

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents Research Background, Statement of Problem, Research Objective, Research Significance, Previous Studies, and Definition of Key Terms.

1.1 Research Background

In the world of film, the detective genre always captivates the audience with its puzzling storylines and surprising plot twists. To create an interesting storyline, a story full of puzzles and plot twists, the author must know about the key elements in the genre. A key element in the detective genre is the use of red herring, which is a storytelling technique used by the author to mislead or distract the characters involved in the story and the audience from the real perpetrator of the crime. Red herring is often found in classical detective formulas that have become the basis of many literary works in the detective genre including movies.

Movie is a literary work as well as novels, short stories, poems, and others. It's a movie that tends to be newer and more modern because it uses audio-visual media due to advanced technology. The media used in literary works change over time. Literary works that normally use a medium of writing may now use new media in the form of images and sound (audio visual) which are implemented in movies. One of the functions of literature is as a medium of information and entertainment. As Horace has explained in the concept of *Utile et Dulce*, which means useful (can provide information) and fun (as entertainment) (Wicaksono, 2017, p. 5). As these functions can also be found in movies, then movies can also be called literary works.

A Haunting in Venice is a movie that has been chosen as the object of the research. This movie was directed by Kenneth Branagh who also played the main role in *A Haunting in Venice* movie as a detective. The movie was released in Indonesia on September 13, 2023 with total revenue in Indonesia reaching \$1,159,656 by IMDbPro on Box Office Mojo website. The movie also received a rating of 77%, 3.9 out of 5 on the Rotten Tomatoes website. It means that *A Haunting in Venice* movie has quite a lot of interest. This is probably the reason behind taking *A Haunting in Venice* movie as the object of this research. *A Haunting*

in Venice is a modern adaptation of the work of Agatha Christies, an author known for her use of classical detective narrative structures. As an adaptation of the novel *Hallowe'en Party*, the film allows the researcher to explore how traditional elements such as red herrings are appropriated in more modern cinematic adaptations. This study can contribute to the study of the adaptation of Christie's work from novel to screen.

In addition, the study of classical detective formulas often focuses more on literature, so this research can expand the range of such studies into the realm of film. By analyzing this film adaptation, the researcher can make a significant contribution in expanding the understanding of how red herring as an important element in classical detective formula used in this film functions across media, from literary text to visual medium. A relatively new film, it adds to the academic discourse in the field of film studies by highlighting how modern films can still follow the classic formula while adding new elements, such as the atmosphere of horror that is not common in classical detective narratives. The movie is an adaptation of a novel entitled *Hallowe'en Party* by Agatha Christie, who has the epithet 'Queen of Crime' because of her great contribution to the detective genre (Karlović, 2023, p. 4). She is a writer who follows in the footsteps of Edgar Allan Poe, a writer who consistently applied the classical detective formula in her works. The classical detective formula was first articulated by Edgar Allan Poe in the 1840s in his works, especially in his novel entitled *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*.

Based on that, most detective story writers started to follow Poe's formula, which was later reformulated by Cawelti that the classical detective formula contains several aspects such as situation, pattern of action, character & relationships, and setting (Cawelti, 1976, p. 80). As this research which more focuses on red herring, and it commonly shows in one of four aspects above, namely character & relationships aspect of classical detective formula which is also one of the intrinsic elements. The relevance of the principles of interrelationship in the analysis of literary works, on the other hand, directs the researcher to constantly pay attention to each element as an inseparable part of the other elements (Ratna, 2015, p. 80). However, other elements cannot be forgotten and ignored, because they are all interconnected. In this case, characterization cannot be understood

without connect it to other elements such as plot, setting and so on. In detective stories, red herrings are frequently used to confuse the characters in the story and the audience to solve the puzzle to find the real perpetrator of the crime.

Today's movie industry is very competitive, continuously producing new films that are unique and interesting to attract the audience. It cannot be denied that the audience today is increasingly critical in choosing the movies to watch. The audience can easily turn away if the movie they are watching is monotonous or boring. The author must think creatively in creating an interesting movie storyline to anticipate the audience turns away. The filmmakers must make the audience curious about the final conclusion of the story. This is where the role of red herring is very important in making an interesting storyline, especially in the detective genre which normally tells about the finding of a murderer by a detective to solve the mystery behind someone's mysterious death.

Moviegoers can now predict plot, making films less engaging. If a story is too predictable, the audience will lose interest. In today's movie, keeping things exciting and intriguing is important. Filmmakers should make stories that keep audiences guessing. By adding twists and turns, directors can make stories that keep audience interested from start to finish. One way to do this, especially in detective stories, is to use red herrings. A red herring is a plot device that misleads the audience. Filmmakers can create mystery by introducing false clues that seem significant but are not. This keeps the audience engaged as they try to solve the puzzle. The strategic use of red herrings adds depth to the story.

