COURAGE AND SINCERITY IN CATHERINE HARDWICKE'S

RED RIDING HOOD MOVIE (2011):

AN EXISTENTIALIST APPROACH

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by:

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COURAGE AND SINCERITY IN CATHERINE HARDWICKE’S
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AN EXISTENTIALIST APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

This study is about courage and sincerity in Red Riding Hood movie (2011). This objective of the study is to apply the Existentialist approach to analyze the courage and sincerity in Red Riding Hood.

The writer uses Sartre’s major point of Existentialism to answer the problem of the study. The study is descriptive qualitative research which data are taken from script in Red Riding Hood. The technique of analyzing data is descriptive.

The study comes to the following conclusion. First, based on the structural analysis of each elements, it shows that the character and characterization, plot, setting, point of view, theme, casting, mise-en-scene, cinematography, sound, and editing are related to each other and form the unity. Second, based on the existentialist analysis, human has different existence. The existence is based on different being, choice, and act. Human has a freedom to choose and then responsible for the existence. The responsibility will appear an anxiety. Catherine Hardwicke wants to convey a moral message that human has to defend the existence and has to struggle the life.

Keywords: Courage and sincerity, the Red Riding Hood, Existentialist Approach.
1. Introduction

**Background of the Study:** The courage to speak the truth all the time because lies is the biggest and most obvious sort of cowardice that all hide behind. The courage to speak about mind and not stay silent, simply because people are afraid that other people might not agree. Of course, there will be conflicting views. And of course, conflict is unpleasant. But not speaking mind can lead to much worse unpleasantness. However, courage is not merely the name people can give putting up with a bad situation. After all, in a bad situation, there is not much one can do except coping with whatever strength and forbearance. The man who tills the land, not knowing whether he will have a good monsoon shows courage. The woman who resists the temptation to lavish goodies on her children shows courage. Courage is a part of human existence and Existentialist is known as a branch of philosophy which is focused on human existence. Existentialist is not easy to define but existentialist and philosophy has relation of each other. Each philosopher has different way to define the meaning of existentialist. Existentialist analysis has seven major points which consist of *Being*, *Existence before Essence*, *Consciousness (cogito)*, *Freedom to Choose*, *Anxiety*, *Transcendence of Ego*, and *Nothingness*.

**Red Riding Hood.** *Red Riding Hood* is an American/Canadian dark fantasy film directed by Catherine Hardwicke, produced by Leonardo DiCaprio and starring Amanda Seyfried as the title role, from a screenplay by David Leslie Johnson. It is very loosely based on the folk tale *Little Red Riding Hood* collected by both Charles Perrault under the name "Le Petit Chaperon Rouge" (Little Red Riding Hood) and several decades later by the Brothers Grimm as "Rotkäppchen" (Little Redcap).
The Red Riding Hood movie opens with the view of small village called Daggerhorn. Then Valerie kids show up, she will take the water from the river. At least some people know about her village but many people know about bad situation in her village. In two generations her village has been terrorized by werewolf. The conflict starts where the arrival of famous witch hunter Father Solomon, who reveals that the townspeople did not slaughter the real Wolf because it would have changed back into its human form if they did. Still, the townspeople decide to celebrate. But the festivities are interrupted by the arrival of the real Wolf, who in a rampage kills several people.

When the two arrive back at the village, it is shown that one of Father Solomon's guard is still alive, though he has been bitten by the Wolf. Father Solomon explains that those bitten by the creature during the week of a blood moon receive the curse as well and, despite the protests of the guard's brother, kills the guard in an attempt to save the town from yet another werewolf.

The following day, Father Solomon arrests Roxanne's autistic brother, believing him to be an accomplice of the Wolf because of his behavior during and after the attack. Father Solomon has him tortured for refusing to name the beast. Roxanne negotiates for her brother's release by telling the priest that Valerie can communicate with the Wolf, but when led to her brother, finds him already dead.

