

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

Introduction is the first step in conducting research. The introduction chapter contains the background of this research. This chapter consists of research background, statement of the problem, research purposes, research significance, previous studies, and definition of key terms.

### 1.1 Research Background

After watching this film, the researcher argues that *Forrest Gump* is a film that tells the story of a disability man who fights for his love and life. *Forrest Gump* was chosen as the research object because it is unique in the male character played by Tom Hanks who has limitations but is still passionate about fighting for his love. The unusual nature of this film's story piqued my interest. I am very interested in how the complexities of romance depicted in this film are packaged differently due to individual situations. If we focus on the plot and portrayal of the characters in this film, we may only notice the love story between Forrest and Jenny. Though some interesting elements contribute to this film's emotional love story. Whereas most films depict the love story of two lovers who share common life problems and obstacles, this film does something different and leaves the audience emotionally attached.

According to researchers also this film tells about a boy who has a disability and meets a girl when he was little. They grew up together and lived their own lives, until

finally Forrest, who is the male character in this film, dared to confess his love to Jenny. Even though they had experienced rejection, in the end, they married and lived happily with one child. Until finally Jenny had to die because of the pain she experienced.

Forrest's flaws and limitations, as well as his struggles and sincerity in loving Jenny's character, demonstrate a high romance value. Because the male character is in an unfavorable situation to win Jenny's love, the value of romance in this film becomes very strong. This intriguing romance formula prompts researchers to consider the film *Forrest Gump*. This romance formula is fascinating to discuss. In a romance formula, a writer will usually only show a love story between two people. However, we can draw a lot of conclusions from this film's love story. This film contains social issues and a component that will appeal to anyone who sees it.

“One of the literary subgenres in popular culture is romance” *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Words* (Baldick, 2008). Romance is defined as a love story in which the central focus is on the development and satisfactory resolution of the love relationship between the two main characters, written in such a way that the reader feels vicarious emotional participation in the courtship process. Romance is typically defined as the love, affection, and feelings shared by two couples who adore one another. Favorite romances may emphasize the importance of such tenderness in men, but because they show that their reserved and cruel heroes are, in fact, compassionate and kind individuals from the beginning, they only pretend to explore creatively the way to the ideal male-female relationship. Because romance is always associated with

men and women, most romances tell about love between men and women who have the desire to always be together but face many obstacles.

In *Romance Fiction: A Guide to the Genre*, Kristin Ramsdell (1987) can be concluded that romance as a love story where the development and satisfaction resolution of an affair between two main characters is the central focus. Judging from this statement, according to researchers this type of romance is written to give the reader some level of vicarious emotional involvement in the courtship process.

Romance is a literary genre that originated in the middle of the 12th century at the French aristocratic court and flourished in France and Germany from the middle of the 12th to the middle of the 13th century in the works of masters like Chrétien de Troyes and Gottfried von Strasberg, according to Britannica (2010).

The romance genre (Lee & Myaeng, 2002) is one of the most popular, but in the context of popular movie, the genre is defined as "the most popular and least appreciated genre." The main reason is that the plot is simple and always ends happily. Of course, the romance genre depicts the romance of a woman and a man who strive to be together and unite their love despite many conflicts and problems that must be overcome, such as problems in a discordant family, friendship problems, and misunderstandings between the two.

In his book, Radway describes the Cawelti formula as a narrative framework. He creates a narrative structure for an ideal romance based on the relationship between the hero and the heroine in light of his study of the Smithton women. The Radway (Radway, 1982) narrative structure refers to the heroine's change from a solitary,

asexual, and insecure adult development to a mature, sensual, married person who understands her potential and identity as a partner of a man and as a mother of a child. The formula is analogous to the type of popular story that determines the story's literary status. There are five main moral fantasies in popular literature: adventure, mystery, romance, melodrama, and alien beings.

