

Chapter I

Introduction

This chapter will provide an overview of the study's background, identification of difficulties, research problems, objective, limitations, and significance. The following are the headers of the chapters.

1.1. Research Background

Society is usually attached to the entertainment industry, one of which is movies. People usually get lost in the narrative in a movie. They usually identify a character with a narrative and thus relate to them more. The audience's empathy towards fictional characters usually involves imagining that they are fictional characters. This is not tied to the writer's work, but shapes each viewer's perspective. Literature and culture are intertwined to form a whole.

Every generation has movies that define an era. And especially in movies about love and maturity, it represents the moment: music, fashion, and our attitude towards life. Based on the theory of Palapah and Syamsudin (1986:114); The definition of film is an entertainment medium that combines storyline, moving images, and sound in one artistic frame. These three elements are contained in every element of the movie, so movies are often used as elements of learning media. Supporting by the of Effendy (2003: 65) in *Ilmu Teori dan Filsafat Komunikasi*, mass media is used in communication when communication is large and the place lives far away.

The most widely used mass media in everyday life are generally newspapers, radio, television, and cinema, which operate in the fields of information, education and recreation, or in other terms of enlightenment, education, and entertainment.

A movie's genre or kind reflects a categorization or category. Following that, the film has a distinct pattern, place, characters, narrative, and topic. Film genres often serve the objective of making it easier to categorize and examine films based on distinct qualities. One of them is romanticism.

On the other hand, not all films end happily, as in Disney fairy tales. "(500) Days of Summer" is a superb example of a less typical love drama that focuses on Tom and Summer's connection. What's interesting about these films that capture the soul of different generations is that our viewpoints change as we age, allowing us to perceive the same picture in different ways over time. Summer is described as a realist on a journey to rediscover herself while steeped in pop culture, whereas Tom is portrayed as a romantic who has constructed his identity around movies and music.

(500) Days of Summer is one of the greatest examples of a modern romantic film that best represents the love lives of urban youth. The film recounts Tom's (Joseph Gordon-Levitt) journey as he falls in love with the erratic and enigmatic Summer, who thinks that "Love Is Just A Fantasy." (500) Days of Summer depicts their romance in a non-linear narrative format, from its early beginnings through its final breakup and resolution,

giving an indie flavor to the storytelling. It's a film that many people like because of its unusual approach to romance and of the complications of modern relationships among urban youth.

Summer is a genuine character; she is a person trying to understand her own aspirations and requirements in life. Tom, on the other hand, is a hopeless romantic, a young guy who has been highly inspired by romantic pop culture films. This gap in personalities creates a paradox and serves as the foundation for the film's conflict.

Summer depicts a character in the film that is pleasant, entertaining, adorable, and has an engaging personality. These people are frequently used to brighten the male protagonist's life. These character types have one thing in common: they appear to exist to make the male protagonist's life more ideal. This is where the Manic Pixie Dream Girl idea comes into play in relation to Summer's persona.

As viewers, it's important for us to empathize with and gain a deeper understanding of the main character, Tom, in order to truly comprehend his perspective. On the other hand, Summer is portrayed as someone who consistently holds false expectations. She initially expresses a lack of interest in long-term relationships and skepticism about love. Yet, unexpectedly, she ends up getting married. However, when we go back in time and revisit Summer's statements, she consistently mentions, "You know, I just want to be friends, I'm not looking for a long-term relationship."

Summer provides a clear disclaimer from the outset, so it's not a case of fantasy or misleading intentions.

On the other side, Tom harbors expectations that Summer will undergo a transformation because he believes that Summer is ideally suited for him. He projects his own desires onto Summer without truly listening to her. Tom's affection for Summer appears insincere; he is infatuated with the concept of having a woman like her in his life, someone who can bring happiness, color, and satisfying to his life. Tom seems primarily focused on how Summer benefits his own perspective. This is evident even in the scene where Summer confides in Tom about her secret story.

The fundamental reason why the writer picked the film, (500) Days of Summer by Marc Webb, is that it is a romantic-comedy with a basic idea but outstanding execution. This video is regarded as one of the top forms of art because it blends the difficulty of maintaining the viewer's viewpoint with the intimacy of the mind as opposed to reality. We appeared to think more and be more familiar with movies. The filmmaker finds it intriguing how intricate and distinct each character is depicted by Webb, and how difficult it is for the writer as a Webb wants the audience to understand each character he introduces.

The story of this film can leave you unsatisfied if you believe that a love story must have a happy ever after ending similar to Disney's fairytale with the main character getting married. Additionally, Summer's character could make the viewer feel odd and irritated.

The Manic Pixie Dream Girl trope theory was introduced by Rabin (2007), a film reviewer. He coined the term "Manic Pixie Dream Girl" while reviewing the 2005 film "Elizabethtown," which starred Kirsten Dunst and Orlando Bloom. In Rabin's analysis, he described Claire (Dunst) as a quintessential manic-pixie dream girl character deliberately created to teach men to appreciate the beauty of life with all its adventures and mysteries. The Manic Pixie Dream Girl is typically portrayed as a happy, quirky, and eccentric woman who "rescues" the male protagonist from a mundane, dull, and empty existence. This term has since become widely recognized in discussions of character tropes in film and literature.