Meanwhile, Father Solomon captures Valerie and uses her as bait that to lure the Wolf from hiding, but she is rescued by Peter and Henry. While Henry frees Valerie's arms from some chains, Peter sets afire the tower from which Father Solomon is overseeing the action. In the act Peter is caught and imprisoned. Father Solomon's men attempt to shoot the fleeing Valerie and Henry with crossbow bolts and in the ensuing mayhem the Wolf appears, killing
many more and following Valerie to the church, where it burns its paw attempting to enter. Father Solomon, who steps out of the church courtyard as he tries to kill the Wolf, gets his hand bitten off. Roxanne and the other women shield Valerie from the wolf until the sun rises, while Father Solomon, wolf bitten and cursed, is executed by his vengeful chief guard.

Meanwhile, Valerie has a dream and becomes convinced that her Grandmother (Julie Christie) who lives in a cabin in the woods near the village and also has very brown eyes, is the Wolf and sets out to destroy her and save the village. Valerie sets off for her grandmother's house, stopping at the chapel on her way out of the village, and putting Father Solomon's severed hand in her basket. In the woods, Valerie meets Peter, who is wearing a glove. He does not explain how he was able to get out of the elephant, but believing him to be the Wolf attempting to hide his burned paw, Valerie slashes him with a knife. She flees to her grandmother’s house.

When Valerie arrives, it seems as though her grandmother is acting strangely, hiding in her curtained bedchamber while she talks to her granddaughter. It is then revealed that the Wolf was neither Peter nor Valerie's grandmother, but her father Cesaire, he pulls back the curtains and strides into the main room. Cesaire explains to Valerie that he needs someone to whom he can pass on his gift, as the blood moon is almost over. He explains that he originally intended for it to be Lucy, however once she saw him, she remained frightened; revealing that she could not understand him. Any offspring of a Wolf would have been able to understand its language. Upon this revelation, Cesaire acted out of rage and killed Lucy.

As Cesaire is about to bite Valerie, Peter arrives to save her. Cesaire bites Peter in the ensuring struggle, but is killed by Valerie's stab to the gut after
Peter’s axe to his back. Valerie and Peter dispose of Cesaire’s body by filling him with rocks and dumping him into the water of a nearby lake. Valerie chooses to remain living in her grandmother's house. She intends to wait for Peter who fully aware that he is cursed, retreats to the wilderness in order to learn how to control his power. A couple of years later, as Valerie pick some plants, she hears a sound. Looking up, she sees the Wolf, Peter now. She smiles as they reunite. The final shots are of Valerie in the red cloak walking on a snow-capped mountain with Peter.

Red Riding Hood Movie 2011 is a Horror, Fantasy. This movie tells about as the death toll rises with each moon, Valerie begins to suspects that the werewolf could be someone she loves. Panic grips the town as Valerie discovers that she has a unique connection to the beast one that inexorably draws them together, making her both suspect and bait. This movie released on March 11, 2011. And the budget of this movie is $42 million.

There are four reasons why the writer is interested to analyze this movie. The first is because this movie is based on the folk tale Little Red Riding Hood collected by both Charles Perrault under the name "Le Petit Chaperon Rouge" (Little Red Riding Hood) and several decades later by the Brothers Grimm as "Rotkäppchen" (Little Redcap). Second one is the movie was directed by Catherine Hardwicke, who made the first "Twilight" film. Here's a movie that cross-pollinates the "Twilight" formula with a werewolf and adds a girl who always wears a red hooded cape. Third is this movie is a romantic story between Valerie and Peter. Although Valerie’s parents have betrothal her to a rich man named Henry but Valerie still loves Peter. Beside that the setting of this movie is very beautiful place like Black Forest hundred years before. The last reason is the major issue in this movie is courage and sincerity. The courage and sincerity are found in Valerie as major protagonist character. She faces many problems with
courage and she also has sincerity of love to her boyfriend “Peter” although Valerie’s parents have engaged her with someone else.

**Problem Statement** of this research is “How are courage and sincerity reflected in Catherine Hardwicke’s Red Riding Hood movie (2011)?”

