

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Novels and films are forms of a literary work. Both of them certainly have very visible differences, namely the visuals presented. For most people, they do not like reading activities. Reading is considered by most people to be a boring activity, moreover, they must be able to imagine the event in a series of stories presented in a novel. This is the opposite of a film. People will certainly prefer movies to novels. Through film, we do not have to be demanded to picture every scene because obviously all scenes have been played in the film. Seeing this incident, of course now more people are demanding to be made an adapted film from the novel they read. Not only fans of novels who demand to be made films, even people who have never read the novel also want to know how the contents and storylines of the novel through the visuals of a film. So, it is not surprising that many directors began working on a film adaptation of the novel to meet the needs of its consumers. But of all the film adaptations that have been shown, not a few also have a different storyline than the adapted novel. Not only plot, character, character, settings, themes, styles were made different. This is certainly useful to facilitate the audience to know the story through the simplification of the film adaptation of the novel.

Over time, making film adaptation of novels is not a demand for most directors and film production houses. Now they have been moved to make a variety of film adaptations that they present to the fans of the novel and even the audience. Most of the novels that are still in the newly released category have been adapted to the big screen. But not a few novels that have long been released began to be adapted to the big screen.

One of them is *Murder On the Orient Express*. The film adaptation of Agatha Christie's novel *Murder On the Orient Express (1934)*, has been officially released in 2017 and directed by Kenneth Branagh. Since the appearance of *Murder On the Orient Express* on the big screen, it has certainly been a big concern for both fans of the detective film and the novel itself. The appointment of the novel to the big screen certainly cannot be separated from the success of the novel. This is not the first time for this novel to be raised into a big screen because Sidney Lumet had been released a film with the same title in 1974. As can be seen from the novel and film that there is a simplification made by the director in order to facilitate people in the modern era to accept the story plot that he has made. The simplification of the film adaptation *Murder On the Orient Express* novel became an issue which raised by the authors in this researcher. It is well known that both the novel and the film itself have been successful and have taken a lot of fans' attention from both the novel and the detective film itself.

Agatha Christie is an author of fiction novels criminals from England who was born on 15 September 1890. She is known through her work as the most famous mystery writer in the world. There are about 80 more detective novels that she has published and now her book has sold in the market until it reaches billions. Moreover, almost all of her works have now been translated into 45 languages. One of the leading detective figures he made was Hercule Poirot. The name of the detective character made her very successful in making this criminal genre series. Not to forget she always adds riddles to the role of Hercule Poirot in overcoming crime so the readers are made curious and feel as if involved in the events in the novel. Some of her novels were inspired by real events that she experienced. Of course, this will be very interesting for readers who are intrigued by the stories. One of them is *Murder On the Orient Express (1934)* novel. The story was inspired by the real events she experienced while on a train. The novel was published by the Collins Crime Club in the

United Kingdom on January 1, 1934. The work was also published by Dodd, Mead and Company in the USA on February 28, 1934 for the first time but with a different title, *Murder in the Calais Coach* to avoid the similarity of the novel's name previously published. This novel is his most successful novel and catapulted his name even higher among crime novel writers. After being published for a long time, this novel has now been adapted in a film of the same name by director Kenneth Branagh in 2017. He is an actor and director born in Northern Ireland on December 10, 1960. He is known as someone who plays two roles at once in a film. Unlike other actors who only play the role of characters in a film, he also directly involved himself as a director. As in the film *Murder On The Orient Express* which was adapted from a novel by Agatha Christie, however, his involvement as an actor and director in a film is not just this time it happened. That Kenneth Branagh will be an actor and director in the film, there are various obstacles that he must face in working on the film to be presented to modern society because the background in the novel's story can be said to be old. seized the attention of the public to watch the film.

In this study, the issues raised by the researcher relate to novels and films chosen by researchers. This relationship can be seen from the fact that there are differences that cause simplification in the film adaptation of the novel *Murder On the Orient Express* through aspects of the plot, character, character, setting, and style.

A great detective who very famous, Hercule Poirot conducted an investigation into the theft that occurred in Jerusalem. After completing the investigation, he traveled from Jerusalem to Istanbul by ship. On his way, he met Mary Debenham and Dr. Arbuthnot who acted as if they did not know each other.

