

THE PORTRAYAL OF GISELLE'S CHARACTER IN "ENCHANTED" MOVIE: A GENDER STEREOTYPE STUDY

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Abstract

Enchanted (2007) is a musical romantic comedy movie produced by Walt Disney Pictures that combine animated and live action scenes. The movie has interesting characters and plot to analyse. This study examines Giselle's character in Disney's Enchanted movie, the connection with gender-role stereotypes, and the moral values from the story. Data were collected by using library research method and analysed through structural approach and coded content analysis approach based on coding characteristics. Results showed that Giselle has more feminine than masculine characteristics that confirm the female gender-role stereotype. However, a twist at the climax of the story displaying her acquired masculine traits indicates the rise of modern female-gendered representation from Disney. Further studies are needed to investigate the development of the dynamic character related to Disney's gender-role message and the influences to today society life.

Keywords: *Character, Enchanted, Literature, Moral Values*

1. Introduction

Movie is one kind of literary works that is interesting to watch. Many kinds of movie such as adventure, comedy, and romantic movies always have interesting stories of fiction that draw the viewers' attention. As a part of literary work, a movie also has similar intrinsic elements such as theme, characters, setting, plot, and scenes. The characters and the plot of a story is displayed very clearly in movies. Therefore, movies are more enjoyable and memorable.

Literature is commonly defined as a collection of written works in the forms of short story, novel, drama, and poetry. Pradopo (1994: 26) described a literary work as a picture of the world and human life, where the main criteria put on the literary work is 'truth' or everything that wants to be pictured by the author. Apart from other art forms like painting, sculpture, music, drama, and the dance, literature is distinguished by the medium in which it works, that is language (Kakonis and Evans, 1971: 139). Literature is one of the media used by human to express themselves on the subject of human beings, cultures, humanity, and the

universe. It is the expression of life issues, philosophy, and psychology. Literature is suitable as learning material since literary works can be used to develop the insight of nation thinking (Wardiman, 1998: 3). Literature, as an example of authentic language, also potentially plays a role in facilitating the learner's access to the English-using culture. Literature can lead to better cultural understanding of the target community, which is necessary for learning the target language (Kramsch, 1993). Therefore, the use of literature plays important roles in life.

Film is one of the most dominant media in literature today that gives many benefits in education and social life. It becomes the most popular literature product because it is produced in many genres, interesting with many colourful animation and special effects, easy and cheap to get. In addition, it offers moral values and often include language and culture content (Anggraeni et al., 2019). It also becomes one of the most easily accessible language products available as a learning media (Caixia, 2013). According to Montgomery (1992: 192), film is a kind of medium that ensures "easy intelligibility", which we could make the most of in language teaching. Students can use films to enhance their critical reading abilities by critically viewing film prior to studying literature such as novels, poems, short stories, plays (Golden, 2007). Furthermore, films can record culture and treat social or political issues and other aspects of societies to capture relationship difficult to be communicated by other means (Lorimer, 1995: 506).

Enchanted is a musical romantic comedy movie produced by Walt Disney Pictures that combine animated and live action scenes. The story tells about a classic fairy tale princess from the past who is thrown into a modern-day world an evil queen. The film is like no other classic Disney fairy tale because it mixes the elements of traditionally animated adventure and magic with the modern-day live action setting of New York City. In the real world, Princess Giselle begins to change her views on life and love after meeting a handsome lawyer, who later becomes her true love in real world. The story itself also contains many feminisms ideology as well as big representation of women.

Based on the definitions above, it can be concluded that film as literature media plays important role in studying language and its culture, thus making analysing film as the main reason for the topic of discussion in this research. The research purpose in this thesis is to analyse the portrayal of the main character Giselle in the *Enchanted* film. The research will focus on the characteristics and characterization of the main character or the female protagonist in the film.

2. Theoretical Framework

Literature can be defined in many ways. Rainsford (2014, p. 8) provided various meanings of literature based on five categories. Based on the first category, form and content, literature is defined as a kind of writing in which the way that something is said matters as much as what is said; or where the way that something is said is part of what is said. The second is imagination and creativity, in which literature means writing that is not just the reporting of facts, but in which things are created or 'made up'. The third category, subjectivity, views literature as writing in which things, persons and events are described from a particular individualistic viewpoint, in a way that is different from an 'objective' understanding. In fourth category, artistry, literature is described as deliberately artistic writing, intended to take its place in an existing 'literary' tradition.

Whereas in the fifth category, greatness, the meaning of literature is a kind of writing that only a few especially talented people are capable of, but which is relevant and perhaps useful to other people and deserves their admiration. There are many forms and genres of literature. Literature has major forms like poetry, prose, drama, and other genres such as fiction, nonfiction, plays, and film (Ugondo, 2015: 192; Lumen Learning & Ivy Tech Community College 2015: 2-4).

