



Analysis on Languages of Love in the Novel “Me Before You”

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to find out the essence of love and how these languages of love were used by the characters in the novel “Me Before You” and their effects to human relationships. The novel was written by the renowned writer, Jojo Moyes and was considered as the New York’s best selling novel in 2012. This study utilized formalistic approach and Chapman’s theory on the Five Languages of Love (1992). Based on the findings of the study, the researchers concluded that: the expressions of love that are evident in the novel “Me Before You” are: (1) words of affirmation, (2) physical touch, (3) quality time (4) acts of service and (5) receiving gifts. Moreover, the most evident love language is the word of affirmation as it was used for twenty-six times by the characters in the novel. The characters revealed the expressions of love through words, gestures, attention, care and time. It is on this milieu that love is considered as the very important aspect in our lives to free us from sadness and to give us reason to continue living. Hence, the absence of love gives imbalance to our daily emotion. The author used the characters to reveal the different expressions of love that arouse us to the reality of love. It raises mindful thinking to the readers for the kind of future brings in their lives when they choose to love someone unconditionally.

Keywords : love languages, acts of service, physical touch, words of affirmation, receiving gifts, quality time

1 INTRODUCTION

Novel has caught the world’s attention in 16th century and continues in the present. As the generation passed, novel about love gives adequacy on the illusions of the reader’s mind. It gives more attention in the eyes of the readers when it talks about love as it shown in literary works that love is one of the genres in a novel.

The novel “Me Before You” written by JoJo Moyes was published in United Kingdom in the year 2012. It is the first among the three series: “Me Before You”, “After You” and “Still Me”. The novel was a literary romance that talks about different languages of love. A love for family, friends and special someone. The novel gives us insights about living our life in a meaningful and unique way. The author shows the true color of people’s struggle, in their own version, and the urge of what they call ideal life. Moyes puts it in one with ups and downs but still there is something that will touch one’s heart. This novel is chosen by the researchers because it is the most popular among other novels of Jojo Moyes written works. It is also New York’s best-selling novel in the year 2012. It gives a heartfelt situation that shows the languages of love.

The researchers believe that the novel “Me Before You” written by Jojo Moyes, produces different expressions of love which can only be understood through the help of the characters and theme in the novel. They are interested to find out the essence of love, its various languages, and how these languages have effect towards the characters.

This study utilized formalistic approach and Gary Chapman’s Theory on the Five Languages of Love (1992).

According to Chapman (1992) formalistic approach allows the

reader to look at a literary piece, and critique it according to its form, point of view, style, imagery, atmosphere, theme, and word choice. Formalism approach is an approach that refers to analyzing and interpreting almost exclusively, on features of the literary text itself. It also refers to critical approaches that analyze, interpret, or evaluate the inherent features of a text. This asserts that the text stands on its own as a complete entity. It is the study of a text without taking into account any of outside influence. It is an interpretative approach that emphasizes literary form and the study of literary devices within the text. This separates a work from the influences of culture, authorship, and society and politics; that is, a work being analysed purely on its own intrinsic worth. This approach calls for the analysis of a work of literature’s composition and structure, the mechanics of the literary work such as genre and the inherent features such as syntactical structure and the use of literary devices (Literary Criticism Module, 2018 as cited by Azucena, 2019 p. 23). The formalistic views on form, was used in this study to look at the essential structure of the story were brought to analysis and interpretation. It can help the researchers to reveal the different languages of love within the novel.

Chapman (2015) unveils the five languages of love these are: words of affirmation, receiving gifts, physical touch, acts of service and quality time. Words of affirmation means that verbal compliments or words of affection, kind words, encouraging words, and humble words said to the partner/lover. Receiving gifts means giving gifts to their partners in order to show love and the gift itself is a symbol or an expression of love. Physical touch involves kissing, embracing, back rubs and sexu-

al intimacy as way of communicating emotional love to the partner. Acts of service means serving one another and the last love language is, quality time which means sharing quality conversations and activities together.

