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Belle's Characterization as the Main Character in Beauty and The Beast Movie by Bill Condon

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ABSTRACT

This study defines the characterization of the main character in the Beauty and the Beast movie in 2017 directed by Bill Condon. The main character in this movie is Belle, a daughter of Maurice who is an inventor in Villeneuve, a small town in France. The movie tells about a love story between the cursed prince who turns into a Beast and a beautiful village girl. This study aimed to find out the characterizations of Belle, the most dominant character in the movie. All characterization could be described through appearances, dialogues, personal descriptions, reactions of other characters, actions, and speeches. From the analysis, it is found that the protagonist Belle, not only described as kind, brave, smart, creative, assertive, and loyal but also, a free thinker loner who can be assertive and even brash. Afterall, Belle the leading female character in Disney's Beauty & the Beast, is one of the most beloved and recognized Disney princesses. She is beautiful, motivating, loving, and strong, just like her royal peers.

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1. Introduction

In literary work, characters and characterization are essential elements in a story. Character is all the qualities and features that make a person, groups of people, and places differ from others. According to Abrams (1999), the meaning of a character is the person symbolizes a piece of dramatic or narrative that interprets moral, intellectual, and emotional traits from their particular methods of expressing the conversation, and from what they are performing the actions.

There are few types of characters, but the main character is the one who attracts the most attention and becomes the audience's focal point of awareness. The main character is a

character who is prioritized in the story. She or he is the character who is mostly told, either as the perpetrator of the incident or the one affected by the incident (Nurgiyantoro, 2005, p.176-177). Therefore, the main character is a character that makes a dominant contribution in a drama, novel, or movies. Meanwhile, the supporting characters are characters that provoke conflict in the main character.

Characterization in literature is the process of authors developing characters and creating images of characters for the audience. On the other hand, it refers to the technique through which an author disclosed a character in a work of fiction or the characterization method of character depiction (Putri, 2017, p.3). It means characterization describes the differences of one character to other characters. Furthermore, Jauhari (2013) stated that characterizations are the depictions of people or performers by the author (p.161). There are two different approaches of characterization, including direct characterization and indirect characterization.

Direct Characterization

In direct characterization, the author informs readers about the character within a story described or done by the narrator, through other characters, or the character himself, usually used in characterizations in novels. According to Charters (2011) stated that External information, such as names of characters or other open comments could be involved. (p.58).

Indirect Characterization

In indirect characterization, the author helps us understand the character's personality which displays through the character's thoughts, actions, speech, and dialogue. Typically used for characterizations in movies. Burroway (2000) identified four types of indirect characterization in literary works: 1) speech, 2) thoughts, 3) action, and 4) looks (p.54).

Beauty and the Beast movie is an American musical romantic fantasy directed by Bill Condon and a screenplay by Stephen Chbosky and Evan Spiliotopoulos which was released in 2017. The story was adapted from Disney's 1991 with the same name as the movie. It tells a story about a handsome prince who was cursed to be a terrible monster because of his arrogance. The prince can only be freed from this curse by finding a true love. Someday, Belle was looking for her father and came to the Beast's castle in order to save her father, and then the Beast took Belle to the prisoner. After spending time together, they gradually

fell in love. However, the prince only has a little time to release the curse before the last rose petals fall.

Belle is the main character who can be used as a role model. She presents as a brave, smart, creative, and loyal girl even though she lives in a small village where most of the villagers are close-minded and have many moral values, messages, and knowledge that can be taken from this movie. All good traits were seen from Belle's character, but in the deeper analysis somehow Belle also had its unfavorable characteristic that a Disney's princess usually had.

2. Method

The design of the research is descriptive and qualitative in nature as the basis of collecting and analyzing data. The object of the study is Bill Condon play entitled *Beauty and the Beast*. According to Latief (2010), the method or the research design of descriptive qualitative research requires authentic data as the results of the study. Hence, the content data analysis was employed which focused on language change and linguistic etiquette as the variables. The data was taken from the movie with a duration of 139 minutes. Belle's character is depicted by portrayed moral values in behavior, actions, and dialogues. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) state the characteristics of qualitative research are descriptive in nature, concerned with the process rather than merely with the outcomes or product, and inductive nature of data analysis. In this research, meaningfulness is essential, but natural setting and events are not ignored in the analyzing process.

