

**OVERCOMING SPEECH DISABILITY IN TOM HOOPER'S *THE KING'S  
SPEECH* MOVIE (2010): AN EXISTENTIALIST APPROACH**



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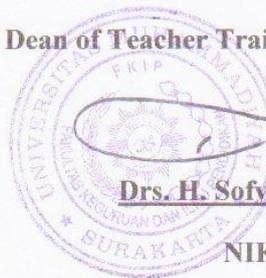
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**ABSTRACT**

*The research is proposed to analyze the Overcoming Speech Disability in The King's Speech movie by Existentialist Approach. The research sets two objectives: the first is to analyze the movie in term of structural elements, and the second is to analyze the movie based on the existentialist approach. This study is qualitative study using the Movie of The King's Speech as the object of the study. There are two kinds of data source: primary and secondary. The primary data source is the play of the movie The King's Speech directed by Tom Hooper and the secondary data source is the other data related to the research, such as books of existentialist approach theory, movie script, commentaries, internet and other relevant information. The method of collecting data in the research is Watching the movie several time, Taking notes of important part in both primary and secondary data, Determining the major character, Arranging the data into several part based on it classification, Analyzing the data based on Existentialist Approach theory, Drawing conclusion based on the analysis of the data. In analyzing the data, the writer employs descriptive analysis. The study comes to the following conclusions. Based on the existentialist analysis, it is evident that in The King's Speech movie, the director illustrates an overcoming speech disability of the King George VI. Tom Hooper reflects how to overcome speech disability for making dream into reality.*

*Keywords: existentialist approach, King's Speech movie, King George VI.*

## A. INTRODUCTION

### 1. BACKGROUND

Speech disabilities vary in type and degree. Some may include difficulty with voice strength, Fluency disorders, aphasia which may alter the articulation of certain words, or voicelessness. Occurrence of speech impairments may be congenital, or due to an injury or illness. At the extreme are people who cannot speak at all must communicate by sign language or by using a talking computer. Yet, even where the disability does not significantly impair the ability to communicate in an understandable way, people with speech disabilities are often subject to ridicule in public and additional discrimination related to employment.

A language disability is a specific impairment in understanding and sharing thoughts and ideas, i.e. a disorder that involves the processing of linguistic information. Problems that may be experienced can involve grammar (syntax and/or morphology), semantics (meaning), or other aspects of language. Speech and language disabilities can be one of the earliest types of disabilities to identify. This is because some of the symptoms are noted because of a lack of social integration, failure to reach developmental hallmarks and the palpable lack of expression in young children. However, if an educator is not trained or informed of the characteristics, the disability can be unnoticed for years. This can cause regression in essential verbal expression skills and lead to low academic achievement. Like all types of disabilities, there is no cure for a speech and language impairment, but there are effective therapies. Students identified with a speech and language disability often qualify for an Individualized Education Plan as well as particular services. These include one-on-one services with a speech and language pathologist.

*The King's Speech* movie is a 2010 British historical drama film directed by Tom Hooper and written by David Seidler. Colin Firth plays King George VI, who, to overcome his stutter, is introduced to Lionel Logue, an unorthodox Australian speech therapist played by Geoffrey

Rush. The two men become friends as they work together, and after his brother abdicates, the new king relies on Logue to help him make a radio broadcast at the beginning of World War II.

Film *the king's speech* was started by actor Colin Firth (King George VI), a beautiful artist Helena Bonham Carter (Queen Elizabeth) and actor Geoffrey Rush (Lionel Logue). This film is produced by the See Saw Films and Productions Bedlam see *the king's speech* movie trailer Prince Albert (Colin Firth) does not ever expect to be king of England. He knows he has limitations. He could not lead a country the size of England while speaking in public just finished her weight struggle. Unfortunately fate of other said and Albert should immediately ascend to the throne.

After the death of King George V (Michael Gambon), Prince Edward (Guy Pearce) who should have ascended the throne, but because Edward prefers off the throne and married Wallis Simpson (Eve Best), there is no other choice except for Albert took over the reins of power. Albert knew that this was not easy affair; especially World War II was in the front door. He should be able to overcome the shortcomings.

