

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Humans are social creatures. They need other humans to survive. They need to communicate with other humans to tell what they want and what they need. In communication, positive and negative subject matters as well as effects are inevitable. In positive communication, there are usually suggestions, praise, jokes, etc. As for negative communication, mal-intention, insults, and conflicts often occur. What makes communication positive or negative depends on the content of the interaction. About the content of interaction, Calatayud Pinazo, a professor of social psychology in University Jaume 1 of Castellon, mentions that “Content that describes the success of the social action (positive valence) or failure (negative valence) can affect motivation to act in favour of the message in different ways” (Pinazo-Calatayud et al., 2020, p. 68). In society, conflict is considered a bad thing and should be avoided.

Conflict itself is a very important aspect in literature because conflict is the soul of a story. If in a story there is no conflict, then the literary work will not be lively, bland, and uninteresting. Conflict is not only in physical form but can be a dilemma in the heart and mind which is called inner/self-conflict. Inner/self-conflict is one type of conflict in literature. Self-conflict is accused of being the cause of quarrels and separation between individuals and even acts of violence against oneself.

The writer considers that self-conflict theory can be applied to what the protagonist experiences in *Rampage* (Peyton, 2018). The writer finds that the protagonist, Davis Okoye, experiences self-conflict which affects the storyline of the film. Similar research was conducted by Nur Hidayah (2018), a student from UIN Malang, who analyzed inner-conflict. Her research focuses more on finding out what types of conflict the protagonist experiences and how to resolve the conflict. The writer of this thesis also analyzes the inner-conflict, but the analysis focuses on how the protagonist's self-conflict affects the storyline and provides evidence of the protagonist's humanity

In this research, the writer intends to focus on the idea of conflict in a feature film entitled *Rampage* (Peyton, 2018). A feature film is a narrative film that typically has a run time between 80 minutes and 180 minutes long as commercial entertainment program. The length of features allow filmmakers to introduce more characters. They also allow characters to have full character arcs and allow the audience to connect more deeply to them. The writer is interested in analyzing the feature film because the writer considers that a feature film as a visual medium with its film narrative is more comprehensible and fascinating for the writer than other narrative forms. *Rampage* is a film directed by Brad Peyton in 2018. The conflict of the film involves the protagonist, Davis Okoye. This film tells the story of a primatologist named Davis Okoye (Dwayne Johnson) who befriends an albino gorilla, George. He saved little George from wildlife poachers after his mother was killed. Davis was a former US Army Special Forces anti-poacher who now works at

the San Diego animal park where George lives. Davis taught George how to communicate with sign language and they were quite close. Yet, one day, a tube fell in the area of George's cage containing an experimental pathogenic substance. The pathogen made George, who was originally docile, turned aggressive and his body became large. The pathogen comes from the results of a secret experiment by the Energyne Company conducting research on the Athena-1 space station.

Athena 1, the spaceship belongs to Energyne, was destroyed and nearly killed the entire crew. The capsule fell into US territory, as well as a canister containing the pathogen, one of which was swallowed by an alligator in the Florida area. Another tube fell in a Wyoming forest area infecting a wolf. When George becomes bigger and more aggressive, Nelson, Davis' friend who also works at the zoo, suggests killing George. Because of his growing body as well as his increasing strength, he is afraid that this could pose an even greater danger. There, David is faced with a difficult choice. On the one hand he doesn't want to kill his animal friend because they've been through a lot of moments together. However, with this incident, George can cause mass panic, harm other humans, and destroy the entire city. Davis is then contacted by geneticist, Doctor Kate Caldwell (Naomie Harris) who explains that George's changes are the result of a pathogen that Energyne has researched. George escapes from the cage and goes on a rampage in the animal park. Because of the chaos, the government intervenes and arrests George by sending Agent Harvey Russell (Jeffrey Dean Morgan) who then take him on a Boeing C-17 Globemaster III.

In this thesis, the writer examines the self-conflict of Davis Okoye. The self-conflict that Davis experiences seems to involve a dilemma between saving his animal friend, George, and saving other human beings threatened by the presence of George. The reason for analyzing this self-conflict of Davis is because the writer perceives that there is an issue or message of morality in it. The message is about compassion; how humans tend to be ignorant and merciless of others but their own vested-interests. This is what the writer is in favor of examining the self-conflict in the film.

1.2 Field of the Study

The field of the study of this thesis is literature, film analysis. The writer chose this field of study because the writer feels that what is conveyed through visual media is more able to bring the audience to feel what message the film wants to convey.

1.3 Scope of the Study

In this research, the writer limits the analysis on the moral issue of the film, namely, Davis Okoye's struggle or dilemma. Davis encounters two choices: giving up his albino gorilla, George, to the authority and be killed, or letting George create havoc with the consequences that he (George) will destroy the whole world.

1.4 Research Questions

Based on the background above, the writer proposes two research questions.

1. How does Davis experience self-conflict throughout the film?
2. Does Davis still have humanity after experiencing self-conflict?

The writer thinks that Davis' reservation articulates his selfishness on the one hand and his discouragement to determine what is best in his situation.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are

1. Find out why Davis Okoye experiences self-conflict throughout the film.
2. Provide evidences whether Davis still has humanity in his heart.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The writer expects that this study will be useful. This research theoretically enriches film analysis in general and feature film in a more specific way. In addition, this study is also expected to provide insight of moral values in the context of learning from film.

1.7 Definition of Terms

For the purpose of clarification, the important terms used in this thesis have been defined.

1. Internal Conflict

“A character struggles to reconcile two competing desires, needs, or duties, or two parts or aspects of himself” (Mays, 2018, p. 76).

2. Protagonist

A leading role or a main character who takes action in the entire in deciding the consequences of its storyline (Mays, 2018, p. 1222).

3. Humanity

“The qualities that make us human, such as the ability to love and have compassion, be creative, and not be a robot or alien.” (Ben-noun, 2021, p. 2).

4. Morality

Things relating to the standards of bad or good behavior to be affirmed and denied by the readers (Tanner, 1994, p. 2779).

5. Evidence

Cambridge Dictionary defined evidence as; anything that helps to prove that something is or is not true, one or more reasons for believing that something is or is not true (Cambridge, 2023).