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Mimicry in child marriage in the novel *Yuni* by Ade Ubaidil

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the practice of mimicry in the phenomenon of child marriage as represented in the novel *Yuni* by Ade Ubaidil. Mimicry is understood as a postcolonial concept proposed by Homi K. Bhabha, referring to the partial imitation of dominant values, norms, and discourses that produces ambivalence and identity negotiation. The novel *Yuni* portrays the social realities of rural Indonesian society, where child marriage is normalized through cultural traditions, religious interpretations, and economic pressures. This research aims to reveal how the characters in the novel perform mimicry toward patriarchal values and moral discourses legitimized by social authorities, and how such mimicry functions as a form of apparent compliance, survival strategy, or subtle resistance. This study employs a qualitative descriptive method using a postcolonial theoretical approach, particularly Bhabha's concept of mimicry. The data consist of narrative descriptions, dialogues, and character portrayals related to child marriage and female identity construction. The analysis is conducted through critical and interpretative textual reading. The findings indicate that mimicry in *Yuni* not only reinforces unequal power relations but also creates spaces of ambivalence that allow the emergence of critical awareness toward gender injustice. This study contributes to the understanding of power, identity, and resistance in contemporary Indonesian literary studies.

Keywords: mimicry; child marriage; postcolonial theory; gender identity; *Yuni* novel

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1. INTRODUCTION

Literature does not merely function as a medium of entertainment, but also as a space for representing social realities that record, critique, and reflect various human issues. In the context of contemporary Indonesian literature, novels often serve as a medium for addressing complex social issues such as gender inequality, power relations, and problematic cultural practices. One issue that remains a serious concern in Indonesia is child marriage, a practice that is frequently legitimized by tradition, religious interpretations, as well as economic and social pressures. This phenomenon not only affects the future of children—particularly girls—but also reflects unequal power relations within a patriarchal social structure.

The novel *Yuni* by Ade Ubaidil presents a compelling portrayal of the reality of child marriage in rural Indonesian society. Through its characters, the novel illustrates how young women are confronted with social demands that require them to conform to dominant norms, even when these norms often conflict with their personal desires and identities. *Yuni* does not merely present an individual story, but also reveals the social mechanisms behind the normalization of child marriage, including the roles of family, community, and social institutions in reproducing this practice.

To understand these dynamics more deeply, the concept of mimicry in postcolonial studies provides a relevant theoretical framework. Mimicry, as proposed by Homi K. Bhabha, refers to the partial imitation of dominant values, norms, and discourses by subjects positioned on the margins. This imitation is never entirely identical; rather, it always contains ambivalence, irony, and subversive potential. In postcolonial societies, mimicry becomes a strategy of adaptation that enables individuals to survive under conditions of power while simultaneously opening spaces for subtle resistance to domination.

In the novel *Yuni*, the practice of mimicry can be observed through the attitudes and actions of characters who appear to comply with the discourse of child marriage, yet at the same time reveal hesitation, inner resistance, or identity negotiation. Female characters, in particular, often display a form of apparent compliance as a means of survival within a social system that restricts their life choices. Mimicry in this context not only reproduces patriarchal values but also reflects the tension between personal desires and collective demands.

Previous studies on the novel *Yuni* have generally focused on issues of gender, feminism, or social criticism of child marriage. However, research that specifically situates the practice of child marriage within the framework of postcolonial mimicry remains relatively limited. This approach, in fact, allows for a more critical reading of how power relations, ideology, and identity are negotiated through cultural practices that appear “natural” and “acceptable” within society.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the practice of mimicry in child marriage as represented in the novel *Yuni* by Ade Ubaidil. This research seeks to uncover the forms of mimicry enacted by the characters, the meanings underlying these practices, and their implications for identity construction and power relations. By employing a postcolonial approach—particularly Homi K. Bhabha’s concept of mimicry—this study is expected to contribute theoretically and critically to Indonesian literary studies, while also broadening the understanding of child marriage as a social practice deeply embedded in negotiations of identity and power.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature plays a crucial role in reflecting social realities, including entrenched cultural practices such as child marriage and identity negotiation among marginalized groups. In postcolonial studies, Homi K. Bhabha’s concept of *mimicry* has been widely applied to understand how subordinated subjects imitate dominant norms, generating ambivalence and subversion rather than straightforward assimilation. Bhabha describes mimicry as “almost the same, but not quite,” emphasizing its ambivalent potential to both reinforce and undermine power structures. This theoretical lens provides an effective framework for analyzing how characters in literary texts internalize, reproduce, or resist hegemonic ideologies. The current study situates *Yuni* by Ade Ubaidil within this theoretical context to examine the representation of mimicry in relation to child marriage.

