

## **CHARACTER ANALYSIS OF IRA LEVINSON IN *THE LONGEST RIDE* MOVIE SCRIPT BY CRAIG BOLOTIN**

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study is to describe the characterizations of Ira Levinson as depicted in *The Longest Ride* movie script by Craig Bolotin. In this research, the writer used qualitative research and descriptive method, which is a research method that used non numerical form set of data, and seek to explain a phenomenon based on the characteristics of the study itself. In analysing all of the data that have been found, the writer used objective approach, which is an approach that focusing only to the work itself without looking at the external aspects. Based on the results of this study, the writer found that the characterization of Ira Levinson depicted in *The Longest Ride* movie script by Craig Bolotin are: Character's Speech includes Poetic, Sarcastic and Straightforward; Character's Behaviour includes Wise, Respecting Others, and Pessimist; Conversation between Characters includes Caring and Influencing; also Character's Action includes Hopeless, Sacrifice, Shy and Spontaneous

**Keywords:** *Characterization, Movie Script, Major Character.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Literature is any writing or body of work that can alter reality into fiction and vice versa. According to Pratiwi, T., Suwandi, S., & Wardhani, N. E., 2019:195) Literature is a creative human activity that produces a written and printed work of art. Literature is a written expression of human's life, nature, and the way to understand, feel and share their experiences or imagination. (Ramadhani, K., Mogea, T., & Maukar, M., 2022:1285) Literary works includes poetry, prose, novel, drama, and many others. Essentially, literary works embody life, which results from literary recognition of the surrounding life. The author creates literary works based on the experience gained from the reality of people's lives that occur against figures

in the real world and pour into literary works. (Gonibala, R., & Mariana, A., 2022:26)

Drama is one of the performing literary works that quite popular. Drama has gone through several stages of development from the nineteenth century. It starts from theatrical and sentimental shows until realism stages. By the time, people's interest into drama has been influenced by the technology. Cameras and television were found, and artists began to capture their plays into recording form. This is what we commonly known as movie. There are loads of movies that can be accessed nowadays. Movies reflect existing values of the society, adding weight to their ability in influencing individual beliefs. (Wedding and Boyd, 1999, as cited in Ramakrishna, Martinez, Malandrakis, Singla, & Narayan, 2017:1669).

In movies, a number of factors, including length, audience, plot, characterization, setting, theme, irony, and subgenres, can help to develop the story and make it humorous. Character is one of the most vital parts, as the tale would appear flat and empty without one. Characterization is the presentation and development of character attributes by the author. (Griffith, 2011).

In this research, the writer chooses *The Longest Ride* to be analyzed. This movie was released in April 2015, directed by George Tillman Jr., an American director and the movie script was written by Craig Bolotin. This movie has got 2 nominations from Teen Choice Awards in 2015 as Choice Movie: Drama and People Choice Awards in 2016 as Favorite Dramatic Movie. *The Longest Ride*, based on Nicholas Sparks' best-selling novel of the same name, is about a star-crossed love story between Sophia, a college student set to embark on her dream job in New York City's art world, and Luke, a former champion bull rider looking to make a comeback. Ira, whose recollections of his own decades-long relationship with his loving wife inspire the young couple, and Sophia and Luke develop an unexpected and fateful connection as their bond is tested by various paths and ideals. *The Longest Ride* spans generations and two connected love tales to investigate the hardships and unlimited benefits of enduring love.

In analyzing this movie, the writer chooses objective approach in order to describe Ira Levinson's characterization depicted in Craig Bolotin *The Longest Ride*

movie script. Objective approach is a literature research approach which focuses on the work itself without looking at the external aspects (Sugeha B. U., Moge T., & Oroh E. Z., 2021:307).

