

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the writer analyzes the collected data. The collected data is a movie with the title *Blue Is the Warmest Color*. The writer analyzes the important shots and scenes in the movie that mark the identity development of the main character, Adèle, based on Cass' homosexual identity formation. The writer will also analyze the title of the movie to see how the movie title expresses the film narrative.

4.1. Synopsis

The film narrative in *Blue Is the Warmest Color* begins with Adèle's life as a high school student. Adèle is mostly like other teenagers at her age in general, until she meets Emma who is a lesbian and Adèle begins questioning her identity. Adèle realizes that there is something she feels that she is into Emma. Adèle is struggling in order to find out who she truly is until she committed to the homosexual identity at last. As time goes by, Adèle's relationship with Emma does not work as what they expected, they broke up. Adèle is trying to make everything works with Emma since Emma is the one who makes Adèle aware about herself of being a homosexual throughout the process. Nevertheless, they choose to live their own life respectively.

4.2. Adèle's Homosexual Identity Development

This subchapter discusses the homosexual identity development of Adèle portrayed in *Blue Is the Warmest Color*. The writer describes Adèle's process on how she finds and adapts to her new identity as a lesbian. In the discussion, the descriptions of the six stages of homosexual identity formation are followed by the explanation of the processes that Adèle undertakes in finding her

identity. A number of important shots and scenes as well as dialogues are examined to meet the purpose of the analysis.

4.2.1. Identity Confusion

The first stage of identity formation is confusion where the person finds that his behavior possibly has a tendency to be a homosexual. According to Cass (1979), (Cass, 1979) as confusion and turmoil may also occur during this stage, the person will either receive this possibility of being homosexual or reject it. The person is perplexed about who he is. Sometimes he feels, thinks, or acts similarly as those of a homosexual. The person would rarely tell this to anyone, yet he is nearly sure that homosexuality has something to do with his desires and impulses.

In the movie, the stage above can be shown in the scene started where Adèle's life was normal before she recognizes her identity as a lesbian. As a high school student, Adèle does common things similar to those of other students. Adèle's confusion about her identity sparks off when she accidentally meets a blue-haired woman, Emma.



Figure 4.1. Adèle meets Emma accidentally
(Blue Is the Warmest Color, 2013, 13:07)

The meeting makes Adèle's heart pounding and drags her to sexual fantasies with Emma. There is an unusual feeling and emotion she never felt before, especially toward the same sex.



Figure 4.2. Adèle has a sexual fantasies with Emma
(Blue Is the Warmest Color, 2013, 18:14)

According to Cass (1979), thoughts, emotional, and physiological response that may be defined as homosexual, characterized the first stage of the identity formation process. Adèle is trying to understand herself as she suddenly has this strange feeling toward a woman. This situation makes Adèle confused, but she tries to convince herself that there is nothing wrong with her sexual orientation by keeping her relationship with Thomas. Yet, her confusion grows even more when she finds no satisfaction with Thomas sexually. The more she denies herself, the more she does not know who she truly is. Furthermore, it shows in the movie that Adèle feels like she is faking.



Figure 4.3. Adèle is confused about her identity
(Blue Is the Warmest Color, 2013, 24:33)

Adèle is now aware that she is attracted romantically to the blue-haired woman she met. She realizes that she could be a homosexual; the fact which makes her feeling downhearted several times. Yet, she finally makes a decision to break up with Thomas.

Adèle feels wrong about her relationship with Thomas, or in this case, with a boy. It can be seen that Adèle is starting to accept the possibility of her being a homosexual. She is stressful regarding her sexual orientation, from a heterosexual to homosexual one.

