

**COPING BEHAVIOR OF BENJAMIN BUTTON IN ERIC ROTH'S  
*THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON* MOVIE (2008):  
AN INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH**



**RESEARCH PAPER**

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. Background of the Study

*The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* is the film directed by David Fincher and written by Eric Roth. It produced by Kathleen Kennedy, Frank Marshall, Ray Stark. It was released On December 25, 2008 by Paramount Pictures, Warner Bros international, United State. It has 116 minutes duration. The Budget of this film was about \$150,000,000.

*The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* told about a man named Benjamin that born in 1918 and have physically un normal like usual human being. He grew from an 85 year old man to young and became a baby until he died. His father took him to the porch of a nursing home. He was saved by Queenie, a woman that worked at the nursing home. Benjamin began grow younger biologically. In 1930, appeared to be 73, he met a 6 year old girl named Daisy in the nursing home. They played together. Then Benjamin went out to work on tugboat on the docks of New Orleans for a tattoo artist, Captain Mike. Benjamin often followed him to a bar for have a drink and has a sex with prostitutes. Then Benjamin left New Orleans with the tugboat crew for along term work engagement. He sent Daisy postcards from his travels. In Russia there was Pearl Harbor attack, Captain Mike and crew followed the

war and they all perish excepted Benjamin and another man. He finally returns to New Orleans and Daisy became 21 years old. He met Thomas Button and revealed when he said that he was Benjamin father. Before died his father gave his house, Button factory and other possessions to him. In 1951, Benjamin went to New York to meet Daisy that performed there. But he disappointed tat daisy has fallen in love with another man and he tried to accept that their live have separated. Daisy career end by an accident in Paris when a taxi hit her, Benjamin went to see her she amazed at his youthful appearance and frustrated at her injuries so she said to Benjamin to go out from her life. Several years later, Daisy returned to New Orleans and they have same physical age. They fell in love and moved into apartment together. Then, Daisy was pregnant and she birth a girl, Caroline.

*Benjamin* was afraid he could not be a father figure to his daughter due to reverse aging and didn't want to burden daisy with having to raise two children. Finally he decided to leave them both with all his wealthy and traveled to India. In 1980, Benjamin appeared about 23, returned and met daisy. She was 56 year old and married Robert Williams, so she lived with her daughter, Caroline and new husband. They met to share their passion for each other but they realized that their lives must remain separate. Benjamin continued to grow younger. In 1991, Benjamin was 12 year old biological and sometimes forgot anything, even her. Daisy moved into the nursing home

where he grew up and took care of him. Benjamin became younger and when he was 84 year old, his physically an infant and finally he died in daisy's arms.

The film receives many responses but mostly positive reviews. Aggregator Rotten Tomatoes reported that 71 % of critics gave the film positive reviews based on 214 reviews, with 77% of selected "top critical" giving the film positive reviews. According to Metacritic, the film received an average score of 70 based on 36 reviews. Yahoo! Movies reported the film received a B+ average score from critical consensus. Most of audience told that this film is a good film because there was an emotional paradox of protagonist's condition in a spirit. But there were any critical, one of them told hat there is no denying the sheer ambition and technical prowess of that film.

This film not only won three academy awards for best make up, best art direction, and best visual effects but also nominees of ten categories academy awards, American Society of Cinematography, golden globe awards, British Academy Awards and many more.

The appeal about the character of Benjamin is very interesting. His differences with other people make him curious can his life like other people likely work, make a relationship with other people or women. Then his other

interesting character is he has the way to cope his problem in his life like work on tugboat on the docks of New Orleans to socialize with other normal people so that they can accept him with abnormal condition. He is very kind and humble with everyone even though at the first meeting. He always moves to another place to tries a new thing and can accepted in society with his condition.

The setting of this film defined as the local of the play in term of time, the era of historical period, and the change in the time that may occur during the play. He born and grew in New Orleans in 1918 after the world war, then in 1934 he went to Russia follows the tugboat he worked. In 1951 he came to New York meet daisy and travel to India in 1969. From the above explanatory ideas, the writer turns to analyze the film because there are some reasons, they are: 1) the character and characterization of the major character, 2) the quality of this literature, and 3) the theme of this film.

This film has abnormal phenomena that a man has different from other and tries to get a place in the society. His abnormal is that he born with an old face about 85 years old and grow become old man then younger and younger, finally he become a baby and die. It is very unique because it reversed to normal life from baby, child and then old finally die. He also has a desire to love a woman and wants to show her about his filling with his way

without words but his acts. He has a problem to get it realizes but he always has a cool action to solve it until he gets it. This film tells how Benjamin copes all of his problems that he faces. From the above explanatory ideas, the writer turns to analyze the film because there are some reasons, they are: 1) the character and characterization of the major character, 2) the quality of this literature, and 3) the theme of this film.

This film has a good cinematography. The pictures is very excellent and make people who watch it love, the make up of Benjamin Button is very naturally when Brat Pitt must act as old Benjamin, his face very different, not like Brat Pitt anymore. It makes most people praising of this film and many award was gotten by make up and cinematography of this film.

