



A Study of the Bildungsroman in Charles Dickens's David Copperfield

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دراسة لرواية التكوين في دايفيد كوبرفيلد لتشارلز ديكنز

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Abstract:

This paper examines Charles Dickens' David Copperfield as a classic model of the Bildungsroman, a genre that traces the main character's emotional and moral growth from childhood to adulthood through journey towards maturity. It is divided into two sections. The first one explains the notion of Bildungsroman, including its kinds, essential features, origins, and historical background. The second one examines the growth of main character, David Copperfield, from childhood to adulthood. It also explores significant traits of the Bildungsroman in his journey. It illustrates how David's life embodies various features of the Bildungsroman, making him an excellent example of this genre.

Keywords: childhood to adulthood, identity, conflict, emotional and moral maturity, Bildungsroman, experiences.

المخلص

تتناول هذه الدراسة رواية ديفيد كوبرفيلد لتشارلز ديكنز بوصفها نموذجا كلاسيكيا لرواية التكوين، وهو نوع أدبي يتتبع مسار النمو العاطفي والأخلاقي للشخصية الرئيسية من الطفولة إلى البلوغ من خلال رحلة نحو النضج. وتنقسم إلى قسمين. يقدم القسم الأول شرحا لمفهوم رواية التكوين، بما في ذلك أنواعها وخصائصها الأساسية وأصولها وخلفيتها التاريخية. بينما يتناول القسم الثاني تتبع نمو الشخصية الرئيسية، ديفيد كوبرفيلد، من الطفولة إلى البلوغ. كما يستكشف السمات الجوهرية لرواية التكوين في رحلته. ويوضح كيف تجسد حياة ديفيد سمات مختلفة من رواية التكوين، مما يجعله مثالا ممتازا لهذا النوع.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الطفولة إلى البلوغ، الهوية، الصراع، النضج العاطفي والأخلاقي، رواية التكوين، الخبرات.

Introduction

The Bildungsroman is an important literary genre that portrays the main character's spiritual, psychological and moral development through a long and difficult journey from childhood to adulthood. It is referred to a novel of coming-of-age, development, or formation. This genre first appeared in German literature in the late eighteenth century. Influenced by its German origins, the Bildungsroman later emerged in English literature around the early nineteenth century. Among the best-known works are *Great Expectation* and *David Copperfield* by Charles Dickens, *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte, *The adventures of Huckleberry* by Mark Twain, and more.

David Copperfield is considered as an example of the Bildungsroman. It is very close to Dickens's heart. Buckley considers *David Copperfield* as the formative example of the Bildungsroman and emphasizes David's personal development and maturity [1]. The novel follows the hero's moral and emotional growth through different stages of his life, from childhood to maturity. It also follows his journey through his journey. David's journey is

filled with challenges, loss, and pain. David develops through many experiences and interactions with people around him. Over time, he forms his identity and integrates into society as a useful member.

This paper explains the concept of Bildungsroman and its essential features. . It also examines Charles Dickens's use of the bildungsroman as a literary device and how he applies its characteristics to the novel David Copperfield. The study is divided into two main parts. The first part discusses the theoretical side of the Bildungsroman. Its main goal is to examine the notion of the bildungsroman through its definition, origin, literary history, etymology, types and features. The focus will be on the defining characteristics of the genre, including journey towards self-formation, types of education, internal and external conflicts, emotional relationships, the role of mentors and guides, the autobiographical element, and reaching maturity.

The second part of this study is the most important and forms its core. It represents the applied analysis of the features of the bildungsroman within the novel David Copperfield. The aim of this study to provide a detailed examination that highlights several essential traits of this genre. It traces David's journey toward his identity and maturity, following his development from the beginning of his life until the end of the story. The analysis demonstrates that David's life journey of growth embodies the seven key features of the Bildungsroman and confirms that he is a clear and classical example of this genre.

1. Definition of bildungsroman.

A Bildungsroman is about the psychological, emotional, and moral development of the main character from childhood to adulthood. It depicts the protagonist's journey from innocence or naivety toward maturity. The central character encounters many troubles, obstacles and problems throughout his path of personal formation. The Merriam Webster Dictionary describes the bildungsroman novel as "a novel about the moral and psychological growth of the main character" [2]. In the same way, Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms defines it as, "a kind of novel that follows the development of the hero or heroine from childhood or adolescence into adulthood, through a trouble quest for identity" [3]. The above two definitions summarize that the Bildungsroman traces the protagonist's intellectual and moral development along the path to maturity, during which he faces difficulties and obstacles. In short, the novel deals with the development of the protagonist's intellectual and moral character through a journey filled with diverse experiences.

2. Origin

The Bildungsroman first appeared in Germany and then spread to Europe and eventually throughout the world. According to Fritz Martini, the term was first used by Karl Morgenstern, a German scholar and philologist, in 1817[4]. The Bildungsroman term became common and was widely used by many authors by the end of the nineteenth century. A century later, in 1905, the term Bildungsroman was popularized through the works of the German philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey's, who provided a deep analysis of the genre. As Boes explains, "the term 'Bildungsroman' was introduced to the critical vocabulary by the German philosopher and sociologist Wilhelm Dilthey" [5]. Dilthey helped to make the term widely used among authors and readers.