Fortunately, Elizabeth (Helena Bonham Carter) never gives up. After trying a few doctors to cure stuttering suffered by Albert, Elizabeth and then tries a more unusual method. He asked Lionel Logue (Geoffrey Rush), a therapist with a strange method, to heal her husband. With strong determination and guidance from Lionel, Albert finally managed to recover. From a guy stutters, Albert became a king who was capable of speech and the burning spirit of all British citizens to face the World War II. (KPL / rock) This film was released in December 2010 and became a Hollywood movie box office 2010.

There are many responses to the performance of *The King's Speech* movie, one of them such as: from *Uginia Urwick*. The film is creating awareness regarding some of the challenges experience not only by persons living with speech impairments but with other forms of special needs. That we could develop special need at any stage in our lives. There

was the aspect too that special needs conditions are irrespective of persons, personalities, ethnic group and background. That the best doctors might not necessary have the solution to every problem. It equally illustrated what families of children or adults with special needs go through socially and emotional. With appropriate therapy technique speech problems could be overcome or minimized.

From those comments the writer could take a note that actually *The King's Speech* movies have a good filming production and education value. It is determined in the plot line, theme and of course in the character of the actors and actresses.

As the audience, the writer also gives his comment onto this movie. The first, the struggle of King George VI to overcome the thing that seems impossible becoming the dream does come true. It is very good character he has ever seen, because it is unique. In one side he was a hard man, but in other side he was a smooth king.

The second, the parents should know that "*The King's Speech*" is totally harmless for an all-ages audience. Quite remarkably, the film contains no sex, nudity or violence. Because it is set inside the royal world of Britain, the language is kept very clean and proper.

The third, this film is able to describe the life is very varied with all the problems and intrigue, the kingdom of life are like the lives of people without a crown.

The last, the presentation of "*The King's Speech*" can be implemented on the lives of anyone, not necessarily the royal family. But once again this film will not only talk about how a candidate for the King of England "to combat" shortcomings in matters of speech, especially in public, but above all the story and the events that appear colored 118 minute duration of "*The King's Speech*", the story of friendship special between King and the therapist.

## 2. Problem Statement

From the background of the study above, the writer would like to state the problem statement as “How is overcoming speech disability for making dream into Reality of King George VI reflected in *The king's Speech* movie?”

## 3. Objective of the study

The objectives of the study are mention the study also aims at analyzing the overcoming speech disability of the major character based on the Existentialist Approach.

## 4. Literature Review

After looking for several literary reviews in Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, the writer has not found the research about *The king's Speech* film done by the other writers. The writer is quite interested in this movie and wants to observe it by using Individual Psychological theory and approach to broaden and understand the movie deeply. The writer applies behaviorist perspective to overcoming speech disability of King George VI in *The King's speech* movie.

## B. RESEARCH METHOD

### 1. Data and Data Source

There are two sources of data namely primary data source and secondary data source: The primary data source is the play of the movie *The King's Speech* directed by Tom Hooper. And the secondary data source is the other data related to the research, such as books of existentialist approach theory, movie script, commentaries, internet and other relevant information.

### 2. Technique of Collection Data

The data in this study are collected and submitted from any library source then they are classified into primary data and secondary data. The Primary Data is expressions, action, thought, and respond from the subjects. The primary data source is a movie in title *The King's Speech* by Tom Hooper. And the Secondary Data is any article, theories, and respond

about *The King's Speech* movie that is relevant toward the aims or purposes of research. By those data, the researcher takes some steps as follows: Watching the movie several times, taking notes of important part in both primary and secondary data, determining the major character, arranging the data into several part based on its classification, analyzing the data based on behaviorist perspective theory, and drawing conclusion based on the analysis of the data.

### 3. Technique of the Data Analysis

The technique used in analyzing the data is descriptive analysis. It concerns with the structural elements of the movie and also analyzes it by using an existentialist approach.