Red herring is a storytelling technique that normally used in mystery, thriller, and detective stories which aims to add confusion and direct characters in the story and audience's attention to irrelevant information (Blakeley & Wimmer, 2023). Red herring create uncertainty by planting false clues. This makes the audience and characters question their assumptions about the crime and the criminal. This makes the viewers and characters more interested because they have to solve the puzzle. The red herring makes the mystery more complex, forcing the audience and the detective to search through false information to find the truth. Red herrings also keep the audience interested in the film. Red herrings keep viewers on edge and the story unpredictable. As the plot continues, these false clues make the

audience think they know who the criminal is, but they are wrong. The audience is pleased when the truth is revealed after a series of false clues. This makes the story more interesting and keeps the audience engaged. Indirectly, this red herring can also maintain the audience's interest in watching a detective movie.

The movie that is taken as research object in this research is a movie entitled *A Haunting in Venice* produced by Kenneth Branagh. This movie is a detective genre that contains logical elements which must be owned by a detective in investigating a crime case, this movie also contains supernatural elements that make the story more interesting. The movie tells the story of the mysterious death of a girl named Alicia Drake. Her mysterious death becomes the topic of talk of almost everyone in the city, connecting her mysterious death to something mystical. And when this story reached the ears of a famous detective writer named Ariadne Oliver, the story was then delivered to her friend, a famous detective in the city to solve the case, to find out the truth behind the mysterious death. In addition, the writer also informed the detective of the participation of a famous shaman. This successfully attracted Poirot's attention as a detective, because he did not believe in such things (illogical).

This is the challenge for a detective and the audience in finding the truth in the story, what is the truth behind the mysterious death of Alicia Drake. Because in this movie, red herring can make the storyline more complicated to make the detective and the audience guess who the real perpetrator of the crime is during the story. They are led by the filmmaker to be suspicious of other characters who are deliberately given motives to keep them away from the real criminal. Therefore, this research focuses on the red herring technique which then be reviewed more deeply to explore how this technique is effectively used in *A Haunting in Venice* movie. How red herring can support the classical detective formula in *A Haunting in Venice* movie and how red herring affect the character development in it which supported by Cawelti's theory of classical detective formula and Petrie & Boggs' theory of Character & Characterization.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Based on the background that has been displayed, the statement of the problem is, “How does red herring influence the development of the storyline in *A Haunting in Venice* movie?”. Therefore, the researcher attempts to analyze *A Haunting in Venice* movie in this research by focusing on red herring which is then formulated into research question as follows:

1. How does red herring support detective formula in *A Haunting in Venice* movie?
2. How does red herring affect character development in *A Haunting in Venice* movie?

1.3 Research Objective

Based on the research question above, the research objective can be formulated as follows:

1. To analyze how red herrings are employed to support the classical detective formula in *A Haunting in Venice* movie.
2. To evaluate the impact of red herrings on character development in *A Haunting in Venice* movie.

1.4 Research Significance

Theoretically, this research is expected to be a reference for further research, especially for the research that has the same theme to this research, both in terms of red herring in the classical detective formula and *A Haunting in Venice* movie itself as an object because so far, the researcher has also not been able to find the research that deals with this movie. This research is expected to increase audiences' knowledge, especially in understanding the concept of red herring in various aspects, especially in classical detective formula.

While practically, this research is expected to increase audiences' knowledge, especially in understanding the concept of red herring in various aspects, such as in classical detective formula. This research also refers to the value or benefits that can be applied in real situations. This research has real impacts such as in story writing and filmmaking. This research is expected to help literary writers and filmmakers in designing and applying writing techniques or film script selection to create more effective and interesting stories.

1.5 Previous Studies

There are so many previous studies which was being selected as references that could support the researcher in completing this research. The first previous studies are the research by Vini Nurazni (2021), entitled *The Classical Detective Formula in Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express*. The theory that was used in this research is Edgar Allan Poe's theory which focuses on the aspects of the classical detective formula such as: 1) Situation, 2) Pattern of Action which are divided into six phases: Introduction of the detective, crime and clues, investigation, announcement of the solution, explanation of the solution, and Denouement, 3) Characters and relationships divided into four main characters: the Detectives, the victims, the criminals, and those threatened by the crime but unable to solve it, and 4) Setting. This research employs qualitative methods and focuses on novels as its primary object of study. Unlike previous studies, this research examines a movie rather than a novel. This gives a unique viewpoint for this investigation, as the classical detective formula is commonly encountered in novels.