Thomas Carlyle played an important role in introducing the Bildungsroman to English literature by writing his own novel, considered the first English Bildungsroman. As Burt and Jeffers comment, "then the term became known to English and American critics when Thomas Carlyle translated Goethe's work into English in 1824" [6]. This translation helped English readers to know the genre and encourages many authors to write novels about the personal growth and self-awareness of the main character.

3. Etymology

The origin of the term "Bildungsroman" comes from the German language, meaning "formation" or "education novel." The term is divided into two parts. The first part, "Bildungs", means growth or development, while "roman" means a novel or narrative. Buckley notes that "the word itself is German, with "Bildung" having a variety of connotations: "portrait," "picture," "shaping" and "formation," all of which give the sense of development or creation" the development of the child can be seen as the creation of the man" [1]. Therefore, the general meaning of the Bildungsroman is about the personality growth of the main character through various experiences and life stages.

4. Types of the Bildungsroman

Under the broad umbrella of the Bildungsroman genre, there are many subtypes, including, Entwicklungsroman, Erziehungsroman, Künstlerroman and Zeitroman. Every type focuses on a certain kind of the lead character's development. These types of the Bildungsroman are German terms.

4.1 Entwicklungsroman: It means the novel of development. It focuses on the protagonist's development in general rather than development related to a specific age stage, formal education, or emotional and intellectual self-improvement. The external life conditions and experiences have a crucial role in changing and developing the main character . The main goal of Entwicklungsroman is to depict the main character's growth through external factors and life experiences, with less attention given to internal development. This subgenre of

Bildungsroman puts less attention on internal development. According to Ira Mark Milne, “Bildungsroman-type novels that pay less attention to the hero’s intellect and emotions than more fully developed works fit into the category of Entwicklungsroman” [7]. Thus, this subgenre places greater emphasis on external conditions and life experiences than on personal development.

4.2 Erziehungsroman: It means a novel of education. It focuses on the central character’s educational development which includes formal education, informal learning, training, apprenticeship and lessons from life experiences. Ira Mark Milne explains, “Not only is it more concerned with the formal education and training of the protagonist, but the novel also intends to teach certain lessons about values to the reader as well” [7]. Hence, both the knowledge gained from school and lessons learned through life experiences are the main purpose of this novel.

4.3 Künstlerroman: It is called an artist’s novel. It concentrates on an artist’s development from childhood to artistic maturity. The central character can be an artist of any field, such as a painter, poet, or musician. Along the journey towards creativity, success, and artistic maturity, the protagonist faces many obstacles and struggles. By the end, he greatly develops his talents and crafts.

4.4 Zeitroman: It means a novel of times or era. In this type of novel, the social and cultural context affects the development of the protagonist. This novel deals with analysing society and the conditions of life that influence the main character’s growth. In such works, the protagonist often mirrors the historical and social environment of the era, and his development is shaped largely by these circumstances.

5. Main Features of the Bildungsroman

5.1 The protagonist’s journey of self-discovery

The main element of the Bildungsroman is the hero’s journey from childhood to adulthood. The central character is often a sensitive, inexperienced child from a village or a small town, as Buckley notes, “A sensitive child grows up in the provinces” [1]. He is usually an orphan or fatherless, due to the death of one or both parents, and typically comes from lower or middle class background.

The protagonist starts his story with a problem, difficulties, social restrictions, or an emotional loss. Inspired by these difficult circumstances, he leaves home in search of a better life elsewhere. Commonly, the new destination is a big city, usually it is London, as seen in a Victorian Bildungsroman. Away from limits of the countryside, the big city offers more opportunities for learning, social connection, employment, and gaining more experiences; all these factors contribute to forming his independent self and personality.

The main goal of the Bildungsroman is the journey toward maturity. This journey is about achieving maturity, self-cultivation, identity formation, education, and self-awareness. Golban describes it as “long, arduous, and gradual” [8]. It involves several stages of development, during which the hero faces many obstacles and challenges until he finally reaches maturity and forms his substantial identity. It is greatly influenced by tests, struggles, conflicts, obstacles, and failures. All difficult situations and circumstances help shape the hero’s mind and character.

At the end of the development journey, the main character achieves intellectual, psychological, and emotional maturity, as well as forms his self-awareness and independent identity. Ultimately, after reaching maturity and forming an identity and sense of self, the hero accepts the norms of society and becomes an effective and influential individual within it. Generally, in some Bildungsroman novels, at the end of the maturity journey, the hero returns to his childhood village and birthplace as an educated, mature person to help the people of his town with his experience and knowledge.

5.2 Education

Education is required for the hero’s development. Life itself is a school that offers many lessons through which the hero learns and grows. Elaine Hoffman Baruch emphasizes “the education of the hero who is brought to a high level of consciousness through a series of experiences” [9]. Education can be formal, at schools, or informal, where hero learns from life experiences and situations. Outside school walls, informal education may take place through work, business affairs, love matters, social interactions, life skills, and societal norms.

