

The Importance of Social Empathy in Fredrik Backman's *A Man Called Ove*

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Abstrak

Empati sosial tidak disadari oleh banyak orang dalam kehidupan sosialnya. Padahal, empati sosial sangat penting dalam interaksi manusia. Empati sosial dapat mengubah seseorang menjadi pribadi yang lebih baik dari sebelumnya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengelaborasi empati sosial yang digambarkan dalam *A Man Called Ove* karya Fredrik Backman. Tujuan penelitian ini ada tiga secara rinci, yaitu 1) mengidentifikasi indikator empati sosial dalam novel *A Man Called Ove* karya Fredrik Backman; 2) Untuk mendeskripsikan bagaimana empati sosial digambarkan dalam novel *A Man Called Ove* karya Fredrik Backman; 3) Untuk mengungkap alamat empati sosial Fredrik Backman dalam novel *A Man Called Ove*. Jenis penelitian ini adalah studi sastra. Metode pengumpulan data menggunakan analisis dokumen dan *copy-paste* sebagai teknik pengumpulan data. Dalam menganalisis data, penelitian ini menggunakan sosiologi sastra karya Alan Swingewood. Hasil dari penelitian ini adalah empati sosial diilustrasikan dengan mendengarkan dengan penuh perhatian, berbicara dengan hati-hati, dan memberikan bantuan oleh karakter yang menyampaikan dialog dan tindakan dalam novel.

Kata Kunci: Fredrik Backman, pentingnya empati sosial, sosiologi sastra.

Abstract

Social empathy is not realized by many people in their social life. Whereas, social empathy is very important in human interaction. Social empathy can change someone to be a better person than before. This research aims to elaborate social empathy that depicted in Fredrik Backman's *A Man Called Ove*. There are three detail purposes of this study, they are 1) To identify the indicators of social empathy in the novel *A Man Called Ove* by Fredrik Backman; 2) To describe how social empathy depicted in the novel *A Man Called Ove* by Fredrik Backman; 3) To reveal Fredrik Backman's social empathy address in the novel *A Man Called Ove*. The type of this study is literary study. The method of collecting data used document analysis and copy-paste as the technique to collect the data. In analysing the data, this research used sociology of literature by Alan Swingewood. The result of this research are social empathy was illustrated by listen attentively, speak carefully, and giving help by the character who deliver dialog and action in the novel.

Keywords: Fredrik Backman, the importance of social empathy, sociology of literature.

1. INTRODUCTION

Empathy can have the big impact on someone's life. Empathy can involve communication between people in society, empathy can change someone to be a better person, and empathy can encourage someone to communicate with others and avoid being antisocial. S. Baron-Cohen (2015, p.32) stated that "empathy is the ability to recognize the thoughts of feelings of another person and

to respond to their thoughts and feelings with the right emotion”. This is a feeling of responsibility for the difficulties that arise faced by others and make people encourage doing something for help. Bagian pendahuluan berisi pengantar topik penelitian yang dibahas, latar belakang permasalahan, deskripsi permasalahan, rumusan tujuan penelitian serta rangkuman kajian teoritik yang berkaitan dengan masalah yang diteliti. Pada bagian ini kadang-kadang juga dimuat harapan akan hasil dan manfaat penelitian.

Social empathy is the interaction between people in social life which they have an ability to appreciate what other people did in the society. Moreover, social empathy can be understood by perceiving and experiencing other’s life situations and conditions. Social empathy must be delivered to others without make others feel offended and overwhelmed.

There is a previous study about social empathy by Pramana (2022) stated the main result of the study is that the characterizations of Gandalf are wise, care, compassionate, and brave. Furthermore, the researcher concludes that the four characters are in line with three main points by Segal (2011) in social empathy, contextual understanding, and social responsibility.

But modern life caused the loss of meaning in life. The problem is about ethics and morality by individual to others. Empathy has an important role for the positive relationships, not only for individual but for large-group living. In Fredrik Backman’s novel entitled *A Man Called Ove* deliver the importance of social empathy in life.

