

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 LITERARY THEORY

2.1.1 Theme

“Themes serve to displace mythical patterns and disguise the composition’s purely literary ends by fostering realistic or referential illusions” (Bremond, Landy, and Pavel, 1995, p. 36). This definition about theme can single-handedly open our idea that sometimes-literary works don’t only have one theme, but there are more than one and each one of them is implicit, hidden by the author using some illusions in the story. Abrams and Harpham (2015) also state that theme is sometimes used interchangeably with “motif” whether it is implicit or asserted. The director of the movie can add a hidden theme that is completely different from the main theme that the viewers could easily identify but also a hidden theme or motif that the director was trying to convey to the viewers. This can be achieved through subtle actions, dialogue, or a change of setting by the director in creating the movie. In this study the writer thinks that *Interstellar* still left us something to uncover, there are more to the theme of the movie other than a space travel in finding new planet for mankind’s survival.

2.1.2 Setting

Setting is the general locale, historical time, and social circumstances in which the action occurs in a narrative or dramatic work (Abrams and Harpham, 2015). It means that the background or the surrounding of scenes are determined

by the setting to give us the correct atmosphere, the correct sense of situation such as is it a tense or calm moment in the movie. Murfin and Supriya (2018) also state that setting is a combination of place, historical time, and social milieu that provides the general background for the characters and plot of a literary works. Other than just acting as a background for our characters in doing their actions and dialogues setting can help us see the details in a scene, find out the hidden message that the director wants to convey. A crucial scene would need a special setting whether it is related with the time of day, the location, or even the social or physical environment itself with the continuous interaction between the setting, characters, and the plot; setting plays a huge role for a director to convey or influence the viewer with the theme of their work. Therefore, the writer thinks that setting will be used as a mean to identify or reveal the hidden theme of *Interstellar* due to its having so big of an impact for scenes in the movie and it is also connected with other important part of a movie such as the characters and the plot.

2.1.3 Plot

Dibell (1988, p. 5) says that plot is built of significant events in a given story. This means for a story to be able to function it will require a plot, where significant events that happen will contribute to the development of the story. Plot is also built, and it cannot be created with a single moment or event in the story. Murfin and Supriya (2018) state,

Plot is the arrangement and interrelation of events in a narrative work, chosen and designed to engage the viewer's attention and interest (or even to arouse suspense or anxiety) while also providing a framework for the

exposition of the author's message, or theme, and for other elements such as characterization, symbol, and conflict.

Based on Murfin's and Supriya's (2018) statement plot is a very important element for a story to function since it can also somewhat act as a framework for the director's message or theme and providing a link for other element of a story to work such as the characters and the setting to come up with a pleasant and flowing storyline. Crafting the perfect plot is not easy, the director must decide what can they show or not and in what order to tell the story. Murfin and Supriya (2018) also state that plot can be divided into introduction or exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution, or denouement.

a. Exposition

Dibell (1988) says that exposition is where necessary background facts must be conveyed. It also involves breaking away from the ongoing action to give information. Showing is also a better method than telling your viewers.

b. Rising action

The event that gives rise to the conflict and precedes the climax. During this part the plot becomes more complicated, and the conflict intensifies

c. Climax

The point of greatest tension or emotional intensity in a plot. During this time of crisis in this part of the plot the protagonist will change decisively, whether for the better or worse

d. Falling action

The part that follows the climax and that leads to the resolution of the plot.

e. Resolution or denouement

The concluding action where the problem of the story is resolved. Denouement a French word for *unknotting* a term that refers to the events following the climax of a plot and implies some ingenious resolution of the explanation of the plot's mysteries or misunderstandings

Therefore, the writer thinks plot is another important mean for the writer to seek out the hidden theme of *Interstellar* since the director has the liberty to choose what scenes or what moment to be shown first and what happened next is also deliberately chosen to craft a perfect story with a hidden message for the viewers to extract.

