THE PERSONALITY CHANGES OF THE MAIN CHARACTER INTHE FILM "TURNING RED" BY DOMEE SHI

Ardhana Trimurti[1], Dias Andris Susanto[2], Rr Festi Himatu Karima[3]

[1,2,3]Universitas PGRI Semarang, Indonesia

*ardhanatrimurti11@gmail.com

Abstract

This final project aims to analyze the character development experienced by Mei-Mei in the film "Turnig Red" from child to adult and what factors influence Mei-Mei's character development. The objectives of this study are; (1) To find out how Mei-Mei's character changes from child to teenager in the film"Turnig Red" and (2) To explain what internal and external aspects affect Mei-Mei's character development seen in this movie. The research design used in this research is descriptive qualitative research method because this method provides flexibility for researchers to interpret and analyze descriptively the subjective elements in a film such as character depiction, themes, or moral values. The results of this study revealed that Mei-Mei's character development underwent 2 phases, namely from the childhood phase (Industry vs. Inferiority Stage) to the teenage phase (Identity Vs Role Confusion Stage). In the children's phase, Mei-Mei is described as an individual who is in the industrial stage, where he is independent, loyal, ambitious, energetic, and responsible. However, at the Inferiority stage, Mei-Mei turns into a red panda monster, which causes Mei-Mei to become grumpy, withdrawn, depressed and also begins to feel love. After that, Mei-Mei entered the teenage phase. At the identity stage, Mei-Mei tries to explore various roles and characters such as rebels, explorers, liars and are more sensitive to things around them. However, at the end of the story, Mei-Mei overcomes the confusion of her role and grows up to be an independent, responsible, honest and cheerful person. Mei-Mei's character development is influenced by several external and internal factors. External factors include the family environment where her mother is too restrained in contrast to her father who always supports Mei-Mei. In the school environment, her Besties has a positive influence on Mei-Mei but Tyler creates conflict. While in the aspect of community environment, influenced by 4-Town. While in internal factors include Temperament, namely overthingking, trust issues, and also feel in love. In cognitive development, it is self-acceptance. In physical transformation, his body turns into a red panda

Keywords: Character, character Development, "Turning red" Film.

Introduction

Literature is a medium for expressing ideas in writing or orally. Literature can be

divided into three major genres: fiction, poetry, theater, and film, (Klarer, 2013). However, due to the rapid development of technology, literature is no longer written or spoken, but in a visual form or what is commonly referred to as a movie.

Film is a visual medium that combines images, sound, and movement to create a work of art. A movie is a story captured on a strip of film that is displayed on a screen at a certain speed to give the impression of movement, Barsam & Monahan (2010). A good movie has complex characters with clearly defined roles so that the audience can understand and get involved in the story being told. Thus, characters in movies play an important role and influence the success of the movie.

Films have various characters as actors in the storyline, (Simanjuntak, 2020). In the movie, there are character values that vary, depending on how the story is told and how the characters in the movie are depicted. A movie can be a good medium to provide positive value to the audience if the development is done properly and correctly.

Character development is essential in film, as it helps to create memorable and relatable characters that resonate with the audience. Character development is "the progressive change in a character's personality, values, or worldview over the course of a story", (McKee, 1997). Character development is very important for children because it can help them develop social and emotional skills needed in daily life.

Regarding the recently viral case related to bullying and violence perpetrated by the child of a tax official. This is still related to the importance of character development education in children and adolescents. Therefore, it is important for us to learn about personality changes in children and adolescents, especially in the context of environmental influences and the role of parents in their personality development.

Studying personality changes in children and adolescents becomes increasingly important, especially with the emergence of the film "Turning Red", which tells of a teenage girl who experiences personality changes when she feels pressured by social demands and emotional pressure. By paying attention to the personality changes experienced by the main character in this film, it is hoped that it can provide deeper insight into the factors that influence personality changes in children and adolescents, as well as the impact of these personality changes on their mental and emotional health.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested in researching the film "Turning Red" by Domee Shi which was released in 2022. The film "Turning Red" is an animated film from Pixar that tells the story of a teenage girl named Mei-Mei who can turn into a big red panda when she feels too burdened or stressed. Eventually, she learns to appreciate his uniqueness and becomes more open and confident. Mei-Mei accepts herself as she is and becomes stronger and more independent.

The research question in this study are:

1. What changes does the main character undergo in terms of personality from child nature to a teenager in the film "Turning Red"?

2. How do the internal and external aspects that influence the character development of Mei-Mei as portrayed in the film "Turning Red"?

