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Character Strategies – Supporting Characters in the Movie "Easy A" to Release Feelings of Inferiority through Adler's Perspective

Setianti Nur Mahatmi[1*], Sukarjo Waluyo[2] & M. Suryadi[3]

[1, 2, 3] Ilmu Sastra Universitas Diponegoro

Article Info

Abstract

Lack of self-confidence often occurs in every individual. In general, every individual experiences this experience in living his life. Ostracism is an event that is often encountered in the phenomenon of human life. To be free from this experience, every individual often tries to free himself from feelings of inferiority or distrust. In the film "Easy A," there are three supporting characters named Evan, Bryan, and Eric Ling who experience self-doubt and are ostracized by their school friends because the three characters are considered to have personalities that do not conform to expected social norms in that environment. Therefore, Evan, Bryan, and Eric Ling tried to escape their self-doubt and become individuals in line with what their school friends had set them up for. To get out of their feeling of inferiority, they used the level of popularity of the main character in the film, Olive Pendhergast, who was famous because of false rumors that she was no longer a virgin and dated many men who were deliberately spread by herself to make herself famous. The method used is a literary psychology approach using theories from David Brodwell's film elements and Adler's theory. This research was carried out to understand how an individual's efforts can free themselves from feelings of inferiority in social life through the perspective of the three supporting characters of the film "Easy A." The author found that the three supporting characters of the film "Easy A" have four ways to let go of feelings of inferiority to Adler's theory: making excessive efforts, being hasty or impatient, having solid impulses, and not considering other people

INTRODUCTION

Feelings of insecurity are often experienced by several people throughout life. This is due to several factors that affect the personality. People who are not confident usually have a negative self-concept and lack confidence in their abilities and, therefore, often close themselves off (Tanjung & Sinta Huri Amelia, 2017). Individuals with personality or insecurity generally understand negatively about themselves as seen by their physique, personal self, social self, and achievements. On the contrary, that confidence level is necessary to live in society. The confidence that a person has will know and understand themselves well (Suharno & Siti Fitriana, 2019). Feelings of low self-esteem or insecurity are everyday emotional experiences in which a person feels a lack of self-esteem, confidence, or self-worth. This can be triggered by various factors, such as traumatic past experiences, rejection, excessive criticism, social comparisons with others, or unrealistic standards imposed on oneself. (Dwiki, 2017). Feeling useless is the main factor in the problem of insecurity in the social environment (Dirgayunita, 2016). This problem is closely related to psychological problems in humans. Feeling confident brings an understanding of the concept of self not being negatively returned in the eyes of others. According to (Tanjung, 2023) In Quora, he recounted that his experience of feeling exclusion impacts a person's personality and affects the level of socialization of an individual with others in his or her current life. This is closely related because there is communication with others. In addition, on a website called Terminal, Muhammad said that the experience of being ostracized has hurt his life until now; trauma is a natural thing experienced by people who experience this phenomenon (Rohman, 2020). The phenomenon of exclusion can occur anywhere.

The feeling of lack of confidence or, in other words, inferiority, according to Adler. Confidence or inferiority is the feeling of being unable to consider people better than themselves; generally, these people find it easy to give up, feel sorry for themselves, and give up easily (Adler in Musriani, 2019). Inferiority or confidence in individuals is generally necessary for life in society. These feelings relate to each individual's personality development in living his or her life. Self-esteem from self-confidence is needed in this concept (Deni & Ifdil, 2016). This phenomenon can generally cause an individual to get discrimination. This severe problem violates the principles of equality and human rights (Komariyah & Uswatun Nisa, 2022). Efforts to reduce discrimination include education, anti-discrimination policies, public awareness, and strict law enforcement against violations of individual rights. Discrimination is defined as a difference in behavior carried out by an individual or a group of individuals towards another person related to specific attributes such as race, social class, religion, and others that are considered different from the understanding possessed by the behavior (Theodorson dan Theodorson in Sihombing, 2009). This leads to each individual wanting to let go of insecurity so that they are not considered weaker and different by others. Discrimination is inevitable, and social life, where people meet and communicate with each other, is the main factor. Confidence can increase positivity in his life (Amin, 2018). Communication efforts will be smoother if there is confidence in humans. Social interaction allows communication between other people. Group relationships between groups are also possible through social interaction (Muslim, 2013).

