

THE ANALYSIS OF SARTRE'S 'ESENSE' AND 'SUBJECTIVITY' IN DISNEY PIXAR'S SOUL ANIMATION

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ABSTRACT

From the start, the philosophical movement that came to be known as existentialism was associated with literature. This possibility happens because there is a natural affinity between existential philosophy and narrative forms of art. On one hand, existentialist concurs on the primacy of individual existence, of the lived experience of concrete human beings. On the other hand, cinematic narratives tell stories of beings such as ourselves, helping us to make sense of our existence and opening up probabilities that we might never have pondered otherwise (Shaw, 2017). Interestingly, Time.com stated that Pixar films are the most philosophical of the animation world. Here lies the reason why the writer decided to analyze the portrayal of Jean-Paul Sartre's famous phrase 'Existence Precedes Essence' in the latest Disney Pixar animation, Soul. Sartre argued that for human beings, our existence precedes our essence. In addition, Sartre's notion of 'existence' is characterized in terms of consciousness, free choice, and 'subjectivity'. For Sartre, the first act of consciousness is to choose. This study shows that Disney Pixar's Soul does portray Sartre's 'existence precedes essence' through Joe's life – human beings have no fixed preordained essence or definition. Moreover, Sartre's idea of consciousness or subjectivity can be seen from 22's decision to be dared to live.

Keywords: existentialism, Sartre, existence, soul, Disney

ABSTRAK

Sejak awal kemunculan tradisi pemikiran filsafat eksistensialisme, aliran ini kerap diasosiasikan dengan karya sastra. Hal ini terjadi lantaran adanya hubungan yang kuat di antara keduanya. Di satu sisi, eksistensialisme mempersoalkan keberadaan manusia dan pengalaman manusia. Di sisi lain, narasi film juga dibuat dengan tujuannya membantu manusia untuk memahami keberadaannya hingga akhirnya bisa membuka diri untuk kemungkinan-kemungkinan yang tidak pernah disadari sebelumnya. Uniknya, media Time.com menyatakan bahwa film-film animasi produksi Pixar adalah karya yang paling filosofis. Oleh karena itulah, penulis berniat untuk melihat lebih dalam bagaimana paham eksistensialisme milik Jean-Paul Sartre, khususnya frasa 'Existence Precedes Essence' digambarkan di film 'Soul'. Sartre beranggapan bahwa eksistensi manusia sejatinya mendahului esensi. Selain itu, gagasan 'esensi' yang dikemukakan Sartre ditandai oleh kesadaran, kebebasan dan subjektivitas. Bagi Sartre, aksi utama dari kesadaran adalah keberanian untuk memilih. Hasil riset menunjukkan bahwa film animasi 'Soul' sangat sarat akan paham 'eksistensi' dan 'esensi' dan tergambar jelas melalui karakter Joe Gardner. Juga, paham 'subjektivitas' milik Sartre dapat diketahui dengan jelas melalui karakter 22, utamanya saat ia memilih untuk berani menjalani hidup.

Kata Kunci: eksistensialisme, Sartre, eksistensi, soul, Disney

INTRODUCTION

In *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy and Literature*, Eldridge (2009) stated that both literature and philosophy as a discipline have engaged with each other to

develop forms of attention to human life and human commitment and passions while avoiding empty idealism. Strikingly, a philosophical movement that is known as existentialism was associated with literature from the start. There is a natural affinity

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between existential philosophy and the narrative form of art. On one hand, existentialists agree on the primacy of individual existence, of the lived experience of concrete human beings. On the other hand, cinematic narratives tell stories of being such as ourselves, helping us to make sense of our existence (Shaw, 2017, p. 1-2). One way to understand the relation between philosophy and literature is by considering a work of literature as a kind of philosophy. In such a work, philosophical thought merge fully into its forms of literary expression which caused people to think both philosophically and poetically at the same time (Verene, 2018).

