

# **THE CHANGING OF CHARACTERIZATION OF THE MAIN CHARACTER IN DAVID NICHOLLS' ONE DAY**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study deals with The Changing of Characterization of The Main Characters in David Nicholls' One Day. The objectives of this study are to find out the changing of characterization and the reasons that cause the changing in the novel. This study is limited to analyze Dexter Mayhew as the main character. This study applied descriptive qualitative method. The data were taken from David Nicholls' novel One Day. The findings indicate that Dexter has round and negative side as his nature; Arrogant, Ambitious, Hedonistic and Selfish. The character finally ended to the positive characterization; being responsible and mature. The reason causing the changing of characterization of the main character is that facing a major outside challenge, developing a close relationship with someone very different from himself such as Sylvie, Jasmine and Emma, and facing his own inner demons and prejudices.

**Keywords:** *Prose, Character, Round, Changing Characterization*

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# INTRODUCTION

## Background of the Study

Novel is one of the kinds of literature, beside poetry and drama. Poetry is written in lines by focusing rhymes scheme. A drama is a work literature or a composition which is design for performance, purpose and delineates life and human activity by means of presenting various actions often either monologues or dialogues of character or a group of characters. Meanwhile, a novel is a narrative kind of writting which is focused on sequence of event, time, and solution and have the aspect of novel, they are plot characters theme, and, setting.

Most of novels involve many characters and tell a complex story by placing the characters in number of diffrent situations. Novels always consist of conflicts that the characters have to face and they will be changed by the conflicts and the change can occur during the course of story. A character and the changing characterization is one of the interesting aspects that will be analyzed in this thesis.

Making research about character is an interesting study that enhance and deepen our understanding of human character and human life. In addition, the understanding of character is one of the major aim of analyzing literary text. Characters in a novel not just like real life people. They have been specially created by author. When authors create a character, they select some aspect of ordinary people, develop some of those aspect whilst playing down others, andput fictional character who only exist in the the words of novel. A character is the representative of a person in a narrative or dramatic work of art such as a novel, play, or film. According to Roberts (1999:53) A character may be define as a verbal representation of a human being. Through action, speech, description, and commentary, authors portray character who are worth caring about, rooting for, and even hate. A character is revealed by how a character responds to conflict, by his or her dialogue, and through description.

Character developed towards greater maturity (Josefsson, Jokela, etc, 2013: 713). Character and characterization are closely related but essentially different concepts. Character refers to one of person in the story, and the end result of the author's effort to create a fictional personality. Characterization on the other hand, refers to the means by which the writter creates the sum of traits, thoughts, and actions,

which taken together, constitute a character. Characterization is the way in which authors convey information about their characters. Characterization can be direct, as when an author tells readers what a character is like or indirect, as when an author shows what a character is like by portraying his or her actions, speech, or thoughts. Descriptions of a character's appearance, behavior, interests, way of speaking, and other mannerisms are all part of characterization. As Whitla (2010:63) states that characterization is a central feature in every many novels, and in many modern works has overwhelmed plot as the main centre of interest in the typical novel. Roberts (1999: 56) as quoted from The British novelist and critic E.M Foster, in his critical work *Aspect of Novel*, calls the two major types character “round” and “flat”. In which The basic trait of round characters is that authors present enough detail about them to render them full, lifelike, and memorable and characterized by both individuality and unpredictability such changes that may be shown in an action or actions, the realization of new strength and therefore the affirmation of previous decisions, the acceptance of a new condition and the need for making changes or discovery of unrecognize truths.

The changing of characterization of the main character in the novel “One Day” by David Nicholls is the major concern of this study. The study of character changing will only focus on Dexter Mayhew or the main character, because he undergoes such a great changing in characterization, e.i from negative to positive characterization. Dexter is handsome and attractive man. He turned to adopt a wild lifestyle after becoming a famous presenter on TV. His new lifestyle of partying and drinking cannot be separated from his life, and then it worsened by the death of his beloved mother. Until finally, after a series of events in his life and his encounter with the extraordinary people, he gains his conciousness and improve his life.

This research will study on the changing of characterization of the main character in *One Day* in which one of the bestseller novel by David Nicholls’ 2009.

# METHODOLOGY

## Research Design

This study was conducted by applying descriptive qualitative method. Creswell (1998:15) define that qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. And also qualitative research involves analysis of data such as words, examples from interviews, transcripts, pictures, video, recordings, notes, documents, the products and records of material culture, audio-visual materials and personal experience materials (such as artifacts, journal and diary information and narratives). This study was intended to find out how is the changing of characterization of the main character described in the novel and the reason causing the changing of characterization of the main character.

### *Subject*

The source of data was taken from David Nicholls' novel *One Day* as the primary data and related book and references as another information which has parallel analogies with the novel as the secondary data in completing this study.

