

ROLES OF MOTHER IN EMMA DONOGHUE'S NOVEL *ROOM*

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Abstract

This study focuses on the roles of mother performed by Ma in the novel *Room*. The purpose of this research is to show Ma's dominant roles in educating, maintaining, and managing the life of Jack, her son. The descriptive qualitative method was applied to analyze the data and to answer the research problems in this study. The data are obtained from the quotations in the novel *Room*. This research is analyzed based on a theory of the roles of mother proposed by several experts such as Ki Hajar Dewantara in Muthmainnah, McGuigan, and Good. Twelve data could be used as evidences of the mother's roles represented by Ma. The results of the study show that there are four dominant roles of mother performed by Ma. The four roles of a mother in the novel are mother as an educator, mother as a carer of family's physical and mental health, mother as a company, and mother as a communicator. From the data presented in the analysis, it is very clear that Ma performs her roles as a mother well. With limited space for movement, Ma can still provide education, health maintaining, attention and affection, play and guide for Jack through life.

Keywords: mother, role, communicator, educator, accompany

1. Introduction

Roberts and Jacobs (1995: 1) say that literature refers to a composition that tells stories, dramatizes situations, emotion, and analysis of ideas. Literature helps us grow, both personally and intellectually. It provides an objective base for knowledge and understanding. Whitla (2010: 6) says that literature becomes a means of passing on the present age the values and the cultural system from generation to generation. Literature has four genres: 1) fiction, 2) poetry, 3) drama, 4) non-fiction.

As one of literary works, the novel always presents not only entertainment but also enlightening stories. This is why this study is concerned with a novel entitled *Room*. The novel was published by Back Bay Books in 2010. *Room* is a Canadian novel that talks about the abduction story of Ma using a third-person point of view, Jack, the protagonist, a five-year-old boy. This novel has completely different situations. Jack grows in a room and lives with his mother only. Ma herself is kidnapped since she is nineteen years old. It has been seven years ago. She is raped and locked in a Room till she gives birth to a son, Jack. For Ma, life in room which is what Jack calls their zone of containment, an ongoing torment, mitigated only by the desire to protect her son. On this occasion, this study only discusses the representation of a mother in educating, managing, and maintaining her son, Jack.

The role of mother is chosen to discuss because of the undeniable facts that parents are the bearers of life for their children. They are the ones who reproduce humankind in a given society, as in this way they contribute to the development of the human history. Discussing the role of parents, especially mothers, is really interesting because there is so much to admire from a mother. One of them is the roles of mothers in educating children. This is what prompts the writers to discuss the roles of mothers performed by Ma to Jack, his son. This study is to know how 'Ma' educates and teaches 'Jack' in limited conditions and motion. Honorably, this study becomes important to entertain readers. Anyone may also get a moral message and understand how if we are arrested, living only in a room about only 3 x 3 ms for seven years. By analyzing this topic, it can be understood what causes a woman to educate and train her son without her son knowing the outside world and meeting someone else besides his mother.

To analyze the roles of Ma to teach and educate her son, the researches use the theory of the Roles of Mother proposed by Ki Hajar Dewantara in Muthmainnah, McGuigan and Good. Of the six roles of a mother, the study discusses only four roles of mother. They are mother as an educator, mother as the carer of the family's physical and mental health, mother as a company, and mother as a communicator. These four roles are closely related to the story presented by a mother in the novel.

2. Literature Review

In general, a mother is a female parent; the center of creation, inspiration, and love; one who rears, nurtures, and protects children; a mender of heart; a maker and holder of memories; someone who loves unconditionally. According to Kelly (2009), motherhood is something that the majority of women frames the identity of all women, even those who are not mothers. She also adds that women are judged on whether they have children or whether they do not, what age they decide to have them, whether they stay at home or return to work, whether they do it as part of a heterosexual or lesbian couple, or as a single mother.

