

**THE FRIENDSHIP VALUES BETWEEN THE MAIN CHARACTERS AS  
REFLECTED IN KATHERINE PATERSON'S *BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA*:  
A PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY**

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**Abstract**

This research entitled "The Friendship Values between the Main Characters as Reflected in Katherine Paterson's *Bridge to Terabithia: A Psychological Study*". This research was intended to find out the friendship values among the main characters of the novel *Bridge To Terabithia* written by Katherine Paterson. The type of this research was library research, which consists of primary data and secondary data. The primary data of this research were the novel entitled *Bridge To Terabithia* written by Katherine Paterson, while the secondary data are taken from other sources such as books, journals, articles that are related to the topic, and the internet sources to complete the data. The subject of this research was the novel *Bridge To Terabithia*, while the object of this research focused on the friendship values between the main characters for life in Katherine Paterson's *Bridge To Terabithia*. The methods used in this research were critical reading and documentation. Collecting the data, he does some steps such as reading the novel precisely and intensively, making notes, visiting the library, and exploring the data from the internet which were related to the topic. The researcher found the friendship values of the main characters were caring for others, being helpful, giving respect, giving hope, joys, and inspiring to others.

**Keywords:** *The friendship values, the main characters, Bridge to Terabithia novel.*

**Abstrak**

Penelitian ini berjudul "Nilai-Nilai Persahabatan antara Tokoh Utama pada Novel Katherine Paterson *Bridge to Terabithia: Studi Psikologi*". Penelitian ini dimaksudkan untuk mengetahui nilai-nilai persahabatan antara tokoh utama dari novel *Bridge To Terabithia* yang ditulis oleh Katherine Paterson. Jenis penelitian ini adalah penelitian kepustakaan, yang terdiri dari data primer dan data sekunder. Data primer dari penelitian ini adalah novel yang berjudul *Bridge To Terabithia* yang ditulis oleh Katherine Paterson, sedangkan data sekunder diambil dari sumber lain seperti buku, jomals, artikel yang terkait dengan topik, dan sumber internet untuk melengkapi data. Subjek penelitian ini adalah novel *Bridge To Terabithia*, sedangkan objek penelitian ini berfokus pada nilai-nilai persahabatan antara tokoh utama kehidupan di novel *Bridge To Terabithia* oleh Katherine Paterson. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah membaca kritis dan dokumentasi. Untuk mengumpulkan data, peneliti melakukan beberapa langkah seperti membaca novel secara tepat dan intensif, membuat catatan, mengunjungi

perpustakaan, dan menjelajahi data dari internet yang terkait dengan topik. Peneliti menemukan nilai-nilai persahabatan dari tokoh utama seperti saling peduli, saling membantu, saling menghormati, saling memberi harapan dan kegembiraan, dan saling menginspirasi.

**Kata Kunci:** Nilai-nilai persahabatan, karakter tokoh utama, novel *Bridge to Terabithia*.

## INTRODUCTION

The value of true friendship is infinite and priceless. Nothing can compare or ever replace the genuine, caring connection between two people who not only understand, but they also want only the very best of all things in life for the other. It is a gift; it is a treasure. Friendship values can be given by taking care of each other, friendly, respectful, helpful, loyal, and wise.

Some famous authors discuss friendship in their literary work, and one of them is Katherine Paterson in the novel *Bridge to Terabithia*. The choice of the novel as the topic of the analysis was based on the following reasons:

First, Katherine Paterson was one of the most famous writers in American Literature. She was born in 1932 in China. As a writer, she wrote some novels. Also, she had written more than 30 books for

children, including 14 novels for young people.

Secondly, the novelist was famous, proven by some of her books published in more than 25 languages, and she is the 1998 recipient of the most distinguished international award given to a writer for a contribution to children's literature, the Hans Christian Andersen Award. She received the Newbery Medal. Katherine Paterson was currently vice-president of the National Children's Book and Literacy Alliance, a non-profit organization that advocates for literacy, literature, and libraries.

The last reason was the novel *Bridge to Terabithia* told about friendship values between a young man and young woman in every condition. The novel was learning to people, that friendship was some important in life, and we could make to good learners by any people.