## C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The existentialist analysis of *The King's Speech* movie concerns King George VI feeling as the major character in the film. This character becomes main analysis that is closely related with the existentialist condition. The existentialist analysis of *The King's Speech* movie will give answer to the problem statement about how to overcome speech disability for making dream into reality of King George VI reflected in *The King's Speech* movie. This analysis is presented through seven basic principles of Sartre's theory, which covers *existence before essence*, *being*, *self-consciousness (cogito)*, *freedom (to choose)*, *anguish (anxiety)*, *transcendence of ego*, and *nothingness*.

### 1. Existence before Essence

Existence is shown by King George VI when he has a problem in speech, until he feels uncomfortable in process of communication with public. He is a king who has to deal with these limitations and to get out of that problem. Elizabeth tries to solve problems faced by her husband by finding a speech therapist to cure King George VI, but she fails, until one day Elizabeth is told by the president of the speech therapists society that there is a therapist who uses an unusual method that is Lionel Logue. A

few days after that Elizabeth ask Lionel about strategy on therapist to overcome her husband problems. One day, Elizabeth with her husband King George VI meets Lionel, and have discussions between King George and the therapist. Lionel uses unusual method to overcome the speech disability. The King George VI should read a text loudly, and then Lionel will record it. Lionel gives the tape to King George VI, after that he listens to the tape in home. King George VI is aware that he could read fluently, and then he would really believe the methods or techniques used in healing the stuttering. King George is always accompanied by Elizabeth when he does the therapy at Logue's home.

Elizabeth is surprised after she hears the voice record of The King George VI then they go to Logue home to follow the method of therapist. After King George VI follows that method and gets success with the therapist, he cans speech well in the public. The efforts of King George VI make the family happy with the success of the therapist of speech.

## **2. Being**

Being is divided into two, that is being in itself which is concerning in thing's existence and being for itself which is discussing the human's existence. Being for itself is the being for human that is expressed with action. The action is the sign of humans who have the being. Being in itself in The King's Speech movie is impressed in the major character is King George VI.

King George VI's being for itself is shown when he wants to survive his reputation. King George VI tries to survive his reputation and he wants to do therapy routinely, because of his belief to the speech therapy of his choice. He tries to find speech therapy to cure his speech problem with hard work to be successful. He thinks that with hard work he can overcome speech problem surely therapy aid can heal and give revert his authority.

He gets efforts to survive and believe with his thinking and his consciousness in choosing his own existence perpetually.

### **3. Self – Consciousness**

The consciousness of King George VI is indicated when he talks with Logue. He is fighting his speech problem to be the next perfect King, after his father died.

King George VI has his consistent to hold the principle. He thinks that it is the real nature of King George VI, he never regrets to decide it and he will be responsible with his choice.

### **4. Freedom**

In The King's Speech movie, the writer will analyze the major characters of freedom from and freedom to. King George VI is the major character of this movie. The writer finds the King George VI's freedom from.

The freedom from occurred when Prince Albert (King George VI) gets into trouble when he was appointed to become successor to the throne after his father died. Prince Albert accepts the obligations and he has the disadvantage stuttering. Albert and Elizabeth have been looking many doctors to overcome his stammer. One day Elizabeth finds a speech therapist that has an unusual technique. They go to the home of the therapist named Logue. Prince Albert is invited into therapist room by Logue. Lionel talks with Albert about the history of Albert's life. After long talks, Lionel asks Albert to read a few sentences, and he will record it. After reading a few sentences, Albert gives up and he is not sure with Lionel's method. Lionel gives voice recordings to Albert before he is back home as a souvenir. When Albert listens to music at home, he remembers the voice record and then he tries to listen it. Elizabeth is surprised to hear the record, because she knows that her husband can read fluently. A few days later, they return to the Lionel's house and Albert wants to work harder to overcome the stammer he suffered. After the practice and keep practicing Albert finally succeeds in his speech and can read fluently.

The next freedom is the freedom to. Freedom of expression is a freedom he gets. In this film, Prince Albert (King George VI) is using

freedom to convince his brother, Prince Edward, for not abdicating and marrying a woman who has been married twice, because it could destroy the kingdom. Prince Albert does not choose to accept the throne immediately, because he is aware of the shortcomings in speech. Prince Albert has the freedom of to determine his fate, because of limitations. He does not want his brother to abdicate and marry her girlfriend, to protect the good name of the royal family and their kingdom.