3. Results and discussion

The result of the analysis was found that Belle in the *Beauty and the Beast* movie has several character traits that will be described in the following.

Kind

The first impression after watch Belle's characteristics is that character is a good girl. Being good, it means that someone brings happiness and being kind to other people. And that is one of Belle's characteristics.

Mr. Monsieur: Good Morning, Belle!

Belle: Good Morning, Mr. Monsieur Jean, have you lost something again?

Bill Condon, Beauty and the Beast, duration, 00:05:42.

The quotation happens when Belle goes to the library in the town. She smiled friendly when

she returned the greeting and asked about Mr. Monsieur's situation. Responding to greetings in a friendly manner and asking for conditions makes other people feel happy, indeed. From what Belle says in the quotation above, we can see that Belle is a good girl.

From the dialogue in the scene mentioned Belle is described as a good girl. It can be seen from the actions she takes and how she talks to villagers, antic goods, and Beast, which indicates she is a good girl.

Brave

The writer has found that one of Belle's characteristics is a brave girl. Brave means having great self-confidence and are not afraid to face dangers and difficulties. Being brave is good for our life. Belle is a brave girl, and it can be proven from her action and her dialogue. To know how Belle being a brave girl, we can see from some dialogue below:

³ Belle: Philippe...what happened? Where is papa? take me to him!

Bill Condon, Beauty and the Beast, duration, 00:26:34

This scene happens when Maurice's horse (Philippe) comes to Belle's house without Maurice riding on it. Then, Belle went to save her father on horseback coming through the woods full of ice and kept running until she arrived at the cursed castle. Belle dismounts from Philippe and takes some wood, and then bravely walks into the castle. Being alone in a scary-looking unfamiliar place is a brave thing. This cursed castle looked haunted. Belle didn't feel scared and didn't want to return to the village. Without hesitation, she picked up the lamp (Lumiere) and ran up the stairs after hearing his father cough.

Smart

The writer has found that Belle is a girl who is smart. The personal descriptions of other characters can prove this. The fact is she can read and teach others to read, she also remembers quotes in a book. The first evidence was from the villagers which says that ¹⁴ "With a dreamy, far-off look and her nose stuck in a book." (Bill Condon, Beauty and the Beast, 00:07:10) and ¹¹ "Now it's no wonder that her name means beauty, her looks have got no parallel...she's nothing like the rest of us." (Bill Condon, Beauty and the Beast, 00:07:48-00:08:05).

From the dialogue scene, it can be described that Belle is beautiful and smart because she is diligent in reading books, indicating that she is a smart girl. The explanation above indicates

that Belle is a smart girl. The writer found evidence that those are personal descriptions from villagers and other characters, Belle teaches a little girl to read, and the last one is Belle's being able to remember a quote well in the book.

Creative

Another one of Belle's characterizations is creative. Creativity is making something different from the others or connecting things that were previously unrelated. Belle has a creative mind which can be seen when she is dealing with some problems. The first evidence, Belle is surrounded by design sketches of a washing machine in a workbench Belle places the miniature barrel in position then fastens a rope to a leather strap then she shaves chips off a block of soap and collects the soap chips in a small sack and rushes out.

-The little girl asked Belle-

Little girl: what is she doing?

Belle: Laundry

(Bill Condon, *Beauty and the Beast*, duration, 00:14:37-00:15:10)

The scene happens when Belle reads a book and does laundry in the town laundry. With the washing machine she made, Belle can do two activities at the same time while washing clothes and doing her hobby.

Assertive

The writer has found that one of Belle's characterizations is assertive. Assertive means people are tough to sway. She will choose boundaries and know what is appropriate for her. Below are three parts of the scene of evidence that show Belle to have an assertive character. The evidence is when Belle is doing the laundry and she teaches little girls to read, but the principal doesn't like it and the villagers get angry then spill Belle's laundry on the ground. Then Le Fou told Gaston to be Belle's hero and he followed Belle into her house.

