



Psychosocial Development Of The Character Maik Klingenberg In The Novel "Tschick" By Wolfgang Herrndorf

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Article History:

Accepted: 6 September 2024

Revised: 7 August 2025

Published: 9 September 2025

Abstract

This study aims to describe: 1) the psychosocial development of the main character, Maik Klingenberg, in Wolfgang Herrndorf's novel *Tschick* based on Erikson's theory, particularly the stage of identity vs. role confusion, and 2) the factors influencing Maik's identity formation, including family, social environment, and school. The research employed a descriptive qualitative method with a literary psychology approach. The primary data source was the original German edition of *Tschick* (2010). Data were collected using the reading-and-note-taking technique and analyzed through classification according to Erikson's psychosocial indicators. The findings reveal that Maik experiences an identity crisis characterized by social role confusion, feelings of alienation, and emotional instability. Through his journey with *Tschick*, Maik undergoes a process of identity exploration that includes trying new roles, developing independence, and engaging in self-reflection. Eventually, Maik reaches a more mature stage of identity formation. This research contributes to the interdisciplinary study of literature and psychology, and provides practical implications for character education, especially.

Keywords: Psychosocial Development, Adolescent Identity, Erikson, *Tschick*, Literary Psychology

INTRODUCTION

Wolfgang Herrndorf's novel *Tschick* presents an in-depth portrait of a teenager's journey through psychosocial struggles through his life experiences. The character Maik Klingenberg represents today's teenagers who face identity dilemmas, social alienation, and family disharmony, trying to find a place and meaning in their lives amidst various pressures and difficulties. His novel is included in the Bildungsroman genre, a type of literary work that tells the story of the main character's development process from adolescence to adulthood, both psychologically and socially. This depiction shows strong relevance to the psychological conditions of today's teenagers who often experience difficulties in building healthy social relationships (Santrock, 2011).

This work can also help in understanding how social and environmental experiences influence the emotional development of adolescents (Simanjuntak et al., 2024). Although literary works are unique and difficult to formulate, they can still provide boundaries and their characteristics can be recognized through the human five senses (Semi, 2012). As literary science develops, the analysis of literary works is not only studied in terms of literary factors but can also be studied through factors outside the literary work. Factors outside literature include the sociology of literature, literary psychology, and literary anthropology (Putri & Nensilanti, 2023). There are various literary works such as novels, short stories, poetry, drama, and others. One literary work that contains psychological phenomena is the novel *Tschick* by Wolfgang Herrndorf.

Fictional characters can reflect complex social conflicts, moral values, and cultural pressures (Wardianto & Khomsiyatun, 2021). These findings suggest that analyzing fictional characters is not only relevant in literary studies but also important as a means of character education and psychological reflection. Therefore, studying the character of Maik in *Tschick* is relevant in a similar context, particularly in understanding the dynamics of adolescent identity from a psychosocial perspective.

This condition is reflected in the latest empirical data, which shows that mental health problems in Indonesia for adolescents have reached an alarming level. The Indonesia-National Adolescent Mental Health Survey (I-NAMHS), the first national survey on adolescent mental health diagnoses involving 5,664 households, found that approximately 34.9% of adolescents were diagnosed with at least one mental health problem. With a population of 44.5 million adolescents aged 10-19, it is estimated that approximately 15.5 million Indonesian adolescents are classified as People with Mental Problems (ODMK) (I-NAMHS, 2023). Global data from UNICEF shows that in 2019, one in seven adolescents experienced a mental disorder, equivalent to 166 million adolescents worldwide (89 million boys and 77 million girls) (Suprapto, Andayani, & Waluyo, 2014). This condition indicates the need for alternative approaches to understanding the psychological dynamics of adolescents, where literature can play a meaningful role in understanding the complexity of adolescent identity crises.

The significance of this research on the psychosocial development of Maik Klingenberg can be examined through several fundamental perspectives. First, Herrndorf's work offers a representation of adolescent psychology that goes beyond conventional stereotypes in literature, providing a more humanistic and in-depth depiction. Second, the internal conflict experienced by Maik represents a daily challenge that many adolescents can identify with, such as feelings of loneliness and the need for recognition. A literary psychology approach can reveal the emotional dynamics of adolescent characters in literature as material for psychological reflection. A literary psychology approach can reveal the emotional dynamics of adolescent characters in literature as material for reflection on character education in schools (Candrawulandari, 2017).