Several recent studies have applied Bhabha's concept of mimicry and related postcolonial concepts such as hybridity and ambivalence to literary works across various cultural contexts. For example, a study on Muslim Indonesian identity in the novel *Annisa* explores how hybridity and mimicry are embodied through language, fashion, and lifestyle, interpreting these elements as negotiations of identity in the face of cultural influence and expectations. The protagonist's mimicry of Western ideologies is not merely imitation, but a space for articulating resistance and reevaluating cultural values within a postcolonial framework (Hietschold, 2022). Similarly, research on the film *Hala* demonstrates how mimicry serves as both a strategy of adaptation and a source of internal conflict for a second-generation Muslim immigrant balancing cultural identities within a dominant Western society. These works underscore how mimicry can involve complex negotiations of identity rather than passive acceptance of external norms.

Postcolonial analyses of Indonesian novels illustrate how mimicry emerges in textual representations and reflects broader cultural and historical tensions. In a study of *Gadis Kretek* by Ratih Kumala, mimicry appears through various cultural practices such as language, behavior, and lifestyle, revealing characters' attempts to navigate inherited hierarchies and social expectations (Salsabila et al, 2025). Likewise, mimicry and hybridity in *Para Priyayi* demonstrate how colonial influences permeate characters' linguistic and ethical expressions, indicating the persistence of colonial legacies in post-independence Indonesia (Wardani., 2018). These analyses highlight the relevance of mimicry as a critical tool for understanding how individuals internalize and reproduce dominant frameworks.

In literary research, mimicry is often linked with ambivalence and hybridity as aspects of postcolonial subjectivity. Studies of *Layla* by Candra Malik, for instance, identify forms of mimicry in marriage, language, and lifestyle, revealing how characters' behaviors represent both acceptance of and tension with cultural norms (Sanditama & Kurniasih., 2021). Similarly, investigations into *Cantik itu Luka* show how mimicry manifests as subtle resistance to colonial and patriarchal power through education, language, and lifestyle negotiations (Rosyada et al, 2023). These examples illustrate how mimicry in literature can serve not only as reproduction of dominant norms but also as a site of critical reflection and resistance.

Despite the rich application of mimicry in literary studies, research specifically connecting mimicry with the practice of child marriage remains limited. Child marriage, although discussed extensively in gender and sociological research, is less frequently examined through postcolonial literary frameworks. Studies on child marriage often focus on gender inequality, legal frameworks, and sociocultural determinants, but rarely frame the practice within postcolonial power relations and identity negotiation as represented in fiction. This gap highlights the importance of integrating postcolonial theory with gender and cultural studies to offer deeper insights into how normative practices like child marriage are narrated, contested, and reproduced in literature.

The broader sociocultural context of child marriage underscores the need for such interdisciplinary approaches. In Indonesian society, child marriage persists due to entrenched patriarchal values, economic pressures, and traditional interpretations, which literature often mirrors. Although not explicitly using postcolonial theory, discourse analyses of child marriage emphasize how societal narratives naturalize the practice, framing it as tradition or protection of honor while obscuring power imbalances. These gendered norms resonate with postcolonial critiques that examine how dominant ideologies shape individual choices and identities.