Arendell (2000: 1192-1207), says that while it may seem obvious that mothers are women who have children this is a simplistic way of conceptualizing motherhood as it does not capture pregnant women, mothers whose children have left home, and mothers whose children have died. An alternative way of conceptualizing motherhood is something distinct from mothers and thought of as experiences and practices that can be 'done' by either gender. Ruddick, as cited in Ribbens-McCarthy and Edwards (2011) mentions 'maternal thinking' in an attempt to remove the gendered connotations of the word mother.

Mothers feel moral and social pressure to conform to an idealized version of motherhood (Miller, 2005). This ideal is one of women aspiring to be good mothers and is a dominant idea from the literature surrounding mothering. This idealized version of mothers is influenced "by socio-cultural backgrounds but also by political discourse and social programs" (Baker, 2010: 216).

To sum up, the ideology that all mothers are aspiring to be a good mother is having their own way. It implies that there is a universal ideal and set of practices that make a good mother.

Johnson and Swanson in Sukma (2017) mention that motherhood is not biologically determined or socially ascribed. In their book, they state that motherhood is a social and historical construction. They quote from Coontz that a family contains with a wage-earner father and a stay-at-home mother is a cultural deviation. They also claim

that culture has the ability to form how a good mother should be, what behaviors and attitudes that appropriate for a mother. In other words, culture formed an image about how to be a good mother.

Jayne Buxton in Sukma (2017) documents how stereotypical characterization of a mother who can manage her household and children and her business at the same time or whom she called as the superwoman are bruted against the Earth Mother, a traditional woman who feeds her children with organic foods and ever-present happy smile and all of her time spend with her children. Johnston and Swanson also state that culture defines, and rewards “good mothers” and sanctions “bad mothers”.

We live in an era of contested motherhood ideologies. However culturally and historically aberrant and individually restrictive and dominant motherhood ideology of the last century may have been, motherhood expectations were clearly defined. The traditional motherhood ideology defines a “good mother” as a full-time, at-home, White, middle class, and entirely fulfilled through domestic aspiration. Scholars have challenged the patriarchal assumptions of the traditional motherhood ideology as restricting mothers’ identities and selfhood, perpetuating the economic dependence of mothers and excluding mothers who are adolescents, older, single, lesbian, or women of color.

Being a mother is one of the most important roles a woman can ever play. Mother plays a huge role in their children’s lives, caring for them, loving them, teaching them, and so much more. The way a child develops can be largely attributed to the role that their parents and caregivers play in their lives. The role of a mother exactly plays importantly in a child’s early childhood development. In the family mother definitely has a role. These roles are as follows.

2.1 Mother as an Educator

Good (1988: 40) explains the role of the woman or the mother as an educator represents a crucial resource to the development of the individual identity, which from researchers is seen even as more important as the very marital status of the parents and the occupation of the parents themselves. It seems that the feeling of being a mother, to the woman is more powerful than being a father of given child for the husband. Always in accordance with the biological as well as physiological relation of mother to the child, represents the first and reasonable part or segment of the child’s development. This is for the reason, mother assures the child’s life, as she is the one who brings the child in this world, and further on she raises them from being little towards reaching a total independency in mature life.

Brada (1995: 193) says that each child which grows up and is educated in the presence of mother, for sure is expected to reach an appropriate physical, psychological as well as social development. In this regard, these children have a much better appearance, they look happy and enjoy childhood in general. They are communicative and as such, they are ready to cooperate.

For this reason, the mother’s love and care for the child is full and well completed, and as such is often accepted by other members of the very family. This type of cultivated love and affection can be qualified as a key condition for the appropriate development of the children in a given family. The children experience the physical as well as psychological effects of the mother, and as such, they are taken as a model which influences their further development during their emotional stage of development of their moral values as a whole.

