

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Chapter I consists of background of the research, statement of problem, research objective, research significance, clarification of key term and the organization of writing.

1.1 Background

Film is part of literature which is related to visual art. The definition of film itself is the combination of image movement and sounds. It also explained that everybody knows what film is and what it means (Elsaesser and Buckland, 2002:1). Whereas, Christian Metz in Elsaesser and Buckland (2002:1) states that, “A film is difficult to explain because it is easy to understand”. On the other hand, film contains some purposes and meanings.

The purpose of the film is also various, most of the film take some controversial issues in society such as human sexuality. It is also stated that the motion pictures and scientific community fashioned the concept of sexual identity in the end of nineteenth century, which is focused on cinematic representation of homosexuality and the other forms of sexuality (Benshoff, 2006:21). Term of *homosexual* when it was first coined is not exactly like homosexual today, but it represent that homosexual at that time is a man who want to be a woman, or a woman who want to be a man (Today it is called as *transgender* or *transsexual*).

In the end of nineteenth century also the short film which shows same-sex intimacy entitled *The Gay Brothers* (1895) was released. The film itself shows two men claps each other and dance in circle, and those two men can be considered as homosexual because the film was released in '*silent films era*' and it is hard to label whether the film is straight or gay, but the film which shows so many opportunities for same-sex desire to express is remarkably as *queer*.

On the other hand, the word “queer” used to be a slang for homosexuality but nowadays, word “queer” used differently, sometimes as an umbrella for coalition of sexual of self-identification, besides, it also used to lesbian and gay studies (Jagose, 1996:1). Beshoff (2006:2) adds that, “Human sexuality is multiple, varying, and diverse, and in recent years the term *queer* has been brought into the academic lexicon to acknowledge and describe this multiplicity of sexualities”. In line with Beshoff, Kirsch (2001:33) had also seen that, “The identity of queer notably held as Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, Bisexual, and Transsexual”.

The definition of queer films itself is the films that deal with characters that are queer (Beshoff, 2006:9). Based on what was explained before, this research will be focused on gay identity which are contained in the three coming of age short queer films; *James* (2008) by Connor Clements, *Jackpot* (2012) by Adam Baran, and *Love is All You Need?*(2011) by Kim Rocco Shield. Gay is a male who attracted to another male in romantic, erotic or emotional sense and identity itself is something that makes them different from others.

Those three films that will be analyzed by using queer theory. Michel Foucault in Spargo (2011:9) states that, “Queer theory is not a singular or systematic conceptual or methodological framework, but a collection of intellectual engagements with the relations between sex, gender and sexual desire”. Spargo (2011:9) also adds about queer theory that it describes a diversity range of critical practices and priorities

“If queer theory is a school of thought, then it’s one with a highly unorthodox view of discipline. The term describes a diverse range of critical practices and priorities: readings of the representation of same-sex desire in literary texts, films, music, images; analyses of the social and political power relations of sexuality; critiques of the sex-gender system; studies of transsexual and transgender identification, of sadomasochism and of transgressive desires”

As a result Spargo (2011:44) says that, “One of the first topics explored by queer theorist was about the opposition between heterosexuality and homosexuality, which was

seen as operating at the conceptual centre of traditional homophobic and anti-homophobic discourses alike”

The theory above is connected to the films that will be analyzed in this research. The first film is *James* (2008) the main character of this film has to struggle because of his identity as a gay and it will show how gay people are accepted in society just like in *Jackpot* (2012), which shows a gay teenager in 1994 and had to deal with his friends, and although the last film is a little bit different, but *Love is All You Need?* (2011) also shows how the main characters are passing the tougher phases on their lives just because they are gay.

Those short films that will be analyzed are coming of age films. Coming of age film is a film that focuses on the growth of protagonist from youth to adulthood. In those three short films, the main characters begin to realize that they are growing up into adulthood and it is proven by their feelings about their sexual orientation. On the other hand, coming of age film also focuses on protagonist's psychological and moral growth, also the change of the characters become important in analyzing the works.

Even though those films are just short films, but they got some positive reviews and also awards in some festivals. The first film that will be analyzed in this research which is entitled *James* (2008) by Connor Clements won some awards such as *Best Northern Irish Film, Belfast Film Festival 2008, Best Short Gaze Dublin International Lesbian & Gay Film Festival 2008, and Jury Award Best Student Short Palm Springs Shortfest 2008*. Whereas, the second film, entitled *Jackpot* (2012) by Adam Baran, also won *Best Short Film - 2013 Miami Gay and Lesbian Film Festival*. On the other hand, the last film, entitled *Love is All You Need?*(2011) by Kim Rocco Shield which won some awards such as *Long Island Gay and Lesbian Festival 2011, Rhode Island International Festival 2011, and Atlanta Film Festival 2011*, besides the reason why those movies taken to be analyzed is because it is related to queer which considered as social issue in society.