2.1.4 Characters and Characterization

In this study, characters and characterization are also important in helping the writer to analyze and answer his question in figuring out the hidden theme of *Interstellar*. Characters and characterization are somewhat inseparable when we are analyzing the development of a character. Garvey (1978) states that character can be identified with simple attribution of a name or even a definite description to an argument of a narrative deep structure proposition. Characters can also be divided into primary characters or protagonists and minor characters (Abrams and Harpham, 2015). and in this study the writer will only focus on the

primary characters which are Cooper and his daughter because they will have huge impact to the plot of the story, whereas plot is another key element for the writer to find the hidden theme of *Interstellar*. But, understanding the characters itself is not enough, the writer also needs to know how the characters develop during the movie that is where characterization comes to mind.

Characterization invests an identified character with an attribute or set of attributes (traits and qualities) which add descriptive material of a particular sort to the argument node (Garvey, 1978). This means that characters will develop because of characterizations or traits that are inserted toward characters, they will have some traits that are unique to certain a character where other characters might not have those traits. Characterization is also a method for the director to develop or change the character's way of thinking or traits. So, by the end of the movie they will become into a better person or maybe even to a worse person compared to the beginning of the movie. With the dynamic way a director can shape characters into their liking with characterization we can also identify two other types of character which are flat and round characters. Flat characters are characters that are defined by a single idea or quality, meanwhile round characters have the three-dimensional complexity of real people (Murfin and Supryia, 2018). The two main characters that the writer will be analyzing will fall to the round character category, since both Cooper and his daughter will eventually change and leave their first traits in the beginning of the movie and found themselves to be better persons and in some way improves their father-daughter relationship. Therefore, characters and characterization are inseparable as a mean to help the writer in analyzing the development of the two main

characters that inevitably will affect the plot of the movie and finally in finding the answer to the hidden theme of *Interstellar*.

2.1.5 Mise-en-scene

In analyzing a film or a movie it is important that the writer also includes the analyzation of the mise-en-scene. According to Lathrop and Sutton (2006) mise-en-scene is a French term meaning “place on stage” that refers to all the visual elements of a theatrical production within the space provided by the stage itself. In the film industry the term mise-en-scene is now widely associated with the control of the director over the visual elements within the movie or the film image. There are four aspects of mise-en-scene they are setting, costume, lighting, and movement of figures, with absolute control of those four elements a director can stage an event for the audience with vivid and sharp memories (Lathrop and Sutton, 2006). With total control of mise-en-scene a director can decide which scene is more important, which scene that will contribute big impact to the plot and by giving more attention to those four elements it will attract the attention of the viewers and left a vivid memory of the scene. In this study the writer will focus on two out of four aspects of mise-en-scene, and they are setting and movement of figures.

Lathrop and Sutton (2006) also explained the definition of setting and movement of figures

a. Setting

An important visual element of film includes all that the viewer sees which informs time and place apart from costume. Setting plays an extremely active

role in film such as adding falling autumn leaf, swirling desert sand, and wildly lashing palm fronds could add the dramatic effect to the film without requiring the actor's performance. Another important note in controlling setting is in the selection of natural or artificial locale.

b. Movement of figures

Figure movements are important because the director will use it to support the narrative as well as help develop the thematic unity of a film. Viewers must also remember that actors are not actually representing real people and they are only following instructions given by the director. The director causes the actors to behave in a way that supports a particular thematic element of the film.

The definition of setting in mise-en-scene is not that different with the definition of setting in literature, but the definition of setting from mise-en-scene is expanding the boundaries of setting from literature by adding the notion of that the director has the liberty to choose whether to use natural or artificial place to shoot or adding small elements from the nature to add dramatic effects to the scene. Movement of figures is also another key element because the writer can analyze why the director wants the character to do such action and what is the effect of his or her action to the plot of the story. Therefore, the two elements from mise-en-scene which are setting, and movement of figures will be used by the writer to further elaborate the analysis of plot and setting to find the hidden theme of *Interstellar*.