2.2 Mother as the Carer of Family's Physical and Mental Health

The mother's roles in family health will be subject to dominant mothering discourses and this will impact the way mothers practice family health. The good mother discourse has been found in research on many of the areas within family health such as food provision, smoking, sleep, immunization, health-seeking behaviors, and breastfeeding. In terms of family health, the good mother is the one who makes moral, responsible and, safe health choices (McGuigan, 2012).

Allane et al in McGuigan (2012) say that the demands of motherhood are used by mothers discursively to explain or justify to themselves when they feel they are not being good mothers. When the mother fails as 'a good mother' there is a feeling of guilt. Mothers always suffer from a sense of guilt as to whether they are doing things right and whether everything has been for the best. There is an awful feeling of uncertainty about being a mother and about what one is like as a mother.

Mothering is subject to dominant ideologies of 'good' mothering which are located predominantly in gendered notions of intensive mothering. In modern reflexive society, good mothers are also self-scrutinizing their own practices. The writers believe that the mother's role in family health will be subject to these dominant discourses and the research will examine this idea with this research. The relationship between mental health and family such as mother is complex, and many assumptions are made by much of the research. First, women and mothers are assumed to be predominantly responsible for family health. Second, it is common that women will have specific gendered health issues and that they will 'do health' differently than men. Third, it is assumed that family health can be measured through health-seeking behaviors or health care utilization.

2.3 Mother as a Company

Every child needs attention from their parents. Some parents work and come home tired, so they have little time to meet and gather with family. For parents who spend part of their time working outside the home, it does not mean they have lost their obligation to accompany their children when they are at home. Even though it is only for a little time, parents can provide quality attention by focusing on accompanying children, such as hearing stories, joking, playing together, etc. (Ki Hajar Dewantara in Muthmainnah, 2012: 108).

2.4 Mother as a Communicator

Communication is important in the relationship between parents and children because communication is a bridge that connects the desires, hopes and responses of each party. Through communication, parents can convey hope, input, and support to their children. Vice versa, children can tell stories and express their opinions (Ki Hajar Dewantara in Muthmainnah, 2012: 108).

2.5 Mother as a Supervisor

Absolute supervision is given to the child so that the child can still be controlled and directed. Of course, the intended supervision does not mean spying and being suspicious. But supervision is built based on communication and openness. Parents need to, directly and indirectly, observe with whom and what the child is doing, to minimize the impact of negative influences on children (Ki Hajar Dewantara in Muthmainnah, 2012: 109).

2.6 Mother as a Motivator

Motivation is a state within an individual or organism that drives behavior toward a goal. Motivation can arise from the individual (internal) or from outside the individual (external). Every individual feels happy when given appreciation and support or motivation. Motivation makes individuals enthusiastic in achieving goals. Motivation is given so that children always try to maintain and improve what has been achieved. If the child has not succeeded, then motivation can make the child never give up and want to try again (Ki Hajar Dewantara in Muthmainnah, 2012: 109).

3. Research Method

This study uses qualitative research method and applies descriptive approach. In contrast to the other approaches, descriptive research can be a research method or an area of study in and of itself. According to Cresswell (2013: 70), descriptive qualitative research is a research method that focuses on the study of life experiences and is expressed in life stories and told by individuals. The design of descriptive method is to describe and to interpret the the role of mother in the novel *Room* by Emma Donoghue based on the theory of the role of mother proposed by Ki Hajar Dewantara in Muthmainnah, McGuigan and Good. There are four roles as the indicators of the analysis of the mother's roles in the novel.

