

**THE INFLUENCE OF THE ENVIRONMENT IN FORMING  
MICHAEL OHER'S PERSONALITY IN *THE BLIND SIDE*  
MOVIE (2009): A READER RESPONSE THEORY**



**Submitted as a Fulfillment of the Requirements for Getting Bachelor  
Degree of Education in English Department Faculty of Teacher  
Training and Education**

**By:**

**RISTAMAYNI WULANDARI SANTOSO**

**A320150253**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH EDUCATION  
FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION  
UNIVERSITAS MUHAMMADIYAH SURAKARTA  
2020**

APPROVAL

**THE INFLUENCE OF THE ENVIRONMENT IN FORMING  
MICHAEL OHER'S PERSONALITY IN *THE BLIND SIDE*  
MOVIE (2009): A READER RESPONSE THEORY**

PUBLICATION ARTICLE

Written by:

**RISTAMAYNI WULANDARI SANTOSO**  
**(A320150253)**

Approved by the Consultant

Faculty of Teacher Training and Education

Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta

The Consultant



**YenyPrastiwi, S.Pd., M.Hum., Ph.D.**

NIK. 1047

ACCEPTANCE

THE INFLUENCE OF THE ENVIRONMENT IN FORMING MICHAEL  
OHER'S PERSONALITY IN *THE BLIND SIDE* MOVIE (2009): A  
READER RESPONSE

Written by:

**RISTAMAYNI WULANDARI SANTOSO**

**A320150253**

Accepted and approved by the Board of Examiners

Faculty of Teacher Training and Education

Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta

On February, 2020

**The Board of Examiners:**

- **Yeny Prastiwi, Ph.D.**  
(Chair Person)
- **Dr.Phil. Dewi Candraningrum, M.Ed.**  
(Member I)
- **Titis Setyabudi, M.A.**  
(Member II)



Dean,



**Prof. Dr. Harun Joko Prayitno, M.Hum**

**NIP. 1965 04 28 1993 03 1001**

## STATEMENT

I hereby declare that in this publication's text no work has ever been submitted to obtain a degree at a tertiary institution and to the best of my knowledge no work or opinion has ever been written or published by anyone else, except in writing referred to in the text and mentioned in References.

If later there is proven untruth in my statement above, then I will take full responsibility.

Surakarta, 7 February 2020

Author



**RISTAMAYNI WULANDARI SANTOSO**  
**A320150253**

# **THE INFLUENCE OF THE ENVIRONMENT IN FORMING MICHAEL OHER'S PERSONALITY IN *THE BLIND SIDE* MOVIE (2009): A READER RESPONSE THEORY**

## **Abstrak**

Penelitian ini membahas tentang bagaimana lingkungan sekitar dapat berperan dalam merubah kepribadian dari Michael Oher dalam film *The Blind Side* yang direspon oleh para pengamat film di Rottentomatoes. Menggunakan teori respon pembaca, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui tipe respon pembaca yang paling sering digunakan dalam memberi penilaian tentang terbentuknya kepribadian Michael Oher. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskripsi kualitatif dan adanya data primer dan data sekunder. Data primer didapat dari pengamat film *The Blind Side* di Rottentomatoes, dan data sekunder berasal dari beberapa referensi dan materi yang berkaitan dengan kebutuhan penelitian ini seperti artikel-artikel dalam alamat web. Dalam penelitian ini, data didapat dari November 2009 sampai Januari 2020 yang mencapai 210 pengamat film dengan jumlah rating 6,1. Hasil lalu menunjukkan bahwa textual reader response adalah kategori yang mendominasi dari beberapa kategori respon pembaca.

**Kata kunci:** Lingkungan, Kepribadian, Respon Pembaca

## **Abstract**

This research discusses about how the environment taking its role in changing Michael Oher's personality in *The Blind Side* movie that was responded by the reviewers on *Rottentomatoes* website. Applying the theory of reader response, this research aims to know what is the most used type of reader response implemented in reviewing Michael Oher's forming personality. This research is using descriptive qualitative method and there are primary and secondary data sources. The primary data are taken from the reviewers of *The Blind Side* movie in *Rottentomatoes* website, and the secondary data are some references and material that relates to the study needs such as articles in websites. In this research, the data taken from November 2009 until January 2020 that reaches 210 reviewers in total with 6,1 rating given by the reviewers. The result then shows that textual reader response is dominating the applied category of reader response.