To understand Maik's psychosocial development, this study draws on Erikson's theory, specifically the identity vs. role confusion stage, which is a crucial phase of adolescence. Maik's character can be analyzed using this theory, as he experiences social alienation throughout the story, struggles to find his identity, and gradually discovers who he is through his various social interactions and experiences.

Wolfgang Herrndorf's novels have been extensively researched, but most focus on sociocultural perspectives, adventure themes, or narrative style. Research by (Setiaji, 2019), for example, highlights moral values and principles in literary works but does not delve

deeper into the psychosocial aspects of adolescent characterization. Previous research conducted by Nara (2016) at Yogyakarta State University focused on analyzing the personalities of Maik and *Tschick* using Gerald Heymans' personality theory, a typology that classifies character personalities, rather than on psychosocial developmental aspects. While this research analyzed personality disorders and their causes, it did not delve deeply into the stages of adolescent identity development according to Erikson's theory. This indicates a significant gap in research that this study seeks to bridge. By analyzing Maik from a psychosocial developmental perspective, this research contributes theoretically to building an interdisciplinary approach between literary studies and adolescent developmental psychology.

This research is important because studies of *Tschick*'s novel from a literary psychology perspective, particularly using Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, are still very limited in Indonesia. This investigation will focus on how the novel's narrative influences Maik's view of identity and how this understanding of character can be used to address the challenges faced by adolescents in real life.

Using a literary psychology approach, specifically Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, this study not only analyzes how Maik's character develops psychologically but also examines how his inner conflict, social environment, and experiences influence the formation of his identity. Through this approach, this study is expected to make a significant contribution to the development of psychological literary studies and provide a deeper understanding of the psychosocial dynamics of adolescence (Nara, 2016).

This study is novel in its analytical focus and research object. Unlike previous studies that focused more on personality analysis using Heymans' theory or the study of adventure themes in *Tschick*'s novels, this study focuses on the psychosocial development of adolescent characters using Erikson's theory, specifically the identity vs. role confusion stage. Furthermore, the analytical method used combines qualitative descriptive analysis with a literary psychology approach that focuses on characters (character psychology), thus providing a more in-depth picture of the process of adolescent identity formation in literary works (Lestari, Wibowo, & Waslam, 2022).

The object of this study is contemporary German literature, which has never been specifically studied in the context of adolescent psychosocial development in Indonesia. Therefore, the results of this study are expected to provide new perspectives for the study of German literature and developmental psychology. This study is also the first to systematically analyze *Tschick*'s novel using Erikson's theoretical framework, thus contributing to the development of interdisciplinary studies between literature and adolescent developmental psychology in Indonesia.

METHOD

Research Approach

This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach with an objective approach. According to Krippendorff (Knight, 2017) this approach allows researchers to systematically analyze literary texts through the interpretation of meaning and context. In its application, the objective approach will understand the systems within literary works.

Location and Time of Research

This research was conducted at the Pematangsiantar City Public Library and the German Language Education Study Program Library at HKBP Nommensen University, Pematangsiantar. These two libraries were selected as research locations based on the availability of literature collections supporting the study of German language and literature.

Research Data

In this study, the narrative text units reflect the psychosocial development of the character Maik Klingenber in the novel *Tschick*.

Data source

The data source used in this study is the Bildungsroman novel entitled *Tschick* published in Berlin Rowohlt Verlag, Germany in 2010 by Wolfgang Herrndorf with a total of 254 pages and ISBN number 978-3-257-24100-9 with analysis covering the entire text from chapters 1 to 42. As supporting sources, this study uses the books *Identity: Youth and Crisis* (Erikson, 1968) and *Psychology of Literature* (I-NAMHS, 2023), as well as scientific journals related to adolescent development and contemporary German literature from *the Journal of Germanic Studies* (2021) and *Deutsch als Fremdsprache*,

Data collection technique

This research is a type of library research. Library research is a study conducted to obtain data from various written sources, such as books, journals, archives, and other documents to support the theoretical study of qualitative research (Moleong, Lexy J. 2017). The object of this research is the novel *Tschick* by Wolfgang Herrndorf. The technique used in this research is the reading and note-taking technique. Data collection in this study was carried out by reading the novel repeatedly and carefully, then recording the information contained in the novel for later analysis.

