

**THE ROLE OF DIALOGICAL COMMUNICATION IN BUILDING  
HUMAN EXISTENCE IN FILM “AKEELAH AND THE BEE”**



**Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Getting Bachelor  
Degree of Educational in English Department**

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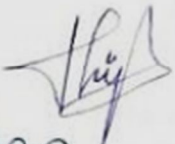
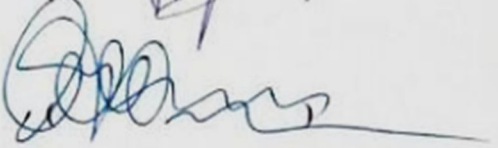

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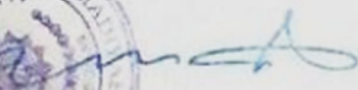
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## **THE ROLE OF DIALOGICAL COMMUNICATION IN BUILDING HUMAN EXISTENCE IN FILM “AKEELAH AND THE BEE”**

### **ABSTRACT**

This research aims to: 1) explain the dialogue theory of Mikhail Bakhtin, 2) describe the concept of dialogue reflected in the film “Akeelah And The Bee”, 3) describe how dialogical communication can build the existence of Akeelah's. Here the author focuses on the theory of dialogism, and the concepts of dialogism by the dialogue of the characters in this film. This film has been framed into everyday life that is easily understood by audiences from all walks of life. The source of data in this study is qualitative descriptive in the form of words and actions, the rest is additional data. The data collection technique used the look-note method. This study uses the theory of Dialogism by Mikhail Bakhtin. Dialogism is that “other” is an integral part to build awareness of “self”. The “other” in Bakhtin's theory of dialogism is necessary because the “self” can never see itself as a whole. The result of the study was found the effect and also existence of the main character based on the dialogical communication, Akeelah got enough support and motivation to be able to show herself to people, even to people who used to mock her.

**Keywords:** human, dialogue, exist, communication

### **ABSTRAK**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk: 1) menjelaskan teori dialog Mikhail Bakhtin, 2) mendeskripsikan konsep dialog yang tercermin dalam film, 3) mendeskripsikan bagaimana komunikasi dialogis dapat membangun eksistensi Akeelah. Di sini penulis memfokuskan pada teori dialogisme, dan konsep dialogisme dengan dialog para karakter dalam film ini. Film ini telah dibingkai dalam kehidupan sehari-hari yang mudah dipahami oleh penonton dari semua lapisan masyarakat. Sumber data dalam penelitian ini adalah deskriptif kualitatif berupa kata-kata dan tindakan, selebihnya merupakan data tambahan. Teknik pengumpulan data menggunakan metode lihat-catat. Penelitian ini menggunakan teori Dialogisme oleh Mikhail Bakhtin. Dialogisme adalah bahwa “other” merupakan bagian integral untuk membangun kesadaran akan “diri”. “other” dalam teori dialogisme Bakhtin diperlukan karena “self” tidak pernah bisa melihat dirinya secara keseluruhan. Hasil penelitian ditemukan pengaruh dan juga keberadaan tokoh utama berdasarkan komunikasi dialogis, Akeelah mendapat dukungan dan motivasi yang cukup untuk dapat menunjukkan dirinya kepada orang-orang, bahkan kepada orang-orang yang biasa menjeleknya.

**Kata kunci:** manusia, dialog, eksistensi, komunikasi

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Film is a work of modern art shown on the big screen where film has a function as entertainment, not only entertainment but, also guidance in learning life by taking lessons from a film that is shown. The film industry has now become a large industry that is quite popular around the world, where feature films from various countries are being shown. One of the films were found is "Akeelah and The Bee" this film actually already shown on 2006 in American. Hearing American, we must be familiar with the film that was production from there in much genre. One of the films that has been released in America is the one that we will discuss in this study.