13
Gaston: Belle! I heard you had trouble with the headmaster! He never liked me either.

7
Belle: All I wanted was to teach a child to read

Gaston: The only children you should concern yourself with will be...your own.

Belle: I'm...not ready to have children.

³
Gaston: Oh...Belle. Do you know what happens to spinsters in this village after their father dies? They beg for scraps, like poor Agathe. This is our world belle. For simple folk like us, it doesn't get better.

Belle: I want to be a farm girl. But I'm not simple. And I'm never going to marry you, Gaston. I'm sorry.

(Bill Condon, *Beauty and the Beast*, duration, 00:16:42-00:17:35)

According to the conversation, Gaston approached Belle after learning she was having trouble with the school principal and convinced her to marry him. Many things Gaston has done to get Belle, but Belle firmly rejects Gaston and insists "²³I'm never going to marry you, Gaston".

Loyal

The last character that the writer has found from Belle's characterizations is loyal. Her loyalty is very strong in facing her problems, how to save her father when prisoned by Beast, took care of the wounded Beast, helps her father and Beast from danger and save the Beast from the deaden spell given by the enchantress. Some of the dialogues below are proof that Belle has a loyal character.

First, Belle always looks after and takes care of her father. This is a pure love between father and daughter. Belle goes to her father in a creepy castle and wants to save him but Maurice refuses because he had already lost Belle's mother and did not want to lose Belle. However, Belle tricked him to replace her father's position. The dialogue below proves that Belle is a loyal girl who loves her father.

⁵
Maurice: Go, live your life and forget me.

Belle: Forget you? Everything I have because of you.

Maurice: I love you, Belle. don't be afraid

Belle: I love you too, papa. I'm not afraid.

.....

-Belle pushed her father out of the prison door, then the door closed, and Maurice fell to the ground and Belle replaces her father's position in prison-

(Bill Condon, *Beauty and the Beast*, duration 00:30:48-00:31:06)

From some of the explanations above, the writer found that Belle's character is a good girl, brave, smart, creative, assertive, and loyal. It can be seen from those characteristics from the appearances, dialogues, personal descriptions, reactions of other characters, actions, and speeches.

A Free Thinker

Belle is a free thinker in the same line. In the classic song Belle, she claims that she lives in a provincial town full of small people. This demonstrates that she is more cultured than her neighbors, or at the very least bored with them. While the other village lady are baking bread, buying eggs, and raising children, she is gaining even more knowledge on a variety of topics and from a variety of sources.

Distracted

She is often in her own little world, dreaming, because she has read about so many fantastic places. While this is typical and an excellent method to exercise her creativity, it can also cause her to become unfocused. In fact, towards the beginning of the film, she is wandering and reading completely oblivious to what is going on around her. She could have overlooked something crucial, or even worse, she could have made a mistake.

Judgmental

Belle is bright, yet her delivery of lines might come across as judgmental at times. She was well-read, and it's been suggested that she didn't appreciate the fact that no one else shared her enthusiasm for learning. Moreover, she seemed to make assumptions and brazenly communicate her ideas with everyone from the townspeople to Gaston (who, admittedly, deserved a little judgment and being put in his place) to The Beast.

4. Conclusion and Suggestions

After reviewing Belle's characterization as the main character in Beauty and the Beast movie by Bill Condon, the writer concludes Belle's characterization based on what is described in Beauty and the Beast movie as a kind, brave, smart, creative, assertive, and loyal girl. On the other hand, she sometimes could be portrayed as a free thinker who can be easily distracted in her on world and sometimes being judgmental.

Movie is a medium that has a good influence on giving information to the audience. The message shown in the movie can be negative and positive depending on the audience because the movie is shown through visualization. Character is the person represents a piece of dramatic or narrative that interpreted moral, intellectual, emotional qualities from their distinctive ways of saying the dialogue, and from what they are doing.

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