In most cases, the hero receives a formal education in boarding schools, or he gains self-education through his personal practices and interests. Through education and apprenticeship, the hero expands his knowledge and skills. Attending two schools is a common feature in the Bildungsroman hero’s educational path. One school often represents a negative environment that influences the hero poorly as Buckley states: “His first schooling, even if not totally inadequate, may be frustrating insofar as it may suggest options not available to him in his present setting” [1]. The second school, however, has positive traits and affected the hero’s development. Whether, formal or informal, education helps the main character form his identity and understand the world around him. He moves

from a state of weakness and lack of knowledge to one of intellectual, psychological, emotional maturity, as well as self-awareness.

5.3 Conflict

Once the plot starts, several conflicts emerge throughout its course. Such conflict pivotally contributes in the hero's psychological and intellectual growth throughout a series of experiences. At the beginning of the narrative, during the hero's childhood, an initial conflict often emerges from the tension between the hero and a parental figure or society, which the hero confronts and tries to resolve. The conflict can be internal, external, or a combination of both. For example, in *Jane Eyre*, the heroine struggles between her passionate heart and her moral integrity. Inner conflict generally arises between the hero and his personality. On the other hand, external conflict is between the hero and the outside world, often involving struggles with interpersonal and societal forces. For example, Huck Finn in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* faces the challenges of slavery, social customs, and moral dilemmas while sailing the Mississippi River.

Conflict with society is the most common and also the most difficult to resolve. Conflicts push the hero to face struggles, problems, and tensions, and through these hard situations the hero learns gradually, often with difficulty. By encountering these conflicts, the hero gains a deeper understanding of both his personality and the world around him. This struggle is never easy; on the contrary, it is challenging and demanding. The hero sacrifices and endures much in order to reach maturity. The conflict ends when the hero overcomes both inner struggles and societal challenges, accepts the society norms, and becomes a decent member of it. By successfully overcoming these struggles, he reaches personal growth and maturity.

5.4 Love

Another part of the protagonist's development is love and romantic relationships. Love helps the hero to improve his emotions, desires, and identity. It also helps him to understand more deeply his own feelings as well as the emotions and values of others. He learns more about life lessons and develops emotionally. Commonly, the Bildungsroman includes two love stories. Buckley observes that there are "at least two love affairs or sexual encounters, one debasing, one exalting" [1]. The failed relationship helps the main character to improve his emotions and identity, and to understand life values, people, and social relations, while successful one story marks his mental, and emotional maturity. Love affair represents conflicts through which the hero develops and grows up.

5.5 Mentors and Guides

The presence of a guide or a mentor is another important feature in the Bildungsroman. The role of a mentor in the hero's life is crucial, as they help shape the hero's growth. Throughout the journey of self-fulfilment, the hero is not alone, as Howe states, "there are mentors ... who try to guide the young apprentice" [10]. Jeffers also highlights the influence of minor characters such as "family, friends, acquaintances, and strangers" [11]. A mentor can come from any social class and may be male or female. They can be a family member, teacher, friend, relative, or companion. The main character, often naïve and inexperienced, needs a more knowledgeable figure—like a parental figure, sibling, or friend—to lead and teach him. The mentor supports, advises, guides, protects, and warns the hero against dangers he might not recognize. In many Bildungsroman novels, the mentors play a crucial role in supporting the protagonist. He is usually an experienced older who helps form the hero's development. For example, Joe Gargery, a kind-hearted blacksmith in *Great Expectation*, serves as a father figure and moral guide to Pip, teaching him the values of kindness and integrity. Another example is Dumbledore in the *Harry Potter* series guides Harry Potter through his challenges, imparting wisdom about love, sacrifice, and the importance of choices.

5.6 Autobiographical Elements

An autobiographical element is important in many Bildungsroman novels. It plays a crucial role in forming both the novel and the protagonist's growth. Maugham points out "It is not an autobiography, but an autobiographical novel; fact and fiction are inextricably mingled" [12]. This indicates that this genre connects the writer and the protagonist by integrating real life with imagination. The author's life and thoughts can be recognized within the narrative.

The novel reflects some certain aspects of the author's life and character, with resemblances seen in characters, events, place, time, conflicts or themes. The autobiographical element adds depth, authenticity, and richness to the story, making the novel more convincing, effective and emotionally close to the reader's heart. Examples of novels containing an autobiographical elements includes *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens, *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë, and *Sons and Lovers* by D.H. Lawrence.

5.7 Reaching Maturity

Arriving at adulthood is one of the most important features of the Bildungsroman. By reaching this final stage of self-development and growth, the main character achieves his goals, desires, and ambitions. The protagonist matures gradually and with immense effort. At the end of the formation journey, the central character attains

identity formation, understands his own and others' feelings, and gains social communication skills as well as financial, emotional, and intellectual stability. He finds his position in society and becomes an effective member who accepts the social norms. He usually has a family and career. Often, he returns to childhood hometown to show the positive big changes he has made and to share his knowledge and experiences with his old family, relatives, and friends. Bildungsroman starts with the protagonist 's suffering and feeling loneliness and ends with a positive outcome and satisfaction. As Cañadas states the Bildungsroman and after maturity journey it. A Bildungsroman "concludes at a momentous point in the hero's life, which signals the culmination of a process of self-discovery, or the moment when a life-defining decision is made" [13]. Maturity is ultimately achieved When the main character attains his personality and his role within society.