Postcolonial literary scholarship also offers comparative models for analyzing identity negotiation in contexts beyond overt colonial rule. Research on works like *Anak Semua Bangsa* by Pramoedya Ananta Toer reveals mimicry in various cultural dimensions, such as language and lifestyle, demonstrating the pervasive influence of external power dynamics even in nationalist narratives (Anantama, 2021). Additionally, studies of mimicry in short story collections by Iksaka Banu reflect how ambivalence emerges in narrative structures, suggesting that mimicry can indicate tensions between historical memory and contemporary identity formation. Although these works do not directly address child marriage, their methodologies offer valuable insights into identifying mimicry in character behavior and social practice within fiction.

The postcolonial theoretical framework itself, centered on scholars like Bhabha, posits that mimicry is not a simple replication of dominant norms but a complex negotiation that can destabilize authoritative discourse. Mimicry often exposes underlying contradictions within hegemonic structures, revealing spaces where subjects can subtly contest and reframe imposed values. This perspective aligns with the portrayal of characters in *Yuni*, where compliance with norms such as early marriage may mask internal resistance and identity negotiation. *Yuni* thus provides a fertile site for examining how mimicry operates within patriarchal and cultural power dynamics.

In summary, existing literature on mimicry in postcolonial studies highlights the concept's versatility in analyzing identity, culture, and power in narratives across genres and cultural contexts. While much research focuses on mimicry in language, hybridity, and cultural negotiation, there is a clear gap in applying this lens specifically to child marriage in literary texts. By situating *Yuni* within this emerging scholarly conversation, this study extends the application of Bhabha's mimicry to a socio-culturally significant issue, revealing how postcolonial identity negotiation shapes individual agency and societal norms. This integration contributes to broader discussions on gender, power, and representation in contemporary Indonesian literature, offering a nuanced understanding of how literary texts both reflect and critique entrenched social practices.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive methodology to analyze the phenomenon of mimicry in the context of child marriage as represented in the Indonesian novel *Yuni* by Ade Ubaidil. Qualitative methods are central in literary research because they allow for careful interpretation of language, narrative structure, character behavior, and socio-cultural meaning embedded within literary texts (Ratna, 2015; cited in related studies). The qualitative approach enables a detailed and contextualized understanding of how mimicry and identity negotiation work through textual representation, including the ambivalent relationship between individual agency and social norms.

3.1. Research Design

The research design follows a qualitative descriptive framework, which emphasizes describing textual phenomena and interpreting them within a conceptual framework rather than testing hypotheses or quantifying patterns. This design is widely used in postcolonial literary studies to examine thematic and ideological dimensions of literary works, including mimicry, hybridity, and power relations. Recent postcolonial analyses of Indonesian literature similarly employ descriptive qualitative designs to explore postcolonial concepts such as mimicry and ambivalence within narrative texts. For instance, research on *Para Priyayi* uses a hermeneutic and descriptive method to identify mimicry in language and ethical adjustment, highlighting the value of descriptive interpretation in postcolonial literary analysis (Yuliawati, 2023).

3.2. Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in postcolonial theory, particularly Homi K. Bhabha's concept of *mimicry*. According to Bhabha, mimicry involves the imitation of dominant norms by subordinated subjects in ways that are never fully identical, revealing ambivalence and potential resistance within power relations. Mimicry does not merely reproduce dominance; it exposes instability and spaces of negotiation in hegemonic structures. This theoretical lens is appropriate for analyzing how characters in *Yuni* navigate socio-cultural norms surrounding child marriage, reflecting both compliance and internal tension. Previous postcolonial research on Indonesian literary texts shows how mimicry is used to examine identity negotiations, including narrative contexts of hybrid cultural behavior and social adaptation (Yuliawati, 2023).

3.3. Sources of Data

Primary data consist of the full text of the novel *Yuni* by Ade Ubaidil, including narrative passages, dialogues, character descriptions, and scenes that portray child marriage and related social practices. These

text units are treated as representations of mimicry and socio-cultural negotiation, and serve as the basis for thematic interpretation.

