

# STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF 'ROSE FOR EMILY': A SHORT STORY BY WILLIAM FAULKNER

**Irma Diani**

*Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Bengkulu University  
E-mail: irmadianiunib@gmail.com*

**Abstract:** Structural analysis of Rose for Emily is exploring the plot, setting, characters, and conflict of that story. The aim of this study is exploring structure of Short Story 'Rose for Emily' written by William Faulkner in 1930. Method of this study is descriptive qualitative method. Data were collected by reading that short story. The data were analyzed structurally on theme, character, plot, conflict and setting. The result of this study showed that theme of this story is about death and resistant to the change of her life. Characters of this story are Emily Grierson was mysterious woman, cloistered and secretive woman. Mr. Grierson was Emily's father. He was solitude man. Homer Baron was Emily's boyfriend. He was kind person and humorous. Judge Steven was good person. Colonel Sartoris was good person. Tobe was a loyal person. Tobe connects Emily to Outside world. The Plot of this story consists of 5 sections, namely, 1. Emily's father dies, 2. Emily tries to keep his body and says he is not dead, 3. Emily meets Homer Baron and they date, 4. Emily buy poison and Emily's house smell horribly, 5. Emily dies. Conflict in this story is people vs. self-conflict, disagreement or problem between characters in a story. Setting of this story is Town of Jefferson, Mississippi.

**Keywords:** *Structural Analysis, Short Story, Literary Theory*

Literature is human work as a tools for their communication in order to share and communicate their ideas, feeling, and experience which could be classified into two different groups those writings that mainly presenting information which tells us about the world is round or knowledge that deals with facts, explanation, real peoples' lives and history, and other place those mainly entertain which imaginative and is aimed to arouse thoughts and feelings (Jones, 1968). Short story is a piece of prose fiction that typically can be read in one time or sitting and it focuses on a self-contained incident, causes single effect or mood (Klarer, 2004). Short story is considered as prose writing about imagined events and characters. Short Story is an independent hybrid genre that connects with other art forms at various points and keep eluding definition except as an interplay of tension and anti-thesis (Shaw, 1983) Fauzan tried to analyze a short story was written by Anie Lightning which was published in America, 2015. The problem highlighted in his study is structural analysis of Peanut and Sparky's short story. There are five elements become the focus on analyzing the short story: character, setting, conflict, plot, and theme (Fauzan, 2016).

One of short story worth analyzing is William Faulkner's Rose for Emily. This Story was published on April 30, 1930. William Faulkner was a Nobel Prize-winning novelist of the America who wrote best known novels, such as 'The Sound and the Fury' and 'As I Lay Dying'. Much of his work was poetry. He became famous after writing his controversial novel in 1931. He got Nobel Prize in 1949 in Literature and He won two Pulitzer and Two National Book Award. He died on July 6, 1962 (editors, 2014).

## **Method**

Qualitative research is a study that use the data are written or oral words are descriptively analyzed (Moleong, 2009). Data presented descriptive qualitatively, without calculation or statistic. Subject of this study is short story of Rose for Emily which was written by William Faulkner. Data were collected by reading the short story. After reading process, the writer looked for the character in that story. Then, analysis was performed to analyze the theme, plot, conflict, character, and setting of the short story descriptively.

## **Results and Discussion**

The result of this study deals with the title 'Structural Analysis of Rose for Emily, thus five elements that will be analyzed in this short story are *character* is a person, sometimes animal, who takes part in action of a short story or other literary work. *Setting* is time and place the story happens. *Plot* is a series of events and character in the story. *Conflict* is main character struggle against to other characters. *Theme* is central idea in short story.

### **The character**

- 1.Emily Grierson: From hopeful young girl to be cloistered and secretive woman. After her father's death, she became a very preserve, eccentric and mysterious. She was raised in aristocratic family. She was conservative and closed to economic, social, and racial equality.
- 2.Mr. Grierson: He was Emily's father. He controlled Emily's life and thwarted Emily to marry.
- 3.Homer Baron: He was humorist. He won many admires in Jefferson because of his gregarious nature.
- 4.Judge Steven: He attempted to handle the complaint from people about the smell from Grierson's house.
- 5.Colonel Sartoris: He was former mayor in Jefferson. He released Emily from tax but his benevolent gesture is not heeded by young generation in Jefferson.
- 6.Tobe: He was Emily's servant. He was only life line that Emily connects to outside world.