6. Main Features of the Bildungsroman in David Copperfield

6.1 David's Journey of self-discovery

The journey of self-formation is the initial and most crucial element in shaping a Bildungsroman protagonist. From the heart of rural village, the young David's journey towards growing up begins. As Stone says, David is "born a posthumous child"[14] who comes to life six months after his father's death to face the world in an orphaned state and with a great loss. Together with his mother and Peggotty, the servant, this sensitive young child lives a happy, and warm life. Although he loses his father, the existence of his mother and Peggotty compensate that loss. That happy life is destroyed by the entrance of Mr. Murdstone, David's stepfather. Murdstone is cruel to David; beats him and treats him badly. Nelson depicts Mr. Murdstone as, "cold, domineering, and entirely without sympathy"[15]. Due to Mr. Murdstone's ill-treatment and his attempts to separate the young boy from his mother, David suffers from deadly loneliness and severe sadness. As a punishment for biting Mr. Murdstone's hand, the orphan is sent to a boarding school, Salem House. This is how Mr. Murdstone eliminates of his stepson. Salem House is run by an abusive headmaster, Mr. Creakle. The young protagonist's suffering continues at his first school where he is frightened by its headmaster. Following Mr. Murdstone's provocation of Mr. Creakle, David endures Mr. Creakle's cruelty and extreme mistreatment. David experiences hardness and loneliness in that gloomy school, with harsh rules and punishment, which is supposed to be a place for learning and a source of psychological and moral support and kindness. From hardness comes blessing; the bad experiences at Salem house offer David valuable lessons that contribute to his growth and self-awareness. The suffering and pains become more complicated when the young boy's mother dies. This momentous event opens the door widely for his stepfather to continue his severity and oppression. Under the authority of Mr. Murdstone and Miss Murdstone, the orphaned boy now feels alone, neglected, and frightened. He portrays them as "two snakes on a wretched young bird." [16] which refers to their inhumanity towards him. At the age of ten, he is compelled to stop studying and is sent to work in a wine-bottling factory, which is Mr. Murdstone's property, in London. Leaving hometown and moving to a big city is important for the hero's development since he faces many experiences and challenges. At that miserable, horrible, and dark place, young Copperfield has to labor hard and feels lonely since he has no family, no security, and no rest. Although this experience is extremely hard, he begins to depend on himself, and endures difficulties, and remains patient. The burden is too heavy that he can't bear anymore especially after Mr. Micawber leaves London. The moment David realizes that the factory is not his true place and he deserves a better environment to develop is a crucial step towards a bright new stage of his growth. There is only one remaining relative, his aunt Miss Betsy, whom David decides to look for and seek refuge with. The turning point in the young protagonist's life is the refuge with his aunt. With the assistance of Miss Betsey, David continues his education, and later he obtains a job. Despite his failings in many personal matters including his first marriage and relationships with some characters, he matures through his mistakes and continues on his process of growing up. Throughout his long and challenging journey, David overcomes obstacles and hardships, builds his identity, and becomes a valuable member of his family and society. In Gold's view, "David Copperfield . . . presents a quest for meaning in personal experience and the need to establish the relation of 'I' to the world" [17]. David shapes his character and determines his position in society over years of experience.

6.2 David's Education

Education is an influential theme in David's development. In Nelson Mandela's memorable words, "Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world". [18]. Through education David forms his personality and improves his life and his future. There are several forms of education through which the main character develops his personality, including formal schooling, informal learning, life experiences, and social interactions, as well as an apprenticeship at a winery and a law firm.

For informal education, David is taught by his mother at home from an early age, representing the beginning of his intellectual development. In addition he inherits a book collection from his late father which he reads extensively. As he recalls, "My father had left a small collection of books." [16]. By reading stories and

literature, he develops reading and writing skills and acquires a gift for storytelling, which enables him to become a successful writer in future.

Life is a big school. Experiences and situations in life are ways of education. Experiences teach David patience and realism as well as how to handle challenges efficiently. Social relations are a useful tool of education. Interacting with many individuals helps David develop his moral and social values. When he is very young, he is sent to work in a wine bottling factory in Canterbury. Despite the bitter and harsh experiences, David gains valuable lessons and insights from them. The lessons derived from laboring in the factory are patience, self-reliance and earning money to meet daily needs. As time goes on, he begins to depend on himself, to manage his affairs, and face difficult circumstances.

Formal education complements the informal education, and both are important to David's growth. Regarding to formal education, the main character receives education through two schools :Salem House and Dr. Strong School. As a form of discipline from his stepfather, David is taken to a boarding school, Salem House, at a young age. The school is miserable and gloomy, controlled by a strict and rough headmaster, Mr. Creakle. In his initial response to the school, David describes it as "the most forlorn and desolate place I had ever seen" [16]. At this school, there are strict rules, bad treatment, and social discrimination among students. It is a hard experience for David. Not only does the school environment affect David negatively, but Mr.Creakle's mistreatment and humiliation deepens his suffering. He describes the headmaster as, "a giant in a story-book surveying his captives" [16]. David is exposed to mockery from the students after being forced to wear a sign on his back that says, "Beware, he bites." Although he spends hard times in that bleak school, Salem house, he learns scientific subjects and broadens his knowledge. In addition, he makes many friendships as well as he uses his talent for telling stories to his schoolmates which helps him develop his ability to be a good writer in the future. Dr. Strong is the second formal school that David joins at the age of 11, after running away from the warehouse to his aunt's home. It is a relaxing and comfortable school. It is run by Mr. Strong, who is an example of a humble, cultured, and friendly headmaster, unlike Mr. Creakle, the headmaster of Salem House .At Dr. Strong School, Students attain respect and esteem. David praises Strong school as, "Doctor Strong's was an excellent school; ... gravely and decorously ordered, and on a sound system; with an appeal, in everything, to the honour and good faith of the boys, . . . which worked wonders"[16]. The atmosphere and environment of Strong School are suitable and conducive to academic achievement and psychological stability. David feels confident and relaxed at this school. He learns very well and improves his knowledge unit he graduates from Dr. Strong School.