The implementation of social empathy happened in the Fredrik Backman’s novel. He created the story in 2012, the author rose about the importance of empathy towards society in Helsingborg, Swedish. Empathy is essential for positive relationships, not only for individuals but for large-group living. Social empathy greatly impacts someone and can change someone to be a better person.

In *A Man Called Ove*, Fredrik Backman wrote about an old man who always got several problems that made him become sensitive, offended, and antisocial person. Therefore, in his novel, Backman wants to deliver to the readers that someone can change to be a better person with support of people around him; someone who is considered wicked by most of society is not necessarily true, and someone should not follow other’s opinion about judging people, as a human we should have our principles in life. It can work if we implement social empathy in our life.

This research aims to: 1) To identify the indicators of social empathy in the novel *A Man Called Ove* by Fredrik Backman; 2) To describe how social empathy depicted in the novel *A Man Called Ove* by Fredrik Backman; 3) To reveal Fredrik Backman’s social empathy address in the novel *A Man Called Ove*.

Previous Study

Previous studies about library research involved novel and movie. For novel, Revzin (2017) establishing empathy in Jane Austen's novel; Mondal, et al. (2018) conduct the theory of empathy in graphic novel; Putri (2018) used novel entitled *A Man Called Ove* by Fredrik Backman to analyse antisocial personality disorder; Sangeetha and Umadevi (2019) used Anita Nair's 'Ladies Coupe'; Kark&Vanderbeke (2020) used Michel faber's *Under the Skin*; Thurlow (2020) used Contemporary Irish Novel; Toosi (2021) used Muhsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*; Monaco (2021) conduct Nadeem Aslam's Postcolonial Fiction; Berrebbah (2021) conduct Laila Halaby's *West of the Jordan*; Childress (2021) conduct Graphic Novels; Mondal (2022) conduct Srividya Natarajan and Stephen Anand's Graphic Novel *Bhimayana*; Sanberg, et al. (2022) used novel entitled *A Man Called Ove* by Fredrik Backman as a cultural representation of ageing masculinity. Therefore, Wulandari (2013) conduct movie by Mark Herman's *the Boy in the Stripped Pajamas*; Palluconi & Schofield (2021) conduct Godzilla movie; Childress (2021) conduct contemporary French film; Wu (2021) conduct Taiwan's movie entitled *Your Name Engraved Herein* (2020); Li&Ruyi (2022) conduct Bi Gan's movie; Ma (no year) conduct *Orphans of the Storm* (1921).

Moreover, previous studies about field research used novel is from Stone (2017) conduct questionnaires and interviews with asylum seekers in Jenny Erpenbeck's *Gehen, ging, gegangen* [*Go, Went, Gone*]. While, Che, et al. (no year) conduct questionnaire to several Muslim respondents in watching horror movies.

The previous study which in line with the topic social empathy is from Pramana (2022) entitled "Analysis of Social Empathy on the Supporting Character in J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Lord of The Rings". This study used movie as the material object in line with the formal object of this study. The study used theory from Segal (2011) to describe the social empathy from Gandalf characterization. The main result of the study is the writer found that the characterizations of Gandalf are wise, care, compassionate, and brave. Furthermore, the researcher concludes that the four characters are in line with three main points by Segal (2011) in social empathy, contextual understanding, and social responsibility. The study has the contribution in adding the information and understanding in writing the research.

2. METHOD

The type of this research is literary study because the material object is a novel by Fredrik Backman entitled *A Man Called Ove*. The object of this study divided into two kinds, they are material object and formal object. In using the material object from the novel entitled *A Man Called Ove* by Fredrik Backman, therefore the type of this study is literary study. The novel entitled *A Man Called Ove* by Fredrik Backman in English was published on 15 July 2014. The novel consists 368 pages with 39 chapters. However, the original novel entitled *En man som heter Ove* by Fredrik Backman from

Sweden which published by Forum on 27 August 2012. Meanwhile, the formal object is social empathy. According to Brene Brown (2019) empathy is the connection between other people so that we can understand we're not alone in struggle. The statement means that empathy proposes to solve someone else's problems or make them comfortable being surrounded by other people who support them. Freud's (1921) in Donald Grant & Edwin Harari (2011) stated that empathy involves any attitude toward other people's mental life. Therefore, social empathy is the ability to feel by positioning ourselves in someone else's situation and supporting them to be better person. Social empathy can deliver by individuals or groups in their social environment.

