

**STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE IN ERIN GRUWELL'S
FREEDOM WRITERS DIRECTED BY RICHARD
LAGRAVENERSE:
AN INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH**



RESEACH PAPER

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Freedom Writers movie is the movie that is directed by Ricahrd Lagravenese and starring Hilary Swank, Scott Glenn, Imelda Staunton and Patrick Dempsey. It has been adapted from the book of *The Freedom Writers Diary* by teacher Erin Gruwell. The movie was theatrical released on January 5, 2007 in USA. The movie was released on VCD Paramount Picture in a special edition, 2 discs, running time 122 minute and full screen.

The movie tells about Erin Gruwell (Hillary Swank), with this background, an idealistic teacher arrives to teach English. She is very educated, pretty, middle class, non-ethnic, well-dressed, and smart. Erin Gruwell (Hillary Swank) gets a job as a teacher in Woodrow Wilson Classical High School in Long Beach, California. The first day at school is a shocking to her, as she sees a fight almost breaks out in her classroom. Her students do not obey her and continuously talk back against her. While struggling with the students, Erin Gruwell has to deal at the same time with two complicated and demanding male relationships. Her husband (Patrick Dempsey) is supportive, but often jealous of her time commitments. Her father (Scott Glenn) is often disappointed of her career choice, but proud of her courage and tenacity. She gives a project to the students to write their diary in the form of a book. She compiles the project into a book and names it *The Freedom Writer Diaries*, after the *Freedom Riders*. Her

husband divorces her, and Margaret tells her, Erin Gruwell cannot teach her kids for their junior year. She fights this decision, eventually convincing the superintendent to allow her to teach her kids' junior and senior year. The film ends with a note that Gruwell successfully brings many of her students to graduation and college. The *Freedom Writers* method not only increases the involvement and satisfaction of students with school but also of teachers. The ripple effect of the *Freedom Writers* story brings students and educators together in an environment that promotes acceptance and embraces diversity. Instead of judging others by their economic standing, the color of their skin, or their learning abilities, students learn from each other and find common threads in their lives.

There are two reasons the writer is interested in studying this movie. The writer is interested this movie from structural elements including character, setting, and theme. Depend on the character, the writer likes the struggle for existence of the major character's a teacher.

The writer will observe the *Freedom Writers* movie by using the theory of Alfred Adler. The basic of Adler's concept is explained into six basic concepts. They are (1) inferiority feeling, (2) striving for superiority, (3) fictional finalism, (4) social interest, (5) creative self, (6) style of life. Depend on it, the writer studies this movie entitles "Struggle for Existence in Erin Gruwell's *Freedom Writers* Directed by Richard Lagravenese: An Individual Psychological Approach".

B. Literary Review

Freedom Writers movie is an interesting movie and as far as the writer know, that there is no such kind of research that analyzed film whether in Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta and Surakarta region. So it is the first research on this movie.

In this occasion, the researcher takes An Individual Psychological Approach to reveal the struggle for existence of Erin Gruwell's as one the major character of in *Freedom Writers* movie.

C. Research Problem

The problem of the study is "How is the major character struggle for existence reflected in Erin Gruwell's a major character of *Freedom Writers*?"

D. Limitation of the Study

In this research, the researcher will focus on the analysis of the major character of *Freedom Writers* movie from the aspect of An Individual Psychological Approach by Alfred Adler.

E. Objective of the Study

The objectives of the study are described as follows:

1. To analyze the movie based on its structural elements.
2. To analyze the movie based on the individual psychological approach.

F. Benefits of the Study

There are two benefits of the study:

1. Theoretical Benefit

To give additional contribution to the each other literary researchers, especially study of *Freedom Writers* movie.

2. Practical Benefit

Practically, the study can add the knowledge to the researcher of the individual psychological theory applied in a literary work, particularly on Erin Gruwell's *Freedom Writers* movie.

G. Research Method

1. Object of the Study

The object of the study is Erin Gruwell *Freedom Writers* movie.

2. Type of the Study

The researcher analyzed the data by using qualitative method that does not include any calculating and numerating.

3. Type of the Data and the Data Source

There are two sources of data namely primary and secondary data sources.

a. Primary Data Sources

The primary data source is the movie of *Freedom Writers*, written by Erin Gruwell.

b. Secondary Data Sources

The secondary data sources are the author's biography, essay, comment, homepage, and website about the movie and other relevant sources.

4. Technique of the Data Collection

The data collecting technique used in this study is the library research.

The necessary steps are as follows:

- a. Watching the movie repeatedly to get a deep understanding.
- b. Reading some related books to find out the theory, data and information required.
- c. Taking notes of information in both of primary and secondary data.
- d. Arranging the data into the several parts based on its classification.
- e. Drawing conclusion based on the analyzing data.

5. Technique of the Data Analysis

The technique used analyzing the data is descriptive qualitative analysis of content analysis. The writer gets the data from watching the movie in order to have the deep understanding. In secondary data, the writer uses an individual psychological theory proposed by Alfred Adler.

H. Paper Organization

This research is divided into five chapters. The first chapter is introduction that explains the background of the study, literature review, research problem, objective of the study, benefit of the study, theoretical approach, research method, and paper organization. The second chapter is dealing with the

underlying which covers the notion on individual psychological theory, and basic assumptions of individual psychological of Alfred Adler, structural elements of the movie, and theoretical application. The third chapter is structural analysis of the film, including narrative and technical elements. The fourth chapter deals with the analysis of individual psychological. The fifth chapter deals with conclusion and suggestion.