**Limitation of the Study** is The writer focuses in courage and sincerity in Catherine Hardwicke’s Red Riding Hood movie (2011) by using Existentialist Approach.

**Objective of the Study** is to analyze courage and sincerity reflected in Catherine Hardwicke’s Red Riding Hood movie and to analyze Catherine Hardwicke’s Red Riding Hood Movie based on the structural elements of movie.

**Literature Review** After looking for several literature reviews in the Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, the writer has not found the research about *Red Riding Hood* movie done by the other researchers, so this research is the first study ever constructed in the Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta.

2. **Research Method**

In this research, the researcher uses the descriptive qualitative method. The writer analyzes the data from the written script or oral words from the Red Riding Hood movie film using existentialism approach.

In doing this study, the writer uses two sources of data namely primary and secondary data sources. (1) Primary data source is the movie itself, Catherine Hardwicke’s *Red Riding Hood* movie. (2) Secondary data sources are taken from existentialist theory book and also *Red Riding Hood* movie review. The methods of collecting data are documentation the picture and note taking, with the steps are: (1) Watching the original movie for several times, (2) Reading the movie script, (3) Determining the character that will be analyzed, (4) Taking notes of important thing both of primary and secondary data source, (5) Classifying and determining the relevant data, (6) Browsing on the internet to search information that relates with movie, such as film’s subtitles, identity, response of the public, etc. The
technique used to analize the data in this movie is descriptive analysis. It concerns with the structural elements of this movie and existentialist approach.

3. Existentialism Theory
   a. Notion of Existentialism

       According in Sartre (2002: 40) there are two kinds of existentialists, namely “Theistic existentialists or Christian existentialist” and “atheistic existentialism”. Christian existentialists are Jasper and Gabriel Marcel Heidegger, Albert Carnus and Sartre are included in atheistic existentialist. Both of them believe that existentialism before essence but they have different opinion about existentialism.

       Human existence is different “the human being exist actually, by standing out or emerging thought the decisions and act that make this person the unique being that he or she is”

   b. Jean-Paul Satre’s Theory on Existentialism

       1) Being

       Being is a measure of human existence, a dimension based on subjectivity. According to Sartre, being is divided into two. Being-for-itself which is discussing about the human’s existence and Being-in-itself which is concerning in thing existence.

       2) Existence Before Essence

       The second major principal of existentialism is the terms existence before essence who is proposed by Sartre. Sartre (2002: 44) states that existence before essence is human being face with their self, exists in the world and define their self. Human existence is different with the thing existence, through the term of “Existence before Essence”.
Hasan (Hassan, 1985: 103) explained that “man is nothing else but what he makes of himself. Such is the first principle of existentialism.” Further it is explained, “A man lives means that he has an existence rather than a man is which means he has being or essence.” Man is being by his conscious as his own self and as like that he cannot be exchanged.

3) **Cogito (Self Consciousness)**

Cogito is not self experience but human existence in non-thematic way. A man must have certain purpose to do something. When he decides something, he must predict its profit and its loss. Cogito is the aspect of existentialist as a point to analyze the existence of the major character, the existence implies by Cogito, it is requirement in human existence.

4) **Freedom to choose**

The fourth major principal is freedom. Man is free and responsible. Human responsible on himself because human has freedom and opportunity to do, to choose good life and to become everything he wants. Making a decision is a form of human’s freedom “Man is nothing else but his plan; he exists only to the extent that he fulfills himself; he is therefore nothing else than the ensemble of his act nothing else than his life” (Hassan, 1985: 103)

5) **Anguish (Anxiety)**

Sartre expressed that anxiety happens when human decides himself as what he wants to be, but what he decides to choose as choice will be hard responsible by him (Hassan, 1985:105).

All choices will have a risk and also responsible, because of that the anxiety will be felt by him because of the hard responsibility and the risk. Human will always choose in the life problem.