Film is considered as a branch of literature because it complements literature. Since literature is a narrative art intent upon creating images and sounds in the reader's mind, then film is obviously literary, that is an extension of the older narrative arts. Basic elements of film are technically grouped into object placement, camera shot, and camera movement. Object placement elements include image, time, motion, sound, lighting, sequence, and composition. Camera Shot Elements consist of medium shot, long shot, wide shot, close-up, medium close-up, extreme close-up, low angle, high angle, and Dutch angle. Camera movement elements are divided into two kinds, which are nonspatial movement of the camera (pan, tilt, pedestal, zoom) and the spatial movement of the camera (trucking, dolly crane) (Nwanwene, 2002 in Ugondo, 2015: 40-42).

There are many definitions of character. According to Card (2010: 3, 5), a character is what he or she means to do, and part of a character's identity is what others say about him. Eder (2015: 73) stated that characters are identifiable represented beings with an inner life that exist as communicatively constructed artefacts. It means that characters are set apart from other elements of represented worlds (story worlds, or degases) by being ascribed an object-related inner life with perceptions, thoughts, motives, or feelings. Chatman (1978 in Weststeijn, 2004:

57) in his open theory of character views characters as more or less autonomous beings, not as merely a function of the plot. Accordingly, when we encounter a character in a literary work or a film, we gradually construct a character by piecing together his or her personal qualities, which are inferred from all kinds of textual data: a character's name, his actions, thoughts and speech, what is said about him by the narrator or by other characters, etc.

Whereas Phelan (1989 in Weststeijn, 2004: 59-60) stated that character is a literary element composed of three components: the mimetic, synthetic and thematic. The mimetic component refers to how a character can be the image of a real and possible person. The synthetic component concerns the artificiality of character and stresses that character is a literary construct. The thematic component refers to how a character can be used to represent a certain idea, a group or a class within the semantic structure of the literary work.

Gender refers to the social categories of male and female that are distinguished from one another by a set of psychological features and role attributes that society has assigned to the biological category of sex. For example, emotionality is a trait we ascribe to women, and competitiveness is a trait we ascribe to men. Personality and appearance are also related to the gender category. The content of gender categories is influenced by society, culture, and time (Helgeson, 2012: 3-4).

A stereotype is a schema or a set of beliefs about a certain group of people. Fiske & Stevens (1993 in Helgeson, 2012: 80) explained that stereotypes have descriptive and prescriptive components. The descriptive component identifies the features of the stereotype which is limiting, as we judge feminine women as less competent for leadership positions and masculine men as less capable of nurturing children. The prescriptive component of a stereotype is how we think people ought to behave due to their sex. For example, men should be masculine and women should be feminine.

Gender-role stereotypes are the features we assign to women and men in our society, features not assigned due to biological sex but due to the social roles that men and women hold. It refers to our beliefs about the features of the biological or psychological categories of male and female and the cognitive component of our attitude toward sex (Helgeson, 2012: 9, 79). Gender-role stereotypes can be defined by using personality traits or male and female characteristics, including coding characteristics formulated from previous studies on gender and animated film. England et al. (2011: 558-560) describes characteristics, which were identified as traditionally masculine or traditionally feminine according to past content analysis literature (Do Rozario 2004; Dundes 2001; Durkin 1985a; Hoerrner 1996; Klein et al. 2000;

Leaper et al. 2002; Thompson and Zerbinos 1995). The coding characteristics contain the gendered characteristics of the prince and princess characters from Disney princess films, the performance of climactic rescues by the characters, and the romantic resolution for the prince and princess characters at the end of the movie.

3. Research Method

This type of research is descriptive qualitative research to reveal facts, events, and circumstances of phenomena contained in the object of film research resulting from the exploitation of literary works. Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011: 3 in Creswell, 2013: 44). This research is conducted by using content analysis method. It is used by sociologists to analyse social life by interpreting words and images from documents, books, newspapers, films, arts, music, and other cultural products and media. For example, responses to open-ended questions are on the basis of content analysis (Hancock et al., 2009 in Mohajan, 2018: 16). The research data is in the form of speech, behaviour, context, which are displayed by the characters through visualization in the film. The procedure of data collection is done by observing repeatedly and noting the aspects in the film that are relevant to the purpose of the research.

