

**GOD’S LOVE IN EMILY DICKINSON’S
“GOD GAVE A LOAF TO EVERY BIRD”**

By AchmadGhaniyNuurrochman

Advisor: Christina Resnitriwati

*English Department, Faculty of Humanity, Diponegoro University
Jalan Prof. Sudarto, S.H., Tembalang Semarang 50275, Telepon: (024)
76480619, Fax: (024) 7463144, Web: www.fib.undip.ac.id*

ABSTRACT

This study examines Emily Dickinson’s “God Gave a Loaf to Every Bird”, which talks about love, life, and happiness. The purpose of this study is to find out God’s love in the poem. The method used in this paper is the intrinsic and extrinsic approach. The intrinsic elements, such as diction and imagery, are used to get the deeper meaning of the poem. The second one is describe the mutual love between the speaker and God through the extrinsic elements, focuses on the speaker’s perspective, maturity and life experience based on the theory of love by Erich Fromm concerning on Love of God aspects. The result shows that the speaker of the poem expresses her feelings while giving the other creature a pleasure, besides the speaker of the poem is categorized as a religious person who always grateful for what she owned.

Keyword: God, God’s love, crumb, believe, intrinsic elements (diction, imagery), theory of love

A. INTRODUCTION

One of the most familiar literary works is poetry because it usually represents the human life in a real life. Poetry is a kind of literary work which contains an essential message. Perrine in his book *Sound and Sense: An Introduction to Poetry Third Edition* says that “poetry might be defined as a kind of languages that says more and says it more intensely than does ordinary language” (1982:3). From the statement above, we can conclude that every word in a poem always has deep and meaningful message which the author wants to share to the readers. The writer uses the poem Emily Dickinson’s “God Gave a Loaf to Every Bird” as the object of this paper. The poem tells about life and love. In this research the writer will limit the discussion to make easier when analyze the poem, in this paper the writer focuses on the intrinsic and extrinsic elements.

In intrinsic elements, the writer focuses on the use of diction and imagery while in extrinsic elements the writer focuses on The God's loves contained in the poem. The objectives of the study are to get the deeper meaning of the poem by analyze the intrinsic elements and to describe the mutual love between the speaker and God in the poem "God Gave a Loaf to Every Bird".

B. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

1. Intrinsic Elements

a. Diction

X.J. Kennedy in his book *Introduction to Fiction, Poetry and Drama* says that "poem state ideas, to be sure and sometimes that the ideas are invaluable, and yet the most impressive ideas in the world will not make a poem unless its word are selected and arranged with loving art" (1978: 440). From the statement above, it can be concluded that the selection of words in the poem is important, because poem is made by not only ideas but also the words. The selection of words in the poem can be called as diction. There are two parts of diction, which are: denotation and connotation. A Denotation is a dictionary meaning while connotation is a word that has one more meaning.

b. Imagery

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 8th Edition imagery is "language that produces pictures in the minds of people reading or listening" (2010: 748). The imagery in the poem is used to show the readers the image of the poem. On the other hand, Perrine says "imagery may be defined as the representation through language of sense experience" (1982: 54). Imagery is used not only to show the image of the poem but also to describe the ideas contained in the poem to the readers. There are seven types of imagery which are visual, organic, tactile, kinesthetic, gustatory, olfactory, and auditory imagery (Abrams, 1999:21). Meanwhile, in this research, the writer focuses on the visual and organic imagery. Visual imagery is an image in the poem which can be seen by using our sense of sight while organic imagery is the image that describes and represents the human sense and internal sensation such as hunger, thirst, fear, nausea or fatigue.

2. Extrinsic Elements

People around the world have a feeling that represents their happiness through someone or other things. This feeling is called as love. In *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 8th Edition* love is “strong feeling of deep affection for somebody or something” (2010: 884). Erich Fromm, a psychoanalyst and philosopher from Germany, created a theory about love. He says in his book *The Art of Loving* that “love is an activity, not passive affect, it is standing in not a falling for. In other words, love is primarily giving not receiving” (1956: 22). From that, it can be concluded that love is a pure and holy thing that appears without any pressure. In his book *The Art of Loving*, He mentions that there are five types of love that are: Brotherly Love, Motherly Love, Self Love, Erotic Love and Love of God (1956: 47). Meanwhile, in this research, the writer focuses on the fifth type of love that is the love of God to analyze The God's love in the poem. Love of God is a kind of love that God given to all creatures. In this type of love someone can interpret different because love of God for each person is different. Fromm explains that:

“Love of God for each person is different. It depends on several factors because of the life experience of each person, the different time to achieving the levels of maturity and perspective of each person view about God itself” (1956:63).

It means that the view of God depends on our attitude and behavior. Based on the writer's understanding, this kind of love is used not only to show someone's view about God and someone's religiosity but it also can be used to show if someone is categorized into grateful or ungrateful person and how he or she represents it.