6) **Transcendence of Ego**

Human has a big power of Ego to help each other in the society. As the part of society, human has Transcendence of Ego. Transcendence of ego
such kinds of tendencies for human to do more helpful for their society as a useful person or a hero, for the example the men has tendencies to help the woman who gets an accident at the street.

7) Nothingness

Every existence must be ended by death; it means that death is one of prevention of human freedom. Human life, absolutely they exist, they can do anything and other human else can receive their existence but when people die, they will be nothingness. Sartre proposed that death just can be hoped (Hassan, 1985: 108).

4. Theory of Courage

According to Atticus Finch, an honest lawyer in Harper Lee's novel To Kill a Mockingbird (1960) courage is not a man with a gun in his hand. "Real courage" is when you fight for what is right regardless of whether you win or lose. In this book Atticus shows praiseworthy courage and exemplary behavior, in many instances, throughout the story. Not by winning brawl fights or killing, but by standing up for what he believed in a civilized but determined fashion. His strongest motivation, however, were his kids. He wanted to be a good example to his kids and instill in them a strong sense of moral values.

5. Research Finding
a. Being

Being is distinguished into two. First is being-in-itself which concerns with thing’s existence and second is being-for-itself which discusses human existence. Being-in-itself in Red Riding Hood movie is shown in the presence of the silver based on the meaning of characters. Every werewolf can be injured or died because of weapon made from silver.

Roxane : Silver fingernails.
To kill a werewolf.

Father Solomon: Get out.

Roxane: Please, I have more than money to offer.

Valerie manages to kill her father or the werewolf using the dismembered hand of Solomon. That is silver fingernails of father Solomon.

b. Existence before Essence

In *Red Riding Hood* movie the writer focuses in analyzing of existence before essence of the major character on the process of her becoming. Valerie is the major character in this movie, in the process of becoming Valerie describes herself as being for itself to make her existence in her life. In the process of being Valerie illustrates herself as someone who lives in a village in the edge of a dark forest.

c. Cogito (Self Consciousness)

Consciousness is seen when Valerie sacrifices herself for the safety of villagers from the werewolf. She is aware that it can kill herself but she does that because the werewolf just wants her.

Father Solomon: Do you deny it?
Valerie: No, I don't deny it.
Father Solomon: And what was the nature of this conversation?
Valerie: It promised to leave Daggerhorn in peace as long as I go with it.
Father Solomon: The wolf is someone in this village who wants you, Valerie. Do you know who it is? I'd think very hard if I were you. Tell me. Tell me who it is. Give me a name. It wants her, not you. If you wish to save yourselves, simply give it what it wants.

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Secondly, consciousness can be seen when Peter with alacrity and wise is leaving Valerie and lets her engage with someone else that is Henry, a man who can make Valerie happy with his wealthy.

d. Freedom to choose

In this movie the central character has the freedom to choose the best one choice for his life. The first freedom is shown when Valerie’s mother has engaged Valerie with Henry because Henry is rich man. Valerie refuses the engagement, she cannot do it because she does not love Henry. Valerie has freedom to accept or refuse someone who proposes her.

As a human who has a freedom to choose, she chooses the second choice. Valerie loves Peter very much, because Peter can make her life happy and colorful.

e. Anxiety

Anxiety in this movie can be seen when Valerie is able to understand the Wolf, gazing into its deep brown eyes, and she can communicate with it. Then she comes to the grandmother’s house and talk to her grandmother about that. She thought that the werewolf is her grandmother.

f. Transcendence of Ego

As social creatures, people should help and do the best for other people around them. In this movie transcendence of ego is shown when the village is terrorized by the werewolf. She wants to sacrifice herself in order to the werewolf appear and not terrorizing the village again.

Fathersolomon: And what was the nature of this conversation?
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Henry: You can't give her to the wolf. That's human sacrifice.
Fathersolomon: We've all made sacrifices.