Based on the explanations above, the researcher was interested in analyzing friendship values between the main characters as reflected in the novel *Bridge to Terabithia* by Katherine Paterson. The analysis used a psychological approach to discuss it.

In this research, the researcher employed the psychological approach to help his analysis of the novel because this approach considers that psychology is a mean to criticize a literary work. It could be used to explain, interpret character and characterization and explain the psychology of the author.

According to Esteen (1984: 20-22), a novel is made up of intrinsic and extrinsic elements. The intrinsic elements are formal ones that build literary work inherently.

## **METHOD**

The object of this research was a person in the novel. According to Nurgiyantoro (2005: 165), an object is a person or thing to which an action, feeling, and so forth are directed. All of the things which will

They are character and characterization, theme, setting, plot and point of view, while the extrinsic elements build a literary work externally, such as psychology, politic, history, philosophy, and education or moral values.

Subhan, in his book (2003: 57) explain the relationship between psychology and literary criticism. He says that psychology can be used to help a literary criticism or literary research to explain, interpret and evaluate literary works. He also says that the psychological approach can be used to analyze character and characterization in a story. The psychology science can be used to explain why and how a character behaves in a specific state.

be analyzed in this novel called object.

The researcher used the primary and secondary source. The primary source was taken from the novel *Bridge to Terabithia* by

Katherine Paterson, which consists of 141 pages and published by HarperCollins Children's Books in 2001 printed in the United States of America. To get the primary data, the researcher read the novel carefully and took notes on critical data.

The secondary source was taken from many books and journal that have relation to the title of the research and also the researcher goes to the library to find out the supporting data, to understand the content of the novel, and interpret the meaning. The researcher needed related book, article, and other documents as references.

The researcher used description, example, and the form of the sentences. The researcher would not use statistics to describe the content of the novel, the

characterization and the plot of the story.

The qualitative technique was chosen here. This technique was used because this analysis would obtain the description of the content of a novel. The research was able to divine, identify, collect, describe and analyze data aspects of the literary work giving the whole meaning.

This research used qualitative research, and it was interpretive, according to Klein and Myers'. They defined research to be interpretive if it was assumed that our knowledge of reality was gained only through social constructions such as language, consciousness, shared meanings, documents, tools, and other artefacts. It attempted to understand phenomena through the meanings that people assign to them.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher described the friendship values in "*Bridge to Terabithia*" novel by doing the main characters as the protagonist. After reading the whole novel, the researcher got some values of

making friendship done by main characters, such as:

### 1. *Caring others*

Jess Aarons has made the friendship by caring to others; but his own times to take care Leslie Burke.

He cares about her so much and wants to do everything in his life. The friendship is shown in the following quotation:

"After school, Leslie got on the bus before he did and went straight to the corner of the long back seat-right to the seventh graders' seat. He jerked his head at her to warn her to come farther upfront, but she would not even look at him. He could see the seventh graders headed for the bus-the huge bossy bosomy girls and the mean, skinny, narrow-eyed boys. They'd kill her for sitting in their territory. He jumped up and ran to the back and grabbed Leslie by the arm. "You gotta come up to your regular seat, Leslie." (Paterson, 2001: 39)

The quotation from the novel above is taken when Leslie Burke got something dangerous because she sat on bossy girls. He took care for Leslie Burke.

In another occasion, Jess Aarons also had shown his caring to her. See the following quotation:

"Lord, Leslie. Don't say that. You can always watch on mine. But it was too late to save her. The hissing sounds of disbelief were already building into a rumbling of contempt.

Mrs. Myers blinked her eyes. "Well. Well." She blinked some more. You could tell she was trying to figure out how to save Leslie, too. "Well. In that case, one could write a one-page composition on something else. Couldn't one, Leslie?" She tried to smile across the classroom upheaval to Leslie, but it was no use. "Class! Class! Class!" Her Leslie smile shifted suddenly and ominously into a scowl that silenced the storm." (Paterson, 2001: 37-38)

From the dialogues above explain that Jess Aarons tried to give solution in Leslie Burke's problem to save from a rumbling of contempt from other people. He felt to care because of the rumbling of contempt. He gave a smile to her, although it was no use. The researcher also gets the value of caring for making friendship done by Leslie Burke.