Stirringly, the approach above can be seen richly in Disney Pixar's latest animation, *Soul*. Despite being overwhelmed by its complexity, *Time.com* admitted that Pixar films are the most philosophical of the animation world (Zacharek, 2020). In addition, Jurgensen (2020) from *The Wallstreet Journal* was even absorbed by Pixar's ability to infuse big existential concepts into animated family movies. *Soul* tells a story about Joe (voiced by Jamie Foxx), a middle-aged jazz musician on the verge of his big break. Joe experienced a very cartoony accident which triggers a near-death journey through a realm where souls exit and enter existence. Joe's attempt to escape the afterlife leads to a caper with a soul avoiding earth (voiced by Tina Fey). Jurgensen added that the movie contains lots of colorful speculation about life's purpose. The movie questions both kids and adults ask of themselves: *What's my purpose? What's my goal? What am I good at? What's my reason for living?* Again, despite the fact that the movie sounds a bit perplexing for kids, Jancelewicz (2020) strongly believed that somehow the writers and producers have managed to make this accessible for children. Moreover, he added that in fact *Soul* really hits home to adults as the movie has a deep lesson. Through the character of Joe, *Soul* brings up issues that adults need to ponder, from a phase of numbness in life to the impossibility to turn back the pages of time. Thus, beyond question the writer believes that *Soul* movie clearly

depicted a strong relation between literature and philosophy; especially the issue of existentialism.

Variously known as "Existentialism," "The Humanism of Existentialism," and "Existentialism Is Humanism," Jean-Paul Sartre's most widely read essay was an attempt to clarify the meaning of the existential movement at a time when its popularity was near its peak. Although not written for professional philosophers, like much of his work – it is meandering, frustrating, endlessly ingenious, and at times vague (Panza & Gale, 2008, p. 157). Here lies the reason why Sartre's existentialism has become a compelling issue to be studied. Firstly, Setyaningrum et al. (2020) analyzed Sartre's existentialism in Ernest J. Gaine's novel: *A Lesson Before Dying*. They found out that Grant Wiggins, who is educated and understands the unfortunate situation around him, attempts to manage the racism aside from his most challenge to manage his mind before redefining Jefferson's identity as a man. Wiggins' act is aligned with Sartre's claims that existentialism is humanism. Secondly, Nuri (2018) examined Sartre's existentialism in Paulo Coelho's *The Alchemist*. She found that to defend his existence, Santiago had to acquire freedom of choice, overcome anguish, be responsible, and estranged himself from others. Nuri concluded that Santiago shows an example of existence that precedes its essence as he must be responsible for his life and all actions or choices that have been taken. Lastly, Hamidy (2016) analyzed the spirit of existentialism in Ernest Hemingway's *From Whom The Bells Tolls*. The finding shows that the main character, Robert Jordan annihilates his *being*, as a teacher of Spanish. In addition, the spirit of existentialism still can be found in Jordan's behavior for he has good faith. Robert knows that living is shouldering the sole great responsibility for whatever he does. The work also shows the spirit of existentialism in its theme: togetherness and love, death, and alienation.

On the whole, a considerable amount of research had successfully spotlighted

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various portrayals of Sartre's existentialism. However, none of the studies above really draw attention to the notion of 'essence' in Sartre's phrase "existence precedes essence". In addition, few studies analyzed Sartre's notion of 'subjectivity' and its relation with Rene Descartes. Whilst, Kappler (1964) from *LIFE Magazine* stated that Descartes is a true forefather of Sartre. Through his notion of 'subjectivity', Sartre had rewritten Descartes' theories according to his own lights (p. 103). Therefore, this research is aimed at answering the following question:

1. To what extent Sartre's idea of 'essence' is shown in Disney Pixar's animation, *Soul*?
2. To what extent Sartre's idea of 'subjectivity' is shown in Disney Pixar's animation, *Soul*?

