Oliver Blue's Courage Building as a Character Development in Morgan Rice's *The Magic Factory*

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Abstract. Character development often occurs in a fictional story and courage building is one of the reasons for the character development. This research aims to describe the courage building which Oliver Blue develops and the reasons for his courage building based on his past experiences and difficulties in Morgan Rice's The Magic Factory. The theory is based on Alfred Adler's individual psychology. The theory affirms how a person's feeling of inferiority will become superior and how human is seen as a whole unity. In this theory, humans are seen to have his own ability to choose and be responsible of his own choices. This research will be applying qualitative method and contextual method as it approaches the psychological side of the character in the novel. The result will show that the constant past experiences and difficulties which Oliver Blue has gone through builds the courage inside him, and thus it becomes the reason for his character development. Thus, it shows that it is possible for courage building to develop someone's character.

1 Introduction

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The psychological aspect of humans has always been a source of inspiration for authors in their literary work. "This critical 'back to the future' includes a growing interest in human psychology as a useful tool for literary critics who have developed a renewed concern for, among other things, literary character" [1]. In this study, it will analyze the courageous acts which will lead into Oliver Blue's character development. Rice writes the adventures of Oliver Blue and the choices he made based on the struggles which happened in his life.

1.1 Background on the Study

Rice's novel titled *The Magic Factory* revolves around the character named Oliver Blue. Oliver Blue, in the novel, is a child who has always been bullied and abandoned since a young age. These events lead him to have several self-doubts and also insecurities about himself. Although feeling that way about himself, he is an exceptionally talented child in invention and inventors. As the story progresses, he meets Armando Illstrom, one of his favorite inventors, in the magic factory itself. From that point onward, lots of events happen in the novel and Oliver Blue who used to be a child who has self-doubt and insecurities gains and builds his courage and thus developed him as a character who is bold and brave at the end of the story. Character development has attracted the attention of readers of literary works, especially those of novels. Thus, the writer of this study is attracted to the courage building which develops the character of Oliver Blue.

1.2 Research Problems

There are problems that are interesting to analyze from Morgan Rice's novel *The Magic Factory*. The writer is mostly interested in the problems that surround our main character. The problems are the following:

1) Does Oliver Blue's past difficulties and experiences with his bullies cause the courage building within him in Morgan Rice's *The Magic Factory*?
2) How does Oliver Blue's courage building progress in Morgan Rice's *The Magic Factory*?
3) What is the impact which happens to Oliver Blue as he builds his courage in Morgan Rice's *The Magic Factory*?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

There are several objectives that are needed to finish this research. The objectives are identified as the following:

1) To describe Oliver Blue's past difficulties and experiences with his bullies which causes his courage to build in Morgan Rice's *The Magic Factory*.
2) To describe how Oliver Blue's courage building progress in Morgan Rice's *The Magic Factory*.
3) To describe the impact which happens to Oliver Blue as he builds his courage in Morgan Rice's *The Magic Factory*.

1.4 Theory and Method

The theory used is individual psychology, a theory which was developed by Alfred Adler as an approach to counseling and psychotherapy. This theory is often misunderstood as a theory where it only focuses on individuals. Even if the name is individual psychology, the main focus of this theory is to see human as a whole unity rather than parts like how Sigmund Freud viewed it as.

Adlerian theory is a holistic, phenomenological, socially-oriented, and a goal-directed approach in understanding and working with people. It emphasizes its role in constructing the "realities" that persons know and to which they respond [2].

There are two main points of Adler's individual psychology. They are the striving for superiority and also the way he viewed human as a whole unity. According to Alfred Adler, the main goal of human is to strive for superiority in order to compensate for their feelings of inferiority. Adler believes that every human has their own feelings of inferiority. This means that inferiority happens to occur within every human being. The only difference for each person is whether they will show it directly or not. Inferiority is always seen as somewhat a negative thing yet if it is taking out the will of wanting to achieve superiority, it can be seen as a positive thing.

"To be a human being means the possession of a feeling of inferiority that is constantly pressing on towards its own conquest. … The goal of the human soul is conquest, perfection, security, superiority. … Every child is faced with so many obstacles in life that no child ever grows up without striving for some form of significance," [3].

With this, it means that the feelings of inferiority which strives for superiority is not a negative feeling at all. When a child wants to gain superiority in order to become the best version of himself, this leads to a better understanding of himself. Compensating his feeling of inferiority will be very much helpful for himself in the future. On the other hand, Adler believes that if a child does not have any interest in developing their feelings of inferiority, it shows that the child is only evading hardships or difficulties that they face. This leads to the problem that he will not improve as a person and only give in to his inferiority complex.

Opposite to Sigmund Freud's idea which stated that human is seen as parts, Adler argues that human is seen as a whole unity. This

means that their actions, ideas, opinions, behaviors, are all within one collective mind of the human. Children will gain their understanding of their own creative self through many influences for example, their cultural origin or their experiences with their family.