In addition, in a study conducted in the field, the object of study was a student; it was found that psychological factors that affect their performance are stress, phobias, depression, and inferiority complex (Cahyaningtyas, 2020). It can be seen that the condition of achievement can affect a student's personality level. Feelings of inferiority can give rise to compensatory events. The meaning of compensation here is all efforts to overcome feelings of inferiority (Suryani, 2012) Because humans are required to be able to develop themselves into better human beings. Confidence is the primary capital to fulfill self-confidence (Riyadi, 2019) This phenomenon can arise especially after a person experiences a situation in which they feel "inferior" or less appreciated in society. For example, when a person feels neglected, belittled, or considered worthless by others (Amri, 2018), They may feel the need to compensate by demonstrating their superiority in other aspects.

The feeling of superiority is the feeling that comes later in life to everyone after being considered in a weak position in society. This feeling of superiority is often a psychological defense mechanism to overcome the insecurity or discomfort that arises from feeling unappreciated. Humans urgently need this mechanism under threat and pressure (Sanyata, 2009). In a state of danger, humans save themselves. However, it is essential to remember that demonstrating superiority does not always result in healthy or happy social relationships (Fibriyanti, 2013). The term was first introduced by psychoanalyst Alfred Adler, who developed the theory that inferiority complexes can be a powerful motivation for individuals to achieve success and achievement (Maulani et al., 2019). Adler said that if inferiority

comes early, a feeling of superiority will come later in life, where superiority can release the difficulties of inferiority (Adler in Ansbacher & Anbascher, 1956). Each individual does four ways to let go of their self-doubt: by seeking security for their position, by making an excessive effort, in a hurry or impatiently, with strong encouragement, and without considering others (Adler in Turner, 1927). Releasing self-doubt is needed by every individual in living their social life because they feel helpful to others. Other benefits that can be obtained are many positive things, such as developing yourself, becoming more self-aware, and having everything you want (Andiwijaya & Franky Liauw, 2019). Everyone can benefit from being confident in interacting with the surrounding environment.

In this study, the object of study is a literary work. The scope of literary works is novels, short stories, films, poems, and others (Darma, 2004). The film is an example of a literary work of research object. "Easy A" was nominated in 2011 as the best comedy film by the Critics Choice Awards America. This is one of the works of directors Zanne Devine and Will Gluck. The film was famous at that time because the main character was played by a famous American artist, Emma Stone (Shafer, 2016) It tells the story of Olive Pendhergast, a famous high school student at her school. Olive's character is famous for the false rumors that she spreads about herself, saying that she has dated many men and is no longer a girl to be considered cool. The phenomenon is that his schoolmate, who has inferior feelings named Bryan, is shunned by his friend because he is homosexual, and Evant is ostracized because he has a large body. Eric Ling's appearance is not considered cool to others, making Olive seem like an intermediary to release their feelings of inferiority by making false rumors that the three of them are also dating him to be superior, like the main character in this movie. It can be a benchmark that film becomes the object of research because it contains messages and symbolic meanings that are deliberately created to be able to communicate with the community (Wicaksono et al., 2013). The hidden meaning will deliver the message to the reader. Social and cultural messages are hidden in the object of this study (Sudarisman, 2016). Every film narrative has a message that the creator symbolically makes.

(Sangu, 1994) "Pencipta (pengarang) terhadap dunia sekelilingnya (realitas sosial) yang diwujudkan dalam bentuk karya sastra, maka kiranya dapat dikatakan bahwa karya sastra merupakan pembayangan atau pencerminan realitas sosial .Pengarang cerita sengaja membuat suatu karya sastra mirip dengan kejadian sehari – hari yang terjadi di kehidupan. Maka dari itu, sastra dan kenyataan hampir memiliki keterkaitan (Sangidu, 1994) (Damono, 2011). One of the literary works is a film. The movie "Easy A" is one of the best American comedy films that discusses the unique issue of high school teenagers. In this article, the research object is a film, so the author also applies David Bordwell's film structure theory to analyze this film. David Bordwell divides film's cinematic and narrative elements into *the Classical* and Art Cinema narratives. Bordwell interprets narrative as selecting and making specific effects on the audience (Bordwell, 1985). According to Bordwell, there are narrative elements, namely characters and plot. (1) Character: Bordwell divides the character into the protagonist and the antagonist. The protagonist is the main character in a movie. Meanwhile, the antagonist is a companion character. (2) Plot, according to Bordwell, Plot has several stages. The first stage introduces the character that plays a role, time, and where the character's state of mind is introduced at this stage. The second stage is the story journey to the top of the film's story. At this stage, there is a section where the character conflict is apparent, and there are flashbacks and fast-forward terms of the story. Flashbacks are meant to remind the audience of the initial story, while fast forwards are story jumps that allow the story to continue. In the third stage, it is the end of the story that the audience can understand. Cinematic elements are also found in an object of film study. These elements include mise en scene, lighting, and characters' costumes (Bordwell, 2005).