2 METHODOLOGY

This study employed descriptive qualitative method of research in order to determine the different expressions of love in the novel "Me Before You" written by Jojo Moyes through the use of Chapman's theory (1992) and formalism approach.

The researchers had to read all the twenty-eight chapters of the chosen novel. Then, critical analysis was done to determine the different languages of love and how the different languages of love were used by the characters in the novel.

3 RESULTS

The novel, "Me Before You" by Jojo Moyes, has written a perfect modern love story. It is centered on circumstances which involve pain and hope, the kind of story that will keep us turning pages into the night. Louisa Clark and Will Traynor can capture one's heart and linger there long after their story has ended. Thus, the research problems are presented based on the researchers' analysis and interpretation. 1.) What expressions of love are evident in the novel? 2.) How are the expressions of love used by the characters in the novel? The revelation of love languages is through the characters of the story in the following dialogue:

The expressions of love are identified and analysed by the researchers thru the use of Chapman's five languages of love. Results show that words of affirmation is the most evident expression of love as employed by the main characters in the novel.

Words of Affirmation

This means accepting verbal and non-verbal compliments from love ones or words of affection, appreciation, encouraging words, kind words, words of forgiveness and humble words are expressed and told to the partner.

Louisa Clark and William Traynor

- (1) *Dear Clark, This is to show you that I am not an entirely selfish arse. And I do appreciate your efforts.
Thank You. Will*

"This job has been the making of you, Lou."

This statement is the letter from William Traynor to Louisa Clark that shows his appreciation to her efforts after all in his being sarcastic to her, still Louisa is there to take care of him. It's the way to express William's gratefulness to Louisa Clark which helps the researcher to reveal that the word of affirmation was used in the letter. In this statement, William Traynor's letter to Louisa Clark shows how the character used the language of love which is the word of affirmation to appreciate all the effort that was given to him.

- (2) *It's okay. Just breathe. Come here. Just Breathe. Slowly.*

In this statement Will is trying to give calming words to Louisa to let her stay calm and to let her feel secure in his side. Those comforting words from Will made Louisa Clark calm down, he makes use of the love language, that is, word of affirmation. The said character uses those words to express his care for her and in that moment Louisa felt that being with Will Traynor made her feel safe.

- (3) *"Hah. Move in closer. You smell fantastic."*

The statement above was uttered during the moment when Louisa Clark and Will Traynor are dancing while she sat in Will's lap and gave

him a dance. Louisa uses language of love in this statement to express her appreciation to Will that his smell is fantastic it let her go closer to him and that shows appreciation and affection towards him, and that language of love used by the character is word of affirmation and it is a powerful communicator of love in the love language.

- (4) *"Sometimes, Clark, you are pretty much the only thing that makes me want to get up in the morning."*

The character of the novel, William Traynor uses the word of affirmation to express how much she admires Louisa Clark's beauty that can make him wake up every morning. The statement shows that the character uses the love language (word of affirmation) to express his appreciation to Louisa for her beauty.

- (5) *I liked the shorthand we seemed to fall into when nobody else was around, the easy intimacy that had sprung between us. I liked the way he turned his face and looked at me with amusement, like I had somehow turned out to be so much more than he had expected.*

The statement above shows how the character of the novel uses the expression of love in which Louisa Clark appreciates how Will Traynor look at her like they're just the only persons exist in the world, fall in love with each other and that made her surprise as Will Traynor sees her with amusement. Those appreciative words reveal the word of affirmation that shows the observation of Louisa Clark of how Will Traynor looked at her.

- (6) *"I think we can do all sorts of things. I know this isn't a conventional love story. I know there are all sorts of reasons I shouldn't even be saying what I am. But I love you. I do. I knew it when I left Patrick. And I think you might even love me a little bit."*

The character of Louisa Clark is confessing her love to Will Traynor in this statement. She takes the risk in confessing her feeling because she already knows that they couldn't have a conventional love story just like what others had and she even broke up with her long-time boyfriend for Will and that "I love You" in the statement shows how she used a love language which is a word of affirmation to express her love for him through saying those three powerful words "I love you" and she really meant it.