"Children, therefore, perceive others and the world as paralleling their first social environment, their family, and eventually frame or filter the larger experience of life –and interpersonal relationships– on the basis of these initial relationships and perceptions of the same," [4].

Regarding the human style of life, Adler believes that humans are proactive so that they create their own creative self. With their creative power, humans are functioning in the way that they act as the author of their own life or the director of their own scenes.

This research will use a qualitative method which is a method of collecting non-numerical data as a source of information. The qualitative nature of research was obtained from the research issue, the method which is used, the analysis strategies, and the scientific justification of the procedure used [5]. In collecting the data, the writer conducted some research on several library studies from various articles.

This research will use contextual methods focusing on psychological approach in order to provide the background information of individual psychology for the analysis. The psychological approach is an approach which is used to provide context with a psychological theory. It will be very suitable for analyzing the topic which will be conveyed since this particular research uses Alfred Adler's theory of individual psychology.

Exploring context involves much bigger issues – the 'circumstances' that contribute both to its production by the author and to its reception by the reader. Context refers to what goes with a text, rather than what is in it [6].

For library research, the use of library work has its place in educational research. One of them is to find out about research methods because this will show people on how to differentiate the particular problem. From that, researchers will then set up the research, prosecute it, interpret the results, and then at last, they will present them effectively. Even if the course in research method is very good, the researcher still needs to read up again a new problem to master the principles. It is also necessary to do so in order to apply them to practical problems [7]. The writer intends to use the library research as a way to collect data and provide context for this research.

In order to use library research as a method on collecting data, this research needs different sources to determine them as primary data and secondary data. The primary data of this research is Morgan Rice's *The Magic Factory*. The secondary data is the journals and sources used as reference to back up the claims that are written in this research. As to

what the definitions are, in historical terms, a primary source is a document or an object written or created during the time under study by the people or organizations directly involved in the event and offers an "inside view." Yet, in scientific terms, primary sources report original documentation or research. Meanwhile, secondary source analyzes, interprets, assigns values to, provides conjecture on, summarizes, reorganizes, or draws conclusions about events reported in primary sources [8]. Thus, the writer would like to formulate the stages of analysis for the courage building into three stages. They are Oliver Blue's past difficulties and experiences as the cause, his courage building progress, and his courage building impact.

2 Result and Discussion

Morgan Rice's *The Magic Factory* is considered to be a novel which foretells the story of Oliver Blue, who develops psychologically as a character. The novel itself talks about the journey of Oliver Blue on how he tackles most of his problems despite having issues within himself. This study, especially in this part of the discussion, will analyze the aspects of Oliver Blue's courage building as a character development in the novel by using Alfred Adler's theory of individual psychology.

2.1 Oliver Blue's Courage Building Background

In understanding more about Oliver Blue as a character, the events which happen in Oliver's life as he grows will likely give a huge impact on him. The past difficulties and experiences which he has contributed into the way he will think and act in the future. The events of him being bullied and also neglected, affects the way he is thinking not only about himself but also about other people. As he does not believe in his own self and values, he also cannot trust and believe in other people's kindness. The emotional and also physical abuse scars him more than he thinks. Not only does he get these experiences at home, but at his school, his classmates also make fun of him for being a nerd.

"Me trampling on your weird little coils?" Chris hissed, quiet enough so that neither of his parents could hear him. "Or breaking that stupid slingshot? You're such a freak, Oliver!" … A tittering of laughter rippled amongst the students behind him. Oliver felt his muscles stiffen defensively in response [9].

These experiences which he has experienced at a young age might be a way for him to develop in the future. But even though that is the case, there is no child who needs to experience those kinds of difficulties. Developing yourself can be done in an unharmful way. Sometimes, these kinds of stories might show people that hardships are a

way to improve themselves, yet it is rare to hear that those kinds of experiences will leave such a huge scar and trauma within one self.

As the story progresses, readers will realize that his suffering still continues. In the factory, Lucas is also part of the difficulties whom he faces. He treats Oliver harshly because he does not like that Armando has another worker under him. Oliver cannot do anything about the hatred which Lucas has towards him. The proof can be seen in; "'He's working here, is he?' Lucas said, his voice dripping with disgust," [10]. The disgust shown in this part of the story means that Oliver is not accepted by Lucas. This is a more reason for Oliver to build some courage to defend himself against the conflicts he has on Lucas.

2.2 Oliver Blue's Courage Building Progress

As it was previously stated about Oliver Blue's past difficulties and experiences, with no doubt that those experiences will lead him to build his courage. As Alfred Adler's individual psychology mentioned, humans' insecurity will be projected into the feeling of gaining superiority. Oliver, who used to be bullied and neglected, will then gain some courage from the experience. First example will be from his conflict with his brother, Chris. Chris has always been bullying him as long as he remembers. Thus, it piles up into anger and the willing to stand up for himself. Despite that he always had some kind of inferiority towards Chris, at that point he does not want to let that happen to him again. He barrels toward Chris to fight for himself.