Research Instruments

The research instrument used in this study is the author himself (*human instrument*). The main instrument in qualitative research is the author himself (*human instrument*) who will directly go into the field, where data collection is carried out, to obtain conclusions (Hurlock, 2020). In this context, the researcher functions to select, identify, and classify data in the form of text excerpts from the novel *Tschick* by Wolfgang Herrndorf related to the psychosocial development of the character Maik Klingenber. The data found is then confirmed using the indicator guidelines for the stages of psychosocial development according to Erikson, such as *identity vs. role confusion*. Thus, this research instrument helps ensure that each data analyzed is in accordance with the relevant theoretical category, so that the research results can be presented systematically using a qualitative descriptive approach.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis technique used in this study was descriptive qualitative. This technique was used because the research data consisted of words, phrases, and sentences. The research steps are as follows.

1. A careful and thorough reading of Wolfgang Herrndorf's novel *Tschick*.
2. Translate data from German into Indonesian.
3. Data identification and classification are based on Erikson's stages of psychosocial development. The analysis will not be sequential, as in theoretical studies, but will

be arranged based on the storyline. If repetition occurs in the story, psychological aspects will still be included.

4. Describing the psychosocial dynamics of characters through a characterization approach.
5. Identifying psychosocial symbols in *identity vs. role confusion* (e.g.: car as freedom, road as a metaphor for finding identity).
6. Connecting psychosocial findings with the social conditions of adolescents, particularly in the context of difficulties in building healthy social identities and relationships.
7. Taking and understanding the values of character education from the character's experiences, such as courage, empathy, self-reflection, and psychological resilience. Drawing conclusions from the analysis that has been carried out

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Discussion of psychosocial development is crucial in understanding the personality dynamics of adolescent characters in literary works. The psychosocial development of Maik Klingenber in Wolfgang Herrndorf's novel *Tschick* is consistent with Erikson's psychosocial theory, particularly the fifth stage, *identity vs. role confusion*. This analysis outlines how Maik experiences an identity crisis, undergoes a process of identity search, and ultimately achieves a more mature identity formation, influenced by various psychosocial factors around him. Through Erikson's theoretical approach, Maik's transformation can be understood as a typical psychological journey during adolescence, where internal conflict and social interaction become catalysts for personal growth (Hoffmann, 2018).

Maik Klingenber's Identity Crisis

Social Role Confusion

Maik experiences role confusion because he doesn't know how to behave as a teenager in both school and family. He feels he doesn't have a clear position, either in class or at home. This is evident in his inability to position himself within the social structure of his peers, especially regarding his feelings for Tatjana. Maik's social role confusion is evident in the following quote.

("Until the last period and even after the report cards were handed out, I was still hoping. I was hoping it was all a mistake, that Tatjana would come up to me after the bell rang and say: «Psycho, bro, I totally forgot about you! Here's the green card!»")

Thus, the series of quotes above shows that Maik experiences profound social role confusion. He does not know how to behave to be accepted in his social environment, both at school and in friendship situations, as seen in his hope of being invited to Tatjana's party and his hesitation in facing the reality of being rejected. His doubtful internal monologue emphasizes the dilemma of whether to express his feelings or hide his disappointment. Even when he is at the party, he remains filled with uncertainty whether to adopt a hidden attitude or pretend to be relaxed, indicating that he has not yet found a clear social identity. All of this illustrates the identity crisis during the adolescent stage as described by Erikson, when individuals still struggle to find their position and role amidst social pressures. This experience then becomes the starting point for Maik to search for his identity through a journey with *Tschick*, which opens up a space for freedom and exploration beyond the social constraints that bind him.