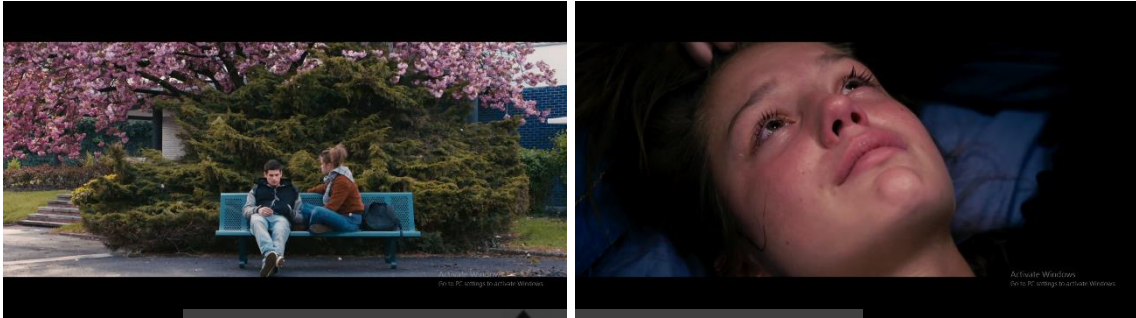


Figure 4.4. Adèle broke up with Thomas and she is stressful
(Blue Is the Warmest Color, 2013, 27:00)

Adèle realizes that she has transformed into a different person. Yet, she is still in great hesitation about her identity. These events mark the beginning of Cass' model where Adèle is in a painful phase trying to find out what happened with her, yet she knows that she may have the possibility to be a homosexual.

4.2.2. Identity Comparison

At the second stage of homosexual identity development, identity comparison, Cass (1979) states that it is characterized by a tentative commitment of being homosexual and the confusion and turmoil seem to be lessened. The person feels that he probably is a homosexual but not definitely sure, which makes him feel alienated and distant from his surroundings. The person will try to look for a group identification where he really belongs. Therefore, the denial of one's self as a homosexual is still possible in this stage.

Identity comparison in the movie can be seen in the scene where Adèle's confusion and turmoil start to lead her to find out and explore about homosexuality that may be her identity. She starts to see the possibility that she is a lesbian. Adèle's first experience of

accepting the possibility of her being a lesbian is when she makes out with one of her female friends. Adèle wants to make sure afterwards, as she thinks that she finally find someone who has the same identity as her, as a lesbian. Yet, instead of getting a positive response, Adèle got rejection. This is where Adèle starts to feel alienated from her surroundings.



Figure 4.5. Adèle starts to feel alienate after getting a rejection
(*Blue Is the Warmest Color*, 2013, 37:51)

As Cass (1979) states, facing the feeling of alienation is the characteristic of this stage because the difference between self and non-homosexual others has become clearer. The scene above shows that Adèle experiences the feeling of alienation as pointed out by Cass. Adèle is trying to compare her previous identity and her present identity that may be a lesbian. By asking her friend to take her to a gay bar, Adèle tries to find a group of people that might be able to overcome her feeling of alienation. This is where she compares what it feels like to be a homosexual as she always has her self-image as a heterosexual. Unexpectedly, Adèle meets Emma in the bar and then they have a conversation. The emotional feeling that Adèle feels is still the same as the first time she met Emma accidentally. She feels comfortable talking to Emma, this is such a strange feeling yet a confirmation for her that she likes being with Emma, or in this case, with a woman.



Figure 4.6. Adèle meets Emma in a gay bar
(Blue Is the Warmest Color, 2013, 43:47)

Their encounter did not end there, Emma is trying to hit on Adèle too afterwards, which makes Adèle pleased. This situation makes Adèle's friends find out that Adèle and Emma have been seeing each other and they also happen to know that Emma is a lesbian. They draw a conclusion that Adèle is a lesbian and corner her about it too which leads Adèle to the denial of her identity as a lesbian.