After everything that had happened over the last two days, with the move, and the horrible school experience, and the loss of his hero, Oliver just didn't have the reserves to cope with this. Fury exploded inside of him. Before he'd even had a chance to think, Oliver went barreling toward Chris [11].

Oliver barreling towards Chris is some sort of progress which builds in him. Even if it is fueled by anger, it is still a decision where he wants to fight for himself. It is a gradual progress of his own courage which builds little by little. Considering how he used to just stand still and do nothing; this is a progress which is shown a bit on his character.

Later on, Oliver's confidence will boost because of Armando Illstrom, the inventor who he looks up to. As he thinks that he will lose his position in the factory because of Lucas' jealousy, Armando proves him wrong. Rather than being assigned with menial tasks which Lucas thinks that it is better if Oliver does it, Oliver is tasked with another job which is suitable with his talents. This confidence boost adds some sort of courage within himself in facing the hurdles he faced towards Lucas. It can be seen from this part.

"I'll assign the rewiring task to Lucas. There are other things for you to do. Things more suited to your particular talents…" Oliver felt a

little swell of pride in his chest. "What other things do you need me to work on?" [12].

But it does not take that long for bad things to happen to Oliver. Lucas, who is fueled with jealousy, betrays Armando and stabs him on the back. This makes Oliver filled with anger towards Lucas. He screams at Lucas even though he used to feel hesitant towards him. The anger and disappointment which he feels is fueling the courage within him. It can be seen from this scene; "He glanced over his shoulder, terrified. Through his tearstained vision he saw the formidable figure of Lucas. 'What did you do to him?' Oliver screamed," [13]. In this part, Oliver is seen to have a feeling of resentment towards Lucas. This feeling swells up inside himself and becomes a fuel for his courage.

All of this course of action which Oliver decides to do happens because he chooses to do so. Alfred said that human is a whole unity in which their actions, opinions, or choices are solely from the way a human thinks as a unit, not parts. It can be said that Oliver's willingness on dealing with the bad experiences which he had by simply defending himself and also ignoring them are made from his willingness to survive and having faith in himself.

2.3 Oliver Blue's Courage Building Impact

From the difficulties which he experiences, onto how he built his courage as the story goes on, the readers will then see a different side of Oliver who is more confident and brave in facing other kinds of problems. The past difficulties which fuel him onto building the courage which he lacks will then develop his character. The examples can be seen in the later conflict after he confronts Lucas. He is willing to help and prevent the bomb to be transferred as he also tries his best to make everything work despite knowing how dangerous it will be.

"That man from the future," Oliver stammered. "He's YOU. He's tricked you into handing a bomb over to Hitler!" But Lucas wasn't going to be convinced. There was no time to explain it either. Oliver had to stop the bomb from reaching its destination [14].

Previously, Oliver did not have any will to confront his own fear towards conflict or problems. He always thinks of running away because that will be the easiest way to do so. Not confronting his problems might give him some sort of closure because he feels like he does not have any responsibility towards it. But after he gains confidence and courage, he cannot just run away anymore. After he knows about his own powers, he feels some sort of responsibility for saving the world. This shows that the courage which builds within himself develops his own character.

As he goes on with his adventure, Oliver, who used to see people and the world in a negative light because of how unjust it is for

him, gains the moral of his own story. He will then understand the point of his own journey and what he should focus on more. Despite knowing that the future will hold more dangerous experiences for him, he is determined that the only thing he wants is to be bold, to trust, and be confident in himself. It can be seen in; "But now was the time to be brave. If he'd learned anything, it was to be bold, be confident, to trust himself" [15]. It is understandable that all of the courses of actions and experiences shape Oliver as a character. It is also shown that the courage building which occurs within him, helps him shape his own character.

3 Conclusion

In general readership, this novel shows the readers that there are several relatable experiences which could be seen in their lives. For example, whenever people get looked down on and ridiculed, there might be some people who think that it is okay to just give up. But some people will likely try to compensate for this feeling of inferiority by experiences. To achieve this, courage building is needed as a way to develop themselves. Past experiences and difficulties can be the reason for those people to fuel their will onto building their courage. Without those, these people might not understand and will just live with the flow. Each person in the world is most likely experiencing different kinds of developments within themselves. People will then gain some understanding that who they are today is different from who they are a year ago.

All of these are gained from experiences and their willingness to face the impossible and confront their inferiority. Thus, in specific readership, students of the English Department can see this novel as not only a novel to read, but also a novel to build oneself and analyze all the intricacies within the story. As an English Department student, it is important to understand which kind of story is beneficial for the development of the major itself. Thus, the writer thinks that this novel, *The Magic Factory*, is one of those stories which is suitable for everyone to read.

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