The type of data is the texts which there are two types of data sources, they are primary data source and secondary data source. The primary data source is the novel entitled *A Man Called Ove* by Fredrik Backman in English version. The English version novel was published in 2014 and consists of 368 pages. Then, the secondary data sources are previous studies, articles, and journals from the internet and e-book about the theory of sociology of literature by Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood.

Moreover, this research used document analysis to explore and understand the data from the novel *A Man Called Ove* by Fredrik Backman. It is in line with Fischer (2006) in Armstrong (2022) defined document analysis as a method to review or evaluate printed and electronic documents in a systematic procedure. Moreover, the researcher also uses copy-paste to collect the novel's data. This study used a context-oriented as the approach of technique analyzing data due to the sociology of literature as the theory of the research, which qualitative as the technique for analyzing data. It is in line with Creswell (2009) and Neuman (2014) that qualitative research explores the meaning of problems in society.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The researcher will provide the data that depicts social empathy, which is found in Fredrik Backman's *A Man Called Ove*.

Three indicators of social empathy depicted in the novel, they are listen attentively, speak carefully, and giving help. Social empathy in the novel is found explicitly and implicitly in several illustrations by the author, dialogues, and actions. Listen attentively is allowing others to speak while pay attention to interlocutors. Listen attentively to someone else's experience, listen to someone who delivers his complaints and condition patiently.

Listen attentively between the characters of Ove and the Lanky One, the new neighbor. Ove thumps his fist on the Lanky One's car asked him to get out of the car without any explanation. The Lanky One was confused but still listened and waited about what will Ove did. It was illustrated as follows:

Ove thumps his fist on the roof of the car so hard that the Lanky One jumps and bangs his head on the doorframe. “Out of the car!”

“What?”

“Get out of the car, I said!”

The Lanky One gives Ove a slightly startled glance, but he doesn’t quite seem to have the nerve to reply. Instead he gets out of his car and stands beside it like a schoolboy in the dunce’s corner. Ove points down the footpath between the row houses, towards the bicycle shed and the parking area.

“Go and stand where you’re not in the way.”

The Lanky One nods, slightly puzzled.

“Holy Christ. A lower-arm amputee with cataracts could have backed this trailer more accurately than you,” Ove mutters as he gets into the car. (2014: 20)

The interaction between Ove and the Lanky One continued. Ove was angry because the Lanky One was not good at managing his car. Suddenly, Ove approached him and subconsciously grumbled and explained about the car. The Lanky One does not angry with Ove, but he always listens to Ove.

“Reverse radar and parking sensors and cameras and crap like that. A man who needs all that to back up with a trailer shouldn’t be bloody doing it in the first place.”

The Lanky One nods cheerfully at him

“Thanks for the help,” he calls out, as if Ove hadn’t just spent the last ten minutes insulting him.

“You shouldn’t even be allowed to rewind the cassette,” grumbles Ove. The pregnant woman just stands there with her arms crossed, but she doesn’t look quite angry anymore. She thanks him with a wry smile, as if she’s trying not to laugh. She has the biggest brown eyes Ove has ever seen. (2014: 22)

Speak carefully done by an individual or group who thought and chose the word delivered to others. Therefore, the word must be selected carefully to make someone else feel comfortable and not offend others.

Speak carefully depicted through the communication between the sales assistant and Ove. Ove was an old man who needed help understanding laptop and the sales assistant always explained about a laptop. Even though Ove snapped and dodged him, the sales assistant tried to explain carefully and not offend Ove. This action was illustrated as follows:

“I want a computer! A normal bloody computer!”

Silence descends over the two men for a short while. The assistant clear his throat.