### **The setting**

Setting is the time and place which happens. Authors often use descriptions of landscape, scenery, buildings, seasons or weather to provide a strong sense of setting. It also denotes the location, historical period, and social surroundings in which the action of a text develops (Klarer, 2004).

Faulkner created his own Mississippi County as the setting for much of his fiction. Rose for Emily is set in County Seat of Yoknapatawpha, Jefferson. The main Character Emily Grierson was living in Grierson. Jefferson is small town in Mississippi, in the Deep South of The United States.

### **The plot**

Plot is the logic interaction of various thematic elements of a text which lead to a change of the original situation as presented at the outset of the narrative (Klarer, 2004). An ideal plot line includes following levels:

Exposition – complication – climax or turning point – resolution

The exposition or presentation of the situation is disturbed by a complication or conflict which produces suspense and leads to climax, crisis or turning point. The climax is followed by a resolution of the complication which the story usually ends (Klarer, 2004). In Rose for Emily, Faulkner used flashback to made readers understand the internal conflict between protagonist character, Emily and community. Faulkner started writing first section by giving a recap of Emily's life when community attends her funeral. The funeral was conducted at her home, to which no one came into for several years.

At the second section, Faulkner used flashback when Emily refused an official comes to her house when people detect a strong smell coming from her house. This occurred after his father died.

Another flashback occurs in section three, when Emily began seeing Homer Baron; people believe she would marry him. As their relation continuous, the section ends with Emily goes to drug store.

In section four, Faulkner described reactions when Emily buying arsenic. People believe that she bought it for killing herself and would not marry Homer Baron. When Emily purchases a toilet with Homer's initial, people believe that they would be married. Homer Baron disappears and people believe that he was preparing for Emily's move. Homer Baron appears one evening but after that he was never seen again.

The story ends in section five when people open Emily's house and found that Homer Baron is stretched out on the bed along with a strand of Emily's hair on the pillow that proves Emily sleeps beside Homer's body.

It can be concluded that plot of Rose for Emily is:

- 1.Emily's father dies
- 2.Emily tries to keep his body and says he is not dead

- 3.Emily meets Homer Baron and they date
- 4.Emily buy poison
- 5.Emily's house smell
- 6.Emily dies

### **The conflict**

Conflict is disagreement or problem between characters in a story (Fauzan, 2016). The conflict is the point of issue or problem in a story. In this story, there are two conflicts. Emily conflicts within herself and conflicts within communities. Conflict with herself is more dominant than conflict within community. Conflict with her is inner morals, dreams ambition, right and wrong.

### **The theme**

Theme is the central idea or belief in a short story. Theme holds the central idea may not be explicit or not obvious in a text (Fauzan, 2016). Theme of Rose for Emily is about death and resistant to change because she did not take Homer Baron's life but also kept his body in her house. She lived with her fiancé forever. She had her own husband. She was not afraid by the death. The death made deals with Emily. She gave her life and freedom for herself. A Rose for Emily is William Faulkner's work. He makes the reader feel Emily Grierson's life was so sad because she refused to adapt to the change.

### **Conclusion**

Structural analysis of Rose for Emily could be understood by reading that story and analyzing the element of the story such as setting, plot, theme, conflict, and character. This story can be the material in teaching literature for graduate and post graduate students. Teacher can use this story as learning material for literature subject. This study focuses on structural analysis, it is better for next researcher to look for the moral value of this story that is useful for students' character building.

### **References**

- Editors, T. B. (2014, April 2). *A&E Television Network*. Retrieved from <http://www.biography.com>
- Fauzan, U. (2016). Structural Analysis of "Peanut and Sparky": A Short Story by Arnie Lightning as A Way in Understanding Literature. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Linguistics (JELTL)*, 39-49.
- Jones, E. (1968). *Outline of Literature: Short Stories, Novel, and Poems*. New York: The MacMillan Company.
- Klarer, M. (2004). *An Introduction to Literary Studies. Second Edition*. London: Routledge.
- Moleong, L. (2009). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. Bandung: Remaja Rosda Karya.
- Shaw, V. (1983). *The Short Story*. London: Longman.