The author found that three previous studies discussed Adler's personality theory. The first research (Akhdiyah, 2022), entitled "August's Character's Inferior Feelings and His Efforts to Become Superior in the Movie Wonder," discusses the intentions or goals of August's character to become superior, according to Adler. The author found four goals: fictional goals, social interests, creativity, and lifestyle. The second research (Aramitha, 2022), "The inferiority of the main character in the film "Amelie Rentt," uses Adler's theory through the approach of literary psychology. The author found four principles: inferiority, pseudo-goals, the struggle to become superior, and creative self-goals. Not only finding four principles, the author also found that there are five compensations for Amelie's character, namely stubbornness, rebelliousness, disrespect, courage, and challenging attitude. The third research is entitled "The Superiority of Hua Mulan's Character in the 2020 Mulan Film: A Study of Adler's Personality Psychology Theory" (Chumairo, 2020). The author found six principles in Mulan's personality: pseudo-goals, the struggle for

superiority, inferiority and compensation, social interests, lifestyle, and creative self. In previous research, the author explained only how the forms of inferiority of Adler's concept in a literary work object. In this study, the author distinguishes that it will focus on analyzing (1) the concept of strategies that everyone does to release their sense of inferiority by becoming superior according to Adler and (2) how the concept of strategy is raised by the three supporting characters in the movie "Easy A" named Brando, Evan, and Eric Ling. This study aims to analyze and explain how the strategies carried out by each individual to release their sense of inferiority by becoming superior according to Adler's concept reflected in the movie "Easy A" through three supporting characters.

METHOD

In the article "Character Strategies – Supporting Characters to Release Feelings of Inferiority through Adler's Perspective," the author will analyze how each releases feelings of inferiority using Alfred Adler's theory through a literary psychology approach using qualitative methods. Literary psychology is a research approach to a literary work containing psychological creativity (Endraswara, 2008). Literary psychology is related to a character's personality in a literary work. To secure a safe position in the lives of the community, the research data taken by the researcher is a snippet of images and dialogues by Alfred Adler's theory. The author then continued with the data by explaining it further. Coupled with literature studies, data is obtained by watching movies, noting essential things, and then analyzing. The qualitative approach is a research approach that explains a social phenomenon occurring in the object (Abdussamad & Patta Rapanna, 2021).

Two data collection methods are applied in this study: documentation and observation. The observation method is a way or concept in research to understand literary works (Hasanah, 2016). Meanwhile, the approach to the documentation of a concept from Miles and Haberman is that there are three stages of data analysis: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles & Saldana, 2014). Data reduction is the first step; namely, by watching the movie "Easy A," the researcher tries to evaluate what social phenomena are related to the psychological concept of each character to release the feeling of inferiority from the three supporting characters in the film, then continue by presenting the data by describing the data that has been obtained described in clear, descriptive sentences or the form of a complete

description, Third, the conclusion is drawn so that the theory is compatible with this research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Analysis of Film Narrative Structure
Character

In this article, the author uses the object of the movie "Easy A" by Will Gluck. According to David Brodwell, cinematic and narrative elements are present in the film (1999). The narrative elements that stand out in this study are characters and plots. The characters consist of two: the protagonist and the antagonist.

Olive Pendhergast

As the main character or central character in the film, the character Olive Pendhergast (played by Emma Stone) is the protagonist in this film. Olive Pendhergast is a high school teenager who became famous for false rumors about She has dated many men and has not returned to look fabulous in the eyes of her friends or, in other words, to gain validation from her environment by the understanding of the protagonist where the character often appears in a movie.

Brando

Brando is a character whom his schoolmates ostracize because he likes the same sex. In this film, the people around him still consider this issue taboo. This character is ostracized because his friends feel weird about Brando. Therefore, Brando takes advantage of Olive's popularity so that he can date Olive and be recognized by his friends that Brando's sexual orientation is normal, not same-sex lovers.

Evan

His friends shunned Evan because he had a good body fat (not ideal). Evan feels unconfident; therefore, the character of Evan is an antagonist/supporting character of Olive's character. He also utilizes Olive's character so that he can be more confident.

Eric Ling

Eric Ling had no friends because he was a nerd, and no one approached him. Therefore, this character also uses Olive's popularity to overcome his distrust.