Apprenticeship is a critical stage in David's growth path. Working as a clerk at Mr. Spenlow's office prepares the narrator for his professional life. This training gives him the opportunity to manage business affairs and to learn how to deal with clients and customers. It adds a sense of responsibility and self-reliance. Additionally, this work helps the hero expand his intellectual horizons, improve his language abilities, and deepen his understanding of people. All of these qualities played an important role in making him a great writer. Ultimately, after several stages of education and training, David chooses the profession that he loves and in which he truly find himself, no matter how simple it is. He expresses his feelings about his job declaring that, "[n]ever to put one hand to anything, on which I could throw my whole self; and never to affect depreciation of my work, whatever it was' both sublimates and redeems the memories of alienated factory labour which he would prefer to forget ."[16]

6.3 David's Conflict

Hardships and trials make a person's character stronger and more mature. Since David's childhood, he struggles the hard life lonely. The external and internal conflicts work together to raise the hero's awareness about his identity and the world around him. Losing his father is an early formative conflict that contributes to shaping his character. Orphaned at a young age, David falls under the control of his stepfather, Mr. Murdstone, who turns the hero's life into a tragedy. From the moment Mr. Mudstone enters young Copperfield's life, problems begin to arise. Significantly, this new cruel stepfather is the main source of the young boy's troubles. Commenting on Mr. Murdstone's tyrannical nature. He treats the vulnerable child with hardness and violence. Not only that, he isolates the helpless boy from his family by keeping him alone. David expresses his painful feelings about lack of love and care by saying, "Day after day, week after week, month after month, I was coldly neglected"[16]. Murdstone's abuse and his ill-treatment evokes David's inner struggles about his character and dignity, and how he must think about himself and refuse to accept this injustice. All of these questions and wonders contribute to the early shaping of his self-awareness and personality.

Eventually, in an attempt to get rid of David, Murdstone sends him away to Salem house, a boarding school that David describes as, is "carried on by sheer cruelty"[16]. The evil Mr. Murdstone is not content with banishing David to the oppressive school; he even asks the headmaster, Mr. Creakle, to treat him harshly. Mr. Creakle beats David and forces him to wear a degrading board on his back for almost three months. The message posted on the board, "take care ! he bites"[16], is both humiliating and embarrassing for David. It refers to him as a dog and exposes him to harassment by his schoolmates. He suffers a lot from physical abuse, bullying and mocking which causes psychological and physical harm. In his inner awareness, David is not content with the insult, oppression

and degradation he experiences. Throughout his stay at Salem House, both internal and external conflicts make the young hero think deeply about himself and the world around him. Consequently, these struggles help David develop his character throughout time. As mentioned previously, the process of trials and errors and personal experiences are useful tools for David's learning and growth. The hardship of living in poor conditions of Salem house benefits him in a positive way. One of the benefits is that he becomes patient, self-reliant and able to endure toils of life. He also receives cognitive education at school. Alongside his studies, he forms many friendships especially strong ones with Steerforth and Treddles. While he is at the oppressive school, David receives another blow—the death of his mother—which is a crushing one. This tragic news creates a new conflict for him. Currently, David is an orphan, having lost both his mother and his father. One of the consequences of this event is that Mr. Murdstone becomes even more tyrannical towards the lonely orphaned child. On the pretext that there is not enough money for supporting his education, David is prevented from continuing his studies. Furthermore, Mr. Murdstone pays no attention to him; rather, he increases his suffering, torture and isolation by sending him to work in a wine bottling warehouse.

Working in that factory, despite his young age, is another severe struggle that the young boy must endure. In order to earn only six or seven shillings, he is obliged to work from ten to fifteen hours a day. With those few shillings, he can barely feed his starving self. David labors hard in a tough environment; the place is dirty, gloomy and miserable. Workers are uneducated and from the low class. The feelings of loneliness and grief continually accompany him, as he says, "No words can express the secret agony of my soul as I sunk into this companionship... never to be brought back anymore; cannot be written" [16].

The wine-bottling factory represents the darkest stage in the main character's life. After a few months, he can no longer endure the hardships of his work, particularly following Mr. Micwaber's departure London. Feelings of hunger, loneliness, and pain, which cannot be endured, drive David to eliminate the obstacles from his way and look for another place to start a better life. He decides to run away to look for his only remaining relative, his aunt, Miss Betsey. David's refuge with his aunt is a positive turning point in his journey. Working in a degraded environment with the lower classes of society makes David realize that this place is not his natural place and that he deserves better. All negative conditions in that gruelling place compel the young boy to question about his identity and self-values. Struggles and difficulties make him to take a courageous step to leave that shameful place and run to toward a better future.