“Well...it isn’t really a normal computer. Maybe you’d rather have a...” (2014: 2)

The assistant stops and seems to be looking for a word that falls within the bounds of comprehension of the man facing him. Then he clears his throat again and says:

“... a laptop?” (2014: 3)

The short chat between Ove and the new neighbor was illustrated as speaking carefully. They were a couple husband and wife. The Lanky One and the Pregnant One. Ove was angry because the Lanky One parked his car in a residential area. All transportation must be parked in the parking area. When the Pregnant One and Ove offended each other, the Lanky One tried to speak carefully to Ove as follows:

The Lanky One nods quickly, clearly keen to avoid further provocation of this unknown man. He turns to his wife as if he’s expecting her to come to his aid. She doesn’t look at all likely to do so. The Lanky One looks at Ove again.

“Pregnant, you know. Hormones and all that ...” he tries, with a grin.

The Pregnant One does not grin. Nor does Ove. She crosses her arms. Ove tucks his hands into his belt. The Lanky One clearly doesn’t know what to do with his massive hands, so he swings them back and forth across his body, slightly shamefully, as if they’re made of cloth, fluttering in the breeze.

“I’ll move it and have another go,” he finally says and smiles disarmingly at Ove again.

Ove does not reciprocate. (2014: 19)

The new neighbor introduced their self to Ove, they were Patrick and Parvaneh. It happened in front of Ove’s house when Ove was preparing for his suicide. Ove was annoyed because they disturbed him, but because Parvaneh persisted and she tried to speak carefully to him, they failed Ove’s plan to suicide.

“We just wanted to introduce ourselves, now that we’re going to be neighbors...”

Ove nods tersely and concisely.

“Okay. Bye.”

He tries to close the door. She stops him with her arm.

“And then we wanted to thank you for backing up our trailer. That was very kind of you!”

Ove grunts. Reluctantly he keeps the door open.

“That’s not something to thank me for.”

“Yeah, it was really nice,” she protests. (2014: 64)

Giving help was an action that encouraged someone to do something for others. Giving help can support and provide someone with something useful in their condition.

Giving help was illustrated by the interaction between Ove, the Pregnant One, and the new neighbor's children in front of Ove's house. The Pregnant One asked her children to give Ove dinner.

Ove looks in utter perplexity at the little flapping speech defect.

“What?”

“Mum said you looked hungry. So we have to give you dinner,” the seven-year-old girl clarifies with some irritation. “Come on, Nasanin,” she adds, taking her sister by the hand and walking away after directing a resentful stare at Ove.

Ove keeps an eye on them as they skulk off. He sees the pregnant woman standing in her doorway, smiling at hi before the girls run into her house. The three-year-old turns and waves cheerfully at him. Her mother also waves. Ove closes the door. (2014: 25)

The interaction between Ove, the Pregnant One, and the Lanky One was illustrated by giving help in front of Ove's house. They visited Ove when he prepared to suicide by hanging himself. Therefore, they prevent Ove from suicide.

He fetches the drill, takes the hook, stands up on the stool, and starts drilling. The first time the doorbell goes he assumes he's made a mistake and ignores the sound for that very reason. The second time he realizes that there's actually someone ringing the bell, and he ignores it for that very reason.

The third time Ove stops drilling and glares at the door. As if he may be able to convince whoever is standing outside to disappear by his mental powers alone. It doesn't work. The person in question obviously thinks the only rational explanation for his not opening the door the first time around was that he did not hear the doorbell.

Ove steps off the stool, strides across the plastic sheets through the living room and into the hall. Does it really have to be so difficult to kill yourself without constantly being disturbed? (2014: 62)

The Lanky One only manages by a whisker to pull his big head back and avoid an impact with his

face.

“Hi!” the Pregnant One exclaims cheerfully beside him, though a foot and a half lower down.

Ove looks down at her, then up at him. The Lanky One is busy touching every part of his face with some reluctance, as if to check that every protuberance is still where it should be.

“This is for you,” she says in a friendly sort of voice, and then shoves a blue plastic box into Ove’s arms.

Ove looks skeptical.

“Cookies,” she explains encouragingly.

Ove nods slowly, as if to confirm this.

“You’ve really dressed up,” she says with a smile.

Ove nods again. (2014: 63)

The interaction between Ove, Parvaneh, and Patrick continued when Patrick wanted to borrow the ladder from Ove. Parvaneh also came to Ove’s house and said she wanted to support Patrick. But Patrick does not feel that she wanted to help him. Actually, Parvaneh wondered about Ove’s life.