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button is not only an interesting film, that makes a lot of people praising of it but behind this film there are moral messages that we find such as people have their life and happiness even though they have abnormal condition so don't look and judge people just from their physical and don't give up with our weakness because every problems have their solution.

From illustration above there is a psychological reason in them. This makes the researcher interested in studying this movie deeply. In this research, the researcher analyzes Eric Roth's movie using an individual

psychological approach with the title: **COPING BEHAVIOR OF BENJAMIN BUTTON IN ERIC ROTH'S *THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON* MOVIE (2008): AN INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH**

## **B. Literature Review**

*The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* is a new and popular movie directed by David Fincher. As literature review the writer research on Google. The writer found no other researcher who has examined this movie at least in UMS.

## **C. Limitation of the Study**

Based on the title and background, the writer focused on analyzing the coping behavior of *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, viewed from the individual Psychological approach.

## **D. Problem Statement**

In this research, the writer proposes a single problem statement. The problem of research is how Benjamin Button as the main character copes with his problem in *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* movie.

a. To analyze the movie based on its structural elements by finding character

and characterization, setting, point of view, style, plot and theme.

- b. To analyze the movie by using individual psychological perspective.

In this research, the researcher intends to analyze the movie viewed from the psychological aspects. It focuses the researched on major character, Benjamin Button and tries to analyze his copes behavior to solve the problem and its influence on his personality.

#### **E. Objective of the Study**

Based on the problem statement above, the objectives of the study are as follows:

- a To analyze the movie based on its structural element by finding character and characterization, setting, point of view, style, plot and theme.
- b To analyze the movie by using individual psychological perspective.

In this research, the researcher intends to analyze the movie viewed from the psychological aspects. It focuses the researched on major character, Benjamin Button and tries to analyze his copes behavior to solve the problem and its influence on his personality.

#### **F. Benefit of the Study**

By presenting this research paper, the writer hopes that it will give some benefits as follows:



### 1. Theoretical Benefit

- a) To give some information which can be used by the other researcher who are interested in analyzing this literary work.
- b) To give contribution to other literary research especially in studying movie *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*

### 2. Practical benefit

- a) For getting deeper understanding about coping behavior the main character in this movie.
- b) For developing the writer's ability in applying the individual psychological approach in *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*.

## **G. Research Method**

### 1. Type of the Study

Based on the problem statement and the discussion, this study can be classified as descriptive qualitative research. It is suitable with state of Surahmat(1995: 3), about descriptive method. He states that one characteristic of descriptive method is that the data are collected, described and then analyzed.

In brief, descriptive qualitative research is research employing the method of collecting, describing, classifying, and analyzing the data and then drawing conclusion. The data can be sentences, discourse,

picture, diary and memorandum. By using the descriptive method, this research is aimed to describe coping behavior as reflected in the movie *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* through individual psychological approach.

## 2. Object of the Study

The object of the study is the original movie *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* directed by David Fincher and written by Eric Roth. It produced by Kathleen Kennedy, Frank Marshall, Ray Stark. It was released On December 25, 2008 by Paramount Pictures, Warner Bros international, United State and has 116 minutes duration.

## 3. Type of the Data and the Data Source

### a. Type of Data

The data in this study can be divided into two kinds of data, namely primary and secondary data. Primary data is the main data consisting of the dialogue, and the action of the movie. Secondary data is supporting data which consist of the other data such as comment, article, and internet about this film that relevant to this research.

### b. Data source

#### 1) Primary Data Source

The primary data source is the movie itself, *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* by Eric Roth and the scripts of the film. The main data consist of character and characterization, dialogues,

body language, visual image, behaviors, plot and all of the statement related to the problems.

## 2) Secondary Data Source

The secondary data sources consist of the other data, which with the study, such as essay, comment, article, internet, historical information and thesis that are related to the research.

## 4. Technique of the Data Collection

The method used in this study is library research which collects and records both of the secondary data. Some steps of collecting data applied in this study are as follows:

- a. Watching the movie repeatedly
- b. Identifying the main idea of the movie
- c. Determining the major character that will be analyzed
- d. Reading some related books to find out theory, data, and information required
- e. Taking notes of important information in both primary and secondary data sources

## 5. Technique of the Data Analysis

The technique of the data analysis used is descriptive qualitative. The writer uses individual psychological approach and adds his structure analysis of the data work. Firstly, the data are collected by watching and observing the film as the main data carefully and repeatedly to get a deep

comprehension of the issue. Secondly, the researcher will take a note from the main data of important fact that are statements which are analyzed in this research. Thirdly, the researcher will analyze all of data using selected approach. And finally, a conclusion is drawn.

## **H. Research Organization**

This research paper is divided into five chapters. Chapter I is introduction, which consist of background of the study, literary review, problem statement, objective of the study, research method and research organization. Chapter II is underlying theory involving the theory of individual psychology that will be used to analyze the data. Chapter III is structural analysis. In this chapter, the writer explains the structural elements of the movie. Chapter IV is psychological analysis. Chapter V is conclusion and suggestion.