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Existentialism

Existentialism may be defined as the philosophical theory which holds that a further set of categories, governed by the norm of *authenticity*, is necessary to grasp human existence Crowell (2020). Existentialism's central theme concerns the rejection of an 'objective', abstract system of knowledge. Philosophy's optimism reached its height in Hegel who argued that all existence, including all aspects of human life, could be understood and explained systematically. In opposition to this, Kierkegaard (as cited in Kirkpatrick, 2008) - existentialism's founding father, replied that 'truth' is far beyond the limit of the human mind. Kierkegaard's point is that 'truth' cannot simply be taught as a rational system, handed to a person on one plate. It can only be learned along life's journey, when we take responsibility for our lives and act decisively within the ambiguities and contradictions that we inevitably encounter. In addition, for many existentialists, God doesn't exist, and so do religion and ethics, which need to be overcome (p.27). Nevertheless, the discussion among existentialists is not just merely about

being theist and atheist. Existentialists, both theists, and atheists reject not only traditional religious systems that attempt to provide quick answers, but also the possibility of any ultimate answers. Existentialists insist that even if a God and heaven exist, the meaning of this life and how you should live will always be open questions, requiring decisions you must face as an individual (Panza & Gale, 2008, p. 1).

Sartre's Existentialism

Sartre focuses on the optimism inherent in the existentialist movement as he sees it. It's a strange, tough kind of optimism, but in the end, it is optimistic. The source of this optimism, for Sartre, is the freedom of man (Panza & Gale, 2008, p. 158). Freedom means different things to different people. However, for Sartre, people are free when they have a choice. The exact nature of that choice can vary, but when people have a choice, they have freedom. Sartre contends that people always have a choice and therefore are always free. Sartre argued that 'Existentialism' can be summed up in the phrase 'Existence Precedes Essence'. To be more precise, Sartre believed that for human beings, our existence precedes our essence (p. 159).

The notion of 'Essence'

When a person considers something is essential, he/she is saying it's necessary. For example, if a person clams chowder and leaves out the clams, he/she hasn't made clams chowder. Clams are just part of the definition of clam chowder; they're essential to making clam chowder what it is and not some other soup.

Similarly, the essence of something is whatever makes it what it is. So by saying that existence precedes essence, Sartre means that human beings exist — are born and are conscious of their lives — before they really "are" anything. In addition, it means no crucial or necessary ingredient defines what a human being is. Nothing, in short, serves as an essence or nature that forces all human beings to be a certain preordained way. We

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have no human nature; there's nothing we're called or meant to do. We quite literally start as nothing (Panza & Gale, 2008, p. 165).

Sartre explains the meaning of his most important phrase by comparing a human being with a manufactured item - watches. Watches have a fixed essence or definition. That is, at least part of what it means to be a watch is that a watch is an "object that tells time." Doing so is a necessary part of being a watch. This function already exists in the mind of the watchmaker before he actually creates any given watch. Therefore, the watch's essence — what it is to be a watch — precedes its actual existence because that essence, that purpose, was in the mind of the designer before the watch came into being.

In contrast, Sartre argued that human beings are not like watches. Human beings have no *fixed* essence or definition. Sartre believed that human beings exist *before* we have any definition, purpose, or meaning. Sartre really emphasized his notion on the words *fixed* and *before*. Definition, meaning, and purpose come later for human beings. People aren't born with them but must develop them on their own. Thereby, existence precedes essence (Panza & Gale, 2008, p. 165).

In short, people are only what they make themselves. Each person must therefore take full responsibility for their present and future, regardless of the past and where they find themselves in life. Nevertheless, Sartre also warned that despite this positive statement of freedom, existentialism is also associated with the term 'anxiety' or 'angst'. It can be denied that the burden of existentialist responsibility, that we alone are responsible for our fate, is huge (Kirkpatrick, 2008).