Feelings of Social Alienation

According to Erikson, one of the main characteristics of an adolescent identity crisis is the emergence of feelings of alienation when an individual feels unaccepted in their social environment. This is experienced by Maik Klingenberg, who feels neglected by both his classmates and Tatjana, the girl he likes. His inability to gain social recognition makes him feel like he has no place in his environment. Thus, Maik's feelings of social alienation are not merely a fleeting emotional experience, but a crucial part of the adolescent identity crisis described by Erikson. His need for acceptance and recognition is not met, resulting in psychological isolation that triggers deep frustration. However, this experience also serves as a point of reflection for Maik in his search for his identity, which later encourages him to seek a space of freedom outside of restrictive social structures.

Emotional Instability

According to Erikson, adolescents often experience emotional instability during their psychosocial developmental stages because their identities are not yet mature. Emotional turmoil can emerge suddenly, manifesting as feelings of shame, confusion, anger, or passivity. Maik Klingenberg demonstrates this through various exaggerated emotional reactions when faced with social situations or family pressure. This is evident in the following quote.

„ Bevor ich ins Bett ging, klappte ich nochmal meinen Rechner auf. Ich fand vier Mails von meinem Vater, der sich beschwerte, dass ich mein Handy ausgeschaltet hatte und auch unten nicht ranging, und ich musste mir noch irgendwelche Ausreden für ihn ausdenken und erklären, dass alles super-okay war hier.“

The Search for the Identity of Maik Klingenberg

Explore New Roles through Adventure

In Erikson's theory, adolescence is a period of role exploration, where individuals try new experiences to discover their identity. Maik's journey with Tschick to Walachei provides a crucial space for this process. Beyond the pressures of family and school, Maik finds opportunities to experiment with new roles, one of which is when he is forced to drive a stolen car after an accident. This is evident in the following quote.

„Ich setzte mich hinters Steuer und erklärte Tschick, dass das nicht ging. Der Tank war halb voll, der Motor im Leerlauf, aber wenn ich nur einen Blick auf die Autobahn warf und wie die da mit zweihundert an uns vorbeirauschten, dann wusste ich, dass das nicht ging. „Ich muss dir ein Geheimnis verraten“, sagte ich. Aber nicht auf der Autobahn“

The Walachei adventure gives Maik the opportunity to step out of his comfort zone and try new roles as a driver, decision-maker, and risk-taking friend. His willingness to admit his weaknesses and try something challenging is the beginning of his maturation. This contrasts with his previous passive and confused life, signaling a shift toward a more independent and active identity (Darwanti, Fauziati, Fathoni, & Minsih, 2025).

Development of Independence and Courage

According to Erikson, one of the most important aspects of adolescent identity development is the ability to make independent decisions and to confront authority. At the beginning of the story, Maik is portrayed as passive, indecisive, and tends to avoid conflict. However, during his journey with Tschick, he begins to demonstrate independence and courage, especially when faced with difficult situations after their adventure ends. This is demonstrated in the following quote.

Self-Reflection and Introspection

The final stage in Erikson's identity formation process is often marked by the emergence of self-reflection, namely the awareness to evaluate experiences and give meaning to them. After experiencing the adventure with Tschick, Maik began to show signs of more mature introspection, one of which was when he reflected on his social relationships. Thus, Maik's introspection confirmed that he had entered a more mature stage of identity development. Awareness of his isolation, combined with an attitude of acceptance, indicated that the experience of the adventure with Tschick not only gave him momentary freedom but also triggered a process of deeper self-understanding.

The Formation of Maik Klingenberg's Character Identity

Integration of Experience and Self-Understanding

At the end of the adventure, Maik begins to integrate his new experiences into the identity he is building. This integration process is a crucial stage in adolescent identity formation, according to Erikson, where transformative experiences are not simply stored as memories but become part of a new self-concept. This signifies that Maik has passed the stage of role confusion and is moving toward identity *achievement*.

