ABSTRACT

This study elaborates the complexity of coming out process through the character of a high school teenager named Holland Jaeger as the main character in the novel entitled *Keeping You a Secret* by Julie Anne Peters. Holland discovers herself as a lesbian and experiences homophobic attitude addressed to her. The writer of this study tries to analyze the factors that prevent Holland to come out as a lesbian and Holland’s negotiation of coming out by using The Epistemology of the Closet theory by Eve K. Sedgwick and Coming Out Process by Robert A. Rhoads. By using close reading method, the writer of this study finds out many things such as identity confusion, lover’s trauma, and heteronormativity in school, homophobic mother become the factors that prevent Holland to come out as a lesbian. After that the writer finds self-acknowledgement, escaping blood family, and then coming out as the negotiation of coming out process. The factors that are preventing Holland to come out as a lesbian cannot be separate from Holland’s negotiation of coming out because it formulates the complexity. This study is an attempt to give the readers an awareness of the difficulties of coming out as a lesbian in heteronormative society.

Keywords: coming out, heteronormativity, identity confusion, sexual identity, trauma