The notion of 'Subjectivity'

Ameriks (2019) stated that the starting point of Sartre's existentialism is the notion of 'existence' characterized in terms of consciousness, free choice, and 'subjectivity' (p. 93). Sartre's notion of 'subjectivity' is taken directly from the French philosopher René Descartes, who famously said, "I think,

therefore I am." Descartes was looking for one belief he absolutely couldn't doubt. He found he was able to doubt quite a lot, including the existence of the entire physical universe and his own body. The only thing he couldn't doubt was the existence of a thinker (himself) who was doubting. So he proclaimed the one fact he could be certain of was that he existed: "I think, therefore I am." In building his philosophy, Descartes starts with this subjective viewpoint, with his own consciousness, and builds everything else from there. Sartre adopts this point of view — the view of starting with consciousness — not on particularly existentialist grounds, but simply based on the fact that he thinks Descartes is right (Panza & Gale, 2008, p. 169).

For Sartre, the first act of consciousness is to choose (Panza & Gale, 2008, p. 170). In *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre (1992) stated that all consciousness is the consciousness of something. Thus, to be conscious of something is to be confronted with a concrete and full presence that is not consciousness. If then we wish at any price to make the being of the phenomenon depend on consciousness, the object must be distinguished from consciousness not by its presence but by its absence, not by its plenitude, but by its nothingness (p. 21-22).

In other words, consciousness, in itself, is nothing. It becomes something only as it makes these choices. This is what makes us different from all the other objects in the universe. Most objects simply are what they are. Human beings are, in one sense, objects; but unlike other objects, we also create what we are and what we'll become. We're subjects — conscious beings — that create what we are through the choices we make. Therefore, consciousness is constantly creating itself by constantly choosing (Panza & Gale, 2008, p. 170).

The relation between Sartre's *Existence - Essence* and *Subjectivity* can be seen from the table below:

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Table 1: The relation between Sartre's Existence - Essence and Subjectivity (Panza & Gale, 2008, p. 170)

	Existence – Essence	Subjectivity
Emptiness	Because human existence precedes human essence, human beings start as nothing. You're nothing before you start making choices.	Consciousness, or subjectivity, in itself, is nothing. It becomes something only as it makes choices.
Difference from objects	An object's essence is predetermined, but human beings create their essence only later.	Objects simply are what they are. In one sense, humans are objects, but as subjectivity, human beings create what they are.
Our nature, to the extent that we have one	to create ourselves, because we have no essence	To choose, which is the activity that allows us to create ourselves.

Since to live is to choose, human beings are perpetually under the weight of this responsibility to choose. Not only we cannot avoid choosing, but we also can't avoid the responsibility for that choice. Also, nothing compels us to make any particular choice, and nothing can comfort us by taking responsibility for that choice away from us (Panza & Gale, 2008, p. 170).

In addition, Sartre argued that a choice is a creative act. The meaninglessness and valuelessness of the universe are, in a

sense, only the starting points. We say in a sense because nothing creates absolute, eternal values. Those don't exist. Through freedom, though, human beings have the power to escape the utter lack of values that's our starting point in the universe. But this escape isn't easy. It's an act of will that people naturally shrink from. We want someone to provide a set answer — a fixed, eternal meaning — for us, and we don't really want the responsibility that comes with creating values for ourselves. In conclusion, Sartre pointed out that as we choose, we create value. In doing so, we create ourselves (p. 174).

RESEARCH METHODS

The writer is using a qualitative method. In analyzing the literary work, the writer chose Disney Pixar's latest animation, *Soul* by Pete Docter (2020). This animation is selected to be observed because the character of Joe Gardner shows an interesting existential problem that aligns with Jean-Paul Sartre's theory of existentialism.

The data collection procedure of this research is started by watching 'Soul' three times to be able to grasp the essence of the story. The writer downloaded the movie script of *Soul* animation. Afterward, the writer read various previous studies which help the writer to find the niche. Lastly, the writer examines the depiction of Sartre's notion of 'essence' and 'subjectivity' in 'Soul' through the character of Joe Gardner. The data is taken from the scenes, dialogues, and narrations from the movie.