In addition to the primary text, secondary data include scholarly sources on postcolonial methodology, mimicry, literary analysis techniques, and related studies published between 2019 and 2025. For example, postcolonial studies conducted on various Indonesian novels demonstrate how mimicry and hybridity are identified through textual patterns, language use, cultural practices, and character actions. These studies provide methodological and analytical precedents that inform the current research design and interpretation.

3.4. Data Collection Techniques

The primary data collection technique is close reading, involving repeated and detailed reading of *Yuni*, with careful annotation of passages relevant to mimicry, identity, and child marriage. Close reading allows the researcher to capture nuanced representations of mimicry, including linguistic and behavioral patterns that reflect negotiation between individual agency and social norms. This technique is consistent with methods used in related studies on mimicry and postcolonial themes, which prioritize textual immersion and interpretive insight (Yuliawati, 2023).

In addition to close reading, the researcher uses documentary and note-taking methods, systematically recording relevant excerpts, authorial language, narrative strategies, and contextual details that illustrate mimicry. Each identified excerpt is catalogued for subsequent coding and thematic analysis.

3.5. Data Analysis Procedure

The data analysis process in this study follows an interpretive and iterative approach that is characteristic of qualitative literary research. This approach emphasizes continuous engagement with the text, allowing the researcher to move back and forth between data and interpretation in order to achieve deeper understanding. The first stage involves data reduction and selection, in which relevant text segments are carefully chosen based on their representation of key themes such as mimicry, child marriage, gender norms, and cultural negotiation. Narrative elements that are not directly related to these core issues are set aside to maintain analytical focus. This process of reduction is essential for refining the corpus into meaningful units that can be examined in depth, thereby enhancing clarity and coherence in the analysis.

Following this, the selected data are subjected to coding and categorization. Each excerpt is systematically coded according to thematic categories, including mimicry as compliance, mimicry as ambivalence, negotiation of identity, and resistance within mimicry. This step enables the researcher to organize the data in a structured manner, facilitating comparison across different parts of the text. Through coding, patterns and relationships begin to emerge, allowing for a more nuanced understanding of how textual elements correspond to broader theoretical concepts. It also supports the identification of recurring motifs and variations in the representation of mimicry within the narrative.

The next stage involves interpretation and thematic synthesis, where the coded data are analyzed through the lens of postcolonial theory, particularly Homi K. Bhabha's concept of mimicry. In this phase, interpretation goes beyond surface-level description to connect textual evidence with its socio-cultural context. The researcher examines how characters' behaviors reflect ideological structures, as well as how mimicry operates as a strategy that embodies both adaptation and subtle resistance. This interpretive process employs descriptive and hermeneutic analytical strategies, aiming to generate rich, conceptual insights rather than numerical findings. The goal is to uncover the underlying meanings embedded within the narrative and to understand how these meanings contribute to the overall structure and message of the text.

Subsequently, the findings are integrated into a broader theoretical framework through a process of theoretical integration and argumentation. At this stage, the analysis is synthesized into a coherent narrative that explains how mimicry functions within the novel *Yuni* as a form of negotiation between individual agency and socio-cultural expectations. This integration not only consolidates the interpretive findings but also situates them within the discourse of postcolonial theory, highlighting their conceptual

significance. The researcher articulates how literary representation reflects complex power relations and cultural dynamics, thereby extending the analysis beyond mere description toward critical interpretation.

Overall, this methodology combines close reading, qualitative descriptive analysis, and theoretical interpretation within a postcolonial framework to reveal how mimicry in *Yuni* reflects and negotiates socio-cultural norms surrounding child marriage. By engaging with recent scholarly discussions on mimicry and postcolonial literary methodology, the study positions itself within contemporary academic discourse while offering both conceptual depth and contextual relevance.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Mimicry as a Survival Strategy

Based on a textual analysis of *Yuni* by Ade Ubaidil, this study finds that the practice of mimicry functions as a survival strategy for the protagonist in confronting strong social pressures related to child marriage. Mimicry is not understood as total compliance with patriarchal norms, but rather as an ambivalent form of imitation—outwardly appearing obedient while inwardly containing resistance.

