

# **The Love Affection of Erin Gruwell's Character in *Freedom Writer* Movie: A Structural Formalist Approach**

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## **Abstract**

Love is an emotion of strong affection and personal attachment which is done by human to each other such as sacrifice, empathy, attention, affection, help, etc. It is not something that an individual forces, but something that happens naturally. There were four kinds of love such as Love affection, Friendship love, Eros love, and Love of God. This study aimed at showing Erin Gruwell's love affection in *Freedom Writer Film*. It is done by establishing two objectives. The first is analyzing love affection of Erin Gruwell in *Freedom Writer* film, and the second is analyzing both of positive and negative consequences of Erin Gruwell's love affection for her students. The researcher used structural formalist approach of literature in which it was used to analyze the intrinsic elements of literature. Intrinsic element is an element that built literature itself such as character and characterization, theme, plot, setting, etc. In this study, the researcher only focused in analyzing character and characterization and also the consequences of Erin Gruwell's love affection. The researcher used document and analyzed as the instrument. The result of the study concluded as follows; Erin Gruwell's love affection appeared in care, responsibility, knowledge, and respect to her students. To establishing her enormous love affection to her students, she got the consequences include for herself or others people around her. Her love affection could give positive consequences for the students. Nevertheless, it also brought negative consequences for herself and people around her such as almost the senior teachers hated her and her husband divorced her.

*Keywords: Love affection, Film Freedom Writer, Structural Formalist Approach, Erin Gruwell*

## **Introduction**

Film is one of the examples for those people who want to take value about human life through literary works. Recently, the most film makers created a movie only focused on its grandeur of the film itself without answering social issues that occurs in the real life. Actually a good film is a film that can answer social issues around us. Many values were gained by understanding characterization through the main character. One of the values that could be learnt is love affection. All people had the ability to give love affection and they need to receive it. Love appeared when it meets with four elements such as care, responsibility, respect, and knowledge (Fromm, 1956: 26).

Nowadays, there had been a lot of bad news about losing love affection between each others. One of the examples is from educational field. Recently, in

Indonesia, violence happened between teacher and student. In conducting this study, the researcher analyze about the four elements of love affection and the consequences of Erin Gruwell's love affection for her students in *Freedom Writer* movie because by giving enormous love affection to the students, she could change her students attitudes to be better. Based on the explanation above lead the researcher conducted a research under the title **“The Love Affection of Erin Gruwell's Character in Freedom Writer Movie: structural formalist approach”**

## **Research Method**

In this study, the researcher used qualitative research as the design. Qualitative research is concerned with developing explanations of social phenomena. It aimed to help understanding the social world in which we live and it is concerned with the social aspects of our world. It deals with the data in form of words and picture than statistics. To explain the phenomena, the researcher used structuralism formalist approach in which explain about the intrinsic element of literature and this study focused on analyzing the characterization of the main character in a movie.

Source of the data was taken from a movie by the title *Freedom Writer* directed by Richard LaGravenese in 2007. The data was collected by using script and scene belonged to Erin Gruwell as the main character in *Freedom Writer* film that contained about the four elements of love affection and the consequences of it both of positive and negative. For procedure of collecting the data, the researcher did an analyzing by watching and understanding movie to get data, used script to make an understanding easily, and selecting the proper data with the theory. For the data analysis, the researcher identified through the dialogue and the scene from the movie that shows love affection. Then, the researcher classified the data depend on love affection appears from Erin Gruwell. In interpreting data, the researcher interpreted the data related to the problem statement equalled with the theories. For the final step, the researcher made a conclusion by collecting conversation and scene that representation of Erin Gruwell's love affection and the consequences.

## **Review of Related Literature**

Literature represent and reflect of human's life. It has two elements both of intrinsic element, and extrinsic element. Intrinsic element can be found inside the story. It consists of the character, plot, setting, moral value, etc. Extrinsic element can be found outside the story. It is the real information which supports and surrounds the story itself. It consists of the author, inspiration, environment around, life experiences, the world experience, etc. Both of the elements are used to make up literary work. This study focused on analyzing the main character in a film. According to Abrams (2009: 42) character is the person represented in a story, who are construed by the reader as possessing particular moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities by inferences from what the persons say and their distinctive ways of saying dialogue and from what they do. Every character has their own personality. This study focused on Erin Gruwell's personality as the

main character in *Freedom Writer* movie. She had various personalities one of them is love affection. She had enormous love affection. Affection is the kind of love that leaves people feeling close, safe and cared for because it can be said as a sort of social interaction between people. Love affection almost slinks through human's lives because almost anyone can become an object of affection. Love affection is extends far beyond relation of mother and young. Affection is the humblest love (Lewis, 1960: 56). This love is warm comfortableness, this satisfaction in being together, it takes in all sorts of object. It ignores the barriers of age, sex, class and education. Love affection must be an ingredient in all healthy personal relationships. It is a give and take sequence, human give love affection, and in return they get affection. Love affection can be kept in heart for someone. Taking care of someone, helping someone in his thick and thin, or simply understanding someone's feeling can be interoperated as love affection. Helping someone socially or any sort of social help is also said to be love affection. Love affection appeared since it meet with four element such as care, respect, knowledge, and, responsibility. The researcher used three previous studies which had some similarities and differences.