2.2 CRITICAL THEORY

The writer chooses to use Objective Criticism as his literary criticism method. Objective Criticism is chosen because it views works as freestanding objects, independent of any external references, whether to their authors and audiences (Murfin and Supriya, 2018). Objective critics also evaluate and analyze works based on internal criteria, such as whether they are coherent and unified and how their components relate to one another, rather than on external standards such as how they have been received (Murfin and Supriya, 2018). Since this research does not involve any perspective from the author or the director of the work and only focuses purely on the movie's intrinsic elements as the source for the writer's analysis therefore, objective criticism is the most suitable literary criticism method.

2.3 EARLIER STUDIES

Through analyzing earlier studies, critics, movie reviews it can be ways for the writer to understand about the analyzed movie even further. These earlier studies, critics, and movie reviews are needed to support the idea of the topic that is being discussed. There are some E-books that analyzed *Interstellar* with its science and also a movie review that will be presented to help the writer completing this study.

An E-book written by Kip Thorne (2014) entitled *The Science of Interstellar* is the brain behind the effects and science elements part of *Interstellar*. He explained in his book that *Interstellar's* science is beyond of what we human can comprehend today or even in some future later. This enables *Interstellar* to be interpreted in as many ways as possible, even Thorne created it all with his imagination and of course with the reassurance from science. Most of Thorne's

analysis in his e-book was about the science that *Interstellar* created to break the barrier of space travel and how it created the fifth dimension or the black hole in the final part of the movie. With the many interpretations and how complicated *Interstellar* was to create this past study by Thorne proved to be useful for the writer to be able to comprehend the complicated science behind *Interstellar* which was just to prove that Cooper's love to his daughter is unbreakable even they are light years away.

Another E-book explaining how consistent Christopher Nolan with his works titled *The Cinema of Christopher Nolan: Imagining the Impossible* (2015) by Jacqueline Furby and Stuart Joy. They pointed out that the overall theme of Nolan's work is almost the same all the time with the tinkering of time or some mesmerizing special effects in short, Nolan always manages to capture the impossible thing to do because the limitation of human advancements. This E-book also strengthens the writer's view of how delicate and how advanced *Interstellar* is and how such little elements can be created to be the main part of a story.

The third one is an article review titled *Interstellar Dreams Big* by Christopher J. Ferguson. He states that movies that try to aim and answer questions beyond the grasp of our power is very rare, and *Interstellar* is one of the movies that managed to present the viewer with that mysterious sensation of uncertainty. Ferguson states in his review that he was struck by the psychological impact that the movie gave to him, after watching the scene where Cooper watches a 23-year-old recorded video of his family. That scene was so powerful that by watching Cooper cries to the video he felt that Cooper just showed the world another side of human psyche that is rarely touched on in psychological science. The movie also

managed to create such a story blending with the science that still confines us and makes us unable to answer the question of the mysterious higher power. His review of *Interstellar* was more onto the psychological impact that the movie brings towards the viewer and by the end of the review he pointed out that humans are a part of a bigger, complex, meaningful universe. This review matches with what the writer wants to discuss that the mysterious power of gravity and love which impacts our unconscious psyche and affect our decision in the future and our decision in the future was affected by our action in the past just like what Cooper did by travelling back in time.

The fourth study is “An Analysis of Themes and Sub-themes in Judy Blume’s *Are You There God? It’s Me Margaret*”. By Nurhandayani (2014). This study focuses on the analysis of themes and sub-themes of the work and only focuses on the work as the main source of the analysis and free from other external influences. These focuses relate to the writer’s approach and goal of the analysis of intrinsic elements to find the hidden theme from the movie.

The fifth study is “*A Study of Plot, Character, and Setting to Convey the Theme as Seen in Hemingway’s The Garden of Eden*”. By Rosaria (2004). This study focuses on plot, character, and setting to find the theme of the work. The focus relates to the writer’s method in finding the hidden theme which focuses on the intrinsic elements of the movie which also contains plot, character, and setting as well.