

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

The concept of the struggle for life is closely related to natural selection. In the most general sense, the struggle for life derives from the disparity between the great capacity of organisms to multiply and the limited amounts of space, food, water, and so forth necessary for the normal existence of organisms of any species.

Every person has ever felt to get better in his/her life even ones. This situation happens as people interacts with other people that sometimes, the stronger power innervate her or him that finally pressure results un-good feeling or uncomfortable condition into the weaker one. That is why people will try to get free no matter what he or she tries to effort as long as he or she can try to overcome.

Person's value in their lives can be seen among others from his or her personality. This suggests that every person can be distinguished, in term of human values, from others through the characteristics and qualities she or he expresses in social interaction within society. Hornby (1995: 863) assumes that: "personality means the characteristic and qualities of a person seen as a whole". People view that the personality is a character between good and bad. Struggle is one of the manifestations of good personality provides, people turning point to achieve a certain goal in life. Struggle itself is defined as the tendency to expect the best in all thinks; confidence in the success of a course of action (Drever, 1958: 814).

Struggle for life is an interesting object not only for psychologist or author of novel but also for movie director. The cinema always reflects the situations that happen in the certain time in order to reveal the reality in human life. Beside that, film gives us knowledge to understand the essence of life and contributes to the understanding of the reality of life in order to be realistic. Film eventually presents the characterization that indicates frustration, excessive of inferiority feeling, and his withdrawal from social interaction. That is why there are a lot of director displaces the realism of life into film through the script. One of those directors is David Fincher who involves the struggle of life in his major character in the film *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*.

According to the above explanation, there is a relationship between literary work and psychology. The literary work itself displaces phenomena of psychology. The problem which is usually in the literary work is the characterization which indicates frustration, excessive of inferiority feeling, his withdrawal from social interaction and his creativity in coping and solving the problems that are caused from situation around him. That is why there are a lot of directors displace the realism of life into the literary.

But David Fincher again found an answer in digital technology that was ready for Pitt's close-ups. Using sophisticated performance capture techniques, digital effects teams scanned sculpted life casts of Pitt, and then of his face as he was recording dialogue. These were entered into a 3D database, which eventually could generate age-appropriate "talking head" images that could be digitally transplanted onto the bodies of the actors who played Button at different periods.

“I was born under unusual circumstances.” Those opening words, spoken in voice-over narration by Brad Pitt, who plays the title character in David Fincher’s much anticipated—and already much heralded—new film, *“The Curious Case of Benjamin Button,”* make a perfectly understated introduction to the stoical Button, but also to the epic movie in which Fincher has framed him.

Among the unusual circumstances surrounding the making of the film is that film figured so little in it. Although nearly every major Hollywood movie of this size and budget is still made on film, “Button,” except for some high-speed and underwater sequences, was shot digitally on high-definition Thomson Viper cameras directly to hard drive, without ever touching tape, then captured into Final Cut Pro for editing.

Shooting this way allowed Fincher to bring film-like resolution to the screen without surrendering the speed and flexibility he could only achieve by building his movie entirely from data. And because Fincher had used the same workflow to create his critically acclaimed previous film “Zodiac,” he was confident that it could be ratcheted up to meet the even greater narrative, technical, and logistical challenges of “Button.”

Early critical reaction to the film suggests he was certainly right. “Button,” which opens Christmas Day, has been nominated for five Golden Globe awards; shortlisted by nearly every credible Oscar handicapper; and touted by at least one critic—who was moved to call it early—as “one of the best films of the decade.”

Since it was first published by F. Scott Fitzgerald in 1922, *“The Curious Case of Benjamin Button,”* the story of a man who is born in his 80s and ages in reverse,

has alternately teased Hollywood and scared it away. Not low on the list of discouragements was the technical challenge of showing a character convincingly morph from a newborn nonagenarian to a senescent infant over the span of nearly a century. But in the 1980s, the idea of making “Button” was again making the rounds in Hollywood.

It was about then that a young special effects assistant named David Fincher first saw a “Button” script floating around George Lucas’s Industrial Light and Magic, where he worked. He saw another promising “Button” script in the early 90s, as he was building his reputation as a groundbreaking director of music videos (Madonna, Michael Jackson, Aerosmith) and as a budding film director, but he passed to pursue the edgy features (“Se7en”; “The Game”; “Fight Club”) that would win him significant fan attention and critical acclaim. But when in 2003 he saw a third iteration of the script, this time by Oscar winning screenwriter Eric Roth (“Forrest Gump”), Fincher was smitten.

“I’d never read the short story,” says Fincher. “I’d read a great script around 1992, but I didn’t think it was makeable. Then twelve years later it was rewritten by Eric Roth, a guy I have a lot of respect for. It was a beautiful, beautiful story, and I thought, ‘This would make an amazing movie.’”