Figure 4.7. Adèle denies herself being a lesbian
(Blue Is the Warmest Color, 2013, 01:04:45)

Adèle's denial of herself being a lesbian marks the identity comparison process, as Cass (1979) explains that denial of one self as a homosexual is also the characteristic of this stage. Social alienation starts to take part in this identity development process as the difference between self and non-homosexual others become clearer and heterosexual seems to be the only one that most society holds. This is where Adèle tries to handle the social alienation she gets. She defends herself as she realizes that she is different and afraid

that everyone will reject her once they know the truth about her identity. It shows that Adèle knows that she probably is a homosexual, but not definitely sure about it yet.

4.2.3. Identity Tolerance

Identity tolerance is characterized by a feeling of the need to seek out other homosexuals. As Cass (1979) explains that the person starts to tolerate his identity, yet he still pretends to be heterosexual for he is not fully sure about being homosexual. Contact with other homosexuals is sought out in order to decrease the feeling of alienation and such contact is frequently seen as "necessary" rather than desirable. A positive contact will lead the person to a bigger commitment as homosexual and negative self-concept will increase if the contact is a negative one.

The scene in the movie that depicts the identity tolerance is when Adèle tends to choose with whom she would interact with and starts to find an environment that supports her to fill her social, sexual, and emotional needs in order to lessen her feeling of alienation from the previous stage. It shows that Adèle starts to see the contact with homosexuals as necessary rather than desirable, which there is a tolerance of her being a lesbian rather than an acceptance of it. At first, Adèle was trying to find out whether she fits with homosexuality or not, by comparing heterosexual and homosexual worlds. She feels distant from the society and feels like she is not belonging with the heterosexuals after her friends cornered her as if they do not accept her as a lesbian. At this stage, even though Adèle does not seem to find a community, she finds a person instead, that is Emma, to support her to fill the needs of the development of her identity. Yet, Adèle is still acting normal and not letting others know about her feelings.



Figure 4.8. Adèle interacts with Emma to lessen her feeling of alienation
(Blue Is the Warmest Color, 2013, 01:12:24)

This is where Adèle also learns to know better about her identity as lesbian. She even asks Emma on how Emma recognized herself as lesbian. It can be seen that Adèle starts to have a bigger commitment of being homosexual as she got a positive respond from Emma. Such respond helps Adèle to eliminate her negative view towards homosexuality. Besides, Cass (1979) states that during this stage, emotional quality of the contact is an important factor to free the person from a state of identity confusion and turmoil he/she had before.

4.2.4. Identity Acceptance

Identity acceptance as Cass (1979) states, is characterized by a more positive view about homosexuality and the person becomes fully sure about his identity. The person has spent most of his time with other homosexuals to retain homosexual lifestyle. The person is also ready to tell a few people about his homosexual identity, but he still hide it from some others that may create problems if they know about his homosexual identity.

This stage of identity acceptance can be indicated in the movie as the scene of Adèle starting to accept herself being a lesbian articulates it. As Adèle is also having a positive and in a constant contact with other homosexual, it can be said that she starts to feel normal about being lesbian. She is fully sure now that lesbian is her identity and is no longer see

homosexuality as something negative anymore, but as something good for herself. It can be seen from how Adèle lives her life by moving together with Emma once she graduated from high school.



Figure 4.9. Adèle is living with Emma
(Blue Is the Warmest Color, 2013, 02:12:22)

Adèle took a step where she starts to open up to some people about her identity as Adèle and Emma introduce themselves as a couple to their closest friends. Adèle is now in a bigger commitment of accepting herself as a lesbian, she even leaves anti-gay hatred behind. Yet, she hides her identity from her parents. This situation happens when Adèle invites Emma to have dinner with her parents and they have some conversation.



Figure 4.10. Adèle's parents do not know about Emma and Adèle relationship
(Blue Is the Warmest Color, 2013, 01:35:36)

Here, all that Adèle's parents know is that Emma helps Adèle in gaining her Philosophy grades at school because Adèle told them so, they have no idea that their daughter is now a lesbian and is having a relationship with Emma. Indeed, Adèle is already

fully sure about her identity being a lesbian, but the decision of Adèle not telling about it to her parents is because the distinction between how she sees herself and how non-homosexual others think about her as a homosexual is increased. It marks the characteristic of this stage. Adèle thinks that it would cause more problems if she tells her parents about her identity as a lesbian.