### **Finding and Discussion**

In this part, the researcher presented the data analysis about love affection which was appeared in Erin Gruwell as the main character. Love affection had four elements equalled with Fromm theory. Fromm (1956) stated love affection appeared in four kind element such as responsibility, knowledge, respect, and care.

As a teacher, Erin had a totality in giving love affection to her students. She did good responsibility to her students who sometimes not all teachers were able to do it. Responsibility is a denote duty. It is an entirely voluntary act for the others' need. Gruwell tried to give the best in teaching learning process in order to she can change her students' behaviour. She had a responsibility in teaching process so she gave a unique method in teaching. She also gave much effort in teaching. Furthermore, she did much voluntary actions to make her students are able to get better education and they could be better students.

People need having interaction with each other. A good interaction can build a good communication. A good interaction occurs when people could understand each other. It can be said that every human should have a deeper understanding in someone's personality, habit, problem, etc.

Human has to appreciate each other's when doing interaction in environment. Respect means that the concern that the other person should grow and unfold as they are. People may not exploit each other because human are free to be themselves. There is no one who allowed to control someone's life. Respect is able to be done by everyone. According to Fromm (1956: 28) respect exists only on the basis of freedom, it implies the absence of exploitation. Gruwell could be a good listener and she appreciated her students. In this term, a few teachers can be what Gruwell's done because being a good listener is not easy. When a teacher is able to be a good listener, student will feel they are appreciated.

By having a care means that people help others and it can make pleased to others. If people do not have care toward others, they will not have affection for each other. Caring for others can be seen from someone's sensitivity to the others need and the ability to understand other people. The sense of care is our concern for the circumstances of others. Everyone feel happy when other cares to them. Many things done by Gruwell is her concern for her students. Without the expectation of reward from anyone, she strives to provide the best for her students even though she must find many obstacles to show her cares. So, by establishing all elements, Gruwell could change her students behaviour.

Every human being wants to be loved. With the exception of some people with personality disorders, everyone wants to be loved. When they know that they are loved, is indescribable. People have a need for intimate relationships, love, affection, and belonging and will seek to overcome feelings of aloneness and alienation. It's almost a beautiful thing to think about, to love someone so strongly that they just cannot imagine one's existence or life without them. In establishing love affection, it also can bring some effect for people around because everything people do, it can bring every consequences. In general, love affection can carry happiness for the whole people in the world. Unfortunately, love affection also can convey sadness for other people even the dispatcher of love affection itself. For example, Gruwell can create happiness and sadness for people around her by establishing her love affection for her students.

In the next stage researcher discussed the finding of the study. Based on the research problems in chapter one and the findings presented above, there were two discussion points. The first was the element of Erin Gruwell's love affection. In general, people talk about love, they should think it's for husband or wife. However, Lewis (1960) divided the four types of love one of them is the love affection. Love affection is a love that does not need a sexual desire inside and it is almost done by parents to the children, teacher to the students, etc. The researcher chose to explain the love affection between teachers to students through four elements of love such as care, respect, responsibility, and knowledge.

The second problem statement in the chapter one is the consequences of conflict happen to Erin Gruwell to establish her love affection for her students in *Freedom Writer* film. Erin Gruwell did many things in her life. it gave some consequences for the people around her. It gave positive consequence for her students because all her students can change to be better. But out of Gruwell's mind, her love affection to her students also brought some negative consequences for her life. She was divorced by her husband because she did not have more time for him. Gruwell was also hated by the senior teacher in her school because they did not agree with Gruwell's teaching method in the class.

## **Conclusion**

The conclusion for each problems based on the finding and discussion related with script and scene in *Freedom Writer* film was the researcher found the four elements love belonged to Erin Gruwell as the main character. The second was the researcher found both of the positive consequences and negative

consequences of Erin Gruwell's love affection which influenced other people around her.

### **Suggestion**

For the next study, the researcher suggests that the next researcher can apply another theory to analyze about love affection or it can also discuss about the other kinds of loves proposed by Lewis in *The Four Love* such as the love affection, friendship love, eros love, and love of God because every kinds of love has a different meaning. For the reader especially the teacher, this study can help them to be a good teacher. Being a teacher should have four elements of love such as respect, knowledge, care, and responsibility in increasing the students' ability.

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