The Lanky One nods and clumsily takes the ladder from him. Ove looks as if he’s about to say something else, but he seems to change his mind. He turns to Parvaneh.

“And why exactly are you here?”

“Moral support,” she twitters.

Ove doesn’t look entirely convinced. Nor does the Lanky One. (2014: 71)

The interaction between Ove, Parvaneh, and Rune’s wife named Anita in front of Ove’s house was depicted giving help from Parvaneh to Ove in advice form. Anita asked for Ove’s help because Rune had a stroke. At first, Ove declined Rune rudely, but Parvaneh gave him advice and said that Ove does not be rude to Anita.

Rune’s wife makes another attempt.

“I think it could be the radiators.”

“Have you bled them?” says Ove.

She shakes her head and looks curious.

“You think it could be because of that?”

Ove rolls his eyes.

“Ove!” Parvaneh roars at him at once, as if she’s a reprimanding schoolmistress. Ove

*glares at her. She glares back. "Stop being rude," she orders.
"I told you, I'm not rude!" (2014: 72)*

In the garage, Ove prepared his suicide plan and tried to suicide by inhaling Saab exhaust fumes. Suddenly, Parvaneh came to see Ove and failed his plan to suicide.

The sirens of an approaching ambulance can be heard in the distance, but he barely takes any notice. Just gets into the driver's seat and starts the engine. Opens the back electric window a couple of inches. Gets out of the car. Closes the garage door. Fixes the plastic tube tightly over the exhaust pipe. Watches the exhaust fumes slowly bubbling out of the other end of the tube. Then feeds the tube through the open back window. Gets into the car. Closes the door. Adjusts the wing mirrors. Fine-tunes the radio one step forward and one step back. Leans back in the seat. Closes his eyes. Feels the thick exhaust smoke, cubic inch, filling the garage and his lungs. (2014: 112)

The Pregnant Foreign Woman should probably have learned by now not to stand so close to doors when Ove is on the other side. But this time she can't avoid getting the garage door right in her face when Ove throws it open violently.

Ove sees her and freezes. She's holding her nose. Looking at him with that distinct expression of someone who just had a garage door slammed into her nose. The exhaust fumes come pouring out of the garage in a dense cloud, covering half of the parking area in a thick, noxious mist.

"I ... you have to bloo--- you have to watch out when the door's being opened ..." Ove manages to say.

"What are you doing?" the Pregnant One manages to bite back at him, while watching the Saab with its engine idling and the exhaust spewing out of the mouth of the plastic tube on the floor. (2014: 113)

In the hospital, Parvaneh and her children took by Ove to see Patrick at the hospital. Then, Parvaneh asked Ove to wait and watch her children. In purpose, Parvaneh tried to prevent Ove back to his home and did something suspicious in the garage.

"Will you sit here nicely with Uncle Ove while Mum goes to see how Dad is? Please?"

"Yeah, yeah," agrees the seven-year-old grumpily.

"Yeeeee!" the three-year-old shrieks with excitement.

“What?” whispers Ove.

Parvaneh stands up.

“What do you mean, ‘with Ove’? Where do you think you’re going?” To his great consternation, the Pregnant One seems not to register the level of upset in his voice.

“You have to sit here and keep an eye on them,” she stated curtly and disappears down the corridor before Ove can raise further objections. (2014: 131)

Giving help was depicted by the man behind the Plexiglas in the train station. Ove had a problem with the ticket machine. The man tried to help Ove even though he was stubborn. The man helped Ove until the ticket machine worked.

Ove thinks that any old fool could figure out that if the card wasn’t working half a minute ago isn’t going to work now either. Ove points this out to the man behind the Plexiglas.

“Please?” says the man.

Ove sighs demonstratively. Takes his card again, without taking his eyes off the Plexiglas. The card works. (2014: 152)

In Ove’s kitchen, giving help was illustrated in the interaction between Ove and Parvaneh. Parvaneh found the kitchen cabinet decorated with relics of Ove’s wife named, Sonja. It touched her heart in the kitchen and she thought Ove felt lonely. Therefore, Parvaneh initiative to make Ove took care of the cat. She hoped that Ove can reduce his loneliness.