The second previous studies are the research by Zidan Hamdani (2023), entitled *Classical Detective Formula in Agatha Christie's Lord Edgware Dies*. This research meticulously applies two important theoretical frameworks to analyze the renowned novel by Agatha Christie. The first theory used is by Cawelti, which focuses on four aspects of the classical detective formula such as situation, pattern of action, character and relationships, and setting in each chapter in Agatha Christie's novel *Lord Edgware Dies*. The second theory is the theory by Kayalvizhi, which focuses on the analysis of detection, the patterns built by the detective in solving the mystery in the detective story in the novel. This research applies literary criticism method and uses a novel as its research object. However, what sets this research apart from the earlier one is the focus on both red herrings and the use of a movie. While the previous study analyzed a novel, this research differs by using a movie as its primary object, providing a fresh perspective in applying the classical detective formula typically examined in literary works.

The third previous studies are the research by Nadya Betany (2019), entitled *Classical Detective Formula in Agatha Christie's They Do It with Mirrors*. This research also focuses on the general aspects of the classical detective formula as

formulated by Cawelti and Kayalvizhi's detection theory as in the research by Zidan Hamdani. The aspects of the classical detective formula include: 1) Situation, 2) Pattern of Action which is divided into six phases: Introduction of the detective, crime and clues, investigation, announcement of the solution, explanation of the solution, and denouement, 3) Characters and relationships which are divided into four main characters: the Detectives, the victims, the criminal, and those who are threatened by the crime but unable to solve it, and 4) Setting. The previous study used the literary criticism method with a novel as its object of research. The main distinction between that research and the current research lies in the focus on red herrings and the use of a movie. In this research, the movie serves as a new medium for presenting the red herring within the classical detective formula, which generally has been applied to the analysis of written literary works, such as novels. By using a movie as its object, this research offers a fresh approach to exploring the classical detective formula in a visual format.

The fourth previous studies are the research by Helen Kapstein (2003), entitled *Red Herrings: Looking Back at Apartheid through James McClure's Detective Novels*. The focus of the research analysis is on James McClure's novels that depict life in South Africa during the Apartheid era. The research discusses red herrings like this research, but in different situations and objects. Kapstein's research offers deep insight into how red herrings function in the unique social and political context of the Apartheid era. The research investigates how McClure uses the character of the detective who often misinterprets situations as a mirror of the wider society, where reality is often hidden by layers of lies and deception. The previous study employed a qualitative descriptive method, with a novel as its object of research. The key differences between this previous study and this research lie not only in the research object but also in the theories applied. While this previous study analyzed a novel using a specific theoretical approach, this research focuses on a movie, utilizing a different theoretical framework to explore the red herring within the classical detective formula. These distinctions highlight both the variation in the objects of analysis and the theoretical perspectives used in each study.

The fifth previous studies are the research by Stephanie Barron (2010), entitled *Suspicious Characters, Red Herrings, and Unreliable Detectives: Elements of Mystery in Jane Austen's Northanger Abbey*. In this research, she focused on exploring the elements of mystery in Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey*, how the novel can be seen through the lens of the detective genre. This research discusses the use of mystery elements in the novel by focusing on a character named John Thorpe as a red herring that diverts General Tilney's investigation of Catherine. The previous study used the method of literary criticism with a novel as its object of research, focusing on red herrings within the narrative. The key difference between this previous study and this research is that while both focus on red herrings, this research goes beyond analyzing red herrings in just the characters. It also examines red herrings across other aspects of the classical detective formula including the situation, pattern of action, character and relationships, and setting.

The sixth previous studies are the research by Sucharita Sarkar entitled *The Gentle Art of On-Screen Murder: Investigating the Screen Adaptations of Agatha Christie's Detective Fiction*. The focus of this research is on cinematic adaptations of Agatha Christie's works, highlighting the success of films such as *Witness for the Prosecution* and *Murder on the Orient Express*, with an emphasis on how elements of the original works were adapted into film and television, and how the adaptations resonated with audiences across cultures. The research also explores the successes and challenges faced by Christie's film adaptations, as well as comparisons between adaptations for film and television. The previous study utilized a qualitative analysis method, focusing on both novels and movies as its objects of study. Although both studies examine novels that have been adapted into films, the main distinction lies in the theoretical framework employed. The theories applied in this research was to explore the red herring within the classical detective formula.

The seventh previous studies are the research by Berna Koseoglu (2015), with the title *Gender and Detective Literature: The Role of Miss Marple in Agatha Christie's The Body in the Library*. This research focuses on analyzing the character of a female detective, Miss Marple in a novel by Agatha Christie, entitled *The Body in the Library*. Miss Marple in this study successfully challenges patriarchal norms and shows that women are also capable of playing an important role in the detective

world. The character succeeds in restoring order and justice in her community, as well as empowering women in the context of detective fiction.