Quality Time

Some people believe that being together, doing things together and focusing in on one another is the best way to show and receive love. This includes being emotionally engaged with each other no matter what you're doing even if it's just hanging out.

- (1) *We sat in silence, gazing at the castle. We sat there a moment longer, listening to the tick its way to silence.*

Louisa Clark shows in the statement how she uses one quality time in the part where she and Will Traynor spent time in a silent that all they feel is the wind but in their heart the moment they sat and listen the surrounding mesmerizing the view of the castle together and it proves the quality of time.

- (2) *I made picnics and we sat out on the edges of fields, just enjoying the breeze and being away from the annex.*

This statement reveals that the characters of the novel use the expression of love when the two of them, Louisa Clark and William Traynor enjoyed the time together in a picnic and having a good time as they are just always in the annex and it consider as the evident of the love language (quality time).

- (3) *I sat down carefully on Will's lap, draped my arms around his neck to hold myself in place. He looked into*

my eyes for a minute, as if working out whether he could refuse into my eyes for a minute, as if working out whether he could refuse me. Then, astonishingly, Will wheeled us out onto the dance floor.

The character in this statement reveals the quality time as they went out to the dance floor and wheeled the wheelchair and didn't mind the persons around them looking, like they are just like the others normally dancing. Every minute of them being close shows how they used the love language (quality time) because it gives value to their every second, minute, hour of time being together.

(4) *Oh, but it was so beautiful down there. The night was warm, carrying on its breezes the scents of distant barbecues, of warm oils on skin, of the faint salt tang of the sea. Will and I stopped near our favourite tree. Someone had built a fire on the beach, perhaps for cooking, and all that was left was a pile of glowing embers*

This statement represents the language of love, quality time. Spending time together is a way of how the characters in the novel used their quality time by being together near the tree and the beautiful ambience around them gives a romantic moment for Louisa and Will.

(5) *"We sat in silence, gazing at the castle. Under a full moon, it seemed flooded in an ethereal blue."*

It seems that Louisa Clark and William Traynor had a good time in gazing at the castle and it reveals the love language, quality time. The characters used the language of love upon sitting together under a full moon as it is another way to express your love to someone through sitting beside her/him without any gadget with you, looking each other and talking, giving each other your attention. Indeed, time is a precious commodity.

(6) *"I closed my eyes and lay my head against the headrest, and we sat there together for a while longer, two people lost in remembered music, half hidden in the shadow of a castle on a moonlit hill."*

This statement reveals quality time as Louisa Clark and William Traynor sit together in the shadow of a castle on a moonlit hill. Sitting there for a while longer and it is how the characters of the novel use the love language, quality time because spending your time and giving your undivided attention to someone you really love, it matters not only about the time but it is also about giving your lives to each other. It is a powerful emotional communicator of love.

(7) *Then, astonishingly, Will wheeled us out onto dance floor, and began moving in small circles under the sparkling lights of the mirror balls.*

In this statement, the language of love, that is, quality time. It reveals that the characters of the novel, William Traynor and Louisa Clark are enjoying their time together in the dance floor. They used quality time through moving in small circles under the sparkling lights of the mirror balls. It really different when you know that you spend your precious time to someone who is worth it, William was looking into her eyes as they dance, giving her his full attention, doing something with her that she enjoys doing and doing it wholeheartedly.

Act of Service

It refers to doing special things for the lover or partner, about serving one another like cooking food, cleaning the house, preparing foods, feeding and helping one another.

(1) *I leaned across, gently peeled his collar from the side of his neck, placed my mouth against it, and took the offending tag between my front teeth. After a few seconds, I was*

able to bite through it, and I closed my eyes, trying to ignore the scent of clean male, the feel of his skin against mine, the incongruity of what I was doing.