The narrative structure of ideal romance is as follows: (1) The heroine's social identity is destroyed. (2) The heroine reacts antagonistically to an aristocratic male. (3) The aristocratic male responds ambiguously to the heroine. (4) The heroine interprets the hero's behavior as evidence of a purely sexual interest in her. (5) The heroine responds to the hero's behavior with anger or coldness. (6) The hero retaliates by punishing the heroine. (7) The heroine and hero are physically and/or emotionally separated. (8) The hero treats the heroine tenderly. (9) The heroine responds warmly to the hero's act of tenderness. (10) The heroine reinterprets the hero's ambiguous behavior as the product of previous hurt. (11) The hero proposes/openly declares his love for/demonstrates his unwavering commitment to the heroine with a supreme act of tenderness. (12) The heroine responds sexually and emotionally. (13) The heroine's identity is restored.

Researcher also refer to Cawelti (1976) Since romance is a fantasy of the all-sufficient nature of love, the majority of romantic formulas revolve on the surmounting of a particular set of psychological or societal boundaries. The "Cinderella formula" might be used to describe the formulaic plot of the poor girl who falls in love with a rich or aristocratic man. Alternatively there's the Pamela formula, where the lead

character defeats the threat of pointless emotion to forge a lasting love connection. Another, more modern scenario is the career girl who chooses money or fame over love, only to find that love is the only thing that can truly fulfill one.

Seeing from Cawelti's words about the "Cinderella Formula", where the heroine is a poor person and has to chase men who are more aristocratic. In the film *Forrest Gump* it is found that the role of the hero is a poor person and the heroine is an aristocrat. Therefore, the researcher considers that the Ideal Romance formula can also position the hero as someone who fights for his love. It's the same as what happened in the movie *Aladdin*. Where Aladdin who is a street kid tries to win the heart of Princess Jasmine where the heroine has a higher position.

So the points that will be analyzed by researchers are as follows: (1) The hero's social identity is destroyed. (2) The hero reacts antagonistically to an aristocratic female. (3) The aristocratic female responds ambiguously to the hero. (4) The hero interprets the heroine's behavior as evidence of a purely sexual interest in him. (5) The hero responds to the heroine's behavior with anger or coldness. (6) The heroine retaliates by punishing the hero. (7) The hero and heroine are physically and/or emotionally separated. (8) The heroine treats the hero tenderly. (9) The hero responds warmly to the heroine's act of tenderness. (10) The hero reinterprets the heroine's ambiguous behavior as the product of previous hurt. (11) The heroine proposes/openly declares her love for/demonstrates her unwavering commitment to the hero with a supreme act of tenderness. (12) The hero responds sexually and emotionally. (13) The hero's identity is restored.

Researcher see that in this *Forrest Gump* film something is interesting, namely Forrest's struggle to get Jenny's love. All internal and external limitations and conflicts experienced by Forrest were successfully overcome. Forrest is very persistent and always manages to prove his love for Jenny. Internal, and external conflicts and disability issues will be very interesting to discuss. All of that is packaged with a romance formula that forms an interesting storyline and touches the emotions of the audience.

There are some studies or research that discussed the same topic. First, the related research is a thesis written by Wilda Eviliana (2019) entitled "*Romance Formula In Jhon M Chu Crazy Rich Asian Movie (2018).*" The second is from Yunita Setiani Aisyah thesis (2018) entitled "*Romantic Formulas in a Novel Notebook by Nicholas Sparks*". The last is from Nurlaeli (2022) previous research. The title of this study is "*Romance formula in To All the Boys I've Loved Before Movie (2018).*" After looking at all of these studies, the researchers found none that analyzed the topic of disability in romance formulas. In addition, the formula used is the usual formula where the female character plays the main role.

The researcher chooses the object of the movie as research to be examined in detail what formulas are presented to make this movie it becomes a romance genre based on the characterization and conflicts that occur in *Forrest Gump* (1994) movie. Furthermore, the researcher read some of the same research in the form of romance genres with various literary objects as supporters of this research. Furthermore, the researcher has not found a researcher who uses the subject of this film. The researcher

will narrow the scope of this research by describing ideal romance formula and find out the character of romance built through conflict in this film.