Some characters, like Steerforth and Heep, are also sources of the protagonist's conflicts. Steerforth is David's close friend since their school days, earning David's love, respect and esteem. Difficulties are faced by the hero due to Steerforth. Although Steerforth is presented as David's best friend, he commits many bad things, including betraying Peggotty's family and seducing Emily, which ultimately destroys her life. The central character gets greatly a big shock from his friend's betrayal, as he always views him ideal, favourite, and perfect. His inner struggle is between his love for Steerforth and his love for Peggotty family. Although David knows about Steerforth's wrongful actions, he is hesitant because of his loyalty to his friend. Hesitation prevents him from making a strict decision regarding Steerforth. At the moment of realization, David decides to stand on the right side. Having overcome that obstacle, he recognizes that morality is the foundation of friendship. Steerforth's case teaches David that he should not be deceived by appearances and should think wisely. He understands that morals are the core of the true person, not false appearances.

Heep is another example of David's conflict. From the beginning, David does not feel relaxed about Heep because of his exaggerated modesty. Doubt, hesitation and inexperience prevent him from taking any serious action regarding Heep. Over time, Heep's deceitful and exploitative actions increase strongly on Agnes, and her father's finance and Miss Betsey's entrust funds. David makes every efforts to recover Mr. Wickfield's money and his aunt's stolen funds from Heep. In addition to that, he saves Agnes and, her father, Mr. Wickfields from the devilish Heep. With the help of Micwaber, David brings Heep to justice. The lesson David learns from Heep's situation is not to trust pretended virtues and fake actions that hide a bad truth as Heep refers to himself many times "I'm humble" [16]. David does not forget his aunt's kindness when she supports him. The hero's inner conflict towards Heep is marked by hesitation and inexperience, but he overcomes it and realizes that he must face Heep. This step of realization and confrontation is an important part in forming his identity and achieving maturity.

Following several struggles, now the central character face encounters a different kind of challenge; one related to his undisciplined heart, love and marriage. David experiences both an internal conflict, driven by his undisciplined heart, and an external one, during his marriage to Dora. Although he loves her deeply, he is shocked by a complicated reality he did not take into account. That childish wife, who is innocent and spoiled, cannot fulfill her duties towards her home and husband. She is unable to support David emotionally and morally. The disparity in awareness, thought and emotional maturity makes it difficult for him to interact with her in a comfortable manner. Driven by his strong desire to make things right, he tries hard to change her for the better and seeks a point of emotional convergence and understanding between them, but things do not go as he hopes. Slaters affirms that Dora's naivety is rooted in her immaturity that causes emotional pain in David [19]. Dora's emotional immaturity prevents connection between her and her husband. Dora seems as an obstacle in David's way as he matures. The issues in his marriage and his uncontrolled heart both contribute to his emotional and

mental growth. Through this experience, David realizes that love and marriage are not based on feelings alone, but involve a balance between mind and heart. His love and choice for Dora is completely emotional and irrational. Over time, David is able to reconcile his reason and feelings.

6.4 David's Love

Part of forming the hero's maturity and identity is a romantic relationship. Love has an emotional and effective role in the development of the hero. According to the Bildungsroman, the main character usually goes through two main love stories; one fails and the other succeeds. The hero learns many lessons from both, even from the failed one. The first one involves many crises and conflicts, which indicates the hero's immature emotions and thinking. However, it helps him recognize his faults so that he does not repeat them in the future. While the second one is a sign of his development and gaining emotional maturity. David's love for Dora stems from the feelings of an impetuous young person, not from a mature and elderly man. It is innocent and superficial, yet lacks depth in rational thought. As Kincaid argues that Dora is a "mistaken choice of immaturity"[20]. David's affections for Dora are a reflection of his naive feelings. David does not think about rational matters like understanding and sharing life's burdens; instead, he loves Dora for her beauty and youth. Following marriage, the consequences of his wrong choice of a life partner begin to emerge. Dora is a childish and naïve wife. She is unable to cook or manage the household affairs. She only knows how to sing, play the guitar and spend time with her dog, Jip. David tries to make her a good wife and talented housekeeper by bringing her some cookbooks but this does not succeed. He brings one servant after another, but Dora struggles with each one every time. The youth protagonist thinks that if he makes Dora a mother, she will become more responsible and serious about her baby and her husband. Unfortunately the baby dies after a short time. As a consequence of this tragic event, Dora becomes extremely sad and deeply depressed. Dora's condition is becoming worse day by day. She dies after some time. David laments his wife's loss and feels sad for her. The loss of Dora, he is freed from the emotional obstacle that impedes his growth. This shows that David's marriage to Dora is a result of his undisciplined heart. By the end of this marriage, David recognizes his poor decision and controls his heart. As previously stated, learning through error and trial is effective. Accordingly, David learns how to choose a suitable woman who is mature, patient, supportive and experienced in life. An ideal future wife should be balanced in feelings and thoughts. A woman who completes the hero should be his true lover and wife. All of these qualities David finds in Agnes. Together, the two grown lovers and partners live their life with love, respect, support, and stability. It can be inferred that the success of a second marriage refers to reaching the hero a mature stage. By comparing David's marriage experiences, it can be concluded that a successful marriage is based on a balance between affection and reason, while a failed one, as in Dora's case, stems from excessive emotion and immature reasoning. This idea is supported by Dabney, who observes, "In Copperfield most of the bad marriages are disinterested, innocent, and impulsive, while the good marriages-Peggotty's to Barkis, Annie's to Dr Strong, David's to Agnes-are passionless and carefully weighed"[21].

