STRUCTURALISM ANALYSIS OF FORREST GUMP

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ABSTRACT


Key Words: strukturalisme, analisis, sastra

I. INTRODUCTION

There are numerous literary theories such as: formalistic, structuralism, deconstructive, and psychological that are applied in literary research. Those theories help the literary researcher to analyze and bring a work to fruition. This article however, will unfortunately be limited only to structuralism theory. It only serves illustration of how literary data might be analyzed.

At first glance, structuralism might appear to be simply the enlargement of formalism project. Instead of focusing on the formal that create the experience of a particular work, structuralism aspired to deal as Eagelton (1982) says, “with structures and more particularly with examining the general laws by which they work”.

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Structuralism is naturally attracted to charts and diagrams because these are helpful in reducing the complexity of a text to some understandable pattern or structure, which can be compared to other patterns or their transmutation or absence. In analyzing a play or drama, for example, structuralism researcher likes to trace the plot as a chart of rising action and falling action.

Such a structure of rising and falling action, however, can rarely be applied to poetry. In poetry, it is recommended to see the structure as a sequence of rising intensity of tone and falling intensity of tone rather than of arising and falling action, since in most cases the structure of poem does not involve any narrative action. Analogous to a prose structure, a poetic one might start with an incentive moment which could be defined as the poems initial pressure of emotion or its initial set of awareness of a certain situation. Then the reader may feel this intensity of emotion rising to a climax before falling to a lower pitch of intensity and finally concluding in resolution of emotion.

A structuralism analysis of the plot of a novel or drama has been a standard practice for a long time, but it is curious to notice that somehow literary researchers hardly ever apply this method on a poem. They probably feel that most poems, except narrative poetry, would not yield as clear a structure as a novel.

In this article, the genre that will be analyzed is in the form of a play. That play is performed in a movie in about 90 minutes' duration. This film is based on the novel Forrest Gump written by an American author, Winston Groom. This film tells about the adventure and the journey of an idiot man named Forrest Gump. His simple mind landed him in the center of nearly every major event of the past several decades in The United States.
II. THE SYNOPSIS

The setting of this film was started in 1970s until 1980s. In this film Forrest Gump was described as an idiot savant. Even though his IQ was only 75, but he had several capabilities that exceed his intellectual grade such as running, ping pong player, football player, hero of Vietnam’s war and a tycoon entrepreneur. He was born in Greenbow, Alabama where the majority of society was Negro or Black American. Gump’s family was a single parent. His father had died and his mother was unemployed and only got money from the boarders who lived in their house.

In this film, Gump had a best friend named, Jenny. She was always on his side. Whenever Gump had disturbance from his naughty friend. Beside, was Gump who had problem because of his stupidity, Jenny also had her own problem of sexual harassment from her father. That is why she was really afraid to go home and prefer to spend much of her time with Gump. They became friends until they were in university. Even though Gump was an idiot but he was so lucky because he could graduate from university. He can do many games such as football and ping pong, and his abilities made him meet Presidents Kennedy and Nixon. After he graduated from university, somebody offered him to join the career in army. He got so many respects from his chief because of his brilliant’s answer and ability to use weapons. But actually he only answered according to his point of view without much thinking. He also inspired John Lennon to make a new song entitled ‘imagine’.

Gump became famous person after his several appearances in television and met several American Presidents of his achievement. Many businessmen wanted him to be the icon of their company. He got much money from shrimp business. He also got so many followers in running without reason.
In the end of this movie, Gump went to Savannah to meet Jenny and what a surprise he found her with a little boy which is his son. He was really happy when she told him that little Forrest is one of the smartest students in his class. They lived together in Alabama as a happy family. Finally, they were married but not so long after she died in the age of thirty-seven because of uncured disease.

III. STRUCTURALISM ANALYSIS OF FORREST GUMP

In analyzing a novel or a play there are many steps as follows according to Structuralism Analysis. Here is the generic structure of structuralism analysis.

- **Incentive Moment**
- **Rising Action**
- **Climax**
- **Falling Action**
- **Resolution**

Incentive moment is the starting point in a story. It is the initial incident to start the action. After that, the play enters the rising action in a series of conflicts. They are, to mention the major ones. The highest point in the rising action presents the climax. After the climax, there is a fast falling action. Finally it is which ended in resolution.

In this discussion, the writer wants to analyze the structuralism approach from two sides, of characters Forrest Gump and Jenny. Because there are so many facts that need to convey on both sides and this will clarify each one’s role in that movie.
1. STRUCTURALISM ANALYSIS FROM FORREST GUMP’ SIDE

a. Incentive Moment
Gump met Jenny on the school bus for the first time when they were in elementary school. She is the only person who wants to sit beside him because everybody knows Gump is an idiot. Her kindness of giving a seat to him made a good impression on Gump’s mind.

b. Rising Action
Gump always got disturbance from his friend because of his stupidity and was Jenny always on his side. She always said to him to run as fast as he could, and because of her suggestion Gump became a good runner. He could enter university because of his ability in running in football game.

c. Climax
After he joined the army, then Gump was sent to Vietnam. He was so sad because of course he could not meet Jenny for a long time. He also thought that he could not see her anymore if he was not safe from that war in Vietnam.

d. Falling Action
Returning from Vietnam, Gump realized that he fell in love with Jenny and he searched her everywhere. He wanted to see her and expressed his feeling that he loved Jenny very much.
e. Resolution

Gump was so sad of Jenny’s death because he really loved her, but he was happy of being the father of a smart boy.

2. STRUCTURALISM ANALYSIS FROM JENNY’ SIDE

a. Incentive moment

Jenny always had a chat with Gump. They spent much of their time together, because he was the only friend that accompanied her away from her father. Sometimes when the night came she went to Gump’s house and stayed there for a night to avoid her father’s shameful attitude.

b. Rising Action

Jenny and Gump became friend until university. Jenny always gave support to Gump in his every activity, especially when he went to Vietnam. Even though Jenny had problems of her own life, but she still cared of Gump. She did not want anybody to hurt him.

c. Climax

Although Jenny knew that she had done many negative activities such as free sex, drunk of the alcohols, drug, etc. she could not avoid those. She was so suffered so much from one place to the others. She was so desperate and intended to commit suicide by jumping from a hotel, but she realized that it would not solve her problems.

d. Falling Action

Jenny thought that her life was unstable. Then she came to Gump’s house. She felt comfortable to stay in his house. They
lived together for some time, but her unstable life returned back. She decided to go again, run away from Gump without any reason.

e. Resolution

During her escape from one place to the other, her life from one man to another, Jenny realized that she felt safe beside Gump. She thought that Gump was the only person who really loved her. He also gave her a nice kid. She then decided to accept his proposal last time. They got married and lived together for some time as a happy family. But unfortunately the happiness did not last long, she died of uncured diseases.

IV. CONCLUSION

From that story the writer may conclude that Forrest Gump was a lucky person because he could graduate from university. Even though he was idiot he got natural talent which was not possessed by normal people. It can be seen from his ability in running, ping pong, fix the weapons, save his friends in Vietnam’s war, etc. Besides that, he could meet three different American Presidents (Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon) in term of giving honor of his special abilities. He also inspired John Lennon to make a new song entitled ‘imagine’ which was very famous around the world. He also became a successful tycoon entrepreneur.

Talking about the moral value, the writer thinks that everybody gets his own destiny. God gives people with good and bad side of life. We can not judge somebody to be good or bad person forever. We have to maintain every gift from God to be better and better, because nobody is perfect in this world.
REFERENCES


