

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Research

Transferring literary works to visual mediums is a common phenomenon in the literary world. Classical literary works and other written works are always a source of inspiration for directors when creating a cinematic adaptation. However, not all adaptations can capture the story's authenticity from the source. This phenomenon will be interesting if we analyze whether the work of an adaptation succeeds in maintaining the faithfulness of the previous adaptation.

The story of Robin Hood is frequently adapted in this context. Robin Hood is often depicted as a hero who helps ordinary people defend justice. The story of Robin Hood has inspired numerous authors and directors to create works. However, not all of Robin Hood's adaptations received good reviews from the public or reviewers. Film adaptations often cut out parts of the original work; this aesthetic symbolizes how text is replaced with images in films, which is the primary technique used to create films (Robert Stam 7). Aesthetic decisions like eliminating components from the original work are incorrect and will harm the original piece. Apart from that, other reasons adaptations are regarded as failures include inaccurate depictions of characters or deviations from the story's ideas. (Leitch 128). One of the adaptations of Robin Hood that received bad reviews from the public and film critics was the film *Robin Hood*, directed by Otto Bathurst.

In this research I will examine the adaptation of the novel *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood* and the film “Robin Hood” (2018), focusing on how a classic adaptation of Robin Hood character that considered failed. According to Enstente, audiences are usually disappointed after watching a film because the film is not as beautiful as the novel, the storyline is not the same as the novel, the characters in the film are different or many changes occur (Enteste 9-10). Films adapted from literary works, primarily novels or short stories, change the audience's perception because of the changes implemented. These changes include the tools used, namely changing the world of words in the novel into a continuous world of moving images in the film. By comparing novels and films, the results can end in disappointment or dissatisfied in the hearts of the audience, including the original novelist. Suppose it is related to the novel *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood* and the film “Robin Hood” (2018). In that case, there are numerous changes in the Robin Hood film adaptation, particularly in adapting the character of Robin Hood itself, which makes Robin Hood fans dissatisfied with the latest adaptation. This is in contrast to the Robin Hood novel, which tells in detail how the character of Robin Hood and how his developments until the ending of the story.

The *Merry Adventures of Robin Hood* novel, Pyle depicts Robin Hood as a mischievous teenager who develops into a mature and good man. Robin lives with his group of Merry-men, consisting of Little Jhon, Will Stulely, Will Scarlet, Thinker and Friar Tuck and fights against the Sherrif of Nottingham and King Henry as the antagonist characters. Apart from that, in this novel, Pyle explains the problems of each character in each chapter in a related way, such as how

Robin Hood met and recruited members of his group as well as the conflicts in each chapter. This novel was first published in 1883 and had a significant influence on children's literacy in the 19th century. This novel by Howard Pyle became famous on the American stage, such as the play Robin Hood by Lord Alfred Tennyson (author of the Arthurian classic, *The Idylls of the King*), *The Foresters* which was adapted from Howard Pyle's work and produced in America with great success (Wright).

Meanwhile, in the film Robin Hood (2018), Otto Bathurst describes Robin Hood as a nobleman pro-lower class in a society aiming to uphold justice. This film, directed by Bathurst, is simpler and has a shorter plot. This film received a lot of criticism from film critics. Quoted from IMDb, Robin Hood only got a rating of 5.3/10 and received bad criticism from reviewers because the film adaptation did not have a clear narrative and deviated from the original story (IMDb). Apart from that, on the "Rotten Tomatoes" site, this film received 1/5 and also received bad criticism from reviewers because this film failed to convey the issues that were wanted to be expressed in the Robin Hood film adaptation (Rotten Tomatoes).