ANALYSIS

The notion of 'essence' of Joe Gardner

Soul movie is told from the point of view of Joe Gardner, the main character. In the beginning, Joe thinks that human beings' personalities and even the purpose of life have been set and found in the realm of the Great Before. The Great Before is a realm where

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new souls are given personalities and passion before the new souls enter the earth portal.

Figure 1: Counselor Jerry points to the last empty circle on a soul's (00:19:10/ 01:40:31)



COUNSELOR JERRY: You'll notice these souls are all missing something. What goes in this spot? Well, these souls need their Spark. And that's where YOU come in! (00:19:14/01:40:31)

From the scene above, it can be seen that the scene represents Sartre's analogy of manufactured watches. The watch's essence — what it is to be a watch — precedes its actual existence because that essence, that purpose, was in the mind of the designer before the watch came into being. Similar to the analogy above, at the beginning of the movie, Joe believed that human beings are shown as a manufactured products. In Joe's understanding, new souls are required to find their 'spark' in the realm of the Great Before. In other words, their passion and meaning must be found before they enter the earth portal. Each new soul will be paired with a mentor who will guide them in finding their 'spark', their passion which will make them a complete human being that is characterized by having a full badge.

Impressively, along the way, the movie emphasizes Sartre's true idea of 'essence'. Sartre argued that human beings are not like watches. Human beings have no *fixed* essence or definition. Sartre believed that human beings exist *before* we have any purpose, or meaning (Panza & Gale, 2008, p. 165). This idea starts when a soul named 22, questioned the way she got her full badge. During his exploration of the realm of the

Great Before, 22 hasn't been able to find her 'spark' yet. Nonetheless, the movie shows how Joe excitedly hops back to Earth. Unfortunately, he accidentally brings 22 along, resulting in 22 entering his body while Joe ending up living a life of a therapy cat. During her days on earth, 22 tries a lot of things which leads to an epiphany.

Figure 2: 22 can't believe that her last box is filled and she gets an earth badge (01:10:00/ 01:40:30).



22 : But... what filled in the last box? Joe seethes, lashing out
 JOE : I'll tell you what filled it in... I did! It was my Spark that changed that badge! She only got that because she was living my life! In my body! (00:19:14/01:40:31)

From the dialogue above, it can be seen that the movie stars showing that the purpose or meaning of life is actually found in life. It is found through experiencing things in life. In the movie, it is told that 22 flees with Joe tailing behind, but Terry catches up and brings both back to the Great Before. 22 realizes that her badge has been filled out, yet Joe insists that it was the result of his experiences and tastes. Joe strongly believed that the only reason why 22 gets her earth badge is that she has experienced life – from the joy of tasting fresh pizza, confronting and make amend with parents, until understanding the sadness of others through her meeting with Connie, Joe Gardner's music student.

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Figure 3: Joe argues that 22's badge was the result of his experiences (01:10:54/01:40:31)



JOE : Come on, 22. Think about it. You hated music until you were in my body. You hated everything until you were me! (00:10:54/01:40:31)

From the scene above, it can be seen that even though Joe Gardner still mistakenly thought that ‘spark’ is the passion that is supposed to be found in the Great Before, but through the dialogue, he started pointing out that 22 found her ‘spark’ as she experienced life on earth. Joe told 22 that she hated music until she was in his body, she hated everything until she was living Joe’s life. Thus, from the scene above, the movie starts depicting Sartre’s idea that in short, people are only what they make themselves. What makes 22 got her earth badge is not her exploration during *You Seminar* in the Great Before. In other words, human beings start as nothing. Human beings are nothing before they start making choices – just like 22, she was nothing, meaningless until she experienced life in Joe’s body. The movie clearly emphasizes the idea that the purpose and meaning of life should be found on the earth. The conversation between Joe and Counselor Jerry then strengthens this idea as the director and the screenwriter showed that ‘spark’ and purpose in life are two different things.