4. Result and Discussion

The character of mother, Ma, is kidnapped at the age of nineteen by a man named Nick, Old Nick. Then, she is locked up for seven years in a closed room called the *room*. During her imprisonment, Ma becomes Old Nick's sex slave. Until two years later Jack is born and accompanied Ma in the *room*. This study discusses what and how Ma educates and takes care of his son. Four mother's roles are verified to be performed by Ma in the novel. They are mother as an educator, mother as a carer of family's physical and mental health, mother as a company and mother as a communicator. Then, these roles are discussed in the following:

4.1 Mother as an Educator

A mother plays an important role in child development. Mothers are not only responsible for intellectual development, but also for physical development. Before getting knowledge and information from school, children will get it from parents, especially mothers because mothers are the first educators for her children. From the mother, a child learns new things in his or her life, such as speaking, behaving and getting information. Regarding the novel *Room*, Ma acts as Jack's sole educator. Jack, who has been confined since birth in a "*room*", learns and gains knowledge only through his mother, Ma, starting from reading, writing, arithmetic and asking questions and information from television. This statement can be proven through the data below.

"Listen. What we see on TV is . . . it's pictures of real things."

That's the most astonishing I ever heard.

Ma's got her hand over her mouth.

"Dora's real for real?"

She takes her hand away. "No, sorry. Lots of TV is made-up pictures— like, Dora's just a drawing—but the other people, the ones with faces that look like you and me, they're real."

"Actual humans?"

She nods. "And the places are real too, like farms and forests and airplanes and cities . . ."

"Nah." Why is she tricking me? "Where would they fit?"

"Out there," says Ma. "Outside." She jerks her head back (Donoghues, 2010: 67).

The quotation above shows a situation where Ma and Jack are watching television. Jack does not understand the information he just receives. He does not know anything about the outside world. Then, he asks if Dora is real. Ma explains that Dora is just a human-like image. It is not real. This is where Ma's role is needed to explain things that Jack does not know. Ma also explains a lot of real things that only exist outside the "room". Real things that Jack never sees but they exist, such as other humans, forests, agriculture, etc. Furthermore, the data below will strengthen the statement above.

"Can I have a story?"

"Which one?"

"One you never told me before."

Ma smiles at me. "I think at this point you know everything I know.

The Count of Monte Cristo?"

"I've heard that millions of times."

Gulliver in Lilliput?"

"Zillions."

Nelson on Robben Island?"

"Then he got out after twenty-seven years and became the government."

Goldilocks?"

"Too scary."

"The bears only growl at her," says Ma.

"Still."

Princess Diana?"

"Should have worn her seat belt."

"See, you know them all." Ma puffs her breath. "Hang on, there's one about a mermaid . . ." (Donoghues, 2010: 75-76).

The data above are a conversation between Ma and Jack. From the data above, it can be verified that Ma performs her role as an educator by providing knowledge through readings and storybooks. At the age of only five-years-old Jack has read books that usually cannot be understood by children of his age. One of his books is *The Count of Monte Cristo*, a thick book that even adults would be reluctant to read, but Jack does it. From this data, it can be concluded that Ma is indeed an educator for Jack.

The last data for Ma as an educator can be seen below.

". . . like a newborn in many ways, despite his remarkably accelerated literacy and numeracy," he's saying to Ma. I'm listening hard because it's me that's the he. "As well as immune issues, there are likely to be challenges in the areas of, let's see, social adjustment, obviously, sensory modulation—filtering and sorting all the stimuli barraging him—plus difficulties with spatial perception . . ."

Ma asks, "Is that why he keeps banging into things?"

“Exactly. He’s been so familiar with his confined environment that he hasn’t needed to learn to gauge distance.”
Ma’s got her head in her hands. “I thought he was OK. More or less.”
(Donoghues, 2010: 203).

The above quotation is to strengthen the evidence that Ma is successful as an educator for Jack. At the age of five, Jack can count and read. Usually, children will start reading and counting when they get formal education through school. The task of teaching and counting is usually assigned to the teacher as a child educator. However, although Jack’s social and sensory skills are still lagging, his literacy and numeracy skills are very good. Despite the limitations of movement, space and information, Ma can still provide education to Jack. Even without formal education at school, Jack is able to read and count at the age of four.

