

# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Background of the Study**

Literature is a written communication whether in poetic or dramatic or prose forms (Ramrao,2016). Practically speaking, literature has many functions. Some of the functions are to communicate, entertain, and shape our way of thinking. Based on its historical background, literature has been existing since 3.400 B.C (Andrews, 2018). From that era, people keep making and improving the literature into different types.

The work of literature can be divided into three big divisions, which are prose, poetry and drama. The major difference that can be seen from prose and poetry is the style of its language. The characteristics of prose and poetry can be seen clearly through its etymological meanings. The word prose is derived from the Latin *prōsa*, which can be translated into straight-forward. On the other hand, the word poetry is derived from the Latin *Poet*, which refers to creative literature. Creative literature itself refers to the language used inside poetry. Poetry is a form of literary art which language is used for its aesthetic and evocative qualities in addition to, or in lieu of, its apparent meaning (Diffen, 2020). Because of this characteristic, many people are more familiar with prose rather than poetry. The language used in prose is more understandable than the one used in poetry. Therefore, many people nowadays tend to spend more time to enjoy prose.

Prose can be divided into novels, textbooks, magazines, newspaper, or short story. However, in this era, many literary masterpieces have been adapted through movies (Bo, 2008). *To Kill a Mocking Bird* (1962), *The God Father* (1974), *Little Woman* (2019), are the examples of movies based from novels. Movie is a recording of moving images that tells a story and people watch on a screen or television or simply known as motion picture (Dictionary, 2020). Movie is divided into several types or genres, such as action, comedy, romance, adventure, documentary, drama, horror, thriller, detective, and science fiction. Beside all those genres, some of the production house has been trying to engage more viewers by providing something new to them. The movie producers are trying to combine the experience of playing video game while watching movie. This type of movie is called as interactive movie. When discussing interactive movie, many scholars have focused on questions concerning the relative freedom the user may have in choosing alternative outcomes or endings for the stories (Stern, 2008 in Vosmeer, M and Schouten, B, 2014). Interactive movie comprises more than one ending. The viewers of the movie have right to choose what kind of ending they want for the movie.

The history of interactive movie begins from the year of 1967. *Kinoautomat* became the first published interactive movie in the world. With a great technological development, movie producers have made several interactive movie afterward, such as *I'm Your Man* (1992), and *Mr. Payback* (1995). However, an interactive movie is rarely known by the people. Since 1967, there are only 13 interactive movies that have been produced. This happens because the production process of making interactive movie is complex. David Slade in Strause (2018)

states, “There’s a complexity that just needs really skilled people at every level to execute this well”. An interactive movie will involve around 250 segments of video to cover all the possible scenes and came without a handbook. The process of making interactive movie is not something that people can do quickly. That is why not many people are capable in making interactive movie. Finally, in 2018, a famous movie streaming platform called Netflix has made a brand new interactive movie with more advanced technology. *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch* becomes the first interactive movie produced by Netflix. *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch* is a movie telling a story about a young programmer named Stefan Butler who wants to adapt a fantasy gamebook into a video game called Bandersnatch. When watching this movie, the viewers are able to decide what will the main character do in one part of the scene, like choosing the cereal, cigarette, and other big decisions inside the movie. However, the decision made by the viewers sometimes can be wrong. If the viewers choose the wrong answer, the movie will bring them back all the way to the beginning of the story, until the viewers choose the right decision. The method used inside the movie is interrelated with meta plot. Meta plot is overarching storyline that binds together events in the official continuity of a published role-playing game campaign setting (Dictionary, 2020). This means that the writer of the movie has already set the plot that will bring the viewers into a particular ending. The technology provided by Netflix enables the viewers to experience playing game while watching the movie. Charlie Brooker, as the writer of this movie, creates more than 170 scripts in order to create the branches of plot leading the watchers into some alternative endings. The movie consists of several endings that can be chosen

by the viewers. This movie has succeeded in getting more than 94% likes from Netflix's viewers. Moreover, it also has gotten some awards, such as "The Innovative Movie Category" in 2009 by Broadcasting Press Guild TV and Radio, "The Best Writing Category" in 2019, by Nebula Award, and lastly, it becomes "The Winner of Outstanding Television Movie" in 2019, by Primetime Emmy Awards.

