excerpt_: "I'm having doubts, Kar," Maura suddenly said_. Here, Maura provides a symbol of the doubt she is feeling, although she is unsure of the exact cause. This doubt still carries an unclear meaning that cannot yet be expressed or fully understood.

After impulse and perception are recognized, the next stage is manipulation, which refers to the response that emerges—the third phase of mind theory. This is evidenced in the excerpt: _"I don't know either. I feel like something isn't right in my heart," Maura said._ Maura experiences a symbolic state of anxiety about her impending marriage to a man she does not know. Since the marriage is arranged by her parents, Maura attempts to accept it, yet she does not feel completely willing or sincere, leading to inner turmoil.

Once manipulation is understood, the final stage is consummation, or the completion phase of mind theory. This is evident in the excerpt:

"Gue takut pernikahan ini nggak bertahan lama. Lo tau kami nggak saling kenal dan tentunya nggak cinta," ucap Maura dengan wajah gusar.

"I'm afraid this marriage won't last long. You know we don't even know each other, and of course, we don't love each other," Maura said with a distressed expression.

The reason for Maura's doubts and anxiety stems from her assumption that a marriage arranged by her parents—without mutual acquaintance or love—will not endure. Based on the four indicators of mind theory, this data qualifies as mind (thought) data because it has gone through the four phases: impulse (inner urge), perception, manipulation, and consummation.

__"Papa kasih kamu pilihan libur dua bulan atau perusahaan Papa buat bangkrut.__ Atau perusahaannya Papa beli aja? Kalau Papa jadi atasan kamu, kan Papa bisa pecat kamu semau Papa." "Haaaaaaaah!" ucap Maura syok, pilihan macam apa itu. "Tunggu, Pa. Bukannya Papa tadi malam bilang ini hidup Maura sendiri" ucap Maura mengungkit-ungkit ucapan papanya tadi malam. "Sekali-sekali Papa harus ikut campurkan. Jadi gimana?" tanya Haris lagi seraya menaikkan alisnya bergantian. Sudahlah, rasanya Maura sekarang ingin menjedotkan jidatnya sendiri ke meja. "Oke fine, Papa menang. Aku pilih libur dua bulan," Ucap Maura final. "Gitu, dong," ucap Papa senang. (Fimeta, 2021,p. 9)

"I'll give you two choices: take a two-month leave or I'll bankrupt your company. Or should I just buy your company? If I become your boss, I can fire you whenever I want."
"Haaaaaaaah!" Maura gasped in shock. What kind of choice was that?
"Wait, Dad. Didn't you say last night that this is Maura's life?" Maura protested, recalling her father's words from the previous night.
"Every now and then, I have to interfere. So, what's it going to be?" Haris asked again, raising his eyebrows alternately.
That's it. Maura now felt like banging her forehead against the table.
"Okay, fine, Dad. You win. I'll take the two-month leave," Maura finally decided.
"That's more like it," her father said happily. (Fimeta, 2021, p. 9)

If linked to the theory of mind, the data above represents mind data because it shows the internalization process of the main character with the figure of Papa from Maura's perspective. The first stage in the theory of mind is impulse, which is evidenced in the bold excerpt: *"Papa gives you a choice: a two-month leave or Papa bankrupts the company. Or should Papa just buy the company? If Papa becomes your boss, then Papa can fire you as he pleases."* This dialogue falls into the category of impulse. In this dialogue, Papa's character creates a perception within himself regarding Maura, namely

making a decision with the expectation of eliciting a favorable reaction from Maura concerning the coercion imposed on her to take a work leave. The impulse is presented with the hope of generating a perception in the main character. Once the impulse is understood, the next stage is perception.

Perception is the second stage after impulse, where perception acts as a stimulus that has passed through the impulse process. This is evidenced in the excerpt, *"Wait, Pa. Didn't you say last night that this is Maura's own life?" Maura said, recalling her father's words from the previous night.* In this excerpt, Maura's response to her father is to recall and resist the impulse given by Papa Maura. The verbal symbol perceived by Maura is a feeling of confusion and anxiety, coupled with the hope that what her father said would not happen and would not be carried out.

After perception is understood, the next stage is manipulation, which is found in the bold excerpt: *"Once in a while, Papa has to interfere. So, what do you say?" Haris asked again while raising his eyebrows alternately.* Manipulation is the third stage in the theory of mind, emerging as a response to perception. In the bold text, an implicit symbolic meaning arises, conveying a subtle form of coercion with the expectation that Maura will comply with Papa's words.

Once the manipulation stage is understood, the final stage of the theory of mind is consummation. Consummation is referred to as the decision-making stage or the final outcome of thought. In this data, consummation is evidenced in the excerpt: *"Okay, fine, Papa wins. I'll take the two-month leave," Maura said decisively*. This excerpt represents the final stage and decision made by Maura. The verbal symbol that emerges is a feeling of frustration, as Maura concedes to her father because he is her parent, leaving her with no other choice but to accept his decision. Based on the theory of mind indicators, this data qualifies as mind data because it has passed through four stages: impulse, perception, manipulation, and consummation.