4.2. Mother as a Carer of Family’s Physical and Mental Health

Parents have their own roles in the family. Like a father who acts as the head of the family and the breadwinner, the mother also has a role as a health caretaker in the family, not only physical health but also mental health. With the care of health, the family will be happy and free from all diseases. Related to the role of the mother as a carer of physical health in the family, the mother in her role in caring for the mentality of the child acts as a good decision maker, and is not burdened, and can increase the child’s ability and confidence. Ma as a carer of the family’s physical and mental health can be proven through the data below.

It’s 12:13, so it can be lunch. My favorite bit of the prayer is the daily bread. I’m the boss of play but Ma’s the boss of meals, like she doesn’t let us have cereal for breakfast and lunch and dinner in case we’d get sick and anyway that would use it up too fast. When I was zero and one, Ma used to chop and chew up my food for me, but then I got all my twenty teeth and I can gnash up anything. This lunch is tuna on crackers, my job is to roll back the lid of the can because Ma’s wrist can’t manage it (Donoghues, 2010: 18).

The data above clearly shows that Ma plays a role in caring for Jack’s physical health. Jack mentions that Ma is the boss of the food which means Ma is in charge of the food for them. With limited food delivered by Old Nick, Ma organizes food and nutrition for her son. Jack also explains that when he is one year old, Ma usually chews food for Jack first. This is usually done by a mother to help her child digest food so that the food eaten by the child is not too big and hard. Ma does it until Jack gets all twenty of his teeth. The above statement clearly shows that Ma does play a role in Jack’s health as a provider, organizer, and carer of Jack’s food.

Other data that can prove that Ma plays a role as a carer of the family’s physical and mental health and this can be seen through the data below.

“It was all about keeping Jack safe.”
“Was it agonizingly hard to be, as you put it, polite?”
Ma shakes her head. “I did it on autopilot, you know, Stepford Wife.”
The puffy-hair woman nods a lot. “Now, figuring out how to raise him all on your own, without books or professionals or even relatives, that must have been terribly difficult.”

She shrugs. "I think what babies want is mostly to have their mothers right there. No, I was just afraid Jack would get ill—and me too, he needed me to be OK. So, just stuff I remembered from Health Ed like handwashing, cooking everything really well . . ."

(Donoghues, 2010: 261-262).

It is a conversation between Ma and a journalist, in which the journalist interviews Ma's situation. Ma explains everything she does to keep Jack safe from Old Nick's threats. "Autopilot" means an automatic mechanical system to guide the vehicle and "*The Stepford Wife*" is a film about a wife who is submissive like a robot. So from these words, it can be seen, in order to take care of Jack mentally and physically, Ma must automatically submit and be polite to all Old Nick's authority. Ma's role as a protector of physical health can also be proven by Ma who always takes care of Jack's health by telling him to wash his hands and cook food very well. This is done so that both of them can stay healthy because in order to keep Jack healthy, Ma has to be fine too. The latest data for this subsection can be seen below.

Me and Ma have a deal, we're going to try everything one time so we know what we like.

I already like going to the park with my soccer ball and feeding the ducks. I really like the playground now except when that boy came down the slide right after me and kicked me in the back. I like the Natural History Museum except the dinosaurs are just dead ones with bones (Donoghues, 2010: 350).

The data above is a situation where Ma and Jack have been released from confinement by Old Nick. After being freed from the "room", Ma, and Jack's psychiatrist, Dr. Clay states that Jack is difficult to socialize and adapts to the environment. As a result, Jack has difficulty responding to other people and always bumps into objects that are nearby. Therefore, to keep Jack mentally and help him adjust, Ma decides to make a deal with Jack. They will go out of their zone and try whatever they like. As a result, Jack does not close himself anymore and begins to adjust to the environment. Then he becomes fond of new things he does and knows a lot.