From the conversation above, it indicates that Valerie helps Father Solomon to catch the werewolf. She does everything that father Solomon orders, she sacrifices herself to save the village.

g. Nothingness

Nothingness in *Red Riding Hood* movie is not analyzed through the central character, because Valerie can keep her existence. Nothingness will be analyzed through another major character grandmother, Cesaire and minor character Father Solomon. Nothingness begins when father Solomon fights with werewolf. He gets a bite from the wolf so his soldier kills him.

6. Conclusion

The analysis of the major character in *Red Riding Hood* movie by Catherine Hardwicke shows that courage and sincerity are part of human existence. The major character gives the important part of the meaning of life which is based on the Sartre’s theory of existentialism. This movie can give a good inspiration for human life. Every courage, struggle, love and sincerity in this movie can inspire the people who watch this movie to get happiness in life.

In *Red Riding Hood* movie, Catherine Hardwicke shows that the major character in this movie has different existence. The villagers in Daggerhorn struggle to save the village from terrors the werewolf. To prove their
existence, human have to start with their being which has an action to show their purpose in their life. Human require consciousness to reach his goal, it means that if someone does not have consciousness, he will have not existence which can define himself. It involves at the major character that has his own existence to reach his destiny and happiness. Consciousness is an aspect of an existentialist as a point to analyze and to show the meaning of life from main character. Consciousness is point to analyze and to show that tell the truth is part of meaning life. Humans must exist first and then an existence, he is aware after doing something and realizing that telling the truth is important although it arises some risk. Indeed the existence of consciousness is absolute, because conscious is self-consciousness that can show the meaning of human life. It implies at the major character which has his own existence in which to save the village she tells the truth that the werewolf just wants her life. So, she sacrifices herself to werewolf.

Through *Red Riding Hood* movie, Hardwicke wants to show that every human being is free. Everyone will face such several choices but he must take one choice it is called freedom. Freedom to choose is the condition of man in making choices. Human has an absolute and unlimited freedom. Humans also determine their choice without any influence from others. With the freedom, Valerie can choose her own choice. She should take the responsible for herself and the other people. This condition is called anxiety. The anxiety of Valerie begun when the townspeople decide to celebrate the death of the wolf, Valerie saw Peter dance with Rose. She felt jealous and angry. She is afraid if Peter really leaves her and lets her marry with Henry. After that Valerie is able to understand the Wolf, and gazes into its deep brown eyes, is able to communicate with it. Their life is in danger and full of conflict that make his life not comfortable again. That sample event always occurs in human existence, everyone will face the condition which he must choose one of some choices directly.
In *Red Riding Hood*, Catherine Hardwicke also wants to prove that the human existence sometimes out of his ego. Everyone has an ego, sometime he shows his ego in the high level and his ego to do something which is useful for the other or society level. This phenomenon is called transcendence of ego. The transcendence of ego of every human has inequality level. Transcendence of ego occurs when Peter and Henry still save Valerie. They cooperate to save Valerie from devoting her to werewolf. As a human being Peter is not selfish although he loves Valerie very much, for her safety he with Henry together struggle for Valerie.

The next is the existence of human will end when they die. Death is one of prevention of human freedom. Human life, absolutely they exist, they can do anything and other human else can receive their existence but when people die, they will be nothingness. Nothingness begins when grandmother dies. Cesaire kills his mother because she knows about the big secret in his life.

Finally, in this movie Hardwicke shows how they struggle to save the village from terrorizing of the werewolf. The ending of the story, the villagers in Daggerhorn can be back in time and undo any moments to a normal life as well. Peter is realizing that he is bite and will be cursed to become the werewolf. Then Valerie helps him dumps Cesaire's body in the lake and he rows away. He promises to return when he has controlled the beast within, and Valerie leaves Daggerhorn and moves into her grandmother's cottage, waiting the day Peter returns. Henry leaves with Solomon's troupe to hunt werewolves. Therefore, *Red Riding Hood* movie has existentialist aspect namely being, existence before essence, consciousness, freedom to choose, anxiety, transcendence of ego and nothingness which build the character of this movie.
REFERENCES


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