"Akeelah and The Bee" film written and directed by Doug Atchison Release on March 16, 2006 in The Cleveland International Film Festival (CIFF) and on April 28, 2006 in United States. Movie time is 112 minutes, with a language English. This film is very inspiring because Akeelah as the main character, a girl who 11<sup>th</sup> years old could be win in competition of the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington DC. With many struggles, she can overcome all of that with support from her environment such as family, friends, neighbour and others.

Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin was born on November 17, 1895 in Oryol, Russian and died on March 7, 1975 at the age of 79. He studied at the University of St. Petersburg and in 1918, he left the university at the height of the Bolshevik Revolution and settled in Vitebsk, where he worked as a school teacher. The beginning of the emergence of this dialogue theory originated from his essay entitled *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* (1981).

Bakhtin's theory of dialogism is based on a neo-Kantian philosophy of language and social oriented aesthetics, linguistics, Russian Formalism, and contemporary Marxist ideological theory. As for Bakhtin's thought, which is also called Bakhtinian philosophy, which appears, it mainly covers the area of morality and discourse studies.

In Manshur (2017) revealed that Bakhtin's foundation of thinking about dialogue is applied in a methodology called 'dialogism'. This concept offers

significant challenges to the practice of discourse authority. According to Bakhtin, dialogue, as an antidote to monologism, produces differences and as a result has the potential to expand capacities across cultural and individual boundaries. In this context, the individual can be referred to as “self“, while culture can be referred to as “other“. In an effort to build this literary theory, Bakhtin formulated the concept of human existence about the "other" who played an important role.

## **2. METHOD**

The method used is descriptive qualitative method. The source of this research data was the film "Akeelah and The Bee" and all articles and or journals which related in this study. The data of this study are in the form of conversational sentences in the film that contain motivational elements that cause struggles for the main character in the film. The source of data in this study is qualitative research in the form of words and actions, the rest is additional data. The data collection technique used the look-note method. The data collection process is supported by using language research methods, namely listening.

## **3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **3.1 Findings**

In this research finding section the author will try to analyze the method of dialogism theory by Mikhail Bakhtin. Here are, the finding of this study by analyzing “Akeelah and The Bee” in the dialogism theory. Each finding would be explained in the following explanation.

#### **3.1.1 Dialogical Communication (dialogism) Build Akeelah’s Existence**

This is the first finding that the author finds in this film. Human existence in this study is represented by the main character Akeelah. To build human existence, Bakhtin put forward the concept that there must be another person "other" and the individual itself "self". Which if there are these 2 concepts, there will be co-being and a dialogue will occur which proves that "other" and "self" can build human existence.

Akeelah at first was a child who was not respected. She is just an 11<sup>th</sup> years old girl who goes with the flow of life without thinking about the future. However, Akeelah has an advantage in the field of learning English. Akeelah always gets the best score even though she doesn't study at all, from here the English teacher invites Akeelah to participate in the spelling bee competition. At first Akeelah refused, because she did not want to be in the spotlight or the material of ridicule, especially for her school friends.

With the dialogical communication between Akeelah and other influential figures in this film. Just as Akeelah communicates with her English teacher, it is the principal of Akeelah's school who also communicates to try to persuade Akeelah to take part in a spelling bee contest that starts between schools. Graduating from this stage, she was desperate and didn't want to proceed to the next stage because many people laughed at her in the hall when she couldn't spell the "Pulchritude" given by Mr. Larabee. With this incident, many people who care about Akeelah don't want Akeelah's ability to be wasted on providing support.

Akeelah received a lot of support, both physically and mentally. The physical support that Akeelah gets is the presence of Mr. Larabee who provides full facilities by directly training Akeelah. Not only that, Mr. Larabee also provided extra training to improve Akeelah's abilities, by giving flash cards containing words and their origins as well as books (essays) with new words. As for the mental support that Akeelah got, it was like encouraging motivational sentences, she got all of that from the people around her.

After getting full support Akeelah finally reached the final stage in the spelling bee contest. At the end of the contest she got



first place by against Dylan. Akeelah gave up her chance for Dylan, so he wouldn't be scolded by his father again. On the stage of the competition, both of them supported each other to do their best.