Literature Review

According to Barsam & Monahan (2010), film is a unique art form that allows us to experience life through the eyes of others, to explore different perspectives and to challenge our own assumptions and beliefs. Films can influence the thoughts and opinions of the audience. Therefore, films play an important role in conveying messages. A film consists of a plot, theme, setting, and characters. McKee (1997) stated that the most important part of any movie is the characters. Character films can also be a medium for conveying deeper moral or social messages through characters and their life experiences. In films, the main character usually has character development so that the plot can be packaged in an interesting way and force the audience to feel the character's emotions. The researcher chose the film Turning Red (2022) because in that film, the main character experiences character development during an interesting storyline.

In film, a character refers to a fictional individual or entity depicted in the story. Characters play a crucial role in the art of storytelling, and their development and interactions are often used to drive the plot, convey themes, and evoke emotions in the audience. A good character understanding can help develop empathy for the characters and deepen understanding of the messages or themes conveyed in the work.

In the film, a character refers to characters in a story or drama who have unique traits, motivations, and goals. Chatman (2007) stated that a character is portrayed through their actions, thoughts, and experiences, which provide a clear depiction of their personality and life story

According to McAdams (1995), personality is a psychological structure that influences a person's patterns of thought, feeling, and behavior, and forms the basis of an individual's identity. This personality trait is the result of interactions between genetic factors, the environment, and individual life experiences. therefore a character's personality is not always fixed and may change over time. In character development, personality traits can help a person to understand important values in life and become the basis for making good decisions.

Character development is a process of changing the personality of the character itself, which shows special traits. Character development is an important element in creating an interesting and engaging story for readers. According to Almerico (2014) good literature with character development themes has the power to develop, shape, and reinforce dispositions essential for instilling in student important core ethical values. Therefore, character and moral education must be taught to children so that they can form strong and dignified personalities so that over time they can help individuals achieve better life goals.

According to Erikson (1993), character change consists of eight stages of development that occur throughout a person's life. The following are the eight stages of development:

a. Trust vs. Mistrust (0-18 months): At this stage, children develop a sense of trust in the world and those around them. If the child feels that his needs are being met properly, then he will develop a sense of trust. Conversely, if the child's needs are not met, then he will develop a sense of mistrust.

b. Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt (18 months-3 years): At this stage, children learn to feel independent and control their environment. Children are happy when they can do things on their own and frustrated when they can't. Therefore, it is important to give children the opportunity to be independent.

c. Initiative vs. Guilt (3-6 years): At this stage, children begin to develop imagination and creativity. They want to try new things and explore their environment. However, if they are pressured too much by adults, then they can feel guilty or anxious.

d. Industry vs. Inferiority (6-12 years): At this stage, children begin to interact with their environment and compare themselves to others. If they can acquire skills and abilities, then they will feel competent. However, if they feel lost in a competitive environment, then they will feel inferior.

e. Identity vs. Role Confusion (12-18 years): At this stage, adolescents begin to search for their identity. They begin to question their values and beliefs and try to find their place in society. If they can find a positive identity, then they will feel confident and happy. However, if they can't find a proper identity, then they can feel confused or anxious.

f. Intimacy vs. Isolation (18-40 years): In this stage, adults seek intimate and affectionate relationships. If they can form positive and stable relationships, they will be satisfied. However, if they find it difficult to form relationships or continue to experience failure in relationships, then they may feel isolated.

g. Generativity vs. Stagnation (40-65 years): At this stage, adults begin to evaluate their successes and failures throughout life. Then, making a positive contribution to the younger generation and the surrounding environment can lead to a sense of satisfaction and "generativity". Failing to make a contribution can lead to feelings of "stagnation".

h. Integrity vs. Despair (65 years and over): At this stage, adults question and reflect on life, if life goals are achieved, it can lead to a sense of satisfaction and "integrity". Not achieving life goals or not being able to accept failure and creates a feeling of "desperation".

External and Internal Factors That Influence Character Development

According to (Hurlock, 1978) character development devided into 2 Factors. Here are the external and internal factors according to Hurlock:

a. External Factors:

1) Family environment: Family is the first environment that influences the development of children's character. Positive parenting, attention, and affection from parents can help children develop into good personalities. Conversely, violence and neglect can cause children to experience character development disorders.

2) School environment: School also influences the development of children's character. A positive school environment, good teachers, and healthy peers can help children develop into responsible and confident individuals.