6.5 Mentors and Guides

The hero's growth is greatly influenced by the role of mentors and guides. Peggotty, Micwaber, Miss Betsey, Agnes and others act as mentors for David during different stages of his journey towards maturity. According to Watkins, "Children survive - perhaps with pain, but without permanent damage - such incidents as poverty, bereavement, social or other changes, war, invasion or physical suffering, if they know that they are supported and loved." [22]. As in David's case, he goes through many difficult and painful experiences, but he manages to pull through and improve when he finds people around him who support him emotionally and morally, especially Miss Betsey, who adopts him after the darkest time in his life. Jeffers affirms Watkins's idea and points out, "the abused child's fight-or-flight struggle to defend itself, and in particular David's quest for allies in that struggle, most notably Peggotty and his Aunt Betsey Trotwood"[11]. Peggotty and Aunt Betsey are the protectors, providing the neglected boy with security and affection.

Among the several characters who stand by David's side is Clara Peggotty, the mother figure and dedicated housekeeper through his journey. This character appears in the novel's first lines. David considers her his second mother. She is more than just a servant; she is also a nanny, a mother figure and a close friend to the family. Throughout his early years, she spends a lot of time with David. From David's perspective, she is a real member of his family. She takes care of him, raises him with kindness and provides him with a proper upbringing and a complete care. During his childhood, she plays with him and tells him stories. She also takes him to her family's house by the sea in Yarmouth. Even when his step-father tries to isolate him from his family and make him feel lonely, she talks with him in private. Additionally, she sends letters to David, while he is staying at Salem house. This humble and simple woman, despite her poverty and lack of education, she is rich in morals and unforgettable situations with David from his early years until his childhood. She functions as a protector, guide, helper and supportive.

Given love and care receives from Peggotty, Miss Betsey Trotwood provides David with stability and guidance. Miss Betsey is the individual who plays an essential role in forming David's future. David's aunt. The positive turning point in David's life is when his aunt shelters him. She makes a huge effort for David's sake.

Aunt Betsey's assistance to her nephew is characterized by Daldry as, "an act of pure generosity"[23]. She takes total care of him, both emotionally and practically. After escaping from a disastrous and miserable life, David reaches her house, overwhelmed with pain and exhaustion. As David says, "I began my new life, in a new name, and with everything new about me" [16]. A decisive change in the hero's future is represented by this moment. Without hesitation, Betsey welcomes David warmly, and provides him with care and protection. She takes full responsibility for him; she washes him, dresses him and feeds him. The young David gains all what he needs from his aunt. In every facets of life, She offers him guidance, support and protection. Miss Betsey's care for her nephew includes emotional, moral, intellectual and financial aspects. She also protects him from his stepfather. In terms of romantic affairs, especially those involving to Dora and Agnes, she provides him with insightful advice. David gets an excellent opportunity to continue his formal education at Dr. Strong school till he graduates. As a result of the favors and generosity of his loyal aunt, David feels as if he is reborn again.

Once David finds safety and stability with his aunt, the quiet Agnes emerges as a source of emotional and psychological support. Agnes plays an essential role through David's life. David views her as having many roles including, a wife, lover, sister, friend and his faithful life companion. He acknowledges her importance in his life: "Agnes! Ever my guide, and best support!"[16], emphasizing her emotional and moral influence on his character development. Since his earliest years, she has supported him, especially during his times at Strong's School. Throughout his ordeals, she stands by him all the time, offering advice, guidance and support, morally, psychologically and spiritually. The little housekeeper, as his father calls her, is able to manage household duties efficiently despite her young age. She is referred by Charles Dickens as "the angel of the home". The angel, as David calls her, never abandons him. She is always a source of support and loyalty for him. Throughout his education and profession, she encourages and helps him. She warns him about his false friend Steerforth, as well as about Heep. During his marriage to Dora, Agnes advises David to be patient and gentle with Dora, and to accept his wife as she is. Furthermore, she makes excuses for Dora, by claiming that it is simply her nature, and that she is young and will learn in due time. After Dora's death, David feels sad and lonely and travels to Europe. David is encouraged to return and go on with his life by Agnes's letters, which also help him to heal and get over his feelings of loneliness and grief. Even after their marriage, she continues to encourage David's writing and to share her thoughts with him. From the beginning to the end, this patient and wise woman remains by David's side. Many critics considers Agnes to be the heroine of the novel. From Irwin's viewpoint, Agnes is constantly seen as "gentle,' 'quiet,' 'modest,' 'thoughtful,' 'serene'" [24].