**Keywords:** Environment, Personality Change, Reader Response.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The words personality is often seen as a something that can distinguish the individual's character and how people behave in their own way (Kartono and Dali, 2006). Kartini and Dali also stated that it is an integration of some characteristics about someone that well recognized by the others. Then it is known

that personality is something deeper than a behavior. One's personality can be influenced by the factor of hereditary and the environment surrounded individuals (Hopwood et al., 2011). Environment here is including the background of place we live in, daily experience, people we socialize with; family, peers, friend in the school, and also communities. As a human, we can't be separated from the environment that influence our behavior because we live side by side with it. One of biographical sport movie titled *The Blind Side* (2009) highlights a story about its main character who develops his personality influenced by the environment. This main character named Michael Oher. *The Blind Side* was released in 2009 under the direction of John Lee Hancock. In this movie, Oher is narrated as an introvert teenager who always get bad treatment as where he steps his shoes. Many problems are facing him; the issue of his family, his social life, and even bullying. Everyone is underestimate and discriminate him because he is a big black boy who has different size among the common teenager. It leads him to be forever silent, always lower his head, and lack of self esteem. As Oher lives just like a wind blow, one day he meets Tuohy family that soon adopt him and become the part of he rich family. There, Oher's blind side is discovered and developed. It is his ability in football game and his great instinct to protect others until he gets a position of a left-tackle in one of Memphis big football club. However, it's all due to the family's care and love towards Oher.

## **2. METHOD**

This study conducted by using the type of descriptive qualitative research because it explores the meaning of an object that relates to social or humanistic problem (Creswell, 2014). The primary data of this research gotten from the reviewers of Rottentomatoes website who responded about the environment influence in forming Michael Oher's personality in *The Blind Side* movie. The secondary data then taken from the references and material that relates to the study needs. The technique of data collection uses in this research is purposive sampling that involves some steps including sets the limitation for the study and gathers the information through the raw documents. Afterwards, the researcher analyzed the

data by categorizing the reviewers' response based on the type of reader response in order to answer the question of what is the most used category of reader response by the reviewers in *The Blind Side* movie in responding Michael Oher's forming personality?

### 3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

In giving the response in Rottentomatoes website, the reviewers also put their personal background of life that may related to the story of Michael Oher. Thus, each of the reviewers had different strategy in responding the issue. As mentioned by Richard Beach (1995), that there are five category of reader response; textual, experiential, psychological, social, and cultural reader response category, the researcher here then found it all except the social one.

Table 1 The Type of Reader Response

No	Types of Strategy	Total	%
1	Textual	28	70
2	Experiential	8	20
3	Psychological	3	7,5
4	Cultural	1	2,5
5	Social	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

It displays that the reviewers mostly used the textual type which has 28 in total, while experiential type is used by 8 person. Following psychological type that only has 3 reviewers, and the least is cultural reader response that only has 1 reviewer.

Textual reader response as the most used category shows that the reviewers mostly influenced by the storyline of *The Blind Side* movie. The reviewers who applied textual reader response mentioned that it is due to the role of Oher's new family that leads him to the success after him being treated awfully by his former bad environment as what the story of *The Blind Side* provides. Proven by one of the reviewer named Kate Rodger in New Zealand that stated:

*According to this story, his rise was due almost entirely to his adoptive mother (Sandra Bullock), a rich god-faring woman, who plucked him from*

*the streets, gave him a home, a family, and the will to strive to succeed* (NZ/9/11/2019).

The tale of Oher's good luck is somehow interests the reviewer. It relates to Wolfgang Iser's theory about wandering viewpoint, that the highlight of the story captured the reviewers' interest and make them travel inside the movie as a whole literary work (1978). Afterwards the reviewers tend to find any way to connect and complete the the meaning into their own personal perspective because in a narrative work, the plot is usually left blank and suddenly moves into different side story (Shi, 2013).

