

**THE PORTRAYAL OF REMY'S CHARACTER IN *RATATOUILLE*
MOVIE**

A GRADUATING PAPER

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Degree in English Literature



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A FINAL PROJECT STATEMENT

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THE PORTRAYAL OF REMY'S CHARACTER IN *RATATOUILLE* MOVIE

ABSTRACT

Ratatouille is an animated movie directed by Brad Bird in 2007. This movie tells about a mouse named Remy who has a big dream of becoming a chef like a human chef. He always tries various ways to become a chef until the fates bring him to the sewers of Paris beneath Gusteau's restaurant and meet with Linguini. This research aims to describe the portrayal of Remy in *Ratatouille* movie and its significance meaning. This research uses the character and characterization theory by Abrams and focuses on the analysis of the portrayal of Remy in *Ratatouille* movie and its significant meaning. The researcher uses qualitative method to analyze the data. Based on the analysis, the researcher concludes that the portrayal of Remy is an intelligent mouse, forms a good relationship with humans, performs human habits and proves Gusteau's motto. The significant meanings of the portrayal of Remy are: Intelligence does not look at identity. Then the second is a cooperative partner. The third is a perfectionist man. The last is there is no success if there are no attempts to prove.

Keywords: *Character, Characterization, Significant Meaning*

GAMBARAN KARAKTER REMY DI FILM RATATOUILLE

ABSTRAK

Ratatouille adalah film animasi yang disutradarai oleh Brad Bird pada tahun 2007. Film ini menceritakan tentang seekor tikus bernama Remy yang memiliki impian besar untuk menjadi seorang koki seperti manusia. Dia selalu mencoba berbagai cara untuk menjadi koki seperti koki manusia, sampai takdir membawanya ke selokan Paris di bawah restoran Gusteau dan bertemu dengan Linguini. Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk menunjukkan gambaran karakter Remy di film *Ratatouille*. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui penggambaran karakter Remy di film *Ratatouille* dan makna pentingnya. Penelitian ini menggunakan teori karakter dan karakterisasi dari Abrams dan difokuskan pada analisis penggambaran karakter Remy dan makna pentingnya dalam film *Ratatouille*. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif untuk menganalisis data. Berdasarkan analisis, peneliti menyimpulkan bahwa gambaran Remy adalah sebagai tikus yang sangat pintar, memiliki hubungan baik dengan manusia, melakukan kebiasaan manusia, dan membuktikan motto Gusteau. Makna penting dari penggambaran Remy adalah; kecerdasan tidak memandang identitas. Yang kedua adalah mitra kerjasama. Yang ketiga adalah manusia yang perfeksionis. Yang terakhir adalah tidak ada kesuksesan jika tidak ada pembuktian.

Kata kunci: Karakter, Karakterisasi, Makna Penting

MOTTO

**“TRY NOT TO BE A SUCCESSFUL HUMAN BUT TRY TO BE A
USEFUL HUMAN”
-ALBERT EINSTEIN-**



DEDICATION

I dedicate this graduating paper for

My beloved Parents *Mamak* Siti Mariyana and *Pae* Suwoto

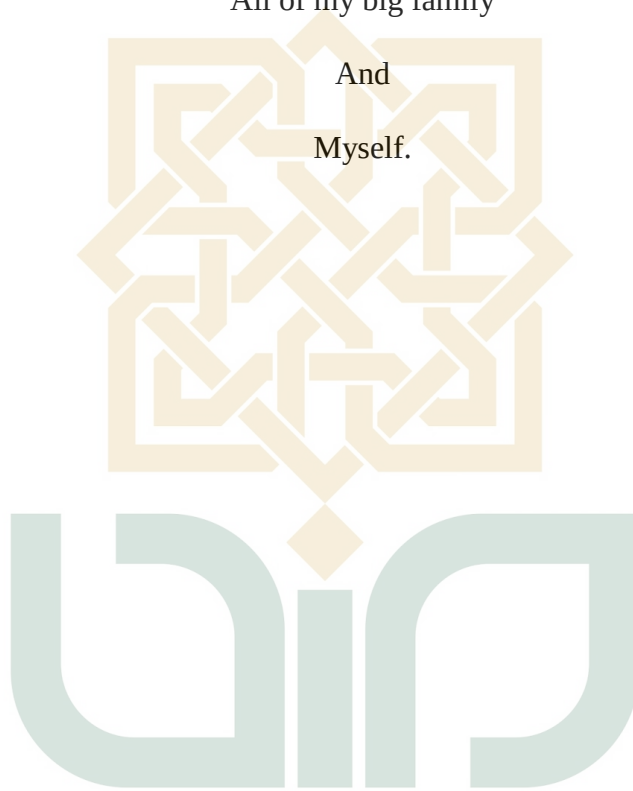
My dearest Brother and Sister Muhammad Malik Khoiruddin and Nurul