## **5. Anxiety**

This condition occurs after King George VI's decide to listen to his brother, Prince Edward, when he decided not to accept the throne after their father King George V died. Prince Edward does not want to accept that throne, because he has a relationship with a woman who has married and prefers for life far of kingdom. According to royal rule that a future king should not marry a woman who has ever married, Prince Edward announce to his people that he does not want to accept the obligation, because his girlfriend who does not prefer to give motivation to become a king and want to live without any rules of the kingdom. Prince Edward gives the throne to Prince Albert, and Prince Albert becomes King George VI succeeding his father King George V who had been died.

Prince Albert becomes anxiety in here, because he has no other choice and must accept the decision of his brother. Before that, Albert was angry and disappointed with his brother's decision to step down and to more emphasize on his girlfriend than to reign to protect his country. Beside that, Albert is not fit to be a king, because a king should have the authority while he has the disadvantage in stammer speech. The King always interacts with his people every day, while he has shortcomings. But, the family especially his wife Elizabeth is giving motivation to overcome these problems.

The other anxiety of King George VI shows after he begins to open and read the documents state. King George VI feels sad and confused to imagine his fate if he becomes a king. But he does not know about the document like that. He was just naval officer and never knew about the

kingdom. Elizabeth always gives a great motivation and enthusiasm for her husband to confront it all in stride and together.

## **6. Transcendence of Ego**

Transcendence of ego in this film begins when Prince Albert (King George VI) wants to do anything to keep Prince Edward not leaving the throne and marrying a woman who has been married twice. Because, when Prince Edward abdicated to marry her girlfriend, then Prince Albert ascended the throne automatically. Prince Albert did not directly want to receive the throne as king, because Albert is aware of the shortcomings in speaking and Edward was the one who deserves to be a perfect king without limitations. He does not want to take a hasty decision, but still wants to try to resuscitate his brother.

He wants to see his brother to be a king to replace their father, King George V who had died. Prince Albert wants an ordinary life without rules of the kingdom. In this phenomenon, King George VI decides to reject the proposal of Prince Edward. This is the ego of Albert (King George VI).

Albert (King George VI) always thinks about the fate of the kingdom after his father died. He is aware of the limitation that is stuttering in speech, but he is still trying to recover with the help of a therapist. Albert does not want to disappoint the mandate of his father before he died to continue his throne and also protect the people.

Based on the illustrating and conversations above, King George VI does not think only for himself but also for the others. He reaches out to sacrifice his ego weakness in the speech to be a king who had experienced anxiety. He wants to make people and his family proud of his hard work in overcoming the problem stammer. This is called other people level of transcendence.

## **7. Nothingness**

Nothingness in this film begins in the presence of Prince Edward. He is a grown man who cannot defend his opinion. He should accept the throne of the kingdom to replace his father who had died of illness. Wallis Simpson

will not accept the decision and asks for Prince Edward not to accept the throne.

He cannot fight for his position. He follows his girlfriend not to accept the throne and to be a king. He does not begin his existence as adults who are struggling to perform his obligations, so he is in nothingness.

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

After analyzing *The King's Speech* movie using existentialist analysis, finally the writer draws the following conclusions as follow. Based on the existentialist analysis, it is evident that in *The King's Speech* movie, the director illustrates an overcoming speech disability of the King George VI to make a right decision for her and everyone he loved. It is closely related to existentialist condition which can support some problem. Tom Hooper reflects how is overcoming speech disability for making dream into Reality of King George VI. He brings in aspect of existentialist involving make a right decision facing her life. Tom Hooper shows the existentialist condition in the major character and how he faces his problem in her life. The problem deals with ego, anxiety, and dilemma. These are arranged in the narrative and technical elements of structural elements that have relationship one to another. The existentialist problem faced characters are portrayed through visualization of the film.

Naturally, human tends to have problem in their life. It motivates human to solve their problem by choosing the right choice not only for his self but also for everyone he loved. They are succeeding when they can solve the problem instead of avoiding it. Besides that, as human being it is normally to have a willing to get the best thing for life.

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