### *Data Collection*

The data were collected by applying documentary technique. Documentary technique is used to collect data of this study. Documentary technique means reading all references, studying, and analyzing some references related to the study. The procedures of collecting the data presented as follows: (1) Reading the novel thoughtfully. (2) Enlisting all uttered which shows the changing characterization and reasons of the main character who undergoes the changing of characterization. (3) Identifying the data which shows the changing of characterization of the main character. (4) Classifying the changing of characterization of the main character from negative to positive and the reasons of changing characterization. (5) Selecting the data based on the problem of the study.

## *Technique for Analyzing Data*

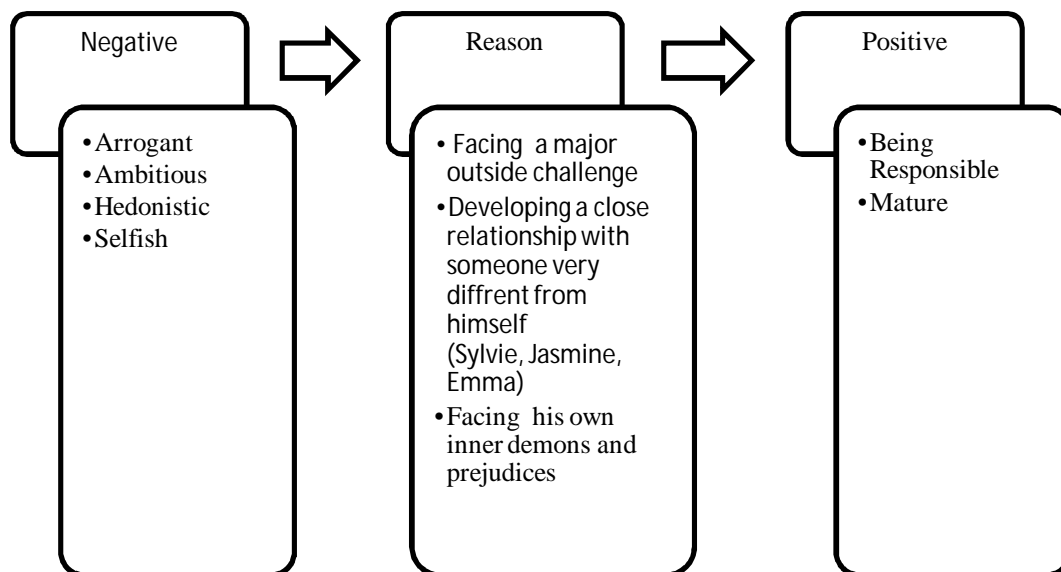
After collecting the data, the procedures taken are as following:

Reading the data that has been collected, identifying the data which shows the changing of characterization of the main character, determining the reason why the main character undergoes the changing of characterization, and then classifying the data based on the changing of characterization of the main character from negative to positive and the reasons causing it and analyzing the data which has been classified.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Qualitative Method**

After collecting and analyzing the data, this study found that Dexter has negative side as his nature in the beginning of his appearance; Arrogant, Ambitious, Hedonistic and Selfish and he finally ended to the positive characterization; being responsible and mature.



## 1. The Main Character's Negative Characterization

### a. Arrogant

*“Money! Plane tickets don’t grow on trees and what about social security and the work ethics etc. Well don’t worry, I’m paying. Yes, I’m paying. I’m going to wire the money to you for your plane ticket (I’ve always wanted to wire money) and I’m going to pay for everything when you’re here.” (p47)*

*“For three hundred pounds of someone else’s money, you could change your life, and you mustn’t worry about it because frankly I have money that I haven’t earned, and you work really hard and yet you don’t have money, so it’s socialism in action isn’t it?” (p47 from the novel)*

### b. Ambitious

*“At twenty-three, Dexter Mayhew’s vision of his future was no clearer than Emma Morley’s. He hoped to be successful, to make his parents proud and to sleep with more than one woman at the same time, but how to make these all compatible? He wanted to feature in magazine articles, and hoped one day for a retrospective of his work, without having any clear notion of what that work might be. He wanted to live life such a way that if a photograph were taken at random, it would be a cool photograph. Things should look right. Fun; there should be a lot of fun and no more sadness that absolutely necessary.” (p9)*

### c. Hedonistic

*“And she really isn’t my girlfriend.’ He fastened three low shirt buttons, waiting for her to take the bait. When she didn’t, he prodded again. ‘We’re just sleeping together every now and then, that’s all.’ (p63)*

### d. Selfish

*“Irrationally, unreasonably, he has become- what? Jealous? No. Not jealous, but resentful perhaps. He has always expected Emma to be there, a resource he can call upon at any time like the emergency services. Since the cataclysm of his mother’s death last Christmas he has found himself more and more reliant on her. She used to return phone-calls immediately, now days go by without a word. She’s been ‘away with Ian she says, but where do they go? What do they*