Formation of Meaningful Relationships

In Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, adolescents are in the identity *versus* role confusion stage. This stage is characterized by the need to establish a strong identity through meaningful social relationships. Adolescents' success in establishing healthy relationships strengthens their sense of identity, while failure can lead to feelings of alienation and role confusion. This is evident in Maik Klingenberg's experience through his friendship with Tschick and his brief interaction with Isa.

Relationship with Tschick

Maik's relationship with Tschick is one of the most significant aspects of Maik's identity formation. Before meeting Tschick, Maik is described as a lonely, insecure teenager with no close friends. Tschick's presence in his life is a crucial turning point, allowing Maik to explore new roles, experience social acceptance, and build courage to face the world. This friendship is unique because it is based on unconditional acceptance and freedom of expression, something Maik rarely finds within his family or school (Daniels, 2016).

The Beginning of Friendship

The friendship between Maik and Tschick begins with an unexpected and chaotic encounter at school. Maik, who often feels isolated and lonely, especially after his old friend Paul moves away and he has no close friends at Gymnasium, finds Tschick different and interesting. Tschick, with his "Assi" appearance and unusual behavior, immediately catches Maik's attention. Maik himself admits that he can't immediately like Tschick. This is shown in the following quote.

„Ich konnte Tschick von Anfang an nicht leiden. Keiner konnte ihn leiden. Tschick war ein Assi, und genau so sah er auch aus.“

(Chapter 9, Page 50)

. Adventure Together

After striking up a friendship, Maik and Tschick embark on an adventure together that becomes the centerpiece of their journey and the development of Maik's identity. This adventure is not only a physical journey across vast territories, but also an emotional and social one that opens up new horizons for both of them.

Their journey begins with the theft of their Lada Niva, their primary vehicle. This moment marks Tschick's courage and spontaneity, as he encourages Maik to escape the monotony and pressures of home and school.

During their journey, they faced various challenges, ranging from technical issues and risky situations to interactions with strangers. One particularly tense moment occurred when they had to cross a fragile wooden bridge.

Conflict and Resolution

Maik and Tschick's friendship isn't always smooth sailing. Their differing personalities – Tschick's spontaneous and bold personality versus Maik's cautious and timid personality – often create tension. For example, when faced with risky situations, like crossing a fragile wooden bridge or facing a stranger while driving, Maik feels anxious and hesitant, while Tschick encourages him to continue.

This tension becomes a crucial learning moment for Maik. He begins to understand his own limits, learns to face his fears, and makes bold decisions. Tschick, on the other hand, learns to appreciate Maik's caution and adjusts his actions to keep both of them safe. Another example is when they must navigate uncertain routes or face the consequences of Tschick's spontaneous actions; Maik slowly begins to express his opinions and participate in decision-making.

The Impact of Friendship on Maik's Identity

Maik's friendship with Tschick significantly influenced the formation of his identity as a teenager. Through his experiences with Tschick, Maik learned to express himself, face his fears, and discover a courage he hadn't previously possessed. Their adventures, from spontaneous car trips to risky situations, gave Maik the opportunity to step out of his comfort zone and experience the world more broadly.

Furthermore, the conflicts and resolutions that arise during the journey enable Maik to develop independence, empathy, and decision-making skills. He learns to recognize his own limits, adapt to others, and face challenges responsibly. All of these experiences contribute to the integration of positive aspects into his identity, so that Maik no longer feels isolated or insignificant (Candrawulandari, 2017).

This friendship also provided Maik with social and emotional validation, feeling accepted and valued. Tschick's unconditional acceptance and warm interactions with Isa helped him internalize the positive experiences as part of his identity. According to Erikson's theory, successfully establishing meaningful relationships like this helps adolescents reduce role confusion and strengthen a stable sense of identity.

Interaction with Isa

Maik's interaction with Isa was a brief but memorable social experience that contributed to the formation of his identity. While not as long as the adventure with Tschick, this relationship provided a new emotional dimension, fostering courage, openness, and closeness. Isa accepted Maik without prejudice, encouraged him to take small risks, and demonstrated that solidarity can emerge even between strangers.

One pivotal moment is when Isa asks Maik to cut his hair. This request forces Maik to step out of his comfort zone, face discomfort, and take responsibility for the actions entrusted to him. This moment is illustrated in the following quote.