The alternative endings used in *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch* makes this movie unique. The interactivity aspect that enables the viewers to choose has also become the interesting part in watching this movie. Nevertheless, this feature may bring some effects on how the viewers understand the movie. When watching a movie, the viewers will actively seek the meaning of the movie by trying to understand each of the scenes. Accordingly, the viewers need to be able to identify some of the important elements inside the movie, such as the involved characters, characterizations, plot line and settings. This action is related to the term interpreting. The word interpret itself means to decide what the intended meaning of something (Thesaurus, 2020). The process of interpreting a movie will be not as easy as it looks. According to Stiver (2017), when it comes to analyzing and intellectualizing film, it is important to consider every aspect of what is being shown to you on screen. Therefore, the viewers need to pay attention to the small details of the movie. This makes the selection, organization, and interpretation of perceptions can differ among different people (Management, n.d). Based on that sentence, we can mention that one's interpretation will be different form the others. It will be different depending on how each people perceive how the movie goes

from the beginning to the end. The intrinsic elements inside the movie will play a big role to drive the viewers' interpretation toward the plot of the movie. One movie with only one ending can have different meanings depends on different viewers' interpretation. Then, it is also applied in *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch* that has more than one ending (alternative endings). Therefore, this study is needed to be done considering the effect of the use of alternative endings on the viewers' interpretation, especially toward the plot of the movie. *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch* can be the proof that the endings of the movie will play a big role in driving the viewers' interpretation. In this research, the writer will involve reader-response criticism to help her analyzing the viewers' interpretations after watching *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch*.

## **1.2. Problem Statements**

In order to reach the objectives of the study, the research problems are formulated as follows:

1.2.1 What are the alternative endings found in the *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch*?

1.2.2 What is the meta plot of the movie?

1.2.3 How do the alternative endings affect the viewers' interpretation of the plot of the movie?

### **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

1.3.1 To find the alternative endings in the *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch*

1.3.2 To find the meta plot of the movie

1.3.3 To understand the effect of alternative endings on viewers' interpretation of the plot of the movie

### **1.4. Originality and Significance**

#### 1.4.1. Originality

*Black Mirror: Bandersnatch* is considered as a new interactive movie on Netflix that was released in 2018. Many branches of plot lines are created to make this movie unique and different from the others. The five alternative endings inside the movie make this movie becomes more interesting to be analyzed. This study is conducted without having any similarities with the other previous studies. The writer of this research focused on the reader-response field to get the result on the effect of the alternative endings on the viewers' interpretation of the plot of the movie.

#### 1.4.2. Significance

The significance of this study will be divided into two aspects, which are theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research can be used as a helpful reference in order to understand the content of the movie, especially the effect of the alternative endings on viewers' interpretation of the plot of the movie itself. Practically, this research can be used as a reference for those who are interested in

studying or analyzing interactive movie. Moreover, this study can also be used as a supporting source for teaching.

### **1.5. Operational Definition of the Key Terms**

#### 1. Interactive Movie

Refers to the movie that involves the viewers to take part to determine the character's decision

#### 2. Plot

Refers to the sequence of events that helps to develop the story line inside the movie (Terms 2015).

#### 4. Alternative Endings

Alternative endings refer to the multiple endings provided by the writer in the movie entitled *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch*.

#### 5. Interpretation

The term interpretation refers to the act of finding the meaning or explaining something (Dictionary n.d.).

#### 6. Meta plot

Refers to the overarching story line that binds the events inside the story altogether (Translations n.d.).

## 7. Reader – Response Criticism

The term of reader-response here refers to the method that will be used to analyze the viewers' interpretation toward the theme of the movie.

### **1.6. Scope and Limitation of the Study (past tense)**

This study focused on reader-response, structuralism and literary analysis approach to get the result of the effect of the alternative endings on the viewers' interpretation of the plot of the movie. Moreover, it involved the analysis of plot which was related to the alternative endings or the interactivity aspect in the movie. As for the respondents, the writer of this research involved 6 people who watched *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch* to analyze their interpretations of the plot of the movie. This study did not use *Black Mirror* series as a reference to analyze *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch* movie.