What makes the writer intrigued to analyze the movie script *The Longest Ride* is how Ira Levinson with his own decades-long romance memories that he wrote on letters about his love life with his beloved wife Ruth, to inspire the young couple. There are quite a lot of similar researches in English Education Department, but the exact topic of character analysis of Ira Levinson in *The Longest Ride* movie script by Craig Bolotin is not yet to be found. Therefore, this research is necessary to be analyzed.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research employs a qualitative research design and a descriptive methodology. A qualitative study focuses on information presented in the form of words rather than numbers. In a qualitative study, research design should be a reflexive process that runs throughout every stages of the project. (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1955, as cited in Maxwell, 2008:214). Qualitative research is a technique that allows for the detailed examination of people's experiences via the use of a specific set of research tools. (Hennink, M., Hutter, I., & Bailey, A. 2020:10) Descriptive research is a study that aims to accurately explain a phenomenon based on the characteristics of the investigation. (Tresno, 2020:19).

Based on the statements above, qualitative research along with descriptive method is a research method that used set of data that not in a numerical form, and seek to explain a phenomenon based on the characteristics of the study itself. Since the purpose of this study is to describe the characterization of a character in a movie, qualitative research and descriptive methods are the most suitable.

### ***Data Sources and Data Collection***

In this research, the primary data used is the movie *The Longest Ride* itself along with the script text. In order to support the primary data used, the writer also used some secondary data sources such as books, articles, journals, similar previous

studies and also website pages that related to this study, the characterization analysis of a character in a story.

The data collection of this study will be done by using observation technique. The writer collects the data of the character's speech, character's behavior, conversation between character, and character's act by watching the movie *The Longest Ride*, take notes on important parts of the movie itself, the script text and also other relevant sources such as articles, journals, and the internet, and break down to the scenes of the movie.

### ***Data Analysis***

The writer employed character development by Robert Stanton character analysis in assessing the data obtained in this investigation. The writer also used objective approach. According to Abrams, "objective orientation which on principle regards the work of art in isolation from all these external points of reference, analyses it as a self-sufficient entity constituted by its parts in their internal relations, and sets out to judge it solely by criteria intrinsic to its own mode of being". In another words, the objective method focuses solely on the work at hand, without regard for the external factors.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

This research is aimed to describe the characterization of Ira Levinson in *The Longest Ride* movie script by Craig Bolotin. The data were collected by watching the movie repeatedly; take notes on some important parts of the movie, script text and other relevant sources such as articles, journals, and the internet, and break down to the scenes of the movie.

The result of this study are divided into four parts, as stated in Stanton's character analysis theory, which are character's speech that includes poetic, sarcastic and straightforward; character's behavior that includes wise, respecting others and pessimist; conversation between characters that includes caring and influencing; also character's action that includes hopeless, sacrifice, shy and

spontaneous. Based on the findings, the writer composed an analysis of data as follows:

### ***Character's Speech:***

At this point, the writer employed data based on the characters' speech. According to Stanton, the writer reveals information about the characters when they are self-talking. The writer focused on Ira's self-talk.

### ***Poetic***

Speaking poetically is speaking in a way that is comparable to poetry or the way a poet would speak, such as by using clever turn of phrase and metaphors.

(1) "Dearest Ruth, the memories of our adventure are always dancing in my mind. Seems like yesterday you helped me see the world in a whole different way". (TLR)

Quotation (1) above showed that Ira can deliver poetic speech, which is part of the character's speech according to Robert Stanton's character analysis theory, because he can interpret what he feels in the form of meaningful speech through self-talk.

### ***Sarcastic***

Sarcasm is defined as "a cutting, often ironic remark meant to wound" or "a type of wit distinguished by the use of sarcastic language and intended to make its target the butt of contempt or ridicule." The term "sarcasm" is frequently used to refer to "irony with a twist," notably the form of irony that entails expressing the opposite of what you intend. (Lieberman, M. 2004)

(2)"Strangle me before dinner so I don't have to eat another hospital meal" (TLR)

Quotation (2) above showed Ira is a sarcastic person, as evidenced by his use of sarcastic speech to express his dislike for something. The writer discovered that sarcasm is part of the character's speech in Robert Stanton's theory of character analysis.

It is shown that Ira's character often speaks in sweet and poetic ways in his younger days, but quite sarcastic and straightforward manner in his old days. As can be seen in some part of the movie script where Ira's letter read by Sophia, or the flashbacks to 1940s, Ira tends to write or speak with poetic, delicate utterance in his daily life.