First, mimicry is evident in the way Yuni responds to marriage proposals and to the community's social judgments. The pressure to marry at a young age forces Yuni to display attitudes considered "appropriate" for a village woman. In one dialogue, Yuni expresses her anxiety:

"Orang-orang mengira aku menolak lamaran karena aku merasa lebih tinggi dari mereka. Padahal aku hanya ingin sekolah lebih lama" (Ubaidil, 2020, blm. 42).

"People think I reject proposals because I feel superior to them. In fact, I just want to stay in school longer" (Ubaidil, 2020, p. 42).

This quotation shows that Yuni does not openly reject the norm of early marriage; instead, she adjusts her behavior so as not to be perceived as opposing the social order. The imitation of the image of a "proper woman" is performed to maintain her social position.

Second, mimicry appears as a strategy to avoid negative stigma. Yuni realizes that every choice she makes potentially invites certain social labels. In an inner narration, the author writes:

"Kalau aku bicara, mereka akan menertawakanku. Kalau aku diam, mereka akan menganggapku sombong. Jadi aku belajar untuk tersenyum" (Ubaidil, 2020, blm. 57).

"If I speak, they will laugh at me. If I remain silent, they will say I am arrogant. So I learn to smile" (Ubaidil, 2020, p. 57).

The act of "smiling" becomes a symbol of mimicry—a form of performative compliance that does not reflect full consent, but rather a mechanism of self-protection. Yuni imitates the expressions expected by society to reduce open conflict, without directly sacrificing her personal desires.

Third, mimicry also functions as a space for negotiating identity between personal aspirations and collective demands. Under pressure from her family and community, Yuni realizes that temporary compliance can serve as a way to delay imposed decisions. This is reflected in the following statement:

"Biarlah mereka mengira aku sedang mempertimbangkan lamaran itu, padahal aku sedang memikirkan hidupku sendiri" (Ubaidil, 2020, blm. 73).

"Let them think I am considering the proposal, while in fact I am thinking about my own future" (Ubaidil, 2020, p. 73).

4.2. Child Marriage Mimicry as a Form of Covert Resistance

The analysis of *Yuni* by Ade Ubaidil demonstrates that the practice of mimicry within the context of child marriage does not merely represent female compliance with patriarchal norms, but rather functions as a form of covert resistance. The protagonist, Yuni, performs a mode of compliance that is essentially performative, serving as a strategy to negotiate intense social pressures without engaging in overt rejection that could jeopardize her social position.

First, covert resistance is evident in the way Yuni responds to the repeated marriage proposals she receives. Instead of rejecting them directly, Yuni adopts an ambiguous stance that imitates the socially constructed image of the "obedient" woman. In the narrative, Yuni states:

“Aku tidak pernah benar-benar berkata tidak. Aku hanya meminta waktu, dan waktu itu selalu membuat mereka gelisab” (Ubaidil, 2020, blm. 39).

“I never truly said no. I only asked for time, and that time always made them uneasy” (Ubaidil, 2020, p. 39).

This quotation illustrates that mimicry operates through delay and ambiguity. Such simulated compliance becomes a subtle form of resistance to the norm of child marriage, as Yuni employs socially acceptable language and behavior to retain control over her body and future.

Second, mimicry as covert resistance is also apparent in Yuni’s response to social stigma. When society labels women who postpone marriage as arrogant or deviant, Yuni chooses to display a calming demeanor, despite its contradiction with her inner feelings. This is reflected in the following passage:

“Aku belajar mengganggu meski kepalaku menolak, karena penolakan yang keras hanya akan membuat mereka semakin berkuasa” (Ubaidil, 2020, blm. 55).

“I learned to nod even when my mind resisted, because open refusal would only give them more power” (Ubaidil, 2020, p. 55).

The act of “nodding” symbolizes ambivalent mimicry. On the one hand, it imitates obedience; on the other, it reflects an awareness that such obedience can function as a means of limiting social domination. Compliance, therefore, is no longer passive but becomes a concealed strategy of resistance.