4.2.5. Identity Pride

Identity pride is characterized by feeling pride about his identity and enjoy living as a homosexual. The person finally makes no attempt to hide the fact that he is homosexual. Yet, Cass (1979) explains that the distinction between heterosexual and homosexual world becomes very strong since there is society's stigmatization towards homosexuals. This stigmatization makes them see heterosexuals as something devalued.

In the movie, the scene when Adèle begins to have a strong commitment to gay identity express this kind of identity pride, which also leads her to an acute awareness of rejection afterwards as she starts to enjoy living as homosexual. The difference between Adèle's concept of being acceptable as homosexual and society's rejection of it is getting clearer. It can be seen on how Adèle got rejection from her friends at school previously and after she graduated, her parents disown her once they know about Adèle's love affair with Emma. Adèle never sees her parents anymore afterwards. According to Cass (1979), as society's rejection is getting clearer, it often leads to an act to promote the equality of the homosexual.



Figure 4.11. Adèle and Emma are joining the action to show their pride as homosexual
(Blue Is the Warmest Color, 2013, 01:23:29)

Since heterosexual is seen as something devalued and homosexual is seen as something worthy, at this stage, Adèle shows her proud feeling of being a homosexual couple with Emma by joining an action of gay pride. Heterosexual seems to be the only sex orientation that is most acceptable in the society. Therefore, the action of feeling proud as homosexual is the result of the society's stigmatization towards homosexuality where they want to be seen as equal. It can be said that this action is also as the expression of self-acceptance that they have achieved as homosexual.

4.2.6. Identity Synthesis

At this stage, the person tries to blend in equally with both homosexuals and heterosexuals. Even the person tends to increase the contact with supportive heterosexuals; he does not see heterosexuals as something negative anymore, but unsupportive heterosexuals are devalued. According to Cass (1979), identity synthesis is where the person synthesizes his own view of self and views of self-belief held by other people into one, and realizing that there are heterosexuals who would accept them the way they are. It is also the stage where the person is ready to open up to everyone about his identity.

However, this stage cannot be applied on Adèle. In the scene when it comes to the situation where Adèle is surrounded by her fellow heterosexuals, she still hide her identity

from them even though she seemed showing her proud feeling of being a homosexual at the previous stage. It happens when one of Adèle's coworkers asks her out for a drink and Adèle always finds excuses to not join them, and it seems that it happens several times which makes them draw a conclusion that Adèle is avoiding them.

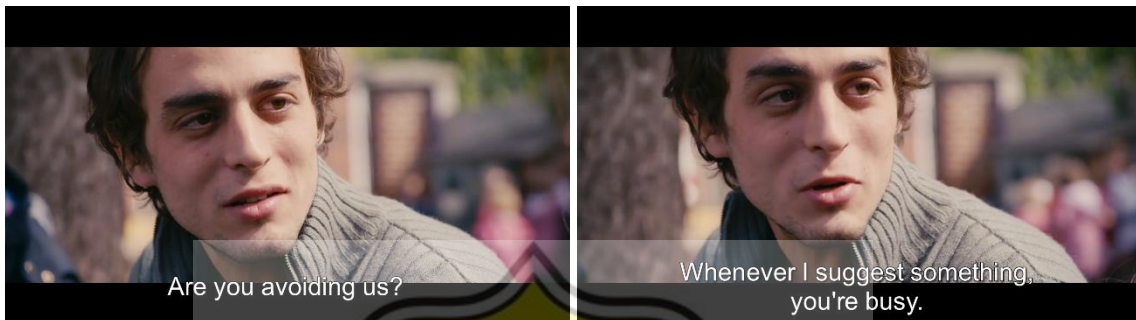


Figure 4.12 Adèle hides her life as a lesbian
(*Blue Is the Warmest Color*, 2013, 01:44:17)

Adèle realizes that her sexual orientation is not everything in life and that there are some supportive heterosexuals out there, yet, the rejection that Adèle got from her family and friends makes her having a strong decision to keep her life from others. It is better for her if only her closest friends who know about her life as a homosexual. It can be said that Adèle has not been fully able to synthesize her private and public aspects of life. It seems like Adèle is confident enough about her identity only when she is around Emma and putting up walls from heterosexuals.