Finally, after going through several spellings word for word given by the jury or judgement, both of them reached the final stage until they both won. Everyone is happy about it, both Dylan's father who has never shown that he is proud of his son. When his son won the contest he was very proud of his son. Likewise with Akeelah, Akeelah has many supporters, many of whom watch on television. They all shouted happily, when Akeelah was declared "That's correct".

From this, human existence occurs, when Akeelah interacts with dialogical communication with the people around her. This can have quite an effect on Akeelah. She was able to achieve victory with the help of the people around her as well as herself who received input from the best people.

### 3.1.2 The Concept of Dialogical Communication Reflected In The Film “Akeelah and The Bee”

Here were the findings of the concept of dialogical communication reflected to the film “Akeelah And Bee.”

#### 3.1.2.1 Carnavalesque

According to Robinson (2011) “Carnival is a kind of syncretic, ritualised pageantry which displays a particular perspective. Its defining feature is festivity – life lived as festive. “There are 2 techniques that can be applied to analyze literature, namely monoglottic and polyglottic techniques. The difference between the two is that the monoglottic technique is commonly used to analyze literary works such as poetry, because poetry does not have many voices, as we know poetry is only the expression of the

author himself without any additional characters. The polyglottic can be used to analyze literary works such as novels and films, in which there are various kinds of voices or there are several characters who of course have interactions with each other which create a dialogue with various ideologies.

In the carnival method, usually using the polyglottic technique to analyze. As mentioned in Chapter II, hybridization has 6 concepts that will be analyzed in this study. Which is where the author finds 5 of the 6 hybridization concepts from this film.

#### 3.1.2.1.1 Single Utterance

In this concept, it is the same as the heteroglossia method which uses a monologic technique. Which examine from Bakhtin there are poem and speech or oration. Heteroglossia is the method used to analyze the monolog literature or single speech. There is found one dialogue or one person in the language. In this study, author found single dialogue which is not a poem or speech, it can be look as opening narration of the main character in the film. In the film found 3 single speech (monolog) from 2 different characters.

First, Akeelah Anderson is a main character from this film. At the opening of the film Akeelah tells where the direction of this film will go or it can also be called the introduction. Akeelah explained how she felt as the main character in this film besides that, she also introduced herself. Here is the monolog or single dialogue that Akeelah's said in the film:

*“Akeelah: you know that feeling, where no matter what you do or where you go, you just don't fit in?.”*

*don't know the word of that. Alienation? Estrangement? Incompatibility?. Nah, those ain't right. But, there's gotta be a word for it. 'Cause it's how I feel all the time.*

*My name's Akeelah Anderson and I'm 11 yers old, and this all starts at Crenshaw Middle School in South Los Angeles."*

In another scene, minute 1.24.39 the author also finds another monologue from Mr. Larabee. There, words or expressions of motivation such as crossed Akeelah's mind were spoken by Mr. Larabee. In that scene Akeelah is walking towards the end of the spelling bee contest journey to stand in front of the big stage. The monologue sentence spoken by Mr. Larabee is as follows:

*"Our deepest fear is not that we are indequote. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, georeous, talented, and fabolous.? Actually, who are you not to be?."*

Those are some of the monologues that the author finds in this film. Actually, as has been said above the concepts of the carnival, namely single speech, is the same as the method of heteroglossia there is no difference.

#### 3.1.2.1.2 Meeting

Meeting in the specific sense of Bakhtin here is a conversation between two or more people who talk about human life. As for the type of conversation in this meeting, it can be said that it is important, not just daily conversations that have no important meaning

such as jokes, ridicule or others. Examples of simple meetings can also be found in everyday life such as teenagers who confide in their friends. Here, the meeting concept can be used in some scenes. That will be shown in the next following paragraph.

First, in the minutes 2.20 there found Akeelah's English teacher (Ms. Cross) ask Akeelah to follow the competition of spelling bee, because Akeelah have a good score in English Subject.

