

**ASSERTIVENESS OF MA REFLECTED IN EMMA DONOGHUE'S
ROOM NOVEL (2010): A FEMINIST APPROACH**



**Submitted as a Formal Fulfillment of the Requirement
for Getting the Bachelor Degree of Education
in English Department**

by :
MUHAMAD NUR ANDIKA
A320130260

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH EDUCATION
SCHOOL OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION
UNIVERSITAS MUHAMMADIYAH SURAKARTA
2018**

APPROVAL

ASSERTIVENESS OF MA REFLECTED IN EMMA DONOGHUE'S *ROOM*
NOVEL (2010): A FEMINIST APPROACH

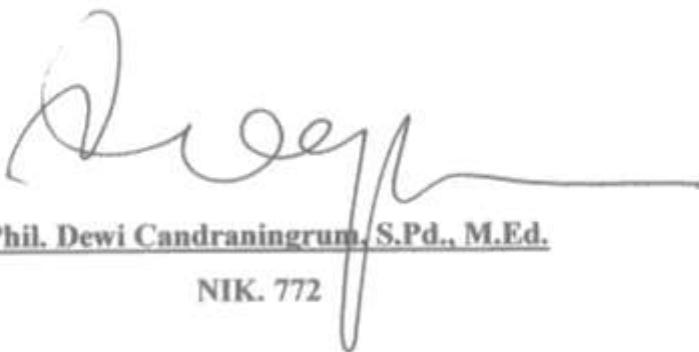
PUBLICATION ARTICLE

by:

Muhamad Nur Andika

A320130260

Approved to be examined by the Consultant



Dr. Phil. Dewi Candraningrum, S.Pd., M.Ed.
NIK. 772

ACCEPTANCE

ASSERTIVENESS OF MA REFLECTED IN EMMA DONOGHUE'S *ROOM*
NOVEL (2010): A FEMINIST APPROACH

by :

MUHAMAD NUR ANDIKA

A320130260

Accepted and Approved by the Board of Examiner
School of Teacher Training and Education
Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta
on August 2018

Team of Examiner:

1. Dr. Phil. Dewi Candraningrum, M.Ed
(Chair Person)
2. Dr. Muhammad Thoyibi, M.S.
(Member I)
3. Titis Setyabudi, S.S, M.A.
(Member II)

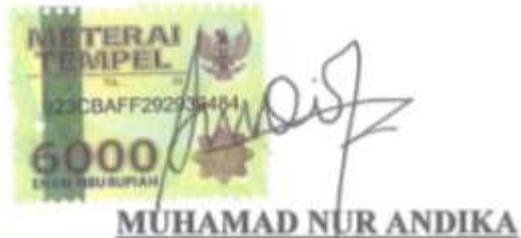




TESTIMONY

Herewith, I testify that in this publication article, there is no such thing as plagiarism of the previous literary work which has been raised to obtain bachelor degree, nor there are opinions or masterpiece which have been written or published by others, except those which are referred in the manuscript and mentioned in the literary review and bibliography. Therefore, if it is proved that there are some untrue statements in this testimony, I will hold full responsibility.

Surakarta, 20 August 2018



A320130260

ASSERTIVENESS OF MA REFLECTED IN EMMA DONOGHUE'S *ROOM* NOVEL (2010): A FEMINIST APPROACH

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis ketegasan dari Ma yang tercermin di dalam novel *Room* dengan menggunakan pendekatan feminis. Penelitian ini termasuk penelitian kualitatif. Teknik pengumpulan data dari penelitian ini adalah penelitian kepustakaan dan teknik analisis data dalam penelitian ini adalah mengklarifikasi data yang diperoleh dengan memilih yang diperlukan dan menganalisa data berdasarkan pendekatan feminis. Hasil analisis ini menunjukkan Ma memiliki ketegasan yang membuatnya dapat mendapatkan kesetaraan dengan laki-laki. Ketegasannya juga membuat Ma dapat merubah perspektif masyarakat terhadap seorang perempuan yang selama ini dianggap makluk lemah dan tidak mempunyai persamaan kedudukan, peran, hak, dan partisipasi dengan pria khususnya di dalam sektor sosial, politik, dan ekonomi.