> *Saat menuruni tangga, semua pasang mata menatap Maura kagum. Parasnya yang cantik mampu membuat orang-orang di sana seolah terhipnotis. Maura sedari tadi menundukkan kepalanya, karena jujur saat ini dia benar-benar gugup. "Maura, senyum, jangan nunduk," ucap Haris. Maura dengan gugup perlahan mendongakkan wajahnya dan saat itu juga pandangan matanya bertemu dengan mata indah milik Aska. Cukup lama keduanya bertatapan, bahkan Aska pun terlihat seolah terpesona dengan kecantikan Maura. "Ehm…Aska ganteng, ya, Ra, sampai kamu tatapnya lama gitu. Sabar, nanti malam aja tatap-tatapannya," bisik Tania, membuat Maura segera memutuskan kontak matanya dengan Aska. (Fimeta, 2021, p. 15)*

> *As she descended the stairs, all eyes admired Maura. Her beautiful face seemed to hypnotize everyone present. Maura kept her head down, honestly feeling extremely nervous at the moment. "Maura, smile, don't look down," Haris said. Nervously, Maura slowly lifted her face, and at that moment, her gaze met Aska's beautiful eyes. They stared at each other for quite some time, and even Aska seemed mesmerized by Maura's beauty. "Ehm… Aska is so handsome, huh, Ra, that you're staring at him for so long? Be patient, save the staring for later tonight," Tania whispered, making Maura immediately break eye contact with Aska. (Fimeta, 2021, p. 15)*

If linked to the indicators of the theory of mind, the data above falls into the category of mind or thought theory. The first stage in the theory of mind is impulse, which is evidenced in the excerpt: *"As she descended the stairs, all eyes admired Maura."* The verbal symbol occurring here is admiration for Maura due to her beauty. The admiration and hypnotic effect represent the heartfelt impulse of those who gazed at Maura as she descended the stairs. In this case, Maura becomes the object. Once the impulse is understood, the next stage is perception, which is evidenced in the excerpt: *"Maura kept her head down, honestly feeling extremely nervous at the moment."* Perception arises due to the stimulus from impulse; in the impulse stage, all eyes admire Maura, and in the perception stage, Maura lowers her head, feeling nervous from being the center of attention. Without the impulse stage, the perception stage would not occur.

Once perception is understood, the next stage is manipulation, the third stage, which occurs as a response to perception. This is evidenced in the bold excerpt*: "and at that moment, her gaze met Aska's beautiful eyes. They stared at each other for quite some time, and even Aska seemed mesmerized by Maura's beauty."* In this stage, there is a verbal symbol between Aska and Maura, namely admiration for each other's beauty and attractiveness. This symbol carries an implicit meaning that both experience overwhelming emotions.

Once manipulation is understood, the next stage is consummation. This is evidenced in the excerpt: *"Ehm… Aska is so handsome, huh, Ra, that you're staring at him for so long? Be patient, save the staring for later tonight," Tania whispered.* Consummation is the final stage of the theory of mind. The bold text contains a symbol indicating that Maura gazed at Aska for an extended period from another person's perspective. This implies that Maura has admiration for Aska, transitioning from sadness over marrying an unfamiliar man to mutual admiration between them.

> *Gia menghela napas pelan. "Ya udah sana ajak Maura ke kamar sekalian," ucap Gia seraya bergeleng-geleng. "Oh ya, satu lagi. Nanti alua Aska masih cuek, aduin ke Bunda, biar bunda omelin sampai kapok suami kamu," ucap Gia,*

membuat Maura tidak kuasa menahan tawanya. Sementara Aska dengan rasa tanpa bersalah malah beranjak begitu saja dari tempatnya, meninggalkan Maura yang meringis pelan. Belum apa-apa sudah meninggalkan saja. (Fimeta, 2021:17)

Gia took a deep breath. "Alright, just take Maura to the room while you're at it," Gia said, shaking her head. "Oh, and one more thing. If Aska remains indifferent, report him to Mom so she can scold him until he learns his lesson as your husband," Gia said, making Maura unable to hold back her laughter. Meanwhile, Aska, without any guilt, simply stood up and walked away, leaving Maura wincing slightly. They weren't even properly married yet, and he was already leaving her behind. (Fimeta, 2021:17)

If linked to the concept of mind, where a person's actions are driven by internal or external factors, the bold excerpt *"Gia took a deep breath. 'Alright, just take Maura to the room while you're at it,'"* represents impulse. Gia instructs Aska to take Maura to the room to rest, knowing that Aska would not do it without being told.