## 2. *Being helpful*

Helpfulness is technically defined as the property of providing useful assistance, and friendliness is evidenced by a kindly and helpful disposition.

Jess Aarons is a good boy. He gives the time to do voluntary

actions intended to help each other as sharing. Also, he always gives help for Leslie Burke in every condition as long as he can. It can be looked at the following quotation:

"At recess time when he was playing King of the Mountain, he could see that Leslie was surrounded by a group of girls led by Wanda Kay. He couldn't hear what they were saying, but he could tell by the proud way Leslie was throwing her head back that the others were making fun of her. Greg Williams grabbed him then, and while they wrestled, Leslie disappeared. It was none of his business, really, but he threw Greg down the hill as hard as he could and yelled to no one in particular, "Gotta go." "They'd kill her for sitting in their territory. He jumped up and ran to the back and grabbed Leslie by the arm. "You gotta come up to your regular seat, Leslie." (Paterson, 2001: 38-39)

From the quotation above, the researcher finds, Jess Aarons gave his helping to Leslie Burke. He wanted to keep her from the dangerous thing by his arm.

Helpful also can be looked at the following quotation:

"Come on," she said. "Let's find a place to build our castle stronghold." They had gone only a few yards into the woods beyond the creek bed when Leslie stopped.

"How about right here?" she asked.

"Sure," Jess agreed quickly, relieved that there was no need to plunge deeper into the woods. He would take her there, of course, for he wasn't such a coward that he would mind a little exploring now and then farther in amongst the ever-darkening columns of the tall pines. But as a regular thing, as a permanent place, this was where he would choose to be – here where the dogwood and redwood played hide and seek between the oaks and evergreens, and the sun flung itself in golden streams through the trees to splash warmly at their feet. "Sure," he repeated himself, nodding vigorously." (Paterson, 2001: 43)

The quotation above tells what they had done for the friendship by helping each other, togetherness; put their own time to find a place to build. They made time for doing everything to find something that they had imagined before in that

place. The researcher also gets the value of helping do work done by Leslie Burke to his family at home.

For Leslie Burke giving a helping hand is something that she should do for her family and friends because it is a part of his life. She gives a helping hand in every condition as long as she can. It can be seen at the following quotation:

"Jess had finished all the picking and helped his mother can the beans. She never canned except when it was scalding hot anyhow, and all the boiling turned the kitchen into some kind of hellhole. Of course, her temper had been terrible, and she had screamed at Jess all afternoon and was now too tired to fix any supper."

"Jess made peanut-butter sandwiches for the little girls and himself, and because the kitchen was still hot and almost nauseatingly full of bean smell, the three of them went outside to eat." (Paterson, 2001: 10)

From the dialogue above, it can be seen that Leslie Burke was not only helping her friend, but she also gave her helping hand to her family. Every day, she did the kitchen work for his mother for as

example; she could do for the beans, made peanut-butter sandwiches for the little girls and herself.

### 3. *Giving respect to others*

In certain ways, respect manifests itself as a kind of ethic or principle, such as in the commonly taught concept of respect for others or reciprocity. It is described in the following quotation:

"She took note of Leslie and asked for an introduction, which one of the girls prissily gave. Then she smiled at Leslie, and Leslie smiled back the first time Jess could remember seeing Leslie smile since she won the race on Tuesday. "What do you like to sing, Leslie?" (Paterson, 2001: 32)

The quotation above described Leslie Burke's happiness because she won the race in the competition. Jess Aarons had given support to her that had she did, and Leslie Burke smiled back to him to respond it back.

Others her respected also can be looked from:

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the girls prissily gave. Then she smiled at Leslie, and Leslie smiled back the first time Jess could remember seeing Leslie smile since she won the race on Tuesday. "What do you like to sing, Leslie?" (Paterson, 2001: 32)

From the story above described Leslie Burke was giving a broad smile on her tanned face to other people before she started to run as if gave sportifitas in the champion.