This statement presents how Louisa helps Will to get the tag of his cloth in the public is a way of presenting the act of service so that he will be comfortable enough with his outfit. In brief, she would do things for him to express her love for him by doing such thing and seek to please him by serving him. Louisa uses the act of service in assuring that William cannot feel any distraction.

(2) *I wheeled him out, down to the car park in the lift, and loaded Will up without incident.*

Louisa wheeled carefully Will to the car making sure Will is comfortable and it will be done with no incident because having a quadriplegic need to be treated well and in the statement it proves the love language, act of service. Louisa Clark used the act of service in this statement as she wheeled William Traynor carefully; her willingness to serve him is another way to express love more effectively.

(3) *I was feeding Will as I said something to Granddad, folding a piece of smoked salmon in my fingers and placing it to Will's lips. (Act of service)*

In this statement, it presents the willingness of Louisa Clark feeding Will that also shows how she used the act of service as it part of her job but also she does really care for Will's health she won't even mind if some people are looking at them. Such action as feeding Will is a tremendous benefit in meeting his emotional needs.

(4) *After an hour, I leaned over, lifted the blanket from Will's arm, and there, pale brown against the white sheet, lay his hand. (Act of service)*

In this statement, it represents the love language, act of service as Louisa Clark lifted the blanket from Will's arm. It is another way in helping him to recover and to feel fine in his illness. Louisa's character expresses her love towards Will and uses the act of service through putting blanket to Will's arm in order for him to feel warm and to feel better.

(5) *I packed an overnight bag with all the things he might want the next day, including clean clothes, his toothbrush, hairbrush, and medication, plus earphones in case he was enough to listen to music.*

This statement represents the language of love that is act of service. Louisa Clark packed all the things that Will Traynor might needed upon recovering in the hospital. The character of Louisa Clark used the act of service in this statement as she really prepared everything to assure that Will can't feel boredom and to show that she really cares for Will's fast recovery.

(6) *I had spent days wrangling with the finer requirements of quadriplegic travel and right up until the morning we left I had not been convinced that Will would be well enough to come. Now, seated with the bags, I gazed at him, withdrawn and pale in the bustling airport, and wondered again if I had been wrong. I had a sudden moment of panic. What if he got ill again? What if he hated every minute, as he had with the horse racing? What if I had misread this whole situation and what Will needed not an epic journey, but ten days was at home in his own bed? (Act of Service)*

The language of love that is present in this statement is the act of service because Lou did everything to give Will a perfect journey in their travel and maybe it will change his decision about going to Switzerland.

land. The character of Louisa uses the love language, act of service as she underwent a lot of research just to assure the safety and needs of Will Traynor in their travel.

(7) I turned back, and walked over to the bed, seating myself on its edge. As he watched, I leaned forward and gently pulled his sun-browned neck toward me. I knew just how to move him now, how I could make his weight, his solidity, work with me. Holding him close to me, I leaned across and placed a fat white pillow behind his shoulders before releasing him back into its soft embrace. He smelled of the sun, as if it had seeped deep into his skin, and I found myself inhaling silently, as if he were something delicious.

This statement presents the language of love that is act of service as Louisa Clark putting William into a comfort position and it made her feel so good taking care of William. Putting William into a comfort position is how Louisa uses the act of service in this statement as it is obvious that she loves him even serving him made her feel that she's really willing to take care of Will even how hard it is.

Receiving Gifts

People who respond to this love language aren't materialistic; rather they enjoy knowing that they were on their partner's mind even when they weren't together.

(1) Will inclined his head toward me. "If you look in the back of the chair, there's a little something for the dinner."

Another language of love that is present in this statement is the receiving gifts. Will Traynor shows his thoughtfulness by giving a gift to Louisa Clark's family a wine in the dinner and that represents their celebration for her birthday because for them wine can make the celebration complete. It is a way of Will's character in the novel uses the receiving gift; the gift itself is a symbol of that thought. It doesn't matter whether it costs money. And it is not the thought implanted only in their mind that counts but the thought expressed in actually securing the gifts and giving it as the expression of love.