Figure 4: Joe is confused as he believes that music is a spark that makes his life meaningful (01:12:14/01:40:31)



COUNSELOR JERRY : I have to ask... How the Dickens did you do it? Get that Earth Pass to change?
 JOE : Oh... uh. I just... let her walk a mile in my shoes, you could say.
 COUNSELOR JERRY : Well, it worked.
 JOE : Heh... yeah. You should probably get going to the Great Beyond [the counselor turns to walk away].
 JOE : [Stops Counselor Jerry B] Hey, we never found out what 22’s purpose was.
 COUNSELOR JERRY : Excuse me?
 JOE : You know, her Spark. Her purpose. Was it music? Biology? Walking?
 COUNSELOR JERRY : We don’t assign purposes. Where did you get that idea?
 JOE : Because I have piano. It’s what I was born to do. That’s my Spark.
 COUNSELOR JERRY : A Spark isn’t a soul’s purpose [the Counselor walks off, chuckling]. Oh, you mentors and your passions! Your purposes! Your meanings of life! So basic.

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JOE : [Joe is confused] No... No!
 It is music. My Spark is
 music. I know it is!
 (01:12:14/01:40:31)

From the dialogue above, it can be clearly seen how Counselor Jerry explained to Joe that from the very first place, actually what new souls need to explore and find in the Great Before is not passion. It started when Joe said to Counselor Jerry they never found out what 22's purpose was, whether it is music, biology, or merely walking. Afterward, Counselor Jerry answered that they never assigned life purposes in the Great Beyond. He then added that a 'spark' is not a soul's purpose. Counselor Jerry then cynically mocked Joe that he is similar to any other mentor – who always emphasized on meanings of life during the *You Seminar* in the Great Before. Nevertheless, even after Joe heard the explanation from Counselor Jerry, he still mistakenly believe that his 'spark' is music and it has been pre-arranged during his exploration in the Great Before.

Here lies the point when Sartre's famous phrase, 'Existence Precedes Essence' is accentuated. Human beings have no *fixed* essence or definition. Again, Sartre believed that human beings exist *before* we have any definition, purpose, or meaning (Panza & Gale, 2008, p. 165). Sartre really emphasized his notion on the words *fixed* and *before*. Definition, meaning, and purpose come later for human beings. People aren't born with them but must develop them on their own. From Counselor Jerry's explanation, it can be seen how the movie instills Sartre's core idea – human beings create their *essence*. Jerry pointed out that what makes new souls get their earth badge is not the predetermined life purpose that they found in the Great Before. In other words, human beings have to create themselves, because we have no predetermined essence. Not until Joe experienced numbness even after he made it to the club on time and played for the night can he see that 'essence' is meant to be found and searched through life.

Figure 5: Disheartened Joe experienced numbness after reaching his ultimate goal (01:16:13/01:40:31)



JOE : So, what happens next?
 DOROTHEA: We come back tomorrow night and do it all again. [Joe looks confused, slightly disheartened.]
 DOROTHEA: What's wrong, Teach?
 JOE : It's just... I've been waiting on this day for my entire life. I thought I'd feel... different
 (01:16:13/01:40:31)

From the scene above, it can be seen that Joe experienced numbness even after he managed to reach his dream – having a successful gig with a great jazz band. He told Dorothea that he had been waiting for this day for his entire life. Nonetheless, he feels nothing different. The scene above is the turning point when Joe finally gets a clear picture of what 'essence' really means. For his whole life, Joe has thought that his 'spark' is music. He thought that by reaching his ultimate goal as a musician, then he has completed his meaning of life. He has lived his life based on the 'spark' he thought he has been assigned for. Joe became disheartened as he learned that he felt empty – just the same as before he had done the best gig of his life.