When he gets there, she’s standing motionless and slightly confused in the middle of the floor with his electric kettle in her hand. She looks a bit overwhelmed, as if the realization of what’s happened has only just hit her.

It’s the first time Ove has seen this woman run out of something to say. The kitchen has been cleared and tidied, but it’s dusty.

It smells of brewed coffee, there’s dirt in the crannies, and everywhere are Ove’s wife’s things. Her little decorative objects in the window, her hair clips left on the kitchen table, her handwriting on the Post-it notes on the fridge. (2014: 177)

“I’m afraid I can’t,” she says after that. “The girls are ... allergic,” she adds.

Ove hears a little pause before she says “allergic.” He scrutinizes her suspiciously in the reflection in the window, but does not answer. Instead he turns to the overweight young man. (2014: 177)

Parvaneh's intention that she wanted to Ove took care of the cat was strengthened by the depiction below:

The cat rolls onto its side, away from Ove, and goes to sleep in protest. Ove looks out the window again. He knows very well that the three-year-old isn't allergic at all. He knows very well that Parvaneh just lied to him so she wouldn't have to take care of the Cat Annoyance. (2014: 216)

Since Ove's closeness to Parvaneh's children in the hospital, Parvaneh's daughters like Ove. For them, Ove was a funny grandfather. Therefore, Nasanin the three-years-old, drew Ove with a lot of colors. The drawing helped Ove feel happy.

When she says that last bit she points at a figure in the middle of the drawing. Everything else on the paper is drawn in black, but the figure in the middle is a veritable explosion of color. A riot of yellow and red and blue and green and orange and purple.

"You're the funniest thing she knows. That's why she always draws you in color," says Parvaneh. (2014: 231)

Parvaneh helped and prevented Ove not to suicide again. When Ove ran his plan, suddenly Parvaneh came to his house to inform him that Lena, a journalist wanted to interview Ove. Because of Parvaneh, Ove failed to kill himself.

Of course, he was supposed to have died today. He had been planning to calmly and peacefully shoot himself in the head just after breakfast. He'd tidied the kitchen and let the cat out and made himself comfortable in his favorite armchair. He'd planned it this way because the cat routinely asked to be let out at this time. One of the few traits of the cat that Ove was highly appreciative of was its reluctance to crap in other people's homes. Ove was a man of the same ilk. (2014: 289)

But then of course Parvaneh came banging on his door as if it were the last functioning toilet in the civilized world. As if that woman had nowhere to wee at home. Ove put the riffle away behind the radiator so she wouldn't see it and start interfering. He opened the door and she more or less had to press her telephone into his hand by violent means before he accepted it. (2014: 290)

Mirsad knew that Ove lived alone in his house, he helped to prepare breakfast in the kitchen for Ove and the cat. Because of Mirsad, Ove remembered when Sonja was still alive, she always prepared breakfast for him.

“Is that you who’s been toasting bread?”

Mirsad nods anxiously. (2014: 306)

“Yes ... I hope that’s okay. Sorry, I mean, is it?”

Ove notices that he’s made coffee too. The cat is on the floor eating tuna. Ove nods, but doesn’t answer the question. (2014: 307)

When Ove checked the pedestrian area as his routine, Mirsad immediately accompanied Ove to walk. Mirsad initiative to make Ove friends to chat.

“Me and the cat have to go for a little walk around our road,” he clarifies instead.

“Can I come?” asks Mirsad quickly.

Ove looks at him a little as if Mirsad has stopped him in a pedestrian arcade, dressed up as a pirate, and asked him to guess under which of the three teacups he’s hidden the silver coin.

“Maybe I can help?” Mirsad continues eagerly.

Ove goes into the hall and shoves his feet into his clogs.

“It’s a free country,” he mutters as he opens the door and lets out the cat.