3) Community environment: The community in which the child grows up also influences the development of the child's character. Economic, political, and social conditions can affect the mindset and behavior of children.

b. Internal factors:

1) Temperament: Temperament is an internal factor that influences the development of a child's character. Children who have positive temperaments such as being sociable, patient, and adaptable tend to develop their character more easily.

2) Cognitive development: A child's intellectual ability also influences character development. Children who have good intellectual abilities tend to learn more easily and develop their character.

3) Physical and health conditions: The physical and health conditions of children also affect character development. Healthy children tend to be more active and better able to develop their character.

Method

The research design used in this study is a descriptive qualitative research method. According to Taylor et al. (2016), qualitative research refers to a type of research that generates descriptive information, including the written or spoken words of individuals and their observable behaviors. (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) also stated that qualitative research displays text data and image data that have been collected and uses various designs. By using a descriptive qualitative method, the researcher makes a detailed and systematic description, to be more precise, the researcher wants to describe and explain the personality changes in the main character and what factors influence them in detail contained in the film "Turning Red" (2022).

The object of this study is the main character in the film "Turning Red" by Domee Shi, released on March 11th, 2022. The researcher uses the scenes subtitle of this film to get the data.

The methods used to collect the data in this study are as follows:

1. The researcher will watch the "Turning Red" (2022) film repeatedly to get more understanding of the story.

2. The researcher will notice each dialogue and scene in the "Turning Red" (2022) film in detail to obtain the required data.

3. The researcher will select the relevant data with the captured scene in a film.

4. The researcher collects the selected data.

Finding and Discussion

1. Changes personality that experienced Mei-Mei from child nature to teenage in the "Turning Red" film.

After researchers watched and analyzed the film "Turning Red". Researchers found significant personality changes in the main character, Mei-Mei. Based on Erikson's theory,

Mei-Mei experiences 2 stages of personality change, namely the Industrial vs Inferiority stage and the Identity vs Role Confusion stage.

At the beginning of the story, Mei-Mei shows the nature of children in general who consider themselves to be adults or what is commonly referred to as the industrial phase. In this industrial phase, Mei-Mei displays independent, loyal, ambitious, energetic, and responsible character. However, these traits do not last long after Mei-Mei faces an Inferiority phase. This phase of inferiority is where Mei-Mei undergoes a physical change into a red panda monster. This change makes it difficult for Mei-Mei to control her emotions so she becomes angry, quiet person, and depressed. In this phase, Mei-Mei also begins to feel attracted to the opposite sex.

After experiencing physical and personality changes in the Industry vs Personality phase, Mei-Mei continues to the early teenage phase, also known as the Identity vs Role Confusion stage. In the Identity stage, Mei-Mei experiences confusion and conflict about her identity and the roles expected from family, friends, and society. Mei-Mei explores herself as a rebellious girl, explorer, and liar to achieve her goals. In this phase, Mei-Mei also becomes more sensitive, so it is difficult to control her emotions.

At the end of the story, Mei-Mei successfully passes through the Role Confusion phase by facing various experiences and events that help her overcome conflicts and find her true self so that she becomes a more mature person and takes responsibility for her life. Mei-Mei also became more independent, responsible, honest and cheerful.

Through these changes, Mei-Mei became more mature and learned to make her own decisions while balancing her desires with society's expectations. She becomes more self-aware and in control of her own future. Mei-Mei's journey in "Turning Red" highlights the complexities and challenges of adolescence as she navigates the path to self-discovery and personaal growth.

2. **Factors Influencing the Development of The Mei-Mei Character in The "Turning Red" Film**

There are several factors that influence the development of Mei-Mei's character in "Turning Red". according to Hurlock's theory, these factors are divided into 2 factors, namely external factors and internal factors. External factors are divided into 3 aspects Family Environment, School Environment, and Community Environment. The following are some of the explanations:

Mei-Mei's family environment plays a significant role. Mei-Mei feels constrained by her mother's overprotectiveness and high expectations, this created tension and made it difficult for Mei-Mei to express herself freely. However, her father provides support and encourages Mei-Mei to be true to herself.

The school environment also impacts Mei-Mei's character development. Her besties (Miriam, Priya, and Abby) positively influence her by providing support and inspiration. On the other hand, Tyler, a schoolmate, creates conflicts that test Mei-Mei and contribute to her growth.

The community environment, particularly the presence of the 4-Town, inspires Mei-Mei and allows her to express herself and explore new interests. Their music and talents have a significant impact on her character development.