4.3 Mother as a Company

Every child needs attention from their parents. These concerns can be in the form of focusing on accompanying children, listening to stories, joking, playing together, etc. Mothers, who spend most of their time with their children, automatically have a role as a child's companion. Mothers as companions act as listeners and give explanations for things that children want to know. This is one of the responsibilities of parents, especially mothers. Regarding the novel *Room* by Emma Donoghue, Ma is Jack's only companion. This can be proven from the quotation below.

I stroke Table's scratches to make them better, she's a circle all white except gray in the scratches from chopping foods. While we're eating we play Hum because that doesn't need mouths. I guess "*Macarena*" and "*She'll Be Coming 'Round the Mountain*" and "*Swing Low, Sweet Chariot*" but that's actually "*Stormy Weather*." So my score is two, I get two kisses (Donoghues, 2010: 7).

The quotation above shows the situation when Ma and Jack play together. Ma is the only person around Jack, so they do everything together. In order to keep Jack's feeling cheerful, Ma plays a lot of games with Jack. One of them is playing Hum. Even though they are eating, they can still play. In the rules of their game, the winner gets as many kisses as they score. This shows that Ma is not only accompanying Jack to play, but also channeling his attention and affection.

The second data to describe Ma as a companion can be seen through the quotation below.

It's Wednesday so we wash hair, we make turbans of bubbles out of Dish Soap. I look all around Ma's neck but not at it.

She does me a mustache, it's too tickly so I rub it off. "What about a beard, then?" she says. She puts all bubbles on my chin for a beard.

"Ho ho ho. Is Santa a giant?"

"Ah, I guess he's pretty big," says Ma (Donoghues, 2010: 61).

The part above describes the situation when Ma and Jack are washing their hair. In between activities, Ma and Jack joke by making fake beards from soap bubbles. At Jack's age, children usually think of everything as a game. Children do things in a way that they find fun. This of course can be understood by Ma. Therefore, despite all the activities they are doing, Ma always responds to Jack's jokes. From the explanations above, it can be said that Ma acts as Jack's companion by accompanying him in joking.

Another data for Ma as a company can be seen through the data below.

We do all the Phys Eds we can think to warm up. Karate and Islands and Simon Says and Trampoline. Hopscotch, where we have to hop from one cork tile to another one and never go on the lines or fall over. Ma picks Blindman's Buff, she ties my camouflage pants around her eyes. I hide in Under Bed beside Eggsnake not breathing even, flat like a page in a book, and it takes her hundreds of hours to find me. Next I choose Rappelling, Ma holds my hands and I walk up her legs till my feet are higher than my head, then I dangle upside down, my braids go in my face and make me laugh. I do a flip and I'm right side up again. I want it lots times more but her bad wrist is hurting (Donoghues, 2010: 91).

The data above clearly shows that Ma plays the role of Jack's companion. With their limited range of motion, Ma can still make Jack play like any other child and keep Jack in a happy mood. The data above describes the games they do such as Phys Eds, Karate, Island, Simons says, trampoline, etc. Jack's age is full of fun and exploration. So it is not surprising that Jack likes to play games. Ma understands this and never refuses or forbids when Jack invites her to play. From this data, it can be concluded that Ma acts as a company for Jack with a focus on accompanying and paying attention to Jack.

4.4 Mother as a Communicator

In the family, communication is a liaison between family members such as between mother and father, mother and child, and father and child. As a communicator, the mother acts as a guide and director who can help children in living life. Through communication, parents, especially mothers, can recognize the personality and know the desires and opinions of children. On the other hand, through communication, children

can also tell stories and convey their opinions to parents. Regarding the novel *Room*, Ma as a mother also uses communication to guide and direct Jack. This statement can be proven through the data below.

"What if we put the bed over there?"

"I stare at her, then I look where she's pointing. "That's TV Wall."

"That's just what we call it," she says, "but the bed could probably fit there, between the toilet and . . . we'd have to shift the wardrobe over a bit. Then the dresser would be right here instead of the bed, with the TV on top of it."