I chose the novel *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood* as the object of study because it has inspired Robin Hood adapters in making adaptations. Furthermore, I chose the film "Robin Hood" by Otto Bathurst as the object of research because it is the latest film adaptation of Robin Hood and has received a lot of criticism from the public for failing to adapt the story. This analysis was carried out to identify the character changes of the latest adaptation of Robin Hood. From this explanation, this research was carried out by comparing elements

in novels and films using the adaptation theory by Linda Hutcheon. This theory explains how to adapt literary works into film form. Adaptation is a transformation process in a medium or context that aims to convey the original work's message, theme or important elements into a new medium or different situation (Hutcheon 3). The role of an adaptation is to retain the recognizable elements of the original work while providing appropriate variations in the new medium without destroying the work being adapted. The adaptation process does not always run smoothly, especially for adapters who adapt famous novels or legendary stories which are likely to face tougher challenges because of the high expectations of fans for the adaptation work. The more popular the story, the greater the possibility of audience dissatisfaction with the adapted work (127).

1.2. Identification of the Problem

The film "Robin Hood" directed by Otto Bathurst is adapted from the famous story of Robin Hood. Despite adapting a famous story, the film received a bad rating with a score of 5.3/10 on the IMDb website. This film received many bad criticisms from fans due to various factors including the characterization of Robin Hood itself. The director has changed many elements that build the characterization of Robin Hood, such as the character background and the character development of Robin Hood.

On the other hand, the novel entitled *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood* by Howard Pyle is a successful novel and is considered perfect for telling the story of Robin Hood. This novel is composed of a combination of various Robin Hood stories (Wright). I used the novel as a reference or comparison to adaptation of Robin Hood character on the film. This is because this novel contains a

collection of Robin Hood stories collected by Pyle from various sources formulated and rewritten into a complete story. Adaptation theory by Hutcheon was used to explore how the director adapted the Robin Hood character into his film by comparing it to the Pyle's novel as a source of comparison.

1.3. Review of Related Literature

In conducting research on film adaptation, the researcher needs to observe some literatures done by previous researchers and scholars in the same field of study. Research on film adaptation is mostly dominated by an observation by seeing the film as the main object compared with the original medium, such as novel. In this case, the researcher reviewed some articles related to film adaptation to enrich the understanding and support this research.

The first article is written by Clouet entitled "The Robin Hood Legend and Its Cultural Adaptation for the Film Industry: Comparing Literary Sources with Filmic Representation." This article outlines the interpretation of Robin Hood as a legendary hero through the ages into a modern form that is more enjoyable for today's audiences. The findings indicate that many Robin Hood film adaptations were found in the 20th century. Clouet stated that one of the film adaptations of Robin Hood, namely "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves," directed by Kevin Reynolds, featured a new main role, namely Maid Marian, who in previous stories was a minor character. He believes that Reynolds' aim in creating this renewal is to present the multicultural reality that exists in the modern era.

Clouet in his article tried to explain the development of Robin Hood film adaptations from time to time. He tried to prove that adaptations of classic stories continue to evolve with the times. This article provides a comparison between

adaptations to show how components in the story were updated. Even so, the writer only focused on discussing the results of adapting the Robin Hood story without providing the original version. He did not refer to any version of the story so it does not match the title used. This research is limited to adaptation in the 20th century so that it can be a reference in my research which examines adaptation in the 21st century.

The second article is written by Pauly entitled “Beauty and the Beast: From Fable to Film.” This article explains how the adaptation of Jean Cocteau's 1946 film “Beauty and the Beast” was based on the 18th century French classic. Pauly found that Cocteau's adaptation brought many changes to certain characters and symbols. Cocteau presented the character Avenant which aims to change the meaning of feminine to masculine of Belle character. He also used elements of magical agent that are very different from the original version, such as gloves, horse, statue and key.

This article attempts to show how changes occur in adaptation. The writer is able to briefly present elements of change and is able to identify feminine-masculine elements from the film adaptation. However, the writer did not fully present the changes she referred to as subtractions and additions. She emphasized more on the transposition of elements. This research provides an overview of adaptation at a detailed level, namely symbols, thus helping my research to reveal changes at the smallest level.