## **1.2 Statement of The Problem**

The uniqueness of the love story between Forrest and Jenny makes researchers feel the need to review more about the romance formula. It is very rare for a film to tell a love story and for one of the characters to be depicted as a person with a disability. So this will have its charm for those who want to produce romantic genre films in the future. The primary issue in this study is related to the ideal romance formula in the film *Forrest Gump* (1994). Of course, the ideal romance formula in a film must be built from a variety of elements. This must be thoroughly examined and analyzed in order to demonstrate that this film contains a romance formula, making it a complete romantic film with a structured plot. These elements can also help the plot of this film to develop. Based on the background and problem statement, the following research question can be formulated:

1. What ideal romance formula are constructed in *Forrest Gump* movie (1994)?
2. How does the character of romance built through conflict in *Forrest Gump* movie (1994)?

## **1.3 Research Purposes**

Based on the question of research above, this research has three objectives, as follows:

1. To identify the ideal romance formula in the *Forrest Gump* movie (1994).

2. To identify how does the character of romance built through conflict in *Forrest Gump* movie (1994).

#### **1.4 Research Significance**

Based on the background of research, this research has two research implications, the first is theoretical and the second is practical. Research implications of theoretical significance is findings of this study are expected to increase knowledge about the romance genre formula in popular movie, as well as knowledge about the form of the ideal romance formula by Radway theory for future research that employs similar theories.

The practical implications is the researcher hopes that this research will inform readers about the ideal romance formula, which can be found not only in popular fiction in the form of writing, but also in films. As a nod to his subsequent research on the same topic in popular literature.

#### **1.1 Previous Studies**

The researcher should go above and beyond to support this research. This type of step involves reviewing the romance formula contained in a film other than the *Forrest Gump* film, as well as previous research relevant to the problem and object of the current research. In order to develop research concepts, the goal is to emphasize research, research positions, and supporting theory. Several studies on the analysis of romance formula in film have helped to enrich the process in this study.

The researcher was inspired and took many lessons from several previous studies to complete this research, There are some studies or research that discussed the same



topic. First, the related research is a thesis written by Wilda Eviliana (2019) entitled “*Romance Formula In Jhon M Chu Crazy Rich Asian Movie (2018).*” This study focuses on the plot of the story as well as the roles of the main characters, who become the specialty in the romance formula. The film is the subject of the analysis. uses the Radway theory proposed by Cawelti In analyzing the romance formula, the plot in this film that builds the romance formula is the romance formula that was built between Nick and Rachel as male heroes and female heroes, then they fall in love. Then there was conflict in their relationship; Nick's friends did not like Rachel, which made him uncomfortable being in Singapore, and conflict with Elanor, who hired a private investigator to find information about Rachel's family. This causes Nick and Rachel's relationship to break up because Elanor's goal is for Nick and Rachel to split up. But they can overcome obstacles after obstacles, the power of love that can bring them back together, and finally, they are happy for the rest of their lives. Because of their love journey, their life stories become romantic. It not only creates a romance formula, which is the atmosphere of the storyline, but it also turns the story into a romance genre.

The second is from Yunita Setiani Aisyah thesis (2018) entitled “*Romantic Formulas in a Novel Notebook by Nicholas Sparks*”. This research looks at the romance formula in Nicholas Spark's novel *The Notebook* Novel. This study analyzes the romance formula using Cawelti's (1976) theory, which is supported by Radway's (1991) and Frye's (1991) theories (1971). *The Notebook* novel implements a specific plot that builds a formula for romance, such as the first between Noah and Allie, who love each other, fight against and face obstacles, and are happy forever. Because it

presents the characteristics of the romance formula through the characters of Noah and Allie, character is the main key to making this novel into the romance genre. One of the key components of a romance formula is the myth of the seasons. This novel's formula is built around the season, specifically summertime.

The researcher then studied Nurlaeli (2022) previous research. The title of this study is "*Romance formula in To All the Boys I've Loved Before Movie (2018).*" The researcher will narrow the scope of this research by describing the romance genre formula in this film based on the romance genre formula displayed by the characters and conflicts in the film. The romance formula employs simple language in the form of adjectives to describe the film's characters and plots. The romance formula discovered two types of conflict, namely internal conflict and external conflict. When Lara Jean pours all of her love into her imagination, she does not believe it is true love and does not dare to express her feelings directly to the man. The conflict scene between Lara Jean and Peter, in which Gen (Peter's ex-girlfriend) begs to reclaim her former status as Peter's girlfriend, serves as an example of external conflict. Gen also attempts to break up the two of them by spreading rumors that Peter has had sex with Gen.