While internal factors are divided into 3 aspects, namely temperament, cognitive development, and physical condition. The following are some of the explanations:

Mei-Mei's temperament affects her character. She tends to overthink and is insecure about how others perceive her. Mei-Mei also experiences opposite-sex attraction, which causes conflict with her mother and adds a layer of complexity to her character development. Trust issues arise when she is not appreciated by her mother and faces pressure from her social environment.

Cognitive development plays a crucial role in Mei-Mei's journey. She undergoes a process of self-acceptance, learning to embrace her unique qualities and overcome insecurities. This cognitive growth positively impacts her character development.

Finally, Mei-Mei's physical transformation into a red panda is a significant factor. It shapes her character development and journey towards self-acceptance. As she deals with these changes, Mei-Mei learns to embrace her new form and finally finds her true self.

Overall, the interaction between internal and external factors shapes Mei-Mei's character, being herself and being able to overcome challenges in her life.

Conclusion

After researchers analyzed the film "Turning Red", it can be concluded that Mei- Mei's character underwent a change from a child to a teenager. Based on Erikson's theory, the change occurs through two stages of personality development, namely the industry vs. inferiority stage and the identity vs. role confusion stage. At the beginning of the story, Mei-Mei is in the industry stage with independent, loyal, ambitious, energetic, and responsible characters. But in the inferiority phase, Mei-Mei undergoes a physical change into a red panda, which makes her grumpy, quiet, and depressed. She also begins to feel love. Then, Mei-Mei enters the teenage phase. In the identity stage, Mei-Mei tries to find her true self by becoming a rebel, explorer, liar, and more sensitive. But at the end of the story, Mei-Mei successfully passes the role confusion stage by facing various conflicts in her life and finding her true self. She grows up with an independent, responsible, honest, and cheerful girl.

Mei-Mei's character development is influenced by several factors, namely external and internal factors. External factors include family, school, and community environments. In terms of family environment, her mother is too restricted with Mei-Mei, in contrast to her father, who always supports Mei-Mei. In terms of the school environment, her friends (Miriam, Priya, and Abby) have a positive influence on Mei-Mei's character development, but there are also conflicts caused by Tyler. While in the aspect of community environment, 4-Town plays an important role for Mei-Mei to express herself and explore her interests. In terms of internal factors, Mei-Mei's character development is divided into three aspects, including temperament, cognitive development, and physical transformation. Her temperament encourages her to overthink, have trust issues, and be attracted to the opposite sex. In the aspect of cognitive development, Mei-Mei learns to accept herself, Finally, in the aspect of physical transformation, Mei-Mei becomes a red panda.

In short, the interaction between internal and external factors shapes Mei-Mei's character to become herself and overcome the challenges in her life. Mei-Mei's journey in "Turning Red" highlights the complexities and challenges of today's teenagers as they explore the journey towards self-discovery.

References

Abrams, M. H., & Harpham, G. G. (2015). *A glossary of literary terms* (Eleventh edition). Cengage Learning.

Allport, G. W. (1921). *PSYCHOLOGICAL BULLETIN*.

Almerico, G. (2014). Building character through literacy with children's literature.

Research in Higher Education Journa, *26*, 13.

Barsam, R. M., & Monahan, D. (2010a). *Looking at movies: An introduction to film* (3rded). W.W. Norton & Co.

Bordwell, D. (2014). *Narration in the fiction film* (Nachdruck). Univ. of Wisconsin Pr. Chatman, S. B. (2007). *Story and discourse: Narrative structure in fiction and film* (9). Cornell Univ. Press.

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (Fifth edition). SAGE.

Erikson, E. H. (1993). *Childhood and society*. Norton.

Hurlock, G. (1978). *Developmental Psychology: A Life-Span Approach* (3rd ed.).

McGraw-Hill.

Klarer, M. (2013). *An introduction to Literary Studies* (Third edition). Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

McKee, R. (1997a). *Story: Substance, structure, style and the principles ofscreenwriting* (1st ed). ReganBooks.

Simanjuntak, M. B. (2020). THE EDUCATIONAL VALUES OF THE MAIN CHARACTER IN BEAUTIFUL MIND FILM. *JOURNAL OF ADVANCED ENGLISH*

STUDIES, *3*(1), 1. https://doi.org/10.47354/jaes.v3i1.83

Steinberg, L. D. (2014). *Age of opportunity: Lessons from the new science ofadolescence*. Eamon Dolan/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Taylor, S. J., Bogdan, R., & DeVault, M. L. (2016). *Introduction to qualitative research methods: A guidebook and resource* (Fourth edition). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Totawad, N. (2019). *Film Literature: An Overview*. 43–44.