Qomariyah

All of my big family

And

Myself.



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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Choosing the Subject

Literature is one of the most important things in human life. It is used to express something unusual; it means that sometimes humans think about something outside of themselves and express it unconsciously, which has aesthetic value and lead to an interest. Aesthetic (from the Greek, “pertaining to sense perception”) designates the systematic study of all the *fine arts*, as well as of the nature of beauty in any object, whether natural or artificial (Abrams, 2009: 4). It is important because in literature, humans can see a reflection of themselves.

According to Terry Eagleton (1996: 2), “perhaps literature is definable not according to whether it is fictional or 'imaginative', but it uses language in peculiar ways”. It is peculiar because every human has different interpretation about literature in different ways. For example, one person can interpret flower with his imagination and another person can interpret the flower with his ability to use figures of speech, such as hyperbole, simile, personification, or another figure of speech in literary device. “Literature itself from the Latin *litteraturae*, ‘writings’ has been commonly used since the eighteenth century, equivalently with the French *belles lettres* (“fine letters”), to designate fictional and imaginative writings-poetry, prose fiction, and drama” (Abrams, 2009: 177).

One of the literary works is a movie. A movie is produced with a very long process, such as choosing the best story to the movie, characters, plot, setting,

shooting, and editing. Movies have become important because many people assume that from the movies they can learn anything and understand it quickly. “Movie can arrange and rearrange time and motion, thus reveals its dimensions that are deeply social, historical, industrial, technological, philosophical, political, aesthetic, psychological, personal, and so forth” (Amy Villarejo, 2007: 9). The base of movies is moving picture. Although movies are categorized as pictures, some people make movies as a reference in their daily lives. They even forget that it is a work of their imagination and the result of their own thinking.

One of the movies which can be used as a lesson is *Ratatouille*. It is an animated movie directed by Brad Bird which took over from Jan Pivanka on 2005. It was released in the United Kingdom on 29 June 2007. This movie was produced by Pixar and distributed by Walt Disney Pictures. The word *Ratatouille* actually comes from the French term “*touiller*” which means to toss food. It is originally a meal made by poor farmers (in essence it starts out life as a peasant dish), and prepared in the summer with fresh summer vegetables (<http://ratatouille.weebly.com/history.html>).

This movie tells about a mouse named Remy who has a big dream to become a chef like human chef. Surely it seems very impossible because Remy is just a mouse. He always tries various ways to become a chef like a human chef. He has the ability to smell food better than another mouse until the fates bring him to the sewers of Paris beneath a Gusteau’s restaurant. Gusteau restaurant is the famous restaurant in Paris at that time. Remy is very happy when knows that he is in Gusteau restaurant. He tries to find some food in Gusteau’s restaurant, but

suddenly Gusteau's shadow comes and asks him some questions about his restaurant. Remy sees Linguini, a cleaning service who spoils the cooked soup. Remy does not accept what Linguini has done, so he falls in to the sink and tries to make the soup better by adding some spices. This case represents unusual habit of Remy.

Later one, Remy and Linguini become friends. Linguini is depicted as a young boy who looks for a job, and he becomes a cleaning service at the restaurant. His relationship can be seen when they work together. He climbs onto Linguini's head and pulls his hair to control Linguini in order to help Linguini cooking. Since the incident, Gusteau restaurant becomes more popular. By that second case, this movie also shows a sign which represents an unusual habit of Remy. Remy's ways to control human are unique because Remy hides himself in the hat chef of Linguini. He controls Linguini by pulling his hair. Humans should control mice or other animals, but in this case Remy is a mouse who controls Linguini by pulling his hair.