This moment demonstrates a warm emotional bond , where Maik learns to adapt his actions to the wishes of others, read expressions and emotions, and manage tension in new situations. Through this interaction, Maik gains experience in trust, courage, and emotional openness , which are crucial elements in the formation of adolescent identity. Both quotes, although from the same moment, highlight different aspects of the interaction: the urge to act and emotional closeness , thus providing a richer and more in-depth analysis.

Isa's Brave Side

Isa's bold and spontaneous character is a key aspect of her interactions with Maik. She demonstrates courage in making decisions and expressing herself without fear of judgment, such as asking Maik to cut her hair and demonstrating an open attitude during their short trip (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005).

Isa's courage not only highlights her independence but also positively influences Maik . Through observing Isa, Maik learns that being confident and independent is an important part of adolescent identity. Isa provides a concrete example of how someone can act assertively, openly, and maintain social relationships with others.

This influence is evident in Maik's development, as he begins to gain more confidence, express himself boldly, and understand the importance of openness in social interactions. In other words, Isa's courage becomes a catalyst for Maik's psychosocial growth , helping him adjust to others and develop a more mature identity.

Separation and Emotional Bonds

The moment of farewell between Maik and Isa left a deep impression on Maik, despite their brief interaction. This farewell emphasized that social relationships don't have to be long-lasting to have a significant impact on a teenager's identity development.

The emotional bonds formed during the haircut and other brief interactions gave Maik a sense of trust, closeness, and appreciation for others . He learned that solidarity and openness can exist even between strangers, and this experience broadened Maik's understanding of the value of interpersonal relationships.

Psychosocially, this experience supports Maik's identity development by enriching his emotional and social dimensions. Although brief, the interaction with Isa plays a significant role in shaping his identity, emphasizing the values of courage, openness, and empathy as part of Maik's journey toward a more mature adolescent identity.

Formation of Personal Value System

After experiencing various experiences with Tschick and Isa, Maik begins to develop a more mature personal value system , particularly regarding authenticity, honesty, and loyalty . This process marks a crucial stage in his identity development, as Maik begins to define the life principles that will guide his future decisions and actions. One of the most eye-opening moments for Maik comes from Tschick's statement about Isa and Tatjana. , especially in his friendship with Tschick.

Factors Influencing Maik's Psychosocial Development

Family Factors

Family factors are a fundamental aspect influencing an individual's psychosocial development, including Maik's in this novel. In Maik's context, although there are no explicit quotes describing his family's circumstances, an analysis of the family interactions

and dynamics depicted in the narrative reveals significant disharmony and a lack of emotional support.

First, Maik's relationship with his parents tends to be cold and emotionally detached. Maik's parents are described as preoccupied with their own personal affairs and fail to adequately address Maik's psychological needs. This situation causes Maik to feel isolated and lonely within his own family environment. In Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, warm and responsive family support is crucial in developing self-confidence and identity during adolescence. The absence of such support can lead to feelings of insecurity and low self-esteem, which Maik experiences (Dar, 2022).

Second, the lack of effective communication between Maik and his parents reinforces the existing emotional distance. Maik rarely has the opportunity to express his feelings and thoughts openly within the family environment, so he tends to seek recognition and acceptance outside the family, particularly through his friendship with Tschick. This indicates that the family, as the primary social system, is unable to meet Maik's affective needs, which has implications for his psychosocial development.

Social Factors

Social factors play a crucial role in Maik's psychosocial development. His peer group and social interactions provide experiences that strengthen his identity, courage, and emotional understanding. His friendship with Tschick and brief interaction with Isa are prime examples of how social factors shape Maik's psychosocial development.

His friendship with Tschick gave Maik a space to express himself, feel accepted, and feel valued, something he had rarely felt before in his family or school environment.

School and the educational environment are among the factors influencing Maik's psychosocial development. The school environment provides a social context in which Maik interacts with peers, teachers, and academic norms. School experiences shape social skills, self-confidence, and adaptation to social rules.