C. DISCUSSION

1. Intrinsic Elements

a. Diction

In line 1 and 2 there is a word “a loaf”. The word “a loaf” is classified as connotation. The word “a loaf” is an amount of bread that has been shaper and baked in one piece (2010: 872). The word “a loaf” represents a “pleasure” which

God given to the bird. The word “bird” here is classified as denotation. According to *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary 8th* bird is “a creature that is covered with feathers and has two wings and two legs” (2010: 135). The bird here means the speaker’s pet. The speaker wants the reader know that she has a pet. The “crumb” is classified as connotation that means a pleasure. A pleasure that God given to the speaker while the word “crumb” in dictionary means “a very small piece of food, especially of bread or cake, that has fallen off a larger piece”(2010: 353). The word “sparrow” in line 7 is a denotation that means a small brown and grey bird, common in many parts of the world (2010: 1427). The speaker shows the readers that “sparrow” is one of God creatures in this universe. It can be taken from the Holy Bible that says “fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrow” (Matthew 10: 31).

In line 11 there is a word “smiles”. The word “smiles” is classified as connotation. The word “smiles” in *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, 8th Edition* is “the expression that you have on your face when you are happy, amused, etc. in which the corners of your mouth turn upwards” (2010: 1405). From that explanation the word “smiles” means a God smiles, a smile which God given to the speaker. There is a word “board”. The word “board” means a “life” especially the speaker’s life. The word “board” based on *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, 8th Edition* is “a piece of wood or other strong material, that is used for a special purpose” (2010: 150). Therefore, the word “board” can be classified as connotation. In line 15 there is a word “a crumb”. The word “crumb” is classified as connotation. The word “crumb” means a very small piece of food, especially of bread or cake, that has fallen of larger piece (2010:353). The speaker uses the word “crumb” to represent a pleasure. A pleasure that God given to her.

b. Imagery

Visual imagery can be seen in the beginning of the poem that is in line 1 and 2. The word “a loaf”, “bird” and “a crumb” are classified as visual imagery because it can be seen by using our sense of sight. From those words, the readers can imagine the shape of “loaf”, “bird” and “crumb”. Those words mean that God gives a pleasure to the bird by the speaker. The visual imagery also found in the word “my board” and “my garner”. Those words make the readers can imagine

about the speaker's condition in this poem. The word "board" means the speaker's life while the word "my garner" represents the speaker's wealth. There is a word "the rich" in stanza 2 line 13. That word can describe what the rich person looks like in this poem. There also a word "An Indiaman – an Earl". That word makes the readers can imagine the physical appearance of an Indiaman and an Earl by using of the sense of sight. There is a word "a crumb" in line 15. The word "a crumb" is a small part of a loaf and the shape is very small.

Organic Imagery can be seen in line 3 and 4. There is a word "starve" and "poignant luxury". Those words can be classified as organic imagery. The speaker wants the readers to feel the feeling of starving and happy. The word "starve" explains that she is starving but she does not want to eat the crumb because it is a precious thing for her and the word "poignant luxury" explains that she feels happy and proud with a crumb. Another organic imagery can be seen in line 7. The word "happy" is identified as organic imagery because it also feels the human sensation that is happy. The word "happy" shows that the speaker is in happy life. In line 11 and 12, the word "such plenty smiles" means happiness. From that the readers can imagine the happiness feelings such like she's feels in her poem. The word "shows so fair" means that the speaker is always satisfy and grateful. In the next stanza is "how the rich may feel". That word makes the readers can feel being a rich person. She shows that she feels like the rich person who has everything.

2. Extrinsic Elements

a. The Speaker's Perspective

The speaker expresses The God's love by realize something. She realizes that the crumb in her hand is a kind of pleasure and realizes that God does not differentiate someone and God always gives a pleasure to all creatures. From that she becomes more religious. The word "My Poignant Luxury" expresses how she feels happy and grateful for what she has. She also realizes that God is a source of happiness and life and realizes that all creatures in this universe are small and helpless.

b. The Speaker's Maturity

The speaker expresses The God's love by always be grateful for what she has and respect to others. She feels happy and grateful for what she owned and she did. It is one of God's mercy that given to her and to all creature in this land. To get The God's mercy, she is brave to sacrifice, care and respect ot others.

c. The Speaker's Life Experience

The speaker learned that happened in the past. She realizes that her life is meaningful and reach that she helps others who need. Because there is a happy moment we can help them and it is a kind of valuable thing and has a lot of benefits. From that she never miss to always pray and talk to God every time because one of she's afraid of is being forgotten by God and believes that God is source of life, love and happiness. She becomes more grateful and proud for what she has now.

D. CONCLUSION

The poem "God Gave a Loaf to Every Bird" is deeply meaningful. The essential meanings contained in the poem are God always gives a pleasure and an enjoyment to all creatures and God does not differentiate someone because all creatures in this land are equal in God's eyes. The speaker here represents The God's love by always be grateful, care, respect, tolerance and help other and the most important thing is assure in God. Those reasons that make someone can be categorized as a grateful person.

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F. APPENDIX

God Gave a Loaf to Every Bird,

By Emily Dickinson

God gave a loaf to every bird,
 But just a crumb to me;
 I dare not eat it, though I starve,—
 My poignant luxury
 To own it, touch it, prove the feat

That made the pellet mine,—
Too happy in my sparrow chance
For ampler coveting.

It might be famine all around,
I could not miss an ear,
Such plenty smiles upon my board,
My garner shows so fair.
I wonder how the rich may feel,—
An Indiaman—an Earl?
I deem that I with but a crumb
Am sovereign of them all