In this movie, Remy becomes the main character and represents as a mouse that has the ability to cook, feel, and smell food like humans do. He also develops habits like human. He walks with two legs and eats good food, unlike common mice which are disgusting and hated by humans because they usually become a pest. They live in the sewers and the trash. Even in this movie Remy is represented as a smarter chef rather than men. Although this movie is similar with the other animated movie that use animals to represent, but it is different. The story in this movie has deep social message. The movie tells about the wishes and

the hard work of a mouse Remy to become a chef. It can be seen in the scene of the movie at 00:08:48 when he climbs into the chimney of a man's house.

In this research, the researcher focuses on the portrayal of Remy in *Ratatouille* movie and the significant meaning of it. The researcher applies character and characterization theory to analyze the issues because the theory is considered plausible to get the portrayal of Remy character and its significant meaning.

Remy depicted as a mouse which has a big dream and wishes to become a chef has complex problems. He is smarter than his human friend, Linguini. He can control Linguini by pulling his hair. Even he imitates all of human nature and behavior. Those are relating to the reality of social condition in this era, where animal is represented as having equal intelligence with human, even higher than human. This interests the researcher to analyze the portrayal of Remy. The researcher is eager to discover the portrayal of Remy in *Ratatouille* movie and to describe the significant meaning of the portrayal of Remy in *Ratatouille* movie.

1.2 Research Questions

From the explanation above, some research questions are formulated as follows:

1. How does the movie portray Remy's character?
2. What is the significant meaning of the portrayal of Remy's character in *Ratatouille* movie?

1.3 Objective of the Study

From the research questions above, the objective of study in this research is to find out the portrayal of Remy's character in *Ratatouille* movie and the significant meaning of it.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The portrayal of Remy in *Ratatouille* movie is the important research for the readers and viewers, especially for the researcher to think that people can learn something not only from real life. People can learn from everything although the character is not human, such as the character in this movie. In Islamic perspective, learning anything from other than humans is taught by God through the story of Qabil and Habil in holy Quran surah al Maidah: 31:

فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ غُرَابًا يَبْحَثُ فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُرِيَهُ كَيْفَ يُوَارِي سَوْأَةَ أَخِيهِ قَالَ يَا وَيْلَتَا أَعَجَزْتُ أَنْ

أَكُونُ مِثْلَ هَذَا الْغُرَابِ فَأُوَارِي سَوْأَةَ أَخِي فَأَصْبَحَ مِنَ النَّادِمِينَ

“Then Allah sent a raven scratching up the ground, to show him how to hide his brother's naked corpse. He said: Woe unto me! Am I not able to be as this raven and so hide my brother's naked corpse? And he became repentant” (<http://ayatalquran.net/2015/01/surah-al-maidah-المائدة-the-table-terjemah-bahasa-inggis/>)

The verse above tells about Qabil who killed his brother, but he was confused because he did not know what to do with his brother's body. Then God

sent two crows that taught Qabil how to bury his brother's body. This story shows that we can learn not only from fellow human beings but also from animals and others. It is hoped that the result of this research can give clear explanation about the portrayal of Remy and the significant meaning of it. To find out the portrayal of Remy in *Ratatouille* movie, the researcher analyzed Remy as the main character in the movie using character and characterization theory as the main theory and also theory of movie to support the process of analysis.

1.5 Literature review

There are at least three researches on *Ratatouille* movie. The first is an international journal article by Luis Gómez Romero entitled *The Jurisprudence of Ratatouille: The Rat in the Machine, or, the Equivocal Taste of Égaliberté*, published on 19 May 2015. This article traces commonalities between the practices of visual animation and modern law through a political and jurisprudential reading of the animated film *Ratatouille*. The result of this research is that *Ratatouille*'s treatment of the ontological and anthropological problems of the human soul not only addresses the philosophical complexities inherent to animation, but also the ideological and material conditions that currently govern the practice of égaliberté in contemporary liberal democracies.