School/Educational Institution Factors

In the novel, Maik is depicted as a teenager who doesn't stand out at school, often feeling ignored or unappreciated by his peers. This makes him vulnerable to feelings of loneliness and role confusion. However, school also provides Maik with opportunities to learn to understand social dynamics, assess others, and express himself through everyday interactions.

In addition, school serves as a setting for peer encounters and self-comparison, which encourages Maik to develop a personal identity and value system. Although the influence of school is not as strong as his friendship with Tschick or his interactions with Isa, it is still significant in shaping Maik's social awareness and adaptability (Nursyahbani, Uktafiani, & Kurniawan, 2023).

Personal and Psychological

Personal and psychological factors play a crucial role in Maik's character development throughout the story. Initially, Maik is portrayed as passive, lacking in self-confidence, and prone to feelings of anxiety and isolation. This is evident when Maik finds himself in stressful situations, such as at the police station. He feels so helpless and frightened that he experiences physical reactions that indicate a high level of anxiety, as depicted in the narrative. Overall, Maik's personal and psychological factors, initially characterized by anxiety, insecurity, and a search for identity, develop significantly through his experiences and social interactions. His journey with Tschick is a pivotal moment that helps Maik

discover courage, independence, and a more mature self-identity, while also establishing a healthier psychosocial foundation.

Psychosocial Symbolism in the Novel

Cars as a Symbol of Freedom and Exploration

In *Tschick's novel* , a stolen Lada car serves as a symbol of freedom and exploration for Maik and Tschick. The car is not just a means of transportation, but a medium that allows them to escape the constraints of society, family, and the restrictive school environment. With the car, they embark on a physical journey that is also a journey of self-discovery and identity formation.

The worn-out and problematic Lada reflects the two teenagers' immature and uncertain psychological and social conditions. However, this car symbolizes rebellion against the norms and rules that have bound them. Through this journey in the stolen car, Maik and Tschick can explore the vast and unpredictable outside world, opening up opportunities for them to experience true freedom and discover their identities. This quote explicitly illustrates the symbolism of the car as a means of freedom and exploration.

Road Trip as a Metaphor for Self-Discovery

In *Tschick's novel* , Maik and Tschick's physical journey through the German countryside serves as a powerful metaphor for Maik's inner journey toward maturity and self-understanding. This road trip is not simply a geographical journey, but a symbol of the psychological and social exploration Maik undergoes in his search for identity and meaning in life.

The journey, filled with challenges and uncertainty, reflects Maik's psychosocial dynamics as he undergoes transformation. Through the experience of facing obstacles, interacting with various characters, and stepping out of his comfort zone, Maik learns to understand himself more deeply and develops courage and independence. For example, as they traverse various landscapes, from cities and villages to mountains and forests, this illustrates the stages in the process of discovering identity, which are not always smooth and full of twists and turns. This is demonstrated in the quote

"Walachai" as a Symbol of Unclear Goals and Limitless Exploration

Maik and Tschick's journey to "Walachai" in *Tschick's novel* is not just a physical journey, but also a symbol of the search for identity and self-exploration . This uncertain destination reflects the uncertainty of adolescents' search for identity , where teenagers often lack a clear direction in life, yet are nonetheless driven to explore the world and new experiences.

Walachai symbolizes freedom and limitless possibilities , where Maik and Tschick are free from social norms, family pressures, and school routines. This journey toward a vague goal opens up unexpected discoveries , both emotional and social, and in the form of self-knowledge. For example, Maik learns courage, independence, and the value of friendship through interactions with Tschick and the people they meet along the way.

From a psychosocial perspective, the journey to Walachai emphasizes that the process of exploration is more important than the end goal itself . The ambiguity of the destination gives Maik the opportunity to evaluate personal values, understand his own desires, and form a more authentic identity. Thus, Walachai serves as a symbol of a dynamic and potentially fulfilling self-discovery , depicting the transformative experiences of adolescents in the process of identity construction.

Character Education Values from Maik Development

Maik's experiences in *Tschick's* novel not only shape his identity but also contain character education values applicable to adolescent learning contexts. These values emerge from Maik's social interactions, adventures, and personal reflections throughout the story.