It is only in his older days, to be exact after Ruth's death he started to speak in a more straightforward and slightly sarcastic manner. In the movie, it is explained that Ira was on his way to Black Mountain College alone when he hit the railway. And scenes after showed how he no longer has life spirit since his loss of Ruth. It can be concluded that Ira's speech manner changed throughout time from poetic to straightforward as an effect of the loss of his beloved wife, Ruth.

### ***Character's Behaviour:***

Furthermore, the writer used data that is based on the character's behaviour. The writer describes a person's behaviour, such as their temperament, habits, or features.

### ***Wise***

The Cambridge Dictionary defines wise as "having or displaying the ability to make good judgment, based on a deep understanding and experience of life." A person is regarded wise if they have an objective viewpoint, behave in accordance with their thoughts, and can learn from their actions.

(3) "Love requires sacrifice. Always. And from that day on, Sophia... it wasn't exactly happily ever after, but it was pretty close. We focused on celebrating all the wonderful things we had... rather than regretting the things we didn't." (TLR)

Quotation (3) above showed how wise Ira is in sharing the experiences he had while still with his beloved wife, Ruth. When he talks about his experience with his wife, that love requires sacrifice. Wise included to Robert Stanton character analysis in the part of character's behaviour.

### ***Respecting Others***

Respecting others is an act that demonstrates how much we value that other, which can gratify both others and ourselves.

(4)“I have loved spending time with you. You've made me very happy.” (TLR)

Quotation (4) above showed how Ira respect Sophia because of her sincerity. Ira obtained respect from his religious family. The writer found that respecting others is included in the Robert Stanton theory of character analysis's section on character's behaviour.

### ***Pessimist***

Pessimists are the polar opposite of optimists; pessimists must constantly see themselves as failing and even suspicious when things are going well.

(5)“In my small community. But I wasn't the only one seeking your attention. This would take some more time.” (TLR)

Quotation (5) above shows at the time, young Ira wanted to meet a woman named Ruth from Vienna, but when he went to buy flowers for Ruth, he discovered she was with another man, and he became pessimistic. The writer found the pessimistic included in Robert Stanton character analysis theory in the part of character's behaviour.

However, Ira also often thought pessimistically, for instance when he thought he is not the only one that seeking for Ruth's attention and just gave up where in fact Ruth also have feelings for him, and when he refused to actually talk to Ruth about his condition after war and just decided to disappear.

### ***Conversation between the Characters:***

Referring to the first and second character analyses, such as those based on the character's speech and behaviour, the writer used the data that was based on character conversation between characters during the research stage. The director

can provide some clues about a person's character through the conversations with other characters. The information gathered about the major character as follows:

### ***Caring***

According to Juwaini A. (2010) Caring is a fundamental principle and attitude that compels us to be aware of and respond to the conditions or circumstances around us. Caring refers to our partisan attitude toward problems, circumstances, or occurrences that arise in our environment.

(6)"Ira: How was New York?

Sophia: I never made it. And I broke up with Luke anyway.

Ira: I'm really sorry. Come here. Come here. How can I help?

Sophia: Take my mind off of it." (TLR)

Quotation (6) above showed Ira appears to be very at ease when he is next to Sophia, and he expresses concern when Sophia is suffering from a broken heart as a result of the breaking up of her relationship with Luke. When the writer observed how much Ira cared for Sophia throughout her period of heartbreak following her breakup, he came to the conclusion that the caring character fit into Robert Stanton's character analysis theory in the part of conversation between characters.

### ***Influencing***

According to Simon Sinek in Ferizal, influence is the ability to affect someone's heart rather than just their mind. We use influence to persuade our interlocutors to do or say what we want them to do.

(7) "Ira: You did everything you could with Luke, Sophia. You sacrificed.  
Sophia: I have loved spending time with you." (TLR)

Quotation (7) above showed it is also can be said that Sophia got influenced by Ira's experiences. Not only by reading his letters, but also by spending time with him, and conversing about Ira's past.

Sophia was frustrated with Luke's stubbornness even after she gave up her dream, and thought that they we're never going to make it. But Ira's story made her realized that she already did everything she could.