The data in this study are collected by using library research method. The writer goes to libraries to collect data. The data consist of two kinds, which are primary and secondary data. The primary data are the pictures and dialogues taken from the movie, whereas the secondary data are the experts' opinions. The writer takes the frames of the movie and dialogues from the movie script to confirm the traits or characteristics of the main character. The methods of approach used are structural approach and coded content analysis approach. In structural approach, the data are collected by using structural approach that focuses on the narrative structure or intrinsic elements of the movie as literary work.

First, the writer watches the Enchanted movie. Second, the writer identifies the intrinsic elements of the movie. The plot and the setting of the story are described. Third, the writer analyses the main character, Giselle. Then, a coded content analysis approach is used to identify and record each gendered behaviour or characteristic depicted in the films. The films' content was coded for the gendered characteristics of the prince and princess characters, the performance of climactic rescues by the characters, and the romantic resolution for the characters at the end of the movie (England et al., 2011: 558). This method enables the writer

to gather information about the types of behaviours portrayed by the movies' main female and male characters, how often such behaviours are depicted, and how these connect to the characters' gender.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1. Giselle's Character Portrayed in Enchanted Movie

4.1.1. Giselle's Physical Appearance

The physical appearance of Giselle's real character matches Disney's animated version with the beauty of a princess. In both cartoon and real character, Giselle is portrayed as a beautiful young woman with a slim body, fair skin, long wavy strawberry-blonde hair that reaches below her back, and large blue-green eyes. She shares similar features of other princess characters like having big eyes, long hair, different eye and hair colours, their hair being neatly tied, and wearing proper and beautiful dresses (Azmi et al., 2018). Her attractive physical appearance confirms the Mo Xu's (2021) study on stereotypical features portrayed by Snow White, Cinderella, and Aurora characters.

4.1.2. Giselle's Personalities Traits

The initial personality traits of Giselle are a combination of the other classic Disney princesses' traits. Director Kevin Lema described her as about 80% Snow White with some traits borrowed from Cinderella and Sleeping Beauty, although her spunkiness comes from Ariel of The Little Mermaid (Disney Wiki, n. d.). Giselle's character is dynamic because her personality traits are developed in the story. She has many innate traits that are inherited from her animated character and remain in the story, such as romantic, cheerful, affectionate, trusting, and optimistic. Her naivety slowly disappears as she learns a lot of things in the real New York and explore more human emotions. She also becomes brave when she tries to save Robert from Narissa.

4.2. Comparing Character's Types and Traits of Giselle to Gender Stereotypes

Giselle has a combination of several character types. She is the innocent because she retains her pure-hearted nature while facing the cynical people in modern New York. She is also the optimist. On the other side, Giselle becomes the nurturant. At the first time, Morgan follows Giselle as a role model because of her princess-like attitude, but then she looks like a nurturing mother for Morgan as they have spent time together. She is the homemaker, which is displayed when she cleaned up Robert's apartment and prepared breakfast for him and her daughter. In addition, she is the brave heart for she acquires brave trait when she behaves and

reacts to the situation where Robert is kidnapped and taken by the Dragon Narissa to the top of the tower.

Giselle has almost all the feminine characteristics, although she becomes masculine at the end of the story. Compared to Coding Characteristics described by English et al. (2011: 559-560), Giselle matches the feminine characteristics such as:

4.2.1. Physically Attractive

Giselle has princess-like appearance that fits her animated-version character. She has beautiful big blue-green eyes, fair skin, slim body, and long wavy hair. Also, she always wears dress like a princess.

4.2.2. Submissive

It means allowing herself to be controlled by others, meekly obedient or passive. Giselle is submissive. In Andalasia, she was controlled by Prince Edward and happily-ever-after love view, so that she received Edward's proposal. When Narissa turned into the beast, Giselle was afraid and hid behind Robert's back.

4.2.3. Emotional

Giselle is expressive and easily shows her feelings. She naively cried in Robert's office and was angry at him. She showed her love to Morgan and Pip in the restaurant. She stared at Robert with love while dancing in the ballroom, and she looked deeply sad when she saw him and Nancy kissing there.

4.2.4. Affectionate

Giselle is light-hearted and cheerful. She also has sincerity, compassion and sympathy for others. For example, she naively gave money to an old woman sitting on a bench. She showed her affection to Morgan so that Morgan kissed her after reading her bedtime story. She also helped Robert fix his relationship with Nancy and encouraged him to show love to her by dancing while singing That's How You Know song and sending Nancy a flower bouquet.

4.2.5. Nurturing

As she grows in emotions and view of life, she becomes nurturing figure of mother for Morgan. She read her bedtime stories. They also shopped and go to beauty salon together like other moms and their daughters do.

4.2.6. Sensitive

In the real world, Giselle was exposed to more human feelings and became sensitive. She easily showed sympathy to others. She felt sadness in no-happily-ever-after real world, anger, love, and broken heart.

