

Book Review of *Dead Poets Society* Written by N.H. Kleinbaum

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Abstrak

This review analyzes the strengths and weaknesses of N.H. Kleinbaum's *Dead Poets Society*. *Dead Poets Society* is a novel that tells a story about a journey of an English literature teacher who provides non-conventional teaching methods in literature. This review explores the strengths and the weaknesses of N.H. Kleinbaum's *Dead Poets Society* by reviewing its elements. They are theme, plot, and characters. This novel has strengths that make it as a good reading. The strengths of the novel are theme and plot. The weakness of the novel is the character aspect. The author tells too much about the additional figures. The goal of this study is to understand the novel clearly. Therefore, the reader can know the opinion of the author about the content of the novel.

Keywords: The strengths and the weaknesses, theme, plot, characters

A. Pendahuluan:

Generally, people are dragged to do something useful. They plan for better future. Therefore, they enter formal education. There are two methods of formal education; conventional and non-conventional. The conventional teaching methods are usual way of our formal education. The students are given tasks, material, and exercise. In other way, the non-conventional teaching methods place teacher only as the facilitator. The students are left in order to be more active in having part in the class.

Dead Poets Society tells about the story of non-conventional teaching methods that is done by the one of teacher at Welton Academy. He is John Keating. The novel was written by N.H.Kleinbaum. Nancy H. Kleinbaum was born in 1948. She was an American author. The reason why the writer chooses to review this novel is because it has many moral values of education. It is also so motivating. The novel also introduces a new method of study, which focuses in creativity, that gets the writer interested. The review of the writer is used to show the strengths and weaknesses of the novel.

B. Isi Makalah

In this study, the writer will focus on the intrinsic elements of this book because it is the major aspect for getting a brief description of a novel. The writer will elaborate a brief definition and explanation by reviewing the intrinsic elements in *Dead Poets Society* novel deeply. The intrinsic elements that will be discussed in this study are theme, plot, and character.

Theme

The theme of any literary work is the main, underlying idea of a piece of literature. The theme of *Dead Poets Society* is an education which is based on non-conventional teaching method. The method is to teach the students to chase their own dreams. Mr. Keating also wants to raise the creativity of students in english literature.

Carpe Diem or seize the day is a principle used by John Keating, which is different from other teachers do. We can see the quotation below:

“He stopped. “Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,” Keating repeated. “ The Latin term for that sentiment is Carpe Diem. Does anyone know what that means?”

“Carpe Diem, “Meeks, the Latin scholar, said. “Seize the day.”

“Very good, Mr....?”

“Meeks.”

”Seize the day,” Keating repeated. Why does the poet write these lines?” (Kleinbaum, 1989: 25)

Plot

Perrine says that plot is “the sequence of incidents or events of which a story is composed” (Perrine, 1987: 41). *Dead Poets Society* uses the forward plot. This is proved when the first time Mr Gale Nolan introduces John Keating in Welton Academy. Then, John becomes a substitute teacher of English. In the end of the story, he is nonrespectfully fired by Gale Nolan from Welton Academy because John Keating is considered as the reason why Neil Perry commits suicide. The arrangement of that plot is chronological, so it is called forward plot.

Characters

The Character is a verbal representation of a human being through action, speech, description, and commentary of authors. *Dead Poets Society* uses two types of characters. They are the protagonist and the antagonist characters. The protagonist in this novel are John Keating and Todd Anderson. Meanwhile, the antagonist is Mr.

Gale Nolan. In this paper, the writer will discuss the three characters. They are Todd Anderson, John Keating and Mr. Gale Nolan.

(1) Todd Anderson

Todd Anderson are not confident and shy. We can see the quotation below:

Mr. Anderson, based on your record at Balincrest: soccer, Service Club, school annual. Anything else I should know about?

Todd stood silent. He struggled to say something, but the words just wouldn't come out.

Speak up, Mr. Anderson,"Nolan said.

...Todd tried to speak again. " I...did...but..." he whispered. Beads of sweat broke out on his brow, and he clenched his hands so tightly his knuckles turned white. As the other boys stared at him, Todd fought back tears.(Kleinbaum, 1989: 11-12)

(2) Mr. John Keating

Mr. John Keating is a confident person. We can see the quotation below:

"I stand on my desk to remind myself that we must constantly force ourselves to look at things differently. The world looks different from up here. If you don't believe it, stand up here and try it. All of you. Take turns." (Kleinbaum, 1989: 60)

(3) Mr. Gale Nolan

Dead Poets Society, Mr. Gale Nolan is not an open minded people. We can see the quotation below:

"John, the curriculum here is set. It's proven. It works. If you question it, what's to prevent them from doing the same?"

"I always thought education was learning to think for yourself," Keating said.

Nolan laughed. "At these boys ages ? Not on your life! Tradition, John! Discipline." He patted Keating on the on the shoulder patronizingly. "Prepare them for college, and the rest will take care of itself." (Kleinbaum, 1989: 109)

The Strengths of N.H. Kleinbaum's *Dead Poets Society*

There are some strengths that are found by the writer based on the intrinsic elements. Firstly, from the theme aspect, N.H. Kleinbaum succeeds to make this novel become an inspiring novel. It shows a journey of John Keating who always make the teaching methods of literature more interesting. He pushes the students to think free and creative. Secondly, the story uses the forward plot. Every event in the story happens chronologically which makes it easier for the readers to follow the plot.

The Weaknesses of N.H. Kleinbaum's *Dead Poets Society*

The weaknesses of *Dead Poets Society* is the character aspect. The author tells too much about the additional figures, so that the readers may be confused in determining the main character in this novel. There are many stories that are not concerned with this main character. It may cause the readers bored with this novel.

C. Kesimpulan

Dead Poets Society is one of many novels that are being successfully adapted into a movie. In this book, there are many positive messages that are expressed by the author to the reader such as the non-conventional teaching method, which is able to make the students more creative and expressive.

The study shows that there are some intrinsic elements that are analyzed in this novel. They are theme, plot, and characters. The review of the writer is used to show the strengths and weaknesses of the novel. The strengths of the novel are theme and plot aspect. The weakness of the novel is the character aspect.

D. Daftar Pustaka

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