The eighth previous studies are the research by Olena Koliasa (2019), entitled *Translation Aspects of Detective Stories*. This study focuses on the translation aspects of detective fiction, with an attention to the relationship between the author and the reader, as well as the challenges faced in translating such works. It explores the techniques used by authors to manipulate the reader, such as misdirection and the strategic use of narrative structure, and the importance of retaining these elements in translation to maintain the integrity of the story and reader involvement. It also discusses the use of stylometry and machine learning in translation studies, as well as the challenges translators face in maintaining the original idiomatic styles and expressions when adapting to the target culture. The research underlines the importance of understanding the cultural, political and social context in translation, as well as the need for creative and analytical approaches to maintain the authenticity and impact of the original work in the context of detective fiction.

All previous studies above also show in the table below which contains a brief information about all the previous studies which was being selected to make it easier to understand how all the previous studies could support and help the researcher in completing this research. The first three previous studies on average discuss four aspects of the classical detective formula in a novel with a different title. These aspects include: 1) Situation, 2) Pattern of action which is divided into six phases: Introduction of detective, crime and clue, investigation, announcement of the solution, explanation of the solution, and denouement, 3) Characters and relationships which is divided into four main characters: The detective, the victim, the criminal, and those threatened by the crime but incapable of solving it, and 4) Setting. These three studies are required in this research because they all discuss the classical detective formula as well as this research which focuses on *A Haunting in Venice* movie which is classified as a detective genre with a classical detective formula.

The other two previous studies discussed red herring in novels with different titles. These studies are beneficial for this research because they all focus on red

herring. All the previous studies selected have the same type of research object, which is novels. Whereas in this study, *A Haunting in Venice* movie used as the object of the research. This is what makes this research different from all previous studies, because so far, the majority of the research that uses the classical detective formula theory is based on novels, not movies.

The last three previous studies that related to this research are in terms of adaptations similar to the object of this research, namely *A Haunting in Venice* movie as a film adaptation of Agatha Christie's novel entitled *Hallowe'en Party*. The main character of female detectives in the research has similarities with this research because it is still within the scope of detective fiction by Agatha Christie. But these previous studies more focus on how Miss Marple's character as a female detective must prove that women can also solve the mystery of a case, can distinguish relevant clues and irrelevant, not just men who can become detectives.

And the last previous studies are also related to this research because they both discuss the way or technique of interpreting a clue in a detective story, because in detective story there are writing techniques that can lead the audience to the wrong conclusion which is commonly called as red herring. In addition, this research certainly not only discuss the aspects of the classical detective formula as they usually do. Instead, red herring became the main focus of the research in examining *A Haunting in Venice* movie by using the theories of Cawelti and Petrie and Boggs, to find the impact of red herring on character development in the story and show that red herring is very important to supports the classical detective formula, especially the classical detective formula in *A Haunting in Venice* movie.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

In this research, there are important terms used such as structuralism, red herring, classical detective formula, characterization, movie, and *A Haunting in Venice*.

1. Structuralism: Structuralism is an analytical approach that focuses on identifying and analyzing the underlying structures in various fields.
2. Red Herring: Red herring is a storytelling technique that normally used in mystery, thriller, and detective stories which aims to add confusion and direct

characters in the story and audience's attention to irrelevant information (Blakeley & Wimmer, 2023). It refers to something that seems important or relevant at the beginning of the story, but turns out to have no direct or significant connection to the solution or the end of the story.

3. **Classical Detective Formula:** The classical detective formula is a narrative structure often used in detective stories, which organizes the elements of the story to create an engaging and challenging mystery for the reader or the audience. This formula typically involves several key aspects that shape the plot. The following are four aspects formulated by John G. Cawelti in his book titled *Adventure, Mystery, and Romance*: 1) Situation, 2) Pattern of action which is divided into six phases: Introduction of detective, crime and clue, investigation, announcement of the solution, explanation of the solution, and denouement, 3) Characters and relationships which is divided into four main characters: the detective, the victim, the criminal, and those threatened by the crime but incapable of solving it, and 4) Setting.
4. **Characterization:** Characterization is the process of developing characters in literary works, which involves the use of various techniques to describe and introduce the characters in the story.
5. **Movie:** Movie can be considered one of the most popular forms of literature, combining elements of story, character, and themes often found in literary works. In the context of popular literature, movie not only serves as entertainment but also as a medium for conveying ideas, culture, and human experiences.
6. *A Haunting in Venice: A Haunting in Venice* is a 2023 American detective film produced and directed by Kenneth Branagh, based on Agatha Christie's 1969 novel *Hallowe'en Party*.