Courage and Risk Taking

Maik's journey with *Tschick* pushes him out of his comfort zone and confronts fears, both physical and emotional. Moments like crossing fragile bridges or facing uncertain situations demonstrate that courage can be developed through real-life experiences. This value teaches adolescents to face challenges with courage and a measured attitude .

Independence and Responsibility

Maik's adventures require him to make his own decisions and take responsibility for his actions , such as learning to drive independently and navigating the risks of travel. This process strengthens Maik's ability to take initiative, evaluate consequences, and become an independent person .

Empathy and Social Acceptance

Maik's interactions with *Tschick*, Isa, and the people they meet teach him the importance of understanding others' feelings and building authentic relationships . Maik learns that solidarity, acceptance, and honesty are the foundations of healthy relationships, enriching adolescents' social and psychosocial skills.

Self-Reflection and Introspection

Throughout his journey, Maik frequently reflects on his own experiences and feelings , including loneliness, fear, and joy. This introspective ability helps Maik understand his personal values, integrate his experiences, and develop a more mature identity .

Psychological Resilience in Facing Crisis

Maik faced various psychological challenges , including social isolation, family pressure, and risky situations during his travels. These experiences taught him the importance of psychological resilience , the ability to remain calm, adapt, and persevere in the face of adversity, which is a crucial part of adolescent character development.

Freud's Psychoanalysis on Maik's Character

From Freud's psychoanalytic perspective, human personality is divided into three main components: the id , the ego , and the superego . These three aspects are evident in Maik's psychosocial development, particularly in his adventures and social interactions.

ID

The id is the part of the personality that contains instinctual drives, desires, and the pursuit of pleasure. In Maik, the id is seen in the unconscious drive for attention and recognition, as well as the spontaneous desire for adventure and freedom without considering the risks.

One manifestation of Id's affection for Maik is his fantasies about Tatjana during their travels. Maik constantly imagines that Tatjana sees them and feels the same happiness, indicating a strong desire for acceptance and attention.

Ego

The ego is the rational aspect that balances the id's impulses with reality and risk. In Maik, the ego manifests itself in the ability to think logically , adapt to social environments , and make practical decisions in challenging situations.

One manifestation of Ego in Maik is seen in his ability to solve practical problems logically, such as when they ran out of gas and he remembered a simple way to get gas from another car that he learned from his childhood book.

Superego

The superego is the aspect of personality that represents moral values, social norms, and self-ideals. It functions as a controller of behavior to ensure it conforms to moral and ethical rules. In Maik, the superego manifests itself through feelings of guilt, shame, a desire to correct mistakes, moral conflict, and the ideal of leaving a meaningful mark.

One manifestation of the Superego in Maik is seen in his feelings of guilt towards his mother due to his actions which were considered to have made the situation worse. Balancing risk and reality, while the superego guides morality and value judgments. The combination of these three aspects allows Maik to develop an identity, value system, and self-reflective abilities , in line with Erikson's *identity vs. role confusion stage*.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the psychosocial development of Maik Klingenber in Wolfgang Herrndorf's novel Tschick using Erikson's psychosocial theory, it can be concluded that Maik experiences significant developmental dynamics. At the beginning of the story, Maik is in a state of identity crisis characterized by confusion about social roles, feelings of alienation, and emotional instability. He feels he has no place in either his school or family environment. This shows that the identity vs. role confusion stage as proposed by Erikson occurs clearly in Maik's life.

Maik's search for identity began to take shape when he decided to travel with Tschick. This experience gave him the opportunity to step out of his comfort zone, explore new roles, and learn to make independent decisions. Through this journey, Maik gradually discovered the courage, independence, and self-confidence he had previously lacked.

Maik's identity formation becomes increasingly apparent as he begins to take risks, manage his emotions, and take a firm stand in difficult situations. This change is influenced by several factors, including a less than harmonious family environment, alienation at school, and interactions with Tschick, who provides emotional support and a space for expression. This entire process demonstrates that adolescent identity development is heavily influenced by social experiences and support from the surrounding environment. Tschick's novel clearly depicts how an adolescent's psychosocial journey can lead to personality transformation toward a more mature identity.

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