Here is the dialogue both Akeelah and her teacher:

Ms. Cross : You know, you could be one of my very best students. But you don't turn in half your homework. Sometimes you don't even show up for class. What's going on?

Akeelah : I don't know

Ms. Cross : Have you heard of next week's spelling bee?

Akeelah : No

Ms. Cross : Well, I think you should sign up for it.

In that scene, Akeelah was called by her teacher to the teacher's office. Ms. Cross ask Akeelah the reasons why she didn't do her homework and other school jobs and also ask Akeelah to follow spelling bee contest. In this dialogue, it was found that the content of the conversation was related to human life, where the content of the dialogue could also be a support for Akeelah, who had felt insecure. Ms. Cross give her a motivated by saying that she is the one of her best students.



also show expression of concern by saying why people laughing at her. That's it because Akeelah indimidate them of her greatness. The dialogue above show that it was in speech arena, furthermore it is found that Mr.Larabee, Mr.Welch and Akeelah talking in their ways.

#### 3.1.2.1.4 The Difference from One Era to Another

The age difference can be seen between the ages of the parents and the times of their children. With the difference in times, of course, there are differences in ideology as well. With this, the film "Akeelah and The Bee" also has some of time differences between several existing characters who later have different ideologies. The following is the concept of epochal differences found in this study.

Here, at the minute 18.18, it was the first meeting between Mr.Larabee and Akeelah. The first impression that Akeelah shows to Mr.Larabee is an impolite girl. Here is found that both in the different era, children in Akeelah's time, used words that were not polite when spoken to an older interlocutor. Therefore Mr. Larabee as the predecessor who was taught manners wanted Akeelah to speak well and politely.

Akeelah            So why are you home during the day?  
                              : Ain't you got a job?  
Mr.                    Do me a favor. Leave the ghetto talk  
Larabee            : outside, all right?  
Akeelah            Ghetto talk? I don't talk ghetto.  
                              :  
Mr.                    And you got no job?

Larabee : You use that language to fit in with your friends. Here you will speak properly or you won't speak at all. Understood?

Akeelah : Yeah. Whatever

Mr. : You can leave now.

Larabee

Akeelah : Excuse me?

Mr. : I said you can leave.

Larabee

Akeelah : How come?

Mr. : Because I don't have time to waste on insolent little girls.

Larabee

Akeelah : Insolent? I ain't in... I mean, I'm not insolent. It's just the first thing you do is start doggin... criticizing the way I speak. I thought this was just about spelling words. Well, then fine...

From the dialogue above found that Akeelah usually used an informal language to her friends. But she should use formal language to the older people. It found that both Mr. Larabee and Akeelah come from a different era.

#### 3.1.2.1.5 Social Differentiation

The social differentiation meant by Bakhtin is that not all human life in the world is the same in social strata, such as in terms of ethnicity, language, culture, ideology, horizon of hope as well as religion or spiritualism. So, based on the meaning from Bakhtin in Social differentiation author found some in this study, which will explain in the next following paragraph.

In the minute 16.30, Dawg or Terrence, Akeelah's second brother talk about something related to ethnicity. As in the following scene and dialogue:

Terrence     What you looking at?  
                  :  
Akeelah     Spelling bee.  
                  :  
Terrence     Oh, yeah, I heard about that. You're  
                  : going up against a brunch of rich,  
                                  white kids.  
                                  They're gonna tear you black ass up.

In the dialogue above, Akeelah and her second brother was talking face to face. Where the content of the conversation contains elements of life that often occur. White people make fun of black people. From the dialogue, it was made Akeelah feel uncomfortable.

### **3.2 Discussion**

After analyzing the data above, the researcher found several things that will be discussed in this chapter. This chapter can be started by exploring dialogism theory which will focus more on the dialogue expressed by the characters in the film. The achievement in this analysis is the classification of dialogues in films into Bakhtin's theory of dialogue. In Bakhtin's theory of dialogue, there are several branches, the first being two methods of heteroglossia and carnival. As already discussed, at the carnival there are 3 basic categories, namely hybridization, interrelated language dialogue, and pure dialogue. Of the three basic categories, only hybridization is used in this study, of which hybridization has 6 other branches called the concept of hybridization, including: single speech, encounters, speech arenas, different linguistic awareness, differences from one



era to another, and social differentiation. Author in this study used objects in the form of films because by watching films messages and learning could be more easily accepted.