Queer in works and films have also been studied by some researchers; The first study was conducted by Padva (2004). He studied about *Edge of Seventeen: Melodramatic coming out in new queer adolescence films*. In his research, he found it that the spectacular visualization of coming-out as the ideal solution for gay youth's agony is a naive illusion but the scenes express empathy, comfort, and compassion, and thus they encourage the young viewers not to feel devastated but to celebrate their gay identity. The second study was conducted by Keller and Jones (2008). They studied about *Brokeback Mountain: Masculinity and Manhood*, and they find it that *Brokeback Mountain* depicts traditional masculinities with its gay sexuality and they are not trying to hide their identities with the masculinity.

The third study was conducted by Olear (2013) he studied that Nick Carraway is gay and in love with Gatsby, he finds it Nick Carraway more interested in Gatsby rather than the other characters, and it is proven by how Fitzgerald describing about Nick's behavior and what Nick thinks in the novel. The last study was conducted by Dhaenens (2013) he studied about teenage queerness; Negotiating heteronormativity in the representation of gay teenagers in *Glee*, and he found it that the series explores sexual diversity among gay teens and questions the hegemonic and one-sided discourse of the helpless gay teen victim.

Based on some researches above, the theme of the films which are about gay identity coming of age in heterosexist world in short movies *James*, *Jackpot*, and *Love is All You Need?* have not been analyzed before, and those short queer films are interesting to be analyzed in this research. This research is important to do because it will represent how the view and also the states of minority group in society. It is almost the same like feminist movement in the past that they want to get the same right just like other people, but the minority group in this research is kind of community which is related to sexual orientation but get considered as 'different' orientation than ordinary people which is called as *queer*.

1.2 Statement of Problems

Based on the background above which focuses on gay identity and short queer films, this research formulates some problems as below:

1. How do the short queer films reveal about gay identity coming of age in a heterosexist world?
2. How do the characters of the short queer films represent social and psychological conflicts of gay identity coming of age in a heterosexist world?

1.3 Research Objective

According to the statement problem mentioned above, the purpose of study in this research are:

1. To find out the revelation of gay identity coming of age in short queer films script
2. To explore the representation of the characters social and psychological conflicts of gay identity coming of age in a heterosexist world

1.4 Research Significance

The significant of the study from this research about queer are:

1. Theoretically, this research can be used for the readers and student of English Department in expanding the knowledge about queer literature.
2. Practically, this research can be used as reference of research that is focused on queer literature and also as a reference in literary criticism in English literature learning.

1.5 Clarification of Key Terms

1. **Gay** 1. Term used in some cultural settings to represent males who are attracted to males in a romantic, erotic and/or emotional sense. Not all men when engage in "homosexual behavior" identify as gay, and as such this label should be used with caution. 2. Term

used to refer to the LGBTQI community as a whole, or as an individual identity label for anyone who does not identify as heterosexual. (Green, and Peterson, 2004:1)

2. **Queer** is an umbrella term which embraces a matrix of sexual preferences, orientations, and habits of the not-exclusively- heterosexual-and-monogamous majority. Queer includes lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transpeople, intersex persons, the radical sex communities, and many other sexually transgressive (underworld) explorers.(Green and Peterson, 2004:3)
3. **Sexual Orientation** refers to the sex of those to whom one is sexually and romantically attracted. Categories of sexual orientation typically have included attraction to members of one's own sex . (gay men or lesbians), attraction to members of the other sex (heterosexuals), and attraction to members of both sexes (bisexuals). While these categories continue to be widely used, research has suggested that sexual orientation does not always appear in such definable categories and instead occurs on a continuum.(Green and Peterson, 2004:4)
4. **Gender identity** refers to “one's sense of oneself as male, female, or transgender” (American Psychological Association, 2006:1)
5. **Coming of age** is the transition from childhood into adulthood

1.6 The Organization of Writing

This research consists of five chapters. In Chapter I Introduction consists of background of the research, statement of problem, research objective, research significance, clarification of key term and the organization of writing. In Chapter II, consists of theoretical foundation. It will explain about queer and gay theory and Cass model, which is about identity formation.

In Chapter III will be explained about the research method which including the research design, sample and the source of data, and the technique of collecting and analyzing

data. In the Chapter IV will explain about data presentation and discussion, the data are taken from the movies and related to the research problem and connected to the theories. Besides, in Chapter V which is the last chapter, will explain about conclusion from the whole research and the suggestion for the next research.