Once the impulse is understood, the next stage follows, as seen in the bold text: *"Oh, and one more thing. If Aska remains indifferent, report him to Mom so she can scold him until he learns his lesson as your husband," Gia said.* This excerpt includes perception, manipulation, and consummation. The perception arises from the impulse, leading to manipulation and consummation. Gia provides an alternative for Maura regarding Aska's indifferent nature. The symbol given here is Gia's protective stance towards Maura against Aska's indifference. Gia's facial expression conveys concern, while Maura's reaction of suppressing laughter suggests she sees Aska as a child still being scolded by his mother, Gia.

Maura menghela napas pelan. Bukan jawaban itu yang dia butuhkan, karena jujur saja Maura tidak tega melihat Aska kerja terlalu keras. Padahal jika tidak bekerja sebentar pun uangnya tidak akan habis, tapi entahlah kenapa Aska sepertinya gila kerja. Maura segera mengakhiri kegiatan makannya karena ia benar-benar sudah tidak selera. (Fimeta, 2021:41)

Maura took a deep breath. That was not the answer she needed because, truthfully, she couldn't bear to see Aska working too hard. Even if he stopped working for a while, his wealth would not be depleted. However, for some reason, Aska seemed obsessed with working. Maura quickly finished her meal because she completely lost her appetite. (Fimeta, 2021:41)

If linked to the theory of mind, the data above represents mind data because it shows the internalization process of the main characters, Maura and Aska. The bolded quotation, *"Today, I'm going to Singapore," said Aska.* This excerpt falls into the category of impulse or an emotional urge. Aska, following his own heart, tells Maura that he is leaving for a business trip to Singapore. Aska's *gesture* while speaking is cold and indifferent. The verbal

symbol here indicates that Aska does not care about Maura and leaves without much concern. This, of course, creates a perception in Maura's mind, as evidenced by the quotation, *"Again?" Maura asked with a slightly annoyed tone. "Aren't you tired of working day and night?"* The emerging symbol represents frustration, and in reality, Maura does not want to be left behind by Aska.

Once perception is established, the next stage is manipulation. This is demonstrated in the excerpt, *"No," Aska replied as he hurried away from the dining table.* Manipulation occurs as a reaction to perception. Manipulation is the third stage in the mind process, and Aska's facial expression remains blank, showing no emotion. Aska remains cold and indifferent toward his wife, Maura. The next stage is consummation or the final phase, evidenced by the quotation, *"Maura let out a slow sigh. That was not the answer she needed. To be honest, she couldn't bear to see Aska working so hard. Even if he took a short break, his money wouldn't run out, but somehow, Aska seemed obsessed with work."* The verbal symbol experienced by Maura is disappointment, and her mood fades due to Aska's obsession with work, making him unaware of time.

Essentially, women want to be understood and given attention, but in this case, Maura does not receive that. She can only suppress her disappointment, endure the bitterness alone, and get used to Aska's nature. Based on the indicators of the theory of *mind*, the data above qualifies as mind data because it has gone through four stages: impulse, perception, manipulation, and consummation.

> *"Pasti kelelahan," ucap Maura pelan. Maura memutuskan pergi ke dapur dan memanaskan masakannya, setekah itu dia menyiapkan makan untuk Aska dan membawanya di atas nampan lengkap dengan air putih dan juga obat. (Fimeta, 2021, p. 75)*
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> *"He must be exhausted," Maura said softly. She decided to go to the kitchen, heat up the food, and prepare a meal for Aska, placing it on a tray with a glass of water and some medicine. (Fimeta, 2021, p. 75)*

In the excerpt above, when linked to the theory of mind, it is evident that every individual has symbols in their interactions. According to the indicators of the theory of mind, behavior is related to problem-solving and is outlined in four stages: impulse, perception, manipulation, and consummation.

In the passage, *"Maura got up from her seat, but Aska held her back. Maura was startled when Aska's hand touched her arm—not without reason, as she felt his hand was burning hot. 'Aska, you're sick.'"* This represents Maura's impulse or emotional urge to ask about Aska's condition, hoping for an answer or feedback. Essentially, there is always something influencing a

person's thoughts, whether an external stimulus or an internal one. The verbal symbol here is Maura's concern for Aska.

After impulse, the next stage is perception, demonstrated in the quote, *"I'm fine," Aska replied.* Perception arises as a reaction to impulse or emotional urges. Aska's facial expression and gesture remain cold and unemotional. His verbal symbol suggests that he is actually unwell, but due to his ego and cold personality, he responds as if everything is fine.

After perception, the third stage is manipulation, as seen in the quote, *"He must be exhausted," Maura said softly*. Manipulation occurs as a response to perception. Maura assumes that exhaustion is the cause of Aska's illness. Even though Aska claims to be fine, Maura believes otherwise and attributes his condition to excessive work. The verbal symbol here is care—Maura pays close attention to Aska before making any assumptions about his condition.