Next is experiential reader response that requires reviewers' past experience in giving their own interpretation towards a literary work (Rosenblatt, 1938). That factor then led them to consider that the story of Oher's forming personality has a cliché and very common plot. As Wesley Lovell, one of the reviewer, pointed that the plot is not surprising anymore until it results such a familiar story. Below is the statement of Wesley Lovell:

*We've seen the story so many times: wealthy woman rescues poor youngster from obscurity, gives him love and support, and aids him in becoming a strong, independent and accomplished adult. So, it isn't surprising that a film like this would be brushed aside as mere fluff* (US/1.28.2010).

It shows that she is having an experience in watching the some movies with the same plot. Plot in literary term is seen as a number of events that going on in detail and then structured a scene (Stobaugh, 2012). Soiferman and Straw and (2016), then added, in reacting to a plot, the readers' past experience is also can give the influence. Then it is clearly reflected to one another, when the reviewers reacted to the plot in *The Blind Side* as a common story they related it to their past experience.

Following the next category is psychological reader response that emphasize subjectivity of the response given by the reviewers because they symboling the text through their personal perception (Spirovska, 2019). Psychological reader response indeed requires someone's personal lense in seeing



this world to interpret a meaning (Holland, 1990; Stahlberg, 2017). Due to the difference in having the personal belief and understanding, the reviewers here also having any other perspective that is not mostly the role of Tuohy family can develop Oher's personality. It is as stated by S. Jhoanna Robledo in his words:

*It centers on messages about inclusion, the benefits of hard work, and the importance of family. That said, it sometimes feels as if it glosses over many of the challenges that Oher and his "rescuer" (socialite Leigh Anne Tuohy, played by Sandra Bullock) must have faced (US/11.20.2009).*

He argued that Oher's hardwork and great will also affect his life to be better. According to Dombi & Wysmulek (2015), the value of the hardwork and surrounded by right people is having a high percentage in determining people's success.

The last is cultural reader response. The reviewer responded about the Memphis accent and attitude of Sandra Bullock who acts as Anne Tuohy in taking care of Oher as his son. That response comes from Cole Smithey who wrote down his statement that shown below:

*Bullock nails the Memphis accent and attitude of her character Leigh Anne Tuohy, a white family woman of privilege who takes into her home African-American Michael Oher (Quinton Aaron), an over-sized high school senior athlete from a broken home in the ghetto. (US/12.05.09)*

From that being said, this reviewer categorized in a cultural reader response since it carries personal background to the process of understading this movie. According to Beach (1995), the background is including the race, gender, sexual orientation, and political background. Those things can be reflected as where the reviewer situated in society.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

The conclusion within this research is about the most used type of reader response that the reviewers applied in responding to Oher's forming personality in *The Blind Side* movie. In this research, the researcher analyzed the four type of reader response that are textual, experiential, psychological, and culural reader response. In giving their review, the reviewers on Rottentomatoes mostly use the textual

reader response type that based on the storyline of the environment that influenced the forming personality of Oher.

## REFERENCE

Ardiyanto, Angga. (2011). Need for Considering Different Modes of Learning in John Lee Hancock's *The Blind Side* Movie (2009): An Educational Psychological Perspective. Accessed from Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, Electronic Theses and Dissertation <https://eprint.ums.ac.id/12755/>

Beach, R. (1993). *A Teacher's Introduction to Reader-Response Theories*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Carson, T.R. 2010. Curriculum Implementation, in Kridel, (Ed.). *Encyclopedia of Curriculum Studies*. Thousand Oak: SAGE Publication.

Creswell, J.W. (2009). *Research Design Qualitative, Quantitative and Mix Method Approach*. London: Sage

Dombi, A.B. & Wismulek, Ilona. (2015). Determinants of Success. Hard Work and Talent or Family and Good Luck?. Research Gate.

Holland, Norman N. (1990). *Holland's Guide to Psychoanalytic Psychology and Literature-and-Psychology*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Hopwood, C. J., Donnellan, M. B., Blonigen, D. M., Krueger, R. F., McGue, M., Iacono, W. G., & Burt, S. A. (2011). Genetic and environmental influences on personality trait stability and growth during the transition to adulthood: A three-wave longitudinal study. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 100(3), 545– 556. DOI: 10.1037/a0022409.