The second is a journal article by Stanley Brandes and Thor Anderson entitled *Ratatouille: An Animated Account of Cooking, Taste, and Human Evolution*. It was published on 8 July 2011. This article analyzed the immensely popular animated film *Ratatouille* as a social and cultural document. The result of this research explores distinctions and similarities between "a man and a beast". It

communicates the idea that all living creatures share more in terms of aptitude and feeling than divide them.

The third is graduating paper by Uswatun Hasanah who was a student of English Department, Faculty of Letters and Fine Arts, Universitas Sebelas Maret, Surakarta. Her paper title is '*A Translation Analysis of Cultural Terms in the Film "Ratatouille"*'. The paper discusses translation analysis of cultural terms in *Ratatouille* movie. She used descriptive qualitative research and qualitative method. The result of this research is she found five categories of cultural terms in the *Ratatouille* movie, and the total mean for acceptability is 1,45 meaning that the translation is highly acceptable.

A similarity and a difference are found between the current research and the three previous researches. The similarity is the literature reviews and this research uses the same object that is *Ratatouille* movie. The difference is this research uses character and characterization theory to analyze, but the previous researches above employed different theories.

1.6 Theoretical Approach

The current research discusses the portrayal of Remy in *Ratatouille* movie and the significant meaning of it. The researcher used character and characterization theory. Besides using character and characterization theory, the researcher also used the theory of the movie as the supporting theory. Here are the theories used to find out the answer of the problem statements:

1.6.1 Character and Characterization Theory

The researcher used character and characterization theory by M. H. Abrams to describe the portrayal of Remy's character and its significant meaning in *Ratatouille* movie. According to Abrams, "Characters are the person representation in a dramatic or narrative work, which are interpreted by the readers as possessing particular moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities by inferences from the dialogue and from the action" (2009: 42). In contrast, characterization is how the author or director represents the character as he or she wants in the movie or in other literary works, such as dramas, novels, and short stories.

Abrams also divided characterizing in to two methods: showing and telling. In showing, "the author simply presents the characters talking and acting and leaves it entirely up to the reader to infer the motives and dispositions that lie behind what they say and do. The showing includes not only external speech, but also a character's inner thoughts, feelings, and responsiveness to events" (Abrams, 2009: 43). It means that the author shows the character through his talking and acting and let the readers or viewers of the movie or the other literary works deduct the unknowing meaning behind it. Meanwhile, in telling, "the author intervenes authoritatively in describe" (Abrams, 2009:43). It means that the character is described clearly by the author in his works.

In this research, the researcher applied the showing method to get the portrayal of Remy's character in *Ratatouille* movie.

1.6.2 Movie Theory

The main data of this research is a movie. The researcher applied the movie theory as the supporting theory. The theory is used to give more explanation about the movie and get the result of the analysis in this research. It also shows the unknown meaning or significant meaning contained in the movie.

In this research, the researcher also employed the concept of *Mise-en-scene* and Cinematography to support the analysis of the research. According to Amy Villarejo, “*Mise-en-Scene* retains the theatrical overtones, meaning “put into the scene” and designating all the encompassed by the Frame” (2007: 28). It means that in concept of *Mise-en-scene* everything showing on the frame of the movie will be analyzed, such as setting, lighting, costume and hair, make up, and figure behavior. Cinematography is a part of *Mise-en-scene*. Cinematography shows how the scenes are created by the camera. As noticed by Amy Villarejo that “anything to do with the camera are belongs to the realm of cinematography” (2007: 36). One of them is the camera angle. Camera angle is position of the camera while taking or recording the pictures. The researcher chose camera angle to explain the scene conducted in a shot because it determines what the viewers of the movie will see.

Camera Angles consist of seven elements:

1. The Extreme Long Shot (ELS), in which one can barely distinguish the human figure;

2. The Long shot (LS), in which humans are distinguishable but remain dwarfed by the background;
3. The Medium Long Shot (MLS), or plan américain, in which the human is framed from the knees up;
4. The Medium Shot (MS), in which we move in slightly to frame the human from the waist up;
5. The Medium Close-Up (MCU), in which we are slightly closer and see the human from the chest up;
6. The Close Up (CU), which isolates a portion of a human (the face, most prominently); to show the expression clearly.
7. The Extreme Medium Close Up (ECU), in which we see a mere portion of the face (an eye, the lips) (2007: 38).