Once manipulation is understood, the next stage is consummation, or the final phase of problem resolution. This is evidenced by the excerpt, *"Maura decided to go to the kitchen, heat up the food, and prepare a meal for Aska, placing it on a tray with a glass of water and some medicine."* Consummation occurs as a response to manipulation. In this final stage, Maura resolves the issue by showing her care for Aska by preparing food, water, and medicine. The verbal symbols in Maura's actions represent concern, affection, and worry for Aska. Based on the indicators of the theory of mind, the data above qualifies as mind data because it has gone through four stages: impulse, perception, manipulation, and consummation.

> *Betapa terkejutnya Maura ketika menemukan ovennya berasap, sedang Aska yang mengikuti Maura pun sama-sama terkejut. Maura dengan cepat mematikan ovennya dan membuka oven itu ia mengambil Loyang di dalamnya karena terburu-buru Maura lupa menggunakan alas. "Aw!" pekik Maura. "Maura kamu gimana, sih!" ucap Aska kaget karena tangan Maura baru saja menyentuh Loyang panas itu. "Aku nggak tau," ucap Maura pelan seraya menatap tangannya yang terlihat mengenaskan itu. Aska menghela napasnya pelan ia mengambil tangan Maura dan mengalirinya dengan air, setelah itu Aska menyuruh Maura duduk di kursi dapur. "Tunggu sini aku ambilin salep," ucap Aska yang diangguki Maura. (Fimeta, 2021:81)*

> *Maura was shocked to see smoke coming from her oven, and Aska, who followed her, was equally surprised. Maura quickly turned off the oven and opened it. In her haste, she forgot to use an oven mitt when grabbing the tray. "Ouch!" Maura cried out. "Maura, what are you doing!" Aska exclaimed in shock as Maura's hand touched the hot tray. "I didn't realize," Maura muttered softly, staring at her badly burned hand. Aska took a deep breath and gently took Maura's hand, running it under cool water. After that, he told Maura to sit down on a kitchen chair. "Wait here, I'll get some ointment," Aska said, and Maura nodded in agreement. (Fimeta, 2021:81)*

If linked to the theory of mind, every individual has symbols in their interactions. According to the indicators of the theory of mind, behavior is related to problem-solving and is outlined in four stages: impulse, perception, manipulation, and consummation.

In the bolded excerpt, *"Ouch!" Maura cried out*. She was cooking and accidentally touched the hot tray without an oven mitt, experiencing pain. Instinctively, due to impulse or an emotional urge, Maura did not remain silent but instead cried out in pain.

After impulse, the next stage is perception, as seen in the quote*, "Maura, what are you doing!" Aska exclaimed in shock as Maura's hand touched the hot tray.* Perception occurs as a reaction to impulse. Aska spontaneously responded to Maura in a harsh tone. His verbal symbol expresses worry, although his concern was wrapped in what seemed like frustration.

After perception, the third stage is manipulation, demonstrated in the bolded excerpt, *"Wait here, I'll get some ointment," Aska said, and Maura nodded in agreement.* Manipulation happens as a response to perception. Aska quickly decides to help Maura by bringing her ointment for her burn. His verbal symbol represents care—every individual who expresses concern is beginning to show signs of affection. Over time, Aska shows small acts of care toward Maura.

After manipulation, the final stage is consummation, evidenced by the bolded excerpt, "*Be more careful next time," Aska said*. Consummation is the resolution of a problem or the conclusion of an issue. Consummation arises as a reaction to manipulation. In this case, Aska gives advice and a reminder for Maura to be more cautious in the future. His verbal symbol reflects care, as he does not want Maura to experience the pain of a burn again. Based on the indicators of the theory of mind, the data qualifies as mind data because it has gone through four stages: impulse, perception, manipulation, and consummation.

Conclusion

The findings of this study highlight the depth of symbolic interaction in Auralaska by L. Dela Fimeta, particularly through the characters Maura and Aska. The analysis reveals that their thought processes align with the concept of symbolic interaction, encompassing impulse, perception, manipulation, and consummation. These elements shape the characters' decision-making and responses, illustrating how symbolic meanings influence their actions. Notably, Maura and Aska's cognitive tendencies are driven by impulse, largely shaped by the dynamics of their newly established

household, including their arranged marriage, emotional bonds, and internal as well as external influences.

Despite these insights, the study has certain limitations, particularly in its scope of analysis, which focuses primarily on the main characters. Future research could expand on these findings by exploring other characters or applying different theoretical frameworks to further understand the complexities of symbolic interaction in literary works. Additionally, these findings have broader implications for literary and psychological studies, offering a nuanced perspective on how characters' thought processes reflect real-world human interactions and decision-making patterns.

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