Third, covert resistance through mimicry is clearly manifested in Yuni’s internal conflict when facing familial pressure. Yuni recognizes that the family functions as an extension of social norms that normalize child marriage. In her internal reflection, she thinks:

“Mereka ingin aku menikah agar hidupku dianggap selesai. Aku menuruti mereka di depan, tapi aku menyimpan rencanaku sendiri” (Ubaidil, 2020, blm. 71).

“They want me to marry so that my life will be considered complete. I comply in front of them, but I keep my own plans” (Ubaidil, 2020, p. 71).

This quotation underscores that mimicry enables Yuni to create a space for personal resistance. Outward compliance serves as camouflage to protect her individual aspirations, particularly her desire to continue her education.

Thus, these findings indicate that in *Yuni*, the mimicry of child marriage operates as a form of covert resistance against patriarchal domination and social pressure. This practice reveals that women are not merely passive subjects, but active agents capable of negotiating power through strategic and ambivalent compliance. Mimicry emerges as a crucial means of sustaining female agency within a social system that severely constrains life choices.

4.3. The Psychological Impact of Child Marriage Mimicry on Character Development

The analysis demonstrates that the practice of mimicry within the context of child marriage functions not only as a social strategy but also produces significant psychological consequences for the main character in Ade Ubaidil’s novel *Yuni*. The mimicry enacted by Yuni—manifested as simulated compliance with norms of early marriage—generates persistent inner pressure, identity conflict, and emotional ambivalence.

First, the psychological impact of mimicry is evident in the form of anxiety and social fear. Yuni becomes acutely aware that her attitudes and speech are constantly monitored and evaluated by the community. The pressure to present herself as a “proper” woman results in prolonged unease. This condition is illustrated in the following narrative:

“Aku takut jika mereka melihatku berbeda, mereka akan berhenti menyebut namaku dengan ramah” (Ubaidil, 2020, blm. 41).

“I am afraid that if they see me as different, they will stop calling my name kindly” (Ubaidil, 2020, p. 41).

This quotation indicates that mimicry compels Yuni to continuously regulate her self-expression in order to secure social acceptance. The fear of exclusion becomes a psychological burden that motivates her to maintain performative compliance.

Second, mimicry contributes to identity conflict and self-fragmentation. On the one hand, Yuni seeks to preserve her identity as an adolescent with aspirations for higher education; on the other hand,

she is required to perform the role of a woman prepared for marriage. This conflict is reflected in her inner monologue:

“Aku merasa seperti dua orang yang hidup dalam satu tubuh: yang satu ingin pergi jauh, yang lain harus tinggal dan menunggu” (Ubaidil, 2020, blm. 58).

“I feel like two people living in one body: one wants to go far away, the other has to stay and wait” (Ubaidil, 2020, p. 58). This statement reveals that mimicry produces psychological fragmentation. Outward compliance stands in opposition to inner desire, resulting in sustained internal tension.

Third, the impact of mimicry is also manifested in emotional exhaustion and psychological distress. The continuous performance of compliance without space for honest expression leads to mental fatigue. In one narrative passage, Yuni states:

“Aku lelah berpura-pura kuat dan baik-baik saja, sementara pikiranku penuh dengan pertanyaan yang tidak pernah boleh keluar” (Ubaidil, 2020, blm. 66).

“I am tired of pretending to be strong and fine, while my mind is full of questions that are never allowed to come out” (Ubaidil, 2020, p. 66).

This quotation underscores that mimicry is not a neutral practice; it carries psychological consequences in the form of emotional repression and mental exhaustion. Yuni must silence her internal voice in order to preserve social harmony.

Thus, the findings indicate that child marriage mimicry in *Yuni* exerts a complex impact on character psychology. Mimicry produces anxiety, identity conflict, and emotional exhaustion, while also cultivating psychological resilience as a resource for resistance. The novel ultimately affirms that social practices commonly perceived as “natural,” such as child marriage, entail profound psychological consequences for female subjects who are constrained within them.