This definition highlights how the Manic Pixie Dream Girl character can be seen as a representation of sexism in cinema. This is because it portrays women as mere instruments for male characters' personal growth and enlightenment. In contrast, female characters often lack depth and remain one-dimensional, with little to no character development. Essentially, women are relegated to the role of being supporting characters in someone else's narrative.

Other characters who represent the title "Manic Pixie Dream Girl" besides Summer include Margo (Cara Delevingne, Paper Towns), Maggie (Anna Hathaway, Love & Other Drugs), Claire (Kristen Dunst, Elizabethtown), Sam (Natalie Portman, Garden State), Sara (Charlize Theron, Sweet November), Annie Hall (Diane Keaton, Annie Hall), Clementine (Kate Winslet, Eternal Sunshine), (Mary Elizabeth Winstead

Scott Pilgrim vs. the World) or even Samantha (Scarlett Johansson, Her) as other examples. (Also appearing is Ruby Sparks (Zoe Kazan, Ruby Sparks), a "Manic pixie dream girl" to the main character Calvin (Paul Dano).

These characters, like Summer from (500) Days of Summer, exhibit traits and characteristics that fit the Manic Pixie Dream Girl trope, and they often play pivotal roles in the development of the male protagonists in their respective stories. They are the quintessential pretty girls with quirky, funny, lovable, funny personalities. And they are here to brighten up the lives of the male protagonists. The similarity between those characters is that they exist to make the male protagonist become perfect.

Due to this shallow portrayal, when the Manic Pixie Dream Girl character chooses to depart from the male protagonist, she is often unfairly labeled as an evil and manipulative woman. The narrative is intentionally framed from a male perspective, disregarding the inner thoughts and motivations of female characters. Over time, this theory has perpetuated harmful stereotypes.

The story presented in this type of film can be either a fictional narrative or an adaptation of a real-life story that is modified to include captivating elements, both in terms of the plot and the perspective of the audience who watches the film.

In this subject, the writer will center the attention on character portrayal and the Manic Pixie Dream Girl trope theory within the narrative. In accordance with the film, the character in question presents numerous

enigmatic elements aligned with the chosen theory and effectively embodies it. Subsequently, the writer will examine how the Manic Pixie Dream Girl Theory represent the characterization of the main female character in this particular film.

This chapter outlines the motivations behind conducting the research and addresses various aspects of the introduction, including the background of the problem, the research question, the objectives of the study, the study's limitations, and its significance.

1.2. Identification of the Problems

In the John Webb film (500) Days of Summer, Summer's character is often cited as the perfect example of the "Manic Pixie Dream Girl", the perfect funky female character type that seems to brighten up the male protagonist's previously boring life. They typically have quirky, adventurous, freewheeling, and clever personalities. In general, the opposition of conservative and boring protagonists is typical for mediocre people.

Summer is misinterpreted by the audience. Furthermore, from Tom's (the main male character's) point of view, the writer created Summer just to round out Tom's existence. If there is no one to accompany Tom through his monotonous and empty life, his life feels incomplete. Tom sets a lot of expectations on Summer, therefore from Tom's point of view, Summer is his Manic Pixie Dream Girl, and she appears wicked when she abandons

Tom in the end. This concept emphasizes how the Manic Pixie Dream Girl character might be interpreted as a manifestation of misogyny in film. Female characters frequently lack depth and stay one-dimensional, with no character development. This is the issue that the writer will investigate in order to deconstruct the Summer character using Rabin's (2007:1) Manic Pixie Dream Girl theory. As a result, the writer wants to observe summer's characterization as a Manic Pixie Dream Girl.

1.3. Research Questions

1. How do the characteristics of the main female character in the movie (500) Days of Summer directed by Marc Webb present the theory of Manic Pixie Dream Girl?
2. How do the behaviors of the main female character towards the main male character in the movie (500) Days of Summer by Marc Webb?

1.4. Limitations of the Study

To prevent any potential misinterpretations of the earlier explanation, it's essential to provide a clear affirmation of the terms used and the boundaries of the research scope.

In the film 500 Days of Summer, there are multiple key characters: Tom Hansen, the main male character; Summer Finn, the main female character; Rachel Hansen, a side character as Tom's family and confidant;

and McKenzie and Paul, a side character as Tom's friends. However, the writer will concentrate on Summer, the main female character, and examine her portrayal using the Manic Pixie Dream Girl theory.

In this study, the researcher's focus is restricted to analyzing the main female character of Summer, her portrayal as a Manic Pixie Dream Girl trope within the context of the story.

1.5. Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the characteristic of the main female character and Manic Pixie Dream Girl Theory in the movie (500) Days of Summer.
2. To find out the behaviors of the main female character towards the main male character in the movie (500) Days of Summer.

1.6. Significances of the Study

This research aims for the readers and further researchers can find out about the Manic Pixie Dream Girl theory that occurred in film through a fictional story.

Theoretical Benefit:

This research is expected to make a positive contribution to the development of literary works. Through this research, the writes hopes that the result of this study will contribute and will be helpful for student of English Department of Pasundan University especially for literature reader.

Practical Benefit:

This research is expected to develop the ability and understanding of the the Manic Pixie Dream Girl trope in literature contained in the (500) Days of Summer film and for future researchers this research can be used as a reference for research to be carried out.