The scene above highlights what Sartre means with 'essence'. Sartre stated that the essence of something is whatever makes it

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what it is. So by saying that existence precedes essence, Sartre means that human beings exist — are born and are conscious of their lives — before they really “are” anything. If Joe Gardner’s essence (music) is predestined in the Great Before, then when he managed to do the gig he has been waiting for, he will be accomplished. He had risked everything, even cheated death just to fulfill the predetermined meaning he thought he was assigned for. But in fact, he felt nothing. This scene strengthens what Sartre said that no crucial or necessary ingredient defines what a human being is. Nothing, in short, serves as an essence or nature that forces all human beings to be a certain preordained way. We have no human nature; there’s nothing we’re called or meant to do. We quite literally start as nothing (Panza & Gale, 2008, p. 165).

Likewise, the fact that music becomes the most significant part of his life is not settled in the Great Before.

Figure 6: Young Joe Gardner's first encounter with jazz



- YOUNG JOE : Dad, I don’t wanna go! I don’t like jazz!
- RAY : Black improvisational music. It’s one of our great contributions to American culture. At least give it a chance, Joey!
- [Young Joe locks in on the pianist]
- JOE : This is where it all started. This is the moment where I fell in love with jazz. (00:23:38/01:40:31)

From the scene above, it can be seen how Joe used to hate jazz in the first place. He even refused to go to the club, where a pianist jams with his band. However, his dad explained that jazz is one of African American contributions to American culture. His father persuades Joe to at least try and listen to jazz music. Then, there’s the first time he falls in love with jazz.

The dialogue above proves that Joe’s passion for music was found in life. He was not just born with Jazz within him. He was not born as a music prodigy who starts playing piano as a baby. In fact, jazz was introduced by his father when he was a teenager. His father asked Joe to watch a performance in a cafe. In conclusion, we can see the implementation of Sartre’s ‘existence precedes essence’ through Joe’s life – human beings have no *fixed* preordained essence or definition.

The notion of ‘Subjectivity’

Related to his first theory, Sartre also strongly believed that the first act of consciousness is to choose. Consciousness, in itself, is nothing. It becomes something only as it makes these choices. This idea can be seen clearly from the scene below:

Figure 7: Joe convinced 22 to dare to live (01:26:20/01:40:31)



- JOE : You ready?
- 22 : Huh?
- JOE : To come live!
- 22 : I’m scared, Joe. I’m not good enough. And anyway I never got my Spark.
- JOE : Yes you did. Your Spark isn’t your purpose. That

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last box fills in when
 you're ready to come live.
 And the thing is... you're
 pretty great at jazzing.
 (01:26:20/ 01:40:31)

From the scene above, it can be seen that Joe is convincing 22 to be dare to live. He told 22 to be ready to live. Joe stressed again the idea that 'spark' is not the same with purpose. The last box in 22's checklist is not filled in because she has found her purpose, but the last box fills in just as she is ready to come live. What Joe Gardner just explained to 22 is aligned with Sartre's idea of subjectivity. For Sartre, the first act of consciousness is to choose. The thing is, nothing can comfort 22 by taking responsibility for that choice away from her. In addition, just as Sartre explained, choosing is an act of will that people naturally shrink from because people usually have a fixed, eternal meaning — for us, and we don't really want the responsibility that comes with creating values for ourselves (Panza & Gale, 2008). Therefore, to find her meaning in life what 22 needs to do is just choosing to live.

CONCLUSION

From here it can be concluded that Disney Pixar's *Soul* does portray Sartre's 'existence precedes essence' through Joe's life – human beings have no *fixed* preordained essence or definition. The fact that music becomes the most significant part of his life is not settled in the Great Before. Joe was not born with jazz in him. He even refused to go to the club. Only after giving Jazz a chance can he appreciate the beauty of it. In short, his passion for music was found in life; it was introduced by his father when he asked Joe to watch a performance in a cafe. Lastly, it can be concluded that Sartre's notion of subjectivity can be seen from the scene when 22 decides to live. For Sartre, the first act of consciousness is to choose. The thing is, nothing can comfort 22 by taking responsibility for that choice away from her.

To find her meaning in life what 22 needs to do in the first place is just choosing to live.

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