Kata Kunci: Ketasan, Kesetaraan, Pendekatan Feminis

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the assertiveness of Ma which is reflected in *Room* novel by using feminist approach. This research includes the qualitative research. Data collection technique of this research is library research and data analysis technique in this research is to clarify the data obtained by choosing the necessary and analyze the data based on feminist approach. The results of this analysis show that Ma has the assertiveness that enables her to gain the equality to the men. Her assertiveness also enables Ma to change the society's perspective on the women who have been considered a weak creature and have no the equality of position, role, right, and participation to the men especially in the sector of social, politics and economy.

Keyword: Assertiveness, Equality, Feminist Approach

1. INTRODUCTION

The novel has a characteristic depending on character, presenting more than one impression, presenting more than one effect, presenting more than one emotion (Tarigan, 1991: 164-165). This means that in the novel showing the nature of the binding one another and should not be missing a single part in it, because it can be one of the novel's ways to imagine and to describe in story of the novel. Then, the novel also has a function that is to present a story which contains more than one impression, effect, and emotion. In the novel contains many interesting storylines to be known. Even we can apply through many types of literary approach such as a feminist approach in the feminist analysis.

According to Collins (1991: 8) states that feminism is about equal rights between men and women in economy, politics, and social or organized activities that fight for the rights and interests of women. That is how feminism provides for similarities between men and women in the economy, social, and politics sectors through a feminist approach. This is obtained because of the women's desire to get their rights and interests through a struggle that is not easy. It is also caused by many obstacles and detentions in that regard. So they will also be under pressure from other men.

Even in many sectors are often encountered some women who experience actions that do not deserve to be accepted by them in many sectors. Women have always been being the object or victim of the crime. Even, they are object to discrimination and pressure aimed at undermining positions, rights, roles and participations in many moments. As a result they lose what they actually get. But, there are also some women who have an attitude of determination to get their rights, roles, participations and positions. They do that, because to fight for and protect themselves, their families and all that is around them. Thus they will get a better quality of life and avoiding the pressure even threat from other men.

Alberti and Emmons (Marini and Andriani, 2005: 47) state that assertiveness is a behavior that enables one to act according to desire, to defend oneself without feeling anxious, to express feelings honestly and comfortably, or to exercise private rights without violating the rights of other people. It shows that assertiveness is an attitude of gratitude from those who want to convey their actions and thoughts to get what they want. It is also a way to fight for something to be achieved from a decision, because of the pressure or deviant action of others. As a result created that a strong principle to dare to act and think. So they avoid the bad things which they do not want.

Room novel is a literary work that tells about how the assertiveness process occurs in a woman because of being a victim of captivity in a kidnapping act. This story took the place in an isolated room around at the corner of a house. This

happened to a woman named Ma who was kidnapped and locked up for years. Because that, Ma felt losing her position, right, role, and participation. Then Ma wanted to change her condition by doing something. So she did an action of assertiveness to act and fight against the abduction of a kidnapper called Old Nick. This was the starting point for assertiveness. The conflict in this novel began when Ma became a victim of the kidnapping act by Old Nick. She was placed in a small room. It could not be opened, except with a secret password that was only known by Old Nick. For several years, Ma was in that room. There, Ma was abused and treated unfairly by Old Nick. One day, Ma wanted to escape but she could not succeed it. Even Ma was getting unkind acts, physical violence, and racist treatment from Old Nick. Meanwhile, Ma also got discrimination, intimidation, and pressure every day. Moreover she was just a woman, it was considered low and trivial by Old Nick. Not long after the incident, there was born a child named Jack who gave her happiness. Jack became friends and entertainers for Ma during in the room.