The difference between this research and previous research lies in the conflict that occurs. If the previous study was very focused on the elements that construct the romance formula, in this study the researcher will talk more about the conflicts that occur in the film. This is related to the researcher's interest in Forrest's character who is described as having a disability.

The researcher then decides to take advantage of this opportunity by picking the Forrest Gump movie since it belongs to the romance genre and suits the topic of the analysis. The researcher selects this subject to gain a deeper insight and to learn the movie's romance formula. By examining the romance formula in this film, it becomes crucial to understand how each of the common fiction parts was utilized. The researcher then applies the Radway theory to the analysis of the movie to determine its ideal romance formula and Myers theory to get the analysis of the character of romance built through conflict in the film.

### **1.5 Definition of Key Terms**

- a. *Popular Literature*: According to Cawelti (1969) Popular literature works refer to books or for specific in films definition is an adaptations of popular books, novels, and other written works that are widely watched and enjoyed by a significant portion of the population . Such works often retain the key elements and storylines of the original literature but bring them to life through the medium of film. Some examples of popular movie literature works include the Harry Potter film series, the Twilight film series, and The Fault in Our Stars. These films have become cultural phenomena, grossing millions of dollars and captivating audiences around the world. Popular movie literature works are an important aspect of popular culture and have the power to bring people together and foster a sense of community through shared experiences.

- b. *Movie*: Movies are a popular form of entertainment that have captured the imagination of people for over a century (Fussalam et al., 2019). They are a combination of visual, audio, and storytelling elements that transport audiences to new worlds and provide an escape from reality. Movies come in many different genres, including action, drama, comedy, romance, and sci-fi, and allow for a wide range of creative expression and artistic exploration. Watching movies has become a beloved pastime for many people, offering a source of entertainment, inspiration, and reflection. Whether enjoyed at the cinema or at home, movies play an important role in popular culture and bring people together to share in a collective experience.
- c. *Ideal Romance Formula*: Literary pieces are primarily composed of writing in the forms of drama, poetry, or fiction that depict human experiences (Janice A. Radway, 1982). On the other hand, a movie is a type of oral work of fiction that presents a visual representation of a story through a series of images projected onto a screen. Romance stories are defined as love stories that engage the reader emotionally and allow them to participate in the courtship process. The core of the plot must revolve around a love affair and end happily, with all other elements being secondary. The way the story is told is crucial to the reader's emotional connection and satisfaction with the romance.
- d. *Conflict Theories in Movies*: Conflict theory, as put forth by Canadian psychologist David G. Myers, posits that movies often reflect and reinforce societal conflicts and power struggles. According to Myers, movies can be seen as a reflection of the underlying tensions and power dynamics that exist within society, with the

characters and events in movies serving as symbols for these larger societal conflicts. For example, movies may present stereotypical gender roles that reinforce traditional gender norms, or they may portray certain ethnic groups as being more intelligent or capable than others. In movie, conflict is classified into two categories: internal and external conflict. Internal conflict refers to a struggle within the character, while external conflict is further divided into three subcategories: conflict between characters, conflict between a character and nature, and conflict between a character and society.

- e. *Forrest Gump Movie*: Researcher see that *Forrest Gump* is a 1994 American comedy-drama film directed by Robert Zemeckis and starring Tom Hanks in the lead role. The film is a nostalgic journey through the latter half of the 20th century and follows the life of Forrest Gump, a slow-witted but athletically gifted man who, despite his limited intelligence, finds himself at the center of some of the most memorable events of the era. *Forrest Gump* is widely considered a classic of modern cinema and has received numerous awards and accolades, including six Academy Awards. The film's success is largely due to its mix of humor, heart, and historical context, which has made it appealing to audiences of all ages. The film's memorable quotes and scenes have become part of popular culture, and it remains a beloved and highly rewatchable film over two decades after its release.