Mirsad interprets this as “Of course you can!” and quickly puts on his jacket and shoes and goes after Ove. (2014: 307)

Character was a figure purposed to represent several people or animals in literary works. According to Kosasih (2012: 67), the character was illustrated and developed in the story, which purposed to make the story come alive. There were two kinds of characters in this novel, they were emphatic and non-empathic. Moreover, there was a character that got the impact of empathy. Based on the novel, empathic characters are Parvaneh, Patrick, Nasanin, Jimmy, and the Man behind the Plexiglas. Non-empathic characters are Tom, the Jovial Man, Two Men of White Shirt, The Man from Social Services, Spanish Government, Swedish Authorities, Police, and Court. Get impact of Empathy characters is Ove.

A.S. Moenir (2002: 63) implied that a professional does something with an intellectual scope that aims to create ideas, deliver skills, and serve society. Based on the novel, three professions of people depicted empathy. There are an IT consultant, a real estate agent, and barista. Allen (2002) stated that an

event is a performance planned before reaching the purpose. The event can be defined as several experiences in the story that have a sequence of time. The author depicted social empathy through the event.

The empathy showed when the new neighbor came near Ove's home. They were a family. Patrick, Parvaneh the pregnant one, and two daughters. They always had several ways to interact with Ove. After they arrived in Ove's environment, they showed their empathy and could prevent Ove from suicide.

When Ove prepared his suicide plan by hanging himself, Parvaneh and Patrick came to his house to introduce themselves. Even though Ove does not care, Parvaneh insists on introducing herself. Therefore, they prevent Ove from hanging himself.

He fetches the drill, takes the hook, stands up on the stool, and starts drilling. The first time the doorbell goes he assumes he's made a mistake and ignores the sound for that very reason. The second time he realizes that there's actually someone ringing the bell, and he ignores it for that very reason.

The third time Ove stops drilling and glares at the door. As if he may be able to convince whoever is standing outside to disappear by his mental powers alone. It doesn't work. The person in question obviously thinks the only rational explanation for his not opening the door the first time around was that he did not hear the doorbell.

Ove steps off the stool, strides across the plastic sheets through the living room and into the hall. Does it really have to be so difficult to kill yourself without constantly being disturbed? (2014: 62)

The Lanky One only manages by a whisker to pull his big head back and avoid an impact with his face.

"Hi!" the Pregnant One exclaims cheerfully beside him, though a foot and a half lower down. (2014: 63)

Social empathy is depicted in Fredrik Backman's *A Man Called Ove* based on the author's feeling, imaginary, and condition. Based on Instagram account named "*@backmanask*" there are several posts from Backman's Instagram picture. The picture represents that he stands for the women of Iran because there are several incidents about religion between Swedish and Iran. Therefore, Backman makes the Iranian woman's character the person with the highest social empathy. Moreover, Backman also depicted social empathy comes from an animal. The reason is that Backman loves animal.

Based on the data above, empathy is the ability of someone to care and share their feelings with others. Individuals or groups can deliver empathy to support others in their environment and namely social empathy. Social empathy will happen and develop in society.

The researcher used sociology of literature by Alan Swingewood. According to Alan Swingewood (1972: 11) sociology of literature is related to the author's imagination and the situation from which they derive. From Alan Swingewood's theory, the author wants to connect his life's situation through the novel's character. The author illustrates his feeling about social empathy through several scenes in the novel.

This research position adds information from previous research about social empathy. Social empathy is still rare to be a topic research. Therefore the data needs to be developed. The novel is straightforward and talked about daily life. Thus people can easily understand the condition and learn the message conducted in the novel.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion presented above, this research concludes that there are three indicators of social empathy depicted in the novel: listening attentively, speaking carefully, and giving help. According to the theory from sociology of literature by Alan Swingewood, Fredrik Backman described social empathy from his imagination, feelings, and condition to make his novel. The author wants to relate his life's situation through the novel's character about social empathy because the author's social media depicts that he loves his dog. The author also has a high level of empathy start from he supports Iranian women because there are several incident about religion between Swedish and Iran, even though he is from Sweden. This explained that the author depicted social empathy in his everyday life and depicted in the novel. The author also reminds the readers that when someone is empathic to others, they can change someone to be a better person, and the kindness will return to their selves. Social empathy has a significant impact on someone's condition. An individual or group can deliver social empathy. In the English version (2014) the novel Fredrik Backman entitled *A Man Called Ove* proved that the importance of social empathy can make someone's life to be better.

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