In the early days in the room, Ma just resigned and accepted all of his treatment. So the position, role, right, and participation of Ma always got the oppression and pressure from Old Nick. From that, Ma began to think about the treatment she received so far. Then, she started trying to act decisively against whatever treatment from Old Nick. Her assertiveness was seen when she asked for vitamins to Old Nick who did not carry the item at that time. Her assertive stance was also visible when she forbade Old Nick to open a cabinet in which Jack lived, because she did not like the Old Nick's act. Regardless of Ma's assertiveness towards Old Nick, she also showed it to her son named Jack and the people around her. This was done when Ma explained the truth between the fantasy world and the real world. At an emergency she asked Jack to do the escape process by getting into the carpet roll, so they would have been free. When she and Jack manage to get free, some attitudes of pressure from other men to her too she got. It made Ma show her assertiveness to disagree when someone was offering to take care of Jack. Finally,

Ma had decided to choose the principles in her-self and to say that she always wanted to live with Jack in better life.

There are reasons of why the researcher chooses this novel. The first reason is the novel has a unique story and interesting plot to read and understand. The author tells how difficult the situation that the main characters must pass. The setting is different from story of other novels. Because this novel has two places, those are in indoor and outdoor. This story makes the readers' curiosity higher and the readers hard to stop reading it because it is very unique and full of surprises.

The second reason is the novel raising some issues. One of its issues offends about assertiveness. Therefore, the researcher wants to know more about assertiveness. Because it can make someone especially the woman more adventurous in achieving her purposes and dreams so the woman is easier to get hers. It was happened when Ma strove to get her equal right, position, participation and position using her assertiveness.

The last reason is the subject matter. *Room* novel is an interesting novel. The image on the characters of the story makes this novel more alive and has more real souls. It can give the researcher and the readers more inspirations, awareness, experiences, and new knowledge in problem solving process.

Based on the illustration above, the researcher is interested to analyze the novel by using a feminist literature entitled **Assertiveness of Ma Reflected in Emma Donoghue's *Room* Novel (2010): A Feminist Approach.**

2. METHOD

In order to analyze *Room* novel the researcher uses feminist of literature based on liberal feminism and applies it using descriptive analysis which concerns to make some interpretation of dealing with the novel. In analyzing the content of the *Room* novel (2010) in the form of text, then that should be done in analyzing the contents by reading the entire text in the novel systematically and comprehensively.

3. RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

In analyzing *Room* novel, the researcher obtains some findings. The findings of the study as follows:

3.1 Character and characterization

3.1.1 Major Character

3.1.1.1 Jack

He was a Ma's boy who had 5 years old, and He was originally as the main character with Ma.

Today I'm five. I was four last night going to sleep in Wardrobe, but when I wake up in Bed in the dark I'm changed to five, abracadabra. Before that I was three, then two, then one, then zero. "Was I minus numbers?" "Hmm?" Ma does a big stretch. "Up in Heaven. Was I minus one, minus two, minus three—?" "Nah, the numbers didn't start till you zoomed down." (*Room*, 2010: 3)

He was a boy who had the best nose of his family. It was one of Jack's ability that was the most important.

I can smell Ma beside me, I've got the best nose in the family. "Oh, I forgot to have some when I woke up." (*Room*, 2010: 7)

3.1.1.2 Ma

She was a Jack's mother who was called by jack namely Ma. It happened when Jack was being interrogated by an Officer or Police woman called Oh.

"And what's your ma called?" asks Officer Oh. "Ma." "Has she got another name?" I hold up two fingers. "Two of them? Great. Can you

remember what they are?" They were in the note that he disappeared. I suddenly remember a bit. "He stole us." (Room, 2010: 184)

At the moment she was being as a victim of captivity in a kidnapping that was conducted by Old Nick. Then, she was hidden in a small room placed at the corner of the house.

Behind us there's another car just like this one. More police persons getting out. "Sit tight, Jack." Officer Oh's opening the door. "We're going to go find your ma." I jump, but her hand is making me stay in the car. "Me too," I'm trying to say but all that comes out is tears. She's got a big flashlight she switches on. "This officer will stay right here with you—" (Room, 2010: 191)

3.1.2 Minor Character

3.1.1.1 Old Nick

He was a man who had kidnapped Ma when she was around his house. He had a bad attitude and behavior. On that time, he was got up because hearing a sound that was made by Jack's Jeep toy when Jack was playing his Jeep toy from the cupboard. It made Old Nick unlike, so he was angry because of that something bad.