1.7 Methods of Research

1.7.1 Type of Research

This research analyzed a literary work, so this research is categorized as literary criticism. The literary work is a *Ratatouille* movie. In this research, the researcher used a qualitative method. Creswell in his book said that “the researcher seeks to establish the meaning of a phenomenon from the views of participants” (2009). From that statement, the researcher observed the phenomenon of the main character as object in the movie. The researcher performed the observation by collecting data and visiting library to get the references. Then the researcher found the data from the movie and added the data from the related references, such as books, articles, journals, and related websites.

Moreover, the character and characterization theory was applied to analyze more deeply the character of Remy in the *Ratatouille* movie, and also the movie theory as the supporting theory.

1.7.2 Data Source

The main data source and the supporting data source were used to obtain all of the necessary data. The main data source is the *Ratatouille* movie elements. They are the character of Remy, the visual appearance of Remy, and the movie script. The supporting data are also used from the representative books, articles, and journals which are related to the movie critics.

1.7.3 Data Collection Technique

In collecting the data, the researcher used the documentation method. The researcher also took some steps to collect the data. Firstly, the researcher read the movie script to get an understanding of the character of Remy. Secondly, the researcher classified the data units which showed the portrayal of Remy in *Ratatouille* movie into some categories. The classifications were conducted to get the accurate data of the portrayal of Remy. The classifications were the dialogues of Remy as main character, the scenes of Remy's behavior, and the shots of Remy's role toward the human and his family. Thirdly, the researcher selected the appropriate data related to the study. Finally, the researcher described, explained, and synchronized the data to answer the research questions.

1.7.4 Data Analysis Technique

The researcher analyzed data using descriptive qualitative approach. This research also applied some theories. They are character and characterization theory as the main theory to identify the portrayal of Remy that appeared in the movie, and the theory of movie to identify all facts in the movie. There were some steps taken to get the data analysis technique. First, the researcher analyzed the data using the shot of the camera angle that was corresponding to character and characterization theory. Second, the researcher described the significant meaning of the portrayal of the main character. Then, the researcher drew a conclusion of the research.

1.8 Paper Organization

This research is divided into four chapters. Every chapter has different substance and explanation. The first chapter consists of the background of the study, research question, significance of the study, literature review, theoretical approach, methods of the research, and paper organization. The second chapter consists of the intrinsic elements of the *Ratatouille* movie. The third chapter explains the analysis of the data. The last chapter is the conclusion of the research.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

4.1 Conclusion

This research aims to find out the portrayal of Remy's character in *Ratatouille* movie and its significant meaning. The researcher classified the portrayal based on the sign of the shot which depicts Remy's action. Then, the researcher formulated the data based on character and characterization theory by conducting two processes. Those processes include analyzing the portrayal of Remy, and analyzing the significant meaning behind the portrayal of Remy which is proven through scenes and dialogues.

There are four portrayals of Remy's character; the smart mouse, a mouse who has good relationship with human, a mouse with human habit, and a mouse who proves Gusteau's motto that "Anyone Can Cook". From those portrayals, the researcher found some significant meaning. The first is that intelligence does not look at identity. It means that everything and everyone can have the intelligence, no matter who and how. The second is that a good relationship can make a cooperative partner. In the movie, this is shown when Remy instructs Linguini by pulling Linguini's hair. It means to become a cooperative partner and be successful, everyone needs each other and should respect each other. The third is a perfectionist being. Remy's behavior which imitates human behavior shows his standard of a perfectionist man. He also praises human nature to show his

perfectionist standard. The last is that success is nothing without any proof. Remy's hard work to become a chef like a human chef can be proven to Anton Ego. His proof makes Ego realizing that Gusteau's motto "Anyone Can Cook" is true. It means that success cannot be acknowledged without proof.

4.2 Suggestion

The researcher believes that this research about Remy's portrayal in *Ratatouille* movie is not perfect. Thus, the researcher suggests the next researchers who want to analyze in the same subject with different theories that this movie does not only talk about portrayal and character and characterization theory, but it also talks about alienation, feminism, and so on. It can be analyzed by the other theories as well. Feminism theory can be another option for anyone who wants to examine this movie.

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