(2) "There's something in my bag for you too," Will said. I pulled the fabric from the parcel, and in my hands were two pairs of black and yellow tights. Adult-sized, opaque, in a wool so soft that it almost slid my fingers.

Another statement that shows the love language which is the receiving gifts when Will Traynor gives Louisa Clark his birthday gift the black and yellow tights and it really made her happy as it her favourite tights when she was a child and for her it was so unexpected to see those tights in an adult size. Presenting a different kind of gift that Louisa considers as the best gift she receives in her birthday is how the character of the novel, William uses the love language, receiving gift. It seems that gifts need not to be expensive but to be meaningful.

(3) Will gave me another book of short stories, one that he'd ordered from Amazon, and a copy of The Red Queen.

In this statement, receiving gift is revealed as Louisa Clark received a book of short stories and a copy of The Red Queen, which William Traynor ordered from Amazon. A gift is something you can hold in your hand and say that you are special to someone. The gift itself is a symbol of thought. And it is not the thought implanted only in the mind that counts but the thought expressed in actually securing the gift and giving it as the expression of love. The character of William uses the love language that being mention in this statement as he presents Louisa

the book with full of effort and excitement.

The word of affirmation was used by William Traynor through writing a letter in order to show his deep appreciation and gratefulness to Louisa Clark for all the things and sacrifices she did for him. For physical touch, Louisa Clark shows a physical touch in which she placed her hand in Will's forehead in order to motivate him not to mind of other things but to get well as soon as possible as some parts of the body are more than sensitive than others. Louisa Clark uses the physical touch as she placed her hand on William Traynor's forehead that means physical touch is louder than words as the fingers are the extremely sensitive area of the body in physical touch. The character of Patrick reveals quality time when Louisa Clark sat beside her boyfriend, Patrick with uneasy feeling. Spending her time and sitting beside him. In this situation Louisa feels comfortable, that she can relax, knowing that her boyfriend will understand her. She feels secure in his presence. She may face many uncertainties in her work. She may have struggles in other areas of her life, but with her boyfriend she feels secure. Another character in the novel reveals the love language which is her sister who never leaves her because she knows that Louisa needs someone to lean on, someone who is willing to listen and comfort her of what she feels inside because when you are facing such circumstances your family is the one who can really understand your pain without judging you.

4 CONCLUSIONS

All the five languages of love which include: words of affirmation, quality time, act of service and receiving gifts are found in novel. The five languages are used by the characters in the novel through their words, gestures, attention, care and time. Words of affirmation is the most prevalent language of love followed by physical touch, quality time, then, act of service, and last is the receiving gift. The five languages are used by the characters in different situations. Louisa Clark shows how she cares so much about her family to the point that she became the caregiver of William Traynor to earn money and provide their needs and that leads her to fall in love with William. William Traynor became a self-centered person because of his situation but as he observes her sacrifices in life he was touched and started to care about Louisa and began to appreciate and loved her. Another character that used the love language, Katrina Clark, she was always there for her sister Louisa to comfort her and give some pieces of advice about her situation with William Traynor. Indeed, family is a good pain reliever then Katrina wipe her sister's eyes with a damp tissue as an act of service. For the receiving gifts the character of Will Traynor reveals an expression of love when he gives Louisa Clark his birthday gifts the black and yellow tights and it really made her happy as it her favourite tights when she was a child and for her it was so unexpected to see those tights in an adult size, for her it was the best gift she ever received in her birthday. It seems that gifts need not to be expensive but to be meaningful.

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the researchers have drawn implications. The novel of Jojo Moyes "Me Before You" in which the author used the characters to reveal the different expressions of love that arouse us to the reality of love. It raises mindful thinking to the readers for the kind of future brings in their lives when they choose to love someone unconditionally.

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