He's shouting, "What are you trying to pull?" Ma sounds all wobbly, she says, "What, what? Did you have a bad dream?" I'm biting Blanket, soft like gray bread in my mouth. "Did you try something? Did you?" His voice goes downer. "Because I told you before, it's on your head if—" (Room, 2010: 60)

3.2 Feminist Analysis

3.2.1 Women's Position

According to Mandell (1995: 14) states that women are subordinated by a special form of life called patriarchy through which men have all superior social roles and maintains women subordinate and exploited position. In the society are more women who are treated by the men as the second person. That means that the women have no same position, so they lose what something should be accepted by them. Women who have no power in the society will be judged as a poor people. Different with men who have a power in many sectors are more dominant. It makes them getting more. But if the women have stronger expectation, then they can be against everything that disturbs them and getting equal position like the men.

Women could also have an important position or more if they dare to strive it. It was reflected when Ma had the best position in her small family. Although Ma was just a woman, she could also achieve an equal position in social sector that she wanted. That was like man who could be as leader of her family at the time when she still stayed in the room, because she thought that Old Nick was a kidnapper not as her husband. It meant that her child who was called Jack had no a legal father like others. Therefore, Ma decided to rule her child both to do and to reach what she had planned in getting the freedom. Ma wanted to realize her plan by demanding Jack to pretend like an ill boy. She hoped that Old Nick could totally believe on Jack who was pretending as ill boy, so Jack would be taken to the hospital to get checked up as soon as possible. Ma also hoped that her escape would be successful without an obstacle when Jack would be being brought by Old Nick to get out from the room. Because all of it would run smoothly to realize her dream if Jack could also was successful in his escape. It can be seen from the text below.

“Oh, the doctors won’t do anything to you for real, because you won’t actually have anything wrong with you, remember?” She strokes my shoulder. “It’s just a trick for our Great Escape. Old Nick will carry you into the hospital, and the first doctor you see—or nurse, whatever—you shout, ‘Help!’ ” (Room, 2010: 133)

3.2.2 Women’s Role

Women are traditionally defined by their roles as daughter, wife, and mother. Women with disabilities are assumed to be full care taking and partnership roles (Mandell, 1995: 54). It states that the women in the world have the role such as wife, mother, house wife, assistant, and others, but in modern era they can have multiple roles. Most of the women have been left away by their husband. It is caused by death, divorce, infidelity and others. So it forces the women to always struggle their life and making they have a role like the men. They have the function to protect, to support, and to guide the member of her family so they could thread their life more safely and goodly. They did it all, because to reach their purposes.

Ma was one of the wonder women. That looked when Ma was still being in room with Jack. There, she did not just had a role as mother even she also had another role like a father who had function to protect, to maintain and to treat Jack. It was caused because she also had equal role in social sector to the man on her family to keep in order that being a stable family. It was started when Old Nick was in the room. He was sleeping with Ma on the mattress. Suddenly, Jack did a mistake by playing his toy. He played in the cupboard that was used as bedroom, so that made Old Nick wake up and scared. Then Old Nick looked for something in room to confirm that there was something bad which would bother to him. There Ma saw what Old Nick did. Therefore Ma talked to

Old Nick that it was noise which was appeared from Jack's toy. That was taken by Ma to prevent Old Nick doing another action on Jack. So what Old Nick would do did not happen and Jack did not get a threat. From that, Ma thought that Jack had made a mistake which made Ma gave the advice to Jack not to do something silly again. Then Jack both obeyed and accepted it. After it all, Ma also hoped that Jack would be avoided from the dangerous thing in the future. It is described on the text below.