I'm shaking my head a lot. "Then we couldn't see."

"We could, we'd be sitting right here in the rocker."

"Bad idea."

"OK, forget it." Ma folds her arms tight (Donoghues, 2010:48).

The data above shows a situation where Ma gives her opinion about the location of their bed. Ma wants to change the location of the bed to create new scenery. But Jack refuses that. From the quotation above, it can be seen that Ma does her job as a communicator well. Ma does not insist and then agrees with Jack's opinion. Although parents act as decision-makers in the family, Ma is not authoritarian. She still accepts Jack's wish. These data clearly show Ma's role as a good communicator.

Further data that will strengthen the statement of Ma as a communicator can be seen below.

"I'm glad he didn't come last night," I tell Ma. "I bet he never comes back, that would be super cool."

"Jack." She kind of frowns. "Think about it."

"I am."

"I mean, what would happen. Where does our food come from?"

I know this one. "From Baby Jesus in the fields in Outside."

"No, but—who's the bringer?"

Oh. Ma gets up, she says it's a good sign the faucets are still working.

"He could have turned the water off too, but he hasn't." (Donoghues, 2010: 90-91).

The conversation between Ma and Jack is described about that they are talking about Old Nick. Jack says he is glad Old Nick does not come to the room last night. But Ma admonishes Jack to reconsider his words. Even though Ma hates Old Nick so much, she does not want Jack to do that either. Ma does not want Jack to be a hater. Therefore, Ma gives understanding to Jack, even though Old Nick locks them up but he still gives food and does not turn off the water tap in the room. Implicitly, Ma teaches Jack to be grateful for what they get and still respect Old Nick.

The last data for the mother as a communicator can be seen through the quotation below.

Relax," Ma tells me. "Everything's different here."

"But what's the rule?"

"There is no rule. We can have lunch at ten or one or three or the middle of the night."

"I don't want lunch in the middle of the night."

Ma puffs her breath. "Let's make a new rule that we'll have lunch . . . anytime between twelve and two. And if we're not hungry we'll just skip it." (Donoghue, 2010: 206).

The conversation above takes place after Jack and Ma are released from the room. Jack, who just finds out the outside world, becomes confused and unfamiliar. Therefore, Ma gives Jack an understanding that the room and the outside world are very different. They no longer need to do all the rules they run in the room. They are free to do whatever they want and make whatever rules they like. As a communicator, Ma has an excellent communication approach. Ma does not force Jack to accept their new circumstances right away. But Ma speaks slowly to make Jack understand what they are about to do.

5. Conclusion

There are several points that have been concluded after the analysis of the novel *Room* by Emma Donoghue. From the analysis, it is found that there are four most dominant roles of mother performed by Ma, namely mother as an educator, mother as a carer of family's physical and mental health, mother as a company and mother as a communicator. Ma as an educator can be seen from Ma's role as the only educator for Jack. With limited space, Ma educates Jack so that he can read, write and count at the age of only 5 years. It can be said that Jack's literacy and numeracy skills are very good and fast. Ma as a carer of family's physical and mental health can be proven through the tasks performed by Ma. She acts as Jack's food keeper and nutritionist. Ma also takes care of Jack's physical health by cooking food well, always telling him to wash his hands. In order to mentally guard Jack against the shock and confusion of the outside world, Ma tries to give Jack understandings. Ma also helps Jack to adjust to his new environment by telling Jack to do things he likes. As a result, Jack begins to adapt to the environment. As the only person accompanying Jack, Ma automatically becomes his companion. Ma as a companion acts as a listener and explanation for Jack. This is evidenced by the data in the analysis. The data presented in the analysis shows that Ma always accompanies Jack to play and joke with him. Ma as a communicator can be seen through Ma's role in guiding and directing Jack. Ma uses a good communication approach. She is never an authoritarian and forces her will on Jack.

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