Through all the discussion above, it can be seen that Adèle has accomplished her journey recognizing her identity as a homosexual. Adèle keeps on moving despite her struggles in order to achieve what she really desired about her identity. She shows some changes within herself; from heterosexual to homosexual one, from denying all the possibilities of being homosexual to accepting who she truly is as a homosexual. Adèle's

identity development is represented in the movie as well as how the movie title represents the film narrative.

4.3. The Film Narrative Representation through The Movie Title

Movie titles are one of the important parts in a movie to attract the viewers. Generally, movie titles will tell the viewers what the story is about. In contrast to the first subchapter which talks about Adèle's homosexual identity development, in this part, the writer focuses on how the title relates and represents the film narrative, *Blue Is the Warmest Color*.

Throughout the film narrative, *Blue Is the Warmest Color* is telling the viewers about the main character's journey, Adèle, finding her identity as a homosexual. Yet it also tells the story of Adèle and Emma which represents the title of the movie. It starts with Adèle's life as a high school student. Like other teenagers at her age, Adèle is still seeking for her identity, and meeting Emma is the first time where Adèle starts to recognize her identity as a homosexual.

Emma is described as a blue-haired woman when she meets Adèle for the first time, even though she changed her hair color in the last scenes. It changes everything when they find each other as Emma is the person that makes Adèle notice her identity that she has not known before. It can be said that Emma is someone that Adèle has been desired for.



Figure 4.13. Emma, the blue-haired woman
(Blue Is the Warmest Color, 2013, 54:37)

During Adèle's journey finding her identity, Emma is the one who makes Adèle feel sure that her new identity as a homosexual is something that she really wants and something that she should cherish despite of the obstacles and the rejection she got from her surroundings. Emma helps Adèle in developing her identity indirectly. Adèle feels comfortable with Emma that she is really into her and they form a bond emotionally, even though they split up for some reasons at the end of the story. Adèle looks so depressed even after a long time of her split up with Emma, she even asks Emma to get back to her.

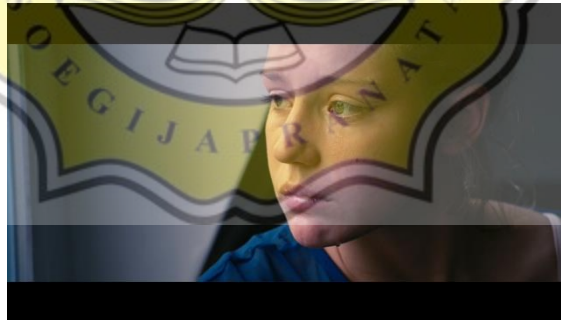


Figure 4.14. Adèle is depressed over her split up with Emma
(Blue Is the Warmest Color, 2013, 02:31:23)

Through these events, it can be concluded that the word "blue" in *Blue Is the Warmest Color*, refers to a person; Emma, who is described as a blue-haired woman. As someone that Adèle has been desired for, Emma is also the person who has been there for Adèle during her hard time accepting her identity as a homosexual. Adèle's sadness over

her split up with Emma is proof that Emma is someone that she cannot live without. Therefore, the words “the warmest color” refer to the situation where Adèle gets all the affection from Emma, the situation where Emma feels like home to her as she can be her own self around Emma when everyone against her about her homosexual identity. She does not need to pretend to be heterosexual around Emma and Emma is where Adèle gets all the comfort she needs.