"We need a place," she said, "just for us. It would be so secret that we would never tell anyone in the whole world about it." Jess came swinging back and dragged his feet to stop. She lowered her voice almost to a whisper. "It might be a whole secret country," she continued, "and you and I would be the rulers of it." (Paterson, 2001: 42)

The quotation above also explains how they saved something secret to other people. Therefore, among them had to respect what they did. In addition, it would be the rulers of the place (*Terabithia*).

#### 4. *Giving hope to others*

Hope is the belief in a positive outcome related to events and circumstances in one's life. In other words, hope is a feeling of optimistic feelings in a negative or falling situation to overcome it in success.

Jess Aarons is Leslie's friend. He wants to be a friend in every condition to her. He hopes anything very much just his friend. Their friendship had taught them some valuable lessons. It can be looked at the following quotation:

"She probably was. Jess wouldn't argue that, but he saw her as a beautiful wild creature who had been caught for a moment in that dirty old cage of a schoolhouse, perhaps by mistake. But he hoped, he prayed, she'd never get loose and fly away." (Paterson, 2001: 13)

Someday, Leslie Burke got an opponent from other students by her mistake, but she would not argue that. Jess who knew that hope and prayed her never to get loose and fly away for her. The quotation from the story above shows that Jess Aarons has a hopefulness to her condition.

### 5. *Giving joyness to others*

Joyness is needed in friendship's life. It is indispensable. Leslie Burke has made the friendship by her joke. She is a good friend for Jess Aaron. She has known how to make a happy life in their life. It is explained in the following quotation:

"Leslie could always come up with something funny that made the long days bearable. Often the joke was on Mrs Myers. Leslie was one of those people who sat quietly at her desk, never whispering or daydreaming or chewing gum, doing beautiful schoolwork, and yet her brain was so full of mischief that if the teacher could have once seen through that mask of perfection, she would have thrown her out in horror." (Paterson, 2001: 46-47)

From the quotation above, Leslie Burke made the life of Jess Aarons more beautiful and colourful by her joke. She always came up with something different from others, it was something funny that she made at a long time. She always did something beautifully to her friends or teacher.

### 6. *Inspiring others*

*Imagination* is the ability to create pictures in your mind (Hornby: 675). The act of imagination plays a central role in *Bridge to Terabithia*. Whenever Jess and Leslie encounter difficulties in their real lives, they escape to the fantasy world of Terabithia. By using this fantasy as merely a way out from difficult thing. They use it to work through their problems. A schoolyard bully becomes a menacing troll, for example, and only after facing down that troll Jess and Leslie can face down the bully herself. The researcher sees their imagination from this story. It is seen in the following quotation:

"Jess and Leslie turned and ran up over the empty field behind the old Perkins place and down to the dry creek bed that separated farmland from the woods. There was an old crab apple tree there, just at the bank of the creek bed, from which someone long has forgotten had hung a rope. They took turns swinging across the gully on the rope." (Paterson, 2001: 42)

The illustration above is taken when they thought about it, and they tried to find the place that they imagined themselves to be a king and queen into Terabithia. They did it themselves. This action

showed that they have begun to think about her future life, and they want to get better in their life. They also used their active imagination to invent ways to deal with every problem they got.

### CONCLUSION

The researcher concludes as follows:

1. Caring other done by Jess Aarons and Leslie Burke. They had made the friendship by taking care; putting their own time to take care of each other.
2. Being helpful, done by Jess Aarons and Leslie Burke. They had done when they got the problem. They had given a helping hand by each other.
3. Giving respect to others, done by Jess Aarons and Leslie Burke. They had respected each other by their smile.
4. Giving hope to others, done by Jess Aarons. He has a hopefulness to Leslie Burke's condition.

5. Giving joyness to others, done by Leslie Burke made the life of Jess Aaron more beautiful and colourful by her joke.
6. Giving inspiring to others, done by Jess Aarons and Leslie Burke. Jess and Leslie encounter difficulties in their real lives; they escape to the fantasy world.

Analyzing the novel was exciting to work to do. After reading the novel, the researcher found some friendship values. That is all human being should be respecting each other, taking and giving each other in all aspect, especially in friendship. This novel also taught the reader how to live in care feeling, friendship, helpful, respectful, and so on.

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