*do? Buy furnitue together? Watch 'vid'? Go to pub quizzes? Ian has even met Emma's parents, Jim and Sue. They love him, She says. Why has Dexter never met Jim and Sue? Wouldn't they love him more?*

## 2. The Reasons Causing the Changing of Characterization of the Main Character.

### a. Facing a Major Outside Challenge

*“Once upon a time he had wondered what happened to all the old people in the TV industry, and now he had his answer. Trainee editors and cameramen were twenty-four, twenty-five, and he had no experience as a producer. Mayhew TV plc, his very independent company, had become less a business, more an alibi for his inactivity. **At the end of the tax year was formally wound down to avoid accounting costs, and twenty reams of optimistically headed paper were shamefully consigned to the attic.** “ (p299 from the novel)*

#### 1. Sylvie

*Sylvie doesn't drink alcohol, Neither does smoke or take drugs or eat red meat or bread or refined sugar or potatoes. More significantly, she has no time for Dexter drunk. His abilities as a fabled mixologist mean nothing to her. She finds inebriation embarrassing and unmanly, and more than once he has found himself alone at the end of the evening because of that third martini. Though it has never been stated as such, **he has been given a choise: clean up your act, sort out your life, or you will lose me.** Consequently there are fewer hangovers these days, fewer nose-bleeds, fewer mornings spent writhing in shame and self-disgust. **He no longer goes to bed with a bottle of red wine in case he gets thirsty in the night, and for this hi is grateful. He feels like a new man.** (p252)*

#### 2. Jasmine

*“ She was born in the late evening of the third day of the new Millenium, and so would always be as the century. A neat but healthy 6lbs 6ozs, and to the Dexter's mind, inexoressibly beautiful, he knew **that he would sacrifice his life for her.....***

*He would never do anything that might cause her pain or embrassment and there would be nothing, **absolutely nothing in his life to be ashamed of anymore.**” (p297)*

### 3. Emma

*'But I'm thirty-seven in two weeks! I'm practically middle-aged!' Thirty-seven is still mid-thirties! Just about. And no, you don't have a job at this exact moment, but you're not exactly living on benefits. You've an income from rent, which is unbelievably lucky if you ask me. **And lots of people change track late in life. It's fine to be miserable for a while,** but you weren't that happy when you were married, Dex. I know, I had to listen to it all the time. " We never talk, we never have fun, we never go out...." (p334)*

#### b. Facing His Own Inner Demons and Prejudices

*"Recently, he has noticed idiocy creeping up on him. His resolve to keep his head on straight, his feet on the ground, is failing and he has observed, quite objectively, that he is becoming more thoughtless, selfish, making more and more stupid remarks. He has tried to do something about this but it almost feels out of his control now, like pattern baldness." (p126)*

### 3. The Main Character's Positive Characterization

#### a. Being Responsible

*"That night, sitting in the low-slung vinyl hospital chair, clutching the tiny, crimson-faced bundle, **Dexter Mayhew made a solemn resolution.** He resolved to do the right thing from now on. A few biological and sexual imperatives aside, all this words and actions would now be fit for his daughter's ears and eyes. Live would be lived as if under Jasmine's constant scrutiny. He or embarrassment and there would be nothing, absolutely nothing in his life to be ashamed of anymore." (p297 from the novel)*

#### b. Mature

*"I'm fine. Bit more sensible.' Sex in toilet cubicles lose its bittersweet charm? He laughed and examined the tip of cigarette. **I just had to get something out of my system, that's all.** And It's out now?' I think so, most of it.' Because of true love?' **Partly, Also I'm thirty-four now. At thirty-four you start to run out of excuses,**" (p285)*

*"It's like everyone a central dilemma in thier life, and mine was can you be in a committed, mature, loving adult relationship.....'(p285)*



# CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

## Conclusion

Having finished analyzing the changing of characterization of the main character in *One Day* by David Nicholls, this novel is clearly reflected the changing of characterization of Dexter Mayhew as the main character in the novel. The points can be concluded as follows:

Dexter has negative side as his nature in the beginning of his appearance; Arrogant, Ambitious, Hedonistic and Selfish and he finally ended to the positive characterization; being responsible and mature.

The reasons causing the changing of characterization of the main character cover three important factors. They are facing a major outside challenge, developing a close relationship with someone very different from himself such as Sylvie, Jasmine and Emma, and facing his own inner demons and prejudices.

From this study, what is experienced on Dexter is an image that can be seen in our real life. Many people can change from negative to positive or positive to the negative because of the same reason as Dexter experienced in his life. And the most influence reason of the changing is that the developing a close relationship with someone very different from ourselves.

## Suggestions

Based on the conclusions above, there are some suggestions needed to be considered. They are:

It is suggested to other students to make more comprehensive and deeper analysis about character and to other students who are interested in the characterizations especially in the changing of characterizations.

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