“Listen,” says Ma, “I couldn’t care less about the jeep.” I blink at her. “He was my present.” “What I’m mad about”—her voice is getting bigger and scratchier—“is that you woke him up.” “Jeep?” “Old Nick.” It makes me jump that she says him out loud. “You scared him.” “He got scared at *me*?” “He didn’t know it was you,” says Ma. “He thought I was attacking him, dropping something heavy on his head.”
(Room, 2010: 65-66)

3.2.3 Women’s Right

According to Mandell (1995: 188), women have equal right to the men, such as right just treatment, right for championship, right for child care, right for education, right for public, right for love. It states that the women also have equal right to men anywhere they are, because they also have ability, intelligence, and skill like men. So they can also both do and make anything that they want. Even it disappear something which can be a discrimination, oppression, and intimidation between men to women in many sectors.

In *Room* novel was reflected that Old Nick did not bring vitamins to Ma when they were being in the room. As the woman, Ma also wanted to get something which she expected. She was brave to ask her right to Old Nick, because he did not give something important which Ma had requested to be used at that night. Those vitamins were really needed by her for Jack’s growth process because Jack was still in period to grow

better. Furthermore, Ma wanted to claim her right as the way to get what she should get from Old Nick. Ma was against a man because Old Nick had done unfair on her. It was form of woman resistance to the man. It also showed that the woman was often treated lower than the man. Woman did not get equal right that she should get. Even woman lost hers, because in environment often assumed that the women had no power. But Ma was different from others. Ma was courageous to state what she should get from Old Nick. It was a form of her equal right in a struggle as fighter to get healthy right of her family especially in the health sector. It is proved on the text below.

I didn't think I was switched off but then Old Nick's here all loud. "But vitamins—" Ma is saying. "Highway robbery." "You want us getting sick?" "It's a giant rip-off," says Old Nick. "I saw this exposé one time, they all end up in the toilet." Who ends up in Toilet? "It's just that, if we had a better diet—" (Room, 2010: 89)

3.2.4 Women's Participation

According to Mandell (1995: 215), Women have equal participation to the men, so that women feel that they appreciate their work in order to get profession, and women have the same access to the men's participation in social, politics, economy, sector, and roles in society.

It was realized by Ma when she was trying to explain about some television programs which were being watched by Jack in the morning. Ma both explained and informed that it could be real or fiction. Ma tried to give some real examples such as gardening, fitness, and news, and then, she also gave some fiction examples such the movie with werewolves and woman bursting like a balloon. It was forms of how Ma wanted to place her as educator of basic education in her family especially in education sector. It was done by her, because it was to prove

that a woman also had equal participation like a man who could also contribute in education, social life, politic, and economic. Especially, correlating in education in her family and could give more influence. It is showed on the text below.

I don't watch the cartoon planet this morning, I choose a bit of a gardening and a fitness and a news, and everything I see I say, "Ma, is that real?" and she says yeah, except one bit about a movie with werewolves and a woman bursting like a balloon is just special effects, that's drawing on computers. (Room, 2010: 82)

3.3 Assertiveness Analysis

Assertiveness was reflected in some parts of *Room* novel (2010). It was begun when there was woman named Ma and her child called Jack living together in a room around Old Nick's house. They are both a victim of kidnapping that was done by Old Nick during more less 7 years. In this room or out of the room, Ma lost much her positions, rights, roles, and participations. Therefore Ma wondered that having to do something in order to get the freedom. Ma included one of the major characters who had assertiveness. She struggled to get something with her assertiveness. It looked when Jack was seeing a mouse in room, then he fed a mouse with the waffle which had taken from on the floor. Jack thought that he had done something good, whereas it was a mistake. Ma known about what her child had done, so she went to Jack. She said that it was a dangerous thing and not repeating it again in the next time, but even Jack wanted to persuade Ma in order that she allowed it. Then, Ma's compliance as a form of her assertiveness appeared when Ma said "no" to Jack to it and no tolerance for it. It was done by Ma, because she wanted to deliver her purpose with her assertiveness in order that it was realized. It is showed on the text below.