4.2.7. Helpful

Giselle likes to help others. For example, she helps Robert fix his relationship with Nancy. With her optimism, she helps him believe in true love again. She convinces him that dreams can come true.

4.2.8. Troublesome

Giselle made trouble in both Robert's apartment and office. Although she invited animals to help her clean the apartment, Roberts and Morgan then had to cast out the cockroaches, rats, and birds from their apartment. She made him angry because she took his curtain to make dresses. Giselle accidentally fell on Robert in front of Nancy and caused miscommunication between them. She also made trouble when she cried in his office that made his client and boss angry at him.

4.2.9. Fearful

She was afraid of Narissa especially when Narissa turned into an ugly giant beast. The beast Narissa made Giselle shocked and scared, so that she hid behind Robert's back.

4.2.10. Accepts advice or help

Robert helped Giselle and told her about reality. Although they argued about that, she then accepts his advice on date and love relationship. When Edward meets Giselle in Robert's apartment and asks her to go home, she asks Edward to go dating. They date because of Robert's advice.

4.2.11. Victim

Her naivety and trusting traits made her become a victim of trickery. She was tricked by the old man, who smiled at her and grabbed her tiara. She was tricked by Nathaniel so that she received the poisoned apples. She was deceived by Narissa, who sent her to the real world and gave her the last poisoned apple.

Until the end of the movie, Giselle retains most of her feminine characteristics like affectionate, nurturing, sensitive, and helpful. Whereas her masculine characteristics like brave, strong, assertive, and leader has displayed from the climax to the end of the story. Giselle was brave and strong when she rescued Robert from Narissa. She was also assertive when she did not let Narissa escaped with Robert and fought against her. She acquired leader characteristic, that is shown in her heroic rescue and her career as a boutique designer in the end of the movie. Because Giselle has more feminine than masculine traits, her character still confirms the female gender-role stereotype.

The heroic action of Giselle saving her true love, Robert, is inconsistent with female gender-role stereotypes. Although her character's types and feminine characteristics confirm the traditional female gender stereotype, she also acquires masculine traits. Robert saved her twice (when she arrived in the real New York and when Robert gave true love's kiss), and Giselle also saved him twice. First, her innocence, affection, and optimism made Robert regain his faith in a romantic love relationship. Second, she saved him from Narissa on the top of the tower showing that a princess can save her prince or do her rescue by herself. Her new masculine traits, which are brave and strong, disconfirm the female gender-role stereotypes.

A gender-role twist in *Enchanted* movie displays a transition of gender roles from traditional feminine to modern female-gendered representation. In the climax, the screenwriter tries to make a gender-role-twist by making a situational attribution or pressure for Giselle's behaviour that disconfirms female gender-role stereotypes. Giselle chose to determine her own happily ever after life in real world with her real true love and could save her prince. At the end of the movie, Giselle also shows a female leading role, which is displayed by running her fashion business or boutique named Andalasia Fashion. The modern princess characteristics represented by Giselle shows that women can be brave, strong, and independent. This result is consistent with Garabedian's (2014) findings about the modern Disney princess that is independent, brave, and heroic. The masculine traits acquired by Giselle are also represented by other Disney's main characters in *Tangled*, *Frozen*, *Moana* (Palupi, 2019; Ramadhan, 2019; Putri, 2021).

5. Conclusion

Giselle is portrayed as a beautiful young girl from animated world Andalasia that experience emotional growth in real world New York. Giselle's character is dynamic because her personality traits are developed in the story. Her personality traits displayed in the story are romantic, naïve, cheerful, affectionate, optimistic, sensitive, trusting, and brave. Compared to Coding Characteristics, Giselle has more feminine than masculine characteristics. The feminine traits are physically attractive, submissive, shows emotion, affectionate, nurturing, sensitive, helpful, troublesome, fearful, accepts advice or help, and victim. Whereas the masculine characters such as brave, strong, assertive, and leader are acquired at the climax of the story. Giselle's character confirms the female gender stereotype, although there is a gender-role twist at the climax that displays a transition of gender roles from traditional feminine to modern female-gendered representation.

Disney animated movies are interesting research object that has been observed by many researchers. Since the sequel of Enchanted movie, Disenchanted, will be released in 2022, the writer suggests the viewers to analyse whether the traits of Giselle's character and gender-role message in the next Disney movie will change or not. The writer also suggests the researchers to analyse the other characters or the villain/ antagonist by using different approach or method. Also, the topic of the shift or change of gender-role representation can be observed by comparing the Disney's princess characters from old times to modern days to analyze the psychological influences in today society.

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