### ***Character's Action:***

The writer hints to the reader about the character of someone by describing how someone will react to a situation and certain conditions. In real life, it's not what a person says that shows us who they are. It's what they do. The content of a person's character is revealed in action and behaviour. Who a person says they are, or thinks they are, doesn't necessarily reflect their true character. People don't just talk and think thoughts. They fidget, shrug, nod, chew their lips, scratch their heads, etc. These details make characters more vivid and relatable.

### ***Hopeless***

Someone who is hopeless feels that nothing positive can happen and that a happy ending is unattainable. It's a bleak situation if you understand you're not going to pass your biology class. Hopeless denotes that there appears to be no possibility of comfort or success.

(8) "Ira: Ruth. Ruth. What was I supposed to do?"

Ruth: Fight for custody.

Ira: From a half-brother in small-town North Carolina? Come on. We wouldn't have had a chance! And who knows what they would've done to Daniel.

Ruth: We were a family.

Ira: We are a family. Ruth, you are my family. I wanted kids too, you know."  
(TLR)

Quotation (8) above showed Ira tells Ruth that they have no chance of adopting Daniel because he still has a legal guardian, but Ruth says that he has become part of their family, which makes Ira feel hopeless because he also wants to have children but is unable to. The writer discovered that Ira is a hopeless character. Hopeless is included in the character analysis in the part of Character's action section according to Stanton's theory of character analysis.

### ***Sacrifice***

Self-sacrifice is the giving up of something one wishes for oneself in order to aid or defend others or to advance or protect other external values.

(9) "Ruth: I have to go. No, please don't!

Ira: I just need to say something. I need to say something. I fell in love with you the first time I saw you. You're just the most amazing, beautiful girl I ever met... and somehow... I don't know, somehow you chose me. But how I loved you then... it's nothing compared to how I love you now. Now, I love you with everything inside of me. I think you should go. I love you so much; I just want you to be happy. Even if that happiness no longer includes me." (TLR)

Quotations (9) above showed Ira sacrifice his feeling. He didn't want Ruth to be sad all the time because he couldn't have children, so he wanted Ruth to be happy even if that happiness no longer included him. The writer discovered that Ira's character is willing to sacrifice everything for the sake of the woman he loves in order for her to be happy.

### ***Shyness***

Shyness (also known as diffidence) is a sensation of uncertainty, discomfort, or embarrassment, especially while in the company of others. This is typical in unfamiliar situations or with unfamiliar individuals; a shy person may simply avoid such situations. Although shyness can be a sign of low self-esteem, the key distinguishing element of shyness is a worry of what others will think of one's behaviour.

(10) "Ruth: Are you ever going to talk to me?

Ira: Excuse me?

Ruth: I always see you there, lurking around.

Ira: I don't lurk.

Ruth: You do lurk. But then you never talk to me. Am I so frightening?

Ira: No, I...

Ruth: What you did to that poor rose was unforgivable." (TLR)

Quotation (10) above showed Ira has a shy personality, as evidenced by the fact that he only dares to lurk and lacks the courage to express his feelings directly. The writer found that Ira's shy personality makes approaching the woman he loves difficult, and that his shy personality causes him to be insecure.

## ***Spontaneous***

Spontaneous refers to unplanned and natural events. When an action or occurrence is described as spontaneous, it suggests that it happened unexpectedly and without planning, as in the meeting devolving into an unplanned dance party. When something is described as spontaneous, it was done on the spur of the moment, with no prior planning. When someone is labelled as spontaneous, it suggests they have a proclivity for or are known for acting rashly and without thought. This is sometimes used to represent them as a joyful, adventurous person who is willing to undertake things on the spur of the moment.

(11) "Ruth: For a country pumpkin, you're quite philosophical.  
Ira: What? It's a "country bumpkin" not a "country pumpkin."  
Ruth: What?  
Ira: I think I prefer the way you said it." (TLR)

Quotation (11) above showed that Ira's spontaneity stunned Ruth, but Ira preferred what Ruth had said before. The writer discovered that Ira's spontaneous personality can amaze others. Because Ira is a spontaneous person, Robert Stanton's theory of character analysis includes spontaneous character as part of the character's action.

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