She drags Stove out, there's a little crack at the bottom of Door Wall, she gets the bundle of aluminum foil and starts pushing balls of it into the crack. "Don't. Please." "I'm sorry. But where there's one there's ten." That's crazy math. Ma puts down the foil and holds me hard by my shoulders. "If we let him stay, we'd soon be overrun with his babies. Stealing our food, bringing in germs on their filthy paws . . ." (Room, 2010: 39-40)

Then, When Ma was explaining about a television program that was being watched by Jack. That was about a comprehension about a woman's condition. Furthermore, Ma also did not forget to explain about new aspects that Jack had not ever known. At being in the middle explanation, suddenly Ma said that time to watch TV was over, whereas her child still wanted to enjoy his program. After it, Jack talked to Ma to request five more minutes to watch a liked program on the TV. But Ma was not permitted about what Jack meant. Ma showed her assertiveness through the compliance act to state that no more time to watch TV again on that time. It was proved when she was shaking her head as indication that she refused that, so Jack agreed. It can be seen on the text below.

"No," says Ma, "she's so happy it's making her cry." That's weird. "Is she happy/sad, like you get when there's lovely music on TV?" "No, she's just an idiot. Let's switch the TV off now." "Five more minutes? Please?" She shakes her head. (Room, 2010: 53)

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the story, finally the researcher has found some important points to be as the conclusion in analyzing *Room* novel which uses a feminist approach through a liberal feminism. The first, the structural element analysis in *Room* novel consists of character and characterization, setting, plot, point of view, style, and theme which have a main function to give the understandings about purpose of the novel's contents deeply and clearly in the correlated unity one another. The author provides the characterization in *Room* novel that is reflected through the major characters that are called Ma and Jack.

Then, the researcher takes one of them to use as object of the study that discusses about the assertiveness of Ma. It could be proved when her assertiveness appeared because she got a discrimination, intimidation, violence, and harassment physically as well as psychologically from a crime act that was done by Old Nick. Then, the author also uses a plot that is very simple and detailed to explain every part of the novel coherently. It is started by an interesting exposition and complication. Afterwards, being continued by the greatly spectacular climax and after that, it is ended by a resolution with a happy ending because Ma had been successful to get what she expected. Furthermore, the author does not forget to give a point of view by using the first person narrator through character's Jack or Jack's perspective in telling a story that can make the sense more imaginative and sharp in an understanding process of the content in *Room* novel. Even the author also takes the amazing theme about a long captivity of the kidnapping action that can give more surprises in the story of the novel.

Secondly, the researcher applies feminist approach based on liberal feminism to analysis the feminist issue in *Room* novel. It is an assertiveness that is reflected through one of the main characters named as Ma. She was a victim of captivity in a kidnapping act that had been conducted by Old Nick. Then, she was placed in the hidden room. During in room, Ma almost lost many of her positions, roles, rights, and participations as the woman because she did not assert. She also received some cruel treatments from Old Nick. But, after Ma had born Jack, she was the brave woman to express her assertiveness to Old Nick. Even when Ma had succeeded to go out of the room to get her freedom, she also showed her assertiveness to fight some disturbances from others to her. Finally, Ma got all of hers that she expected all this time. Why the researcher concludes it as a form of the assertiveness because in the component of the assertiveness consists of compliance, duration of replay, loudness, request for new behavior, affect, and latency of response that Ma had acted in some moment in the story of *Room* novel. In this case can also be concluded that assertiveness can be applied to make the women stronger than before and moreover it can give a confidence to the women in enjoying their life. Even the women's assertiveness can make the women have equal role,

position, participation, and right to men in many sectors especially in the social, economy, politics, education and health sector where they live.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Collins, Patricia Hill. 1991. *Learning From The Outsider Within: The Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Thought*. Indiana: Indiana University Press.
- Donoghue Emma. 2010. Room. USA: Little, Brown, and Company. Mandell, Nancy. 1995. *Feminist Issues race, Class, and Sexuality*. Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice Hall Canada Inc.
- Marini, L dan Andriani, E. 2005. *Perbedaan Asertifitas Remaja Ditinjau dari Pola Asuh Orang Tua*. Jurnal Psikologi Universitas Sumatera Utara.