5. CONCLUSION

The study entitled *Mimicry in Child Marriage in the Novel Yuni by Ade Ubaidil* aims to examine how the practice of mimicry is represented within the novel’s narrative and how it functions in the context of child marriage. Based on the findings of the analysis, it can be concluded that mimicry in *Yuni* does not merely reflect female characters’ compliance with social and patriarchal norms, but rather operates as a complex strategy characterized by ambivalence, identity negotiation, and covert resistance.

First, this study demonstrates that child marriage in *Yuni* is portrayed as a social practice legitimized by tradition, communal pressure, and dominant moral constructions. Within this context, the protagonist, Yuni, occupies a subaltern position that requires her to adjust to dominant norms in order to remain socially accepted. Mimicry emerges as a form of imitation of socially constructed ideals of womanhood—obedient, silent, and non-confrontational. However, this imitation is partial and never fully identical to the norms being reproduced.

Second, mimicry functions as a survival strategy. Yuni performs compliance in a performative manner to avoid social stigma, open conflict, and marginalization. Such compliance enables her to remain within the social structure without completely relinquishing her personal autonomy. In this sense, mimicry becomes an adaptive mechanism that allows the female character to survive within a social system that restricts her life choices, particularly with regard to education and her personal future.

Third, the study finds that mimicry also operates as a form of covert resistance. Yuni’s apparent compliance does not constitute an ideological acceptance of child marriage, but rather a strategy of power negotiation. Through ambiguity, delay, and simulated obedience, Yuni creates a space for personal resistance that enables her to preserve her aspirations and identity. This finding aligns with Homi K. Bhabha’s concept of mimicry, which emphasizes its ambivalent, ironic, and potentially subversive nature.

Fourth, this research underscores that the practice of mimicry has significant psychological implications for the character. Mimicry generates social anxiety, identity conflict, emotional exhaustion, and self-fragmentation resulting from the tension between personal desires and collective demands. At the same time, mimicry also fosters psychological resilience and an awareness of personal agency. Thus,

mimicry operates not only at the social level, but also profoundly shapes the internal dynamics of the female character.

Overall, this study concludes that *Yuni* represents mimicry as a complex social and psychological practice within the context of child marriage. Mimicry serves as a means of negotiating identity, power, and resistance for female characters within a patriarchal society. This research contributes significantly to contemporary Indonesian literary studies by demonstrating that women's compliance with social norms is not necessarily passive, but can function as a subtle form of strategy and resistance. Moreover, the study enriches postcolonial scholarship by highlighting the relevance of the concept of mimicry in interpreting local cultural practices such as child marriage in the context of modern Indonesia.

Ethical Approval

This study did not require formal ethical approval as it did not involve clinical interventions, vulnerable or high-risk participants, or the collection of sensitive personal data. The research was conducted in accordance with general ethical principles commonly applied in social sciences and humanities research, including respect for intellectual integrity, responsible data use, and adherence to academic honesty throughout the research process.

Informed Consent Statement

Not applicable. This study is based on textual analysis of a literary work and does not involve human participants, interviews, surveys, or direct personal data collection.

Authors' Contributions

Not applicable

Disclosure statement

The author declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this research.

Data Availability Statement

The data supporting the findings of this study consist of primary textual materials derived from the novel *Yuni* by Ade Ubaidil and relevant secondary scholarly sources. These materials are publicly available through published literary works and academic databases.

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Notes on Contributors

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Maman Qimaruzaman is a lecturer in the Management Study Program, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Pamulang. The author completed a Master's degree in Literature at Universitas Gadjah Mada and has academic interests in English for Business, applied linguistics, language ideology, power relations, and cross-cultural management in educational and professional contexts. The author was fully responsible for the conceptualization of the research, the development of the theoretical framework, data analysis, interpretation of the findings, as well as the writing and revision of the manuscript. All stages of the research and writing process were conducted independently by the author.

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