Another character who teaches David many life lessons is Mr. Micawber. Despite his many imperfections and financial struggles, Mr. Micawber, the comic person, teaches David important moral values from him like dignity, generosity, kindness, hope and patience. In a courageous act, Mr. Micawber assists in uncovering evidence against Heep's villainous plans. David has known Micawber since his early childhood years. David meets Micawber for first time when David rents a room from Micawber family while working at the wine factory. `Micawber and his wife treat David very kindly and gently. They consider him as their son supporting him with warmth and love. Mr. Micawber always repeats his phrase "something will turn up" which indicates the optimism and hope. This phrase evokes in David the belief that after darkness comes light, and after difficulties comes rest.

6.6 Autobiographical Elements

Identifying characteristics of the author's life mirrored in the literary work's hero is known as an Autobiographical element. Edgar Johnson closely examines the influence of Dickens's life on David Copperfield. He states that all the periods in Copperfield's life "have their roots in Dickens's personal experience, and derive their depths from the intensity of his feeling about his own childhood and days of youth [25]. In David Copperfield novel, there are characters, settings and events that reflect Dickens's own life and experiences. Dickens highlights this autobiographical link with David in the preface of the book, stating: "Of all my books, I like this the best...I have in my heart of hearts a favourite child. And his name is David Copperfield"[26]. The author prefers the novel David Copperfield the most. It is very close to Dickens's heart. In terms of childhood, Dickens and David both have a difficult and miserable life. David's father died six months before David's birth, while Dickens's father was imprisoned. At an early age, both were forced to leave school and work in a factory. Djebbar, citing Lucas (1992), declares that "the novel is very close to a member of key events in Dickens's own life. Of these, the most important is the traumatic time he spent working at Warren's blacking factory, which he echoed in David's period at Murdstone and Grimby's"[27]. Working in factory, Dickens and David endure the same hard experience. The writer and his protagonist's autobiographical relationship is strengthened by this incident. Another similarity between David and Dickens is the gift of storytelling. Dickens recounts stories for his workmates, while David does the same for his schoolmates. The opportunity granted to both the author and the hero to resume and complete their education is another example of the autobiographical connection. In the profession field, there is also a personal resemblance: each of them works as a writer. David experiences a failed romantic story, just as Dickens does, which represents another example of similarity. Dickens's own love for Maria is similar to David's love for Dora Spenlow. In the final stages of maturity and identity formation, both of

them finally find the true love. They recognize that a true love is based on a harmony between a clear reason and deep emotions. David is not an exact mirror of Dickens, but there are several similarities between them.

In conclusion, the writer's use of autobiographical elements adds depth, authenticity, realism, and emotional effect to the protagonist and the literary work. There are strong connections and similarities between Dickens and David, especially in childhood, career, love experiences and conflicts. The novel reflects many aspects of the author's life.

6.7 Reaching Maturity

The main goal of David's journey is spiritual, psychological and moral growth. After Dora's death, David travels to Switzerland to reflect deeply on his internal and external challenges. He spends time in solitude, reflecting both emotionally and intellectually. David devotes himself and his time to writing, and deep reflection. As a result of this solitude, he comes to understand Agnes in a new light. Through the darkness of sadness shines the light of hope and awakening. Here, David realizes that there is a gentle dove of peace that has always loved him and will love him for the rest of her life. David decides to return for the sake of Agnes. Jackson points out that Copperfield's marriage to Agnes "is a sign he has reached maturity" [28], which represents David's growth emotionally and morally.

Eventually, David's slow and painful path ends with his maturity. The result is that David discovers his identity and becomes a useful member of a society. Through conflicts, loss, poverty, orphanhood, mistakes, trials and various experiences, David becomes a mature man with a worthy position in his society. Establishing a balance between personal identity and society is what David achieves at the final stage of his journey. He builds a successful career, a secure family, and a thoughtful understanding of life. David attains maturity after overcoming his undisciplined heart and the several obstacles he has encountered throughout his life. In addition, he gains mental and intellectual stability, establishes a successful career, and forms a happy family. As he matures further, he also becomes more rational, balanced, and sober. Eventually, David comes to accept the rules and principles of society and becomes an effective and influential member within it. Carl Bandelin states that David needs to "acquire the ability to live creatively and humanely in the world"[29]. David must overcome the obstacles and become a mature and responsible man.

To sum up, David is the protagonist of a Bildungsroman whose his journey of growth is filled with loss, struggles, and experiences that help David to attain maturity. According to Jerome Buckley, the 'happy ending' of David Copperfield suggests a seamless 'integration of personality to which the hero in the novel of youth typically aspires', though it is rarely accomplished[1]. After a long and difficult journey, David eventually achieves the happy ending. David's life story is an excellent example of a Bildungsroman hero.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study proves that David Copperfield by Charles Dickens is a comprehensive and obvious example of the bildungsroman. It defines the genre and explains its seven primary features in detail, then applies these features to David, the protagonist of the story, proving that he meets the requirements of the bildungsroman hero. The analysis traces David's long path of development, examining the obstacles and struggles he encounters, as well as how various people – both good and bad – affect his experiences. In addition, it focuses on his romantic relationships, his formal and informal education, internal and external conflicts, and the autobiographical link between the author and his hero.

All of these factors come together to form David's character in the final stage of his path, when he reaches maturity. His journey is marked by suffering, grief, learning, hope, and determination. Despite these difficulties, he attains his identity and personality and becomes a useful member within society. Based on the analysis and results, this study confirms that David is not only a suitable example of the bildungsroman, but also one of its best and most influential works in English literature.

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