The next article is “Cinematizing the Victorian Novel to Cinema “Pride and Prejudice”” written by Rahmah and Iman. This study investigates the literary adaptation of the novel *Pride and Prejudice* written by Jane Austin into a film

directed by Joe Wright with the same title. They used Hutcheon's theory of adaptation to uncover the issue. In this writing, they highlighted two main elements of the novel as the main observation, namely the setting and conflict. They argued that the director and the scriptwriter have successfully adapted the novel into film as seen through the alteration of setting by enhancing the romantic spheres and characters' classes. Also, the transposition of conflicts among characters has been occurred by minimizing the social condition issue and depiction of Victorian women's roles. In addition, they strongly emphasized that the conflict occurred as a result of romantic relationship between characters and beautiful landscape as its setting have completely influenced audience's view and personal feeling.

This article successfully explores how a director and script writer perfectly provide an enjoyable experience through the film they adapted from a famous classic novel. Both writers highlighted two important components, namely conflict and setting, which are usually of special concern to film lovers and also contribute to determining the quality of a film. However, as scientific research, this research shows subjectivity which is indicated by the assessment of beauty that can be enjoyed by the audience without directly involving the audience as part of the research. On the other hand, this research provides the researcher with an idea of how adaptation research should be carried out. This research provides a depiction of how intrinsic elements can be observed and analyzed to find the uniqueness of a film adaptation compared to the original medium, such as a novel.

Another article is "Kajian Transformasi dari Novel *Laskar Pelangi* Karya Andrea Hirata ke Film *Laskar Pelangi* Karya Riri Riza" written by Mahanani.

This research examines the forms of transformation from verbal to audio visual that occur in the plot and characterization of the novel *Laskar Pelangi* in its film adaptation. The theory applied is ecranization. Based on the findings, Mahanani believed that plot transformation can be seen in the addition and subtraction of events. Meanwhile, characterization transformation results from adding and subtracting characters in the film compared to the original novel. She argued that the differences resulting from adapting literary works to other media must occur and depend on the meaning and interpretation in the process of adapting the work.

This research succeeded in showing the changes that occurred in two important elements, namely plot and characterization. The writer showed how changes in the form of additions and subtractions usually occur in adaptations whose objectives are adjusted to the needs of the adaptation itself. However, the writer did not include the implications of the additions and subtractions that occur. She only compared the existence and changes that occur between the two works. This research provides an overview of changes in both subtraction and addition in the adaptation of the research I conducted. The difference is that the research I conducted tried to uncover the reasons behind the elements that were adapted into the film.

The last article is Ardianto's "Dari Novel ke Film: Kajian Teori Adaptasi sebagai Pendekatan dalam Penciptaan Film." This article explores the study of adaptation theory in transforming text into visuals. The author believes that the success of film adaptations of novels is the result of the success of the adaptation approach. He stated that there are two types of approaches in adapting novels to films, namely loyalty to the source and contextuality-intertextuality of the original

source. Based on his findings, he realized that no work was truly new, but always came from something that had existed before and was a repetition. The writer's view seems to refer to Hutcheon and Damono's thoughts about medium freedom in adaptation.

The research provides an overview of the adaptation approach I used in my research. This research provides a reference on how the medium in adaptation is transformed into another form of medium. Even though it briefly touched on the freedom of the medium, this research only limited the discussion to the novel-film area. The writer did not mention other mediums even though he clearly mentioned freedom in the medium of adaptation.

1.4. Research Questions

In conducting research on Robin Hood character adaptation, I proposed some research questions. They are:

1. How is the characterization of Robin Hood created by Otto Bathurst in his film compared to the novel *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood* by Howard Pyle?
2. What are the changes in Robin Hood's characterization created by Bathurst in the film?

1.5. Scope of the Research

In this research, I focused on the adaptation of Robin Hood character as created by Bathurst in his "Robin Hood" (2018) movie compared to a novel by Howard Pyle entitled *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood*. I also found out the changes in the Robin Hood's characterization adaptation directed by Otto

Bathurst. To reveal all this, the adaptation theory pioneered by Hutcheon was applied.

1.6. Objectives of the Research

This research explored the adaptation of the Robin Hood character in the film "Robin Hood" directed by Otto Bathurst compared to the novel *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood* by Howard Pyle. The purpose of this research is to analyze the characterization of Robin Hood in Bathurst's film compared to the novel. Also, to find out the changes in the Robin Hood's characterization adaptation directed by Otto Bathurst