Arriving in Istanbul, he met his old friend, Director Bouc, the most luxurious train director there. After an exciting conversation someone came to bring a telegram to Poirot. He received the telegram letter he

needed to return to London. After receiving the telegram, he asked Bouc for help to find and buy The Orient Express tickets at same night. They went to order first class service. But all tickets are sold. Director Bouc asked one of the train conductors named Michelle to check whether all passengers on the train were leaving soon. He found one of the passengers absent that night which meant the ticket had been forfeited immediately. Bouc asked Poirot to immediately occupy the empty room.

On the morning in a dining room, Poirot met a mobster named Samuel Ratchett. He offered Poirot a job to be his bodyguard because recently he had received a threatening letter from an unknown person. But Poirot refused the offer because he knew that Ratchett was not a good person. At night when Poirot was going to sleep, he was awakened by voices heard from the next room and also someone pacing in the corridor of the train. Then suddenly the train stopped because of heavy snow which slipped so the railway was covered and took the train out of the way. In the next day, Ratchett was found dead in his room. He was killed. Bouc asked Poirot for help in investigating the case because he did not want the Orient Express's reputation to be destroyed. He found many irregularities in this case. This case is very different from the case he previously handled. One by one the passengers began to take their testimonies. One by one the evidence in the Ratchet Room began to discover who the owner was. Poirot was surprised at why in a luxury train there are many people from various backgrounds and different nationalities even though this is not the tourist season for traveling. Until finally this case leads to the past of someone whose life had been destroyed by the murder of the daughter of the Armstrong family. This is a case of revenge against Ratchet.

After the successful screening of the film adaptation, of course many people responded to this film through social media. Various kinds of responses have been disseminated in various media. Considering that the setting of this film was in the 1930s, in fact the film was able to capture

the attention of many people through uninterrupted visual appearance. Most of them responded to how Branagh and the team presented *Murder On the Orient Express* with the addition of their own version. According to AnandiJustika in her blog said that Branagh was able to display and bring Poirot's character as a calm detective like in the novel by Agatha Christie. According to her, the alibi presented in the film is quite interesting although slightly different from her expectations as in the novel.

Mr_Heracilus in his opinion on imdb said that the crime displayed by Branagh is not a modern crime that is usually carried out with violence or with explosions made in the film although the film is dedicated to modern society. Branagh still presents the figure of Poirot who is a detective who works with full skill and observation rather than using physical strength in solving his case.

Bob-the-movie-man in his opinion on imdb said that this film is able to display visually with rich colors and exotic colors that are able to display the colors of films in the 40s. According to him, the cinematography displayed by HarisZambarloukos is able to display a beautiful sky portrait and viewpoint that he thinks is worth showing. Even the special effects used by Patrick Doyle were considered good enough to show scenes on the alpine bridge which he said were more beautiful than the places they used in the process of making films.

The research that researchers made is very interesting. Simplification made by the director is an issue that will be raised by researchers. There are various elements that are changed by the director to make a difference in the film and novel. The results of this study are 1) the simplification made by the director in the elements of the plot, character, character, setting, and style; 2) war in Syria, time limitation, and the presentation for a modern audience are the reasons for the differences between the novel and film; 3) presenting this film to a modern audience is a way to simplify the film's adaptation of this novel.

After seeing the background of the problems contained in the film adaptation of this novel, the researcher will conduct a study entitled "Simplification in Film Adaptation of Agatha Christie's *Murder On the Orient Express* (1934): A Structural Approach".

B. Research Questions

1. What are the differences between *Murder On The orient Express* (1934) novel by Agatha Christie and *Murder On The orient Express* movie by Kenneth Branagh?
2. How did Kenneth Branagh adopt *Murder On The orient Express* (1934) novel into *Murder On The orient Express* movie?
3. Why did Kenneth Branagh change *Murder On The orient Express* (1934) novel into *Murder On The orient Express* movie?

C. Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the differences between *Murder On The orient Express* (1934) novel by Agatha Christie and *Murder On The orient Express* movie by Kenneth Branagh.
2. To reveal the way Kenneth Branagh changed the film's adaptation of *Murder On The orient Express* (1934) novel.
3. To describe the reason of the changes in the film's adaptation of *Murder On The orient Express* (1934) novel.

D. Significances of the Study

The benefits of this research are as follows:

1. Theoretical Significance

The study contributes to the body of knowledge, especially literary study on film adaptation Agatha Christie's *Murder On The orient Express* (1934) and to complete the previous study that was analyzed *Murder On The orient Express* movie and novel.

2. Practical Significance

The study enriches the present writer's understanding of structural and literature theory, especially on structural and literary fields.

The researcher hopes that this research will provide in-depth understanding to next researchers as a reference in their research.