Author is interested in the character of Akeelah, an 11-year-old girl who can change her way of thinking from being insecure to being able to prove herself to people who didn't even glance at her before. Not only is she able to prove herself, she also has a good heart, she is even more concerned with others than herself. Mr. Larabee as Akeelah's coach, plays an important role in training and supporting Akeelah like a father treats his daughter. In this film there are many other characters so that the dialogue is created that supports this research. Therefore, the author chose "The Role of Dialogical Communication in Building Human Existence in the Film "Akeelah And The Bee" as the title of the paper.

The author uses the theory of dialogism because it is very suitable for researching the topic chosen by the author. This film is more about Akeelah's struggle to enter the spelling bee contest, which at this age Akeelah still needs support, especially from those closest to her. This film also describes how the main character Akeelah, to be able to make people around her know that she can do it (spelling bee), especially her mother. For the content in this film, the author believes that there is a place to use the theory of dialogism.

This research is also very relevant to real-life events, many children are born not from educated families not from well-to-do families. With so many of the children not getting the good care of their families. In this film, Akeelah does not come from a wealthy family, but her mother is very smart, and even received a scholarship to study medicine. But, because she was busy with work, she paid attention to the 11-year-old Akeelah. In the end, Akeelah was confirmed by her English teacher at school to enter a spelling contest that changed people's views of her.

At the end of the film, when Akeelah and Dylan are left standing they support each other. At first Akeelah gave up victory for Dylan so he wouldn't be angry with his father again, then Dylan also did the same to Akeelah. Until finally the winner of the competition was won by the two of them, which made everyone happy.

#### **4 CONCLUSION**

After the author finished studying the film, the author concluded that the dialogue was important in having the human existence. Based on the dialogue theory of Mikhail Bakhtin, human existence can become more meaningful. First, an individual existence especially in society is not recognized. Then, through dialogues from individual to another individual, it will be able to make him more recognized by the society. In this way, individual who previously feels inferior because he has no opportunity to develop his ability, becomes more enthusiastic, motivated to achieve her dream, make progress, happiness due to his passion. In addition to being motivated, individuals who previously received public recognition will become more optimistic.

In this film, of course, it proves that every character has existence, because there are dialogues that they practice to show that the character in the film exists. For the conversation itself has 2 directions, namely monologue and dialogue. Monologue is a single conversation, in which a person does not need the presence of another person to be able to respond to what is being said. As mentioned in several chapters above, literary works that are monologues are poetry and speeches. And for literary works of dialogue, that can be seen from films, or also novels discussed by Mikhail Bakhtin.

From this film, there are lots of dialogues and there are several monologues, both "spoken" from the main character and from other characters. The dialogues contained in the film lead to human existence, in which the dialogue between Akeelah and other characters has a support effect for Akeelah who is struggling to tell people in a large scope that she exists. The writer classifies the dialogues of Akeelah and other characters according to Bakhtin's theory. The researcher concludes that dialogue occurs because

humans exist, and then in the dialogues in this film, it creates a support effect for Akeelah who is in the phase of needing support. In this support, it can provide reciprocity for existing characters which can have a positive effect on themselves and other characters.

This is reflected when initially Akeelah was not confident in her abilities, getting various motivations from people, including family, friends, coaches, teachers, and also the principal. And in the end Akeelah also gave motivation to people who were in need, such as when Mr. Larabee didn't have the enthusiasm so he couldn't be Akeelah's coach anymore. This is because Mr. Larabee remembered his daughter who had died 2 years younger than Akeelah. So, the author concludes that support is needed by every human who exists, for that it will be better for us to motivate others and until one day we feel the adversity of others will also help us.

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