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button, The film centers on a man who, at age 50, begins aging backward and the complications that ensue when he falls in love with a woman of 30. "*The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*" is a 1922 short story by F. Scott Fitzgerald. The protagonist 'Benjamin Button' is born as a feeble old man, and ages in reverse until he becomes a baby at the end of his. *The Curious Case of*

Benjamin Button is the United States movie which realized in 2008 directed by David Fincher and the actors are Brad Pitt, Cate Blanchett, Taraji P. Henson, Julia Ormond, etc. Adapted from the 1920s story by F. Scott Fitzgerald, "Button" tells the story of a man who is born in his 80s and ages backwards. Stretching from the end of World War I in 1918 into the 21st century, the film follows the adventures of Benjamin Button in New Orleans, and in the many places he travels, to tell the extraordinary tale of a not so ordinary man.

Struggle for normal life is an interesting object not only for psychologist or author of novel but also for movie director. The cinema always reflects the situations that happen in the certain time in order to reveal the reality in human life. Beside that, film gives us knowledge to understand the essence of life and contributes to the understanding of the reality of life in order to be realistic. Film eventually presents the characterization that indicates frustration, excessive of inferiority feeling, and his withdrawal from social interaction. That is why there are a lot of director displaces the realism of life into film through the script. One of those directors is David Fincher who involves the struggle of normal life in his major character in the film *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*.

Learning from the figure that has been stated on that story above, the researcher finds the reason that is to study *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* movie by using an individual psychological approach by Alfred Adler to disclose the struggle for normal life of the major character Benjamin Button in his personality.

B. Literature Review

In this case, the writer discussed the previous study research about individual approach that been done by some researchers. First, Rendry (2005) did research entitled: *The Optimism of Julia Stanford in Sidney Sheldon's Morning, Noon And Night: An Individual Approach*. The writer would like to present previous research related to an individual psychological approach with different object. Therefore this research will study about the different object in the struggle for life of Benjamin Button.

In this study, the researcher does not find the other researcher so this is the first time of research paper that conduct David Fincher's *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* movie to be analyzed through Individual Psychological Approach. It will focus on the struggle for normal life of Benjamin Button in David Fincher's *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* movie.

C. Limitation of the Study

The writer focuses on analyzing the main character's struggle for life by employing Individual Psychological Approach.

D. Problem Statement

In this study, the writer proposes a single problem statement. The major problem is how the major character's struggle for normal life is reflected in David Fincher's *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* movie.

E. Objective of the Study

Dealing with the problem statement above, the objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To analyze the film based on its structural elements and technical elements by finding characters and characterizations, setting, point of view, plot, theme, *mise-en-scene*, cinematography, sound, and editing.
2. To analyze the film especially the character of Benjamin Button in *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* movie using an individual psychological approach developed by Alfred Adler.

F. Benefit of the Study

Two kinds of benefits can be gained from the study are Theoretical and Practical Benefit.

1. Theoretical Benefit

To give some contributions to the body of knowledge, particularly the application of Individual Psychological Approach in literary study.

2. Practical Benefit

To get better understanding about the movie, particularly from the Individual Psychological point of view.

G. Research Method

1. Type of the Study

This research applied descriptive qualitative method. Descriptive qualitative method is a research which employs the method of collecting, describing, classifying and analyzing the data and then drawing conclusion.

2. Object of the Study

The object of the study is *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* film. The film is directed by David Fincher .

3. Type of the Data and the Data Source

a. Primary Data

The primary data are taken from the texts of *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* film directed by David Fincher, it consists of dialogue, plot, themes, conflicts, and the whole narration, etc, which are relevant to the object of the study

b. Secondary Data

The secondary data sources are taken from some books, web sites, others literary and also other matters which support this analysis.

4. Technique of the Data Collection

The method of collecting data in this study is library research. The data from both primary and secondary sources are collected and recorded in a sort of document. The methods of collecting data are as follows:

- a. Watching the movie and analyzing it from the script.
- b. Reading some related books as secondary sources to find out the theory, data and information required.
- c. Taking notes of important parts in both primary data and secondary data.
- d. Classifying data in categories.
- e. Drawing conclusion to get the last result.

5. Technique of the Data Analysis

The method employed in analyzing the data is descriptive analysis, in which the data collected, described and then analyzed. It concerns with the

relationship between the movie and the Individual Psychological theory to show how struggle for life is reflected by major character in the movie.

H. Paper Organization

The writer makes an organization of this paper in order to make an easy understanding. There are five chapters in this research paper.

Chapter one is introduction. It includes the background of the study, literature review, problem statement, limitation of the study, objective of the study, benefit of the study, research method and research paper organization. Chapter two is underlying theory. It deals with notion of individual psychology theory, structural elements of movie and theoretical application. Chapter three is the analysis of the movie. It includes the structural elements of the movie. Chapter four deals with individual psychological analysis. Chapter five contains conclusion and suggestion.