Plot

The plot is the stages of the story. The first stage the introduction of the character, namely the appearance of Olive Pendhergast is, a high school teenager who is not famous at his school; the second stage, because Oliv feels that he is not

famous, he spreads false rumors that he is no longer a girl by dating many of his male friends at school. This makes her three friends, who feel shunned in her school environment, make Olive a tool for themselves to be safe by making false rumors that they are also dating Olive, which makes the three of them not get rid of it again and let go of their inferiority. The third stage is because the rumor made them famous in their environment, not considered weak, and become confident again. Although the way they do it is unnatural.

Strategies to Release the Inferiority of Supporting Characters with the Adler Concept

The phenomenon supporting characters in the film "Easy A" are Brando, Evan, and Eric Ling, who have a way or strategy to release the feeling of inferiority that exists in them. According to Adler (McCluskey, 2022), there are four concepts: making excessive efforts, being in a hurry or impatiently, having strong encouragement, and not considering others.

Doing excessive effort.

Excessive effort is something that an individual should not do. Here are the excessive efforts made by the three supporting characters of the movie "Easy A."

Brando

Olive : "Actually, indirectly, I slept with many men who were just lies. From here, you should learn Brando."

Brando : "It is chaotic. They do not like me. Do you mean I have to pretend I am not gay so that people like me? That is new. It would be best if you were teaching at The Learning Alex. Olive Pendhergast's Teachings of the Fake Cheap Girl" (Easy A, 21:20 - 25:07)

Fits the concept of Adler (2013). Brandon agrees to make an unconventional effort to make himself more confident by spreading lies just like Oliv, just to be liked by his friends at school. Brando is a gay student, so his friends at school avoid him.

Evan

Evan : "Can we talk for a minute? Brandon told me that you had done it. Didn't he do it? I hope you can do it to me, too."

Olive : "Goodbye Evan."

Evan : "Wait, I can pay you. I thought you did not want to. I am just a useless fat person."

Olive : "Okay, I agree." (Easy A, 42:10 – 44:15)

Just like Brando Evan, he also wants to let go of his inferiority because his large physique and being overweight make his friends get rid of him; the way to let go of their inferiority is to make false rumors with Olive. What should not have been done? Evan even begged Olive for him to help her.

Eric Ling

Eric : "Olive, will you help me?"

Olive : "I have memorized this is going to happen." (Easy A, 46:30 – 46:53)

The dialogue footage shows that Olive has memorized that someone asked him to help spread fake dating rumors about her. Eric, whom his friends shun because he is a nerd, also wants to relinquish his inferiority in a way that he should not.

In a hurry
Brando

Brando : "Come on Olive Fast, just add One fake rumor of fake sex? Come on, I must be fast; I do not want to be oppressed continuously; we must win together. I would not say I like another day like this; it feels like I am being strangled. I do not know what to do; I will pay you."

Olive : "It is not a problem that you pay, but I am still a virgin."

Brando : "Isn't that just a false rumor? Just like you" (Easy A, 28:04 – 30:20)

Brando's character cannot wait to lie about fake dating rumors with Olive. From the dialogue, the impression was made in a hurry because Brando could no longer stand being eliminated by his friends at school because of same-sex lovers.

Evan

Evan : "When did your high school years end? I thought about this. Can it be tomorrow?"

Olive : "Damn, why do you say that? Just try you guys and ask me out; I am sure I want to."

Evan : "You want to go on a date with me?"

Olive : "Not now, stupid." (Easy A, 45:10 – 45:21)

Evan's character is the same as Brando's in that he is also in a hurry to do this. This is because he cannot wait anymore for him to be able to escape being kept away by his friends because he is physically ridiculed.

Eric Ling

Eric : "When can we start? I want it right away."

Olive : "Let us make a rumor later that we will make out in chemistry class."

Eric's character is in a hurry for Olive to be able to carry out his actions so that rumors spread quickly and he is free from being ostracized by his friends.

Strong Push
Brando
Olive : "Make sure you are ready to accept the consequences."
Brando : "What is melon squeeze? Okay. I will accept it. Thank you, Olive."
Olive : "Why don't I know all that?" (Easy A, 35:47 – 37:44)

Brando has a strong urge to do what will create rumors to improve his image with Olive, as explained in Adler's theory, and he is quick to say he is ready to accept any consequences if he does so.

Evan
Evan : "I will give you $100 and a ticket."
Olive : "Ok. Prepare that tomorrow. Anyway, I do not want to know. You can date me for 100 dollars."
Evan : "I can."   (Easy A, 49:20 – 49:35)

Evan's character has a strong drive to be free from the problem of inferiority in him. He was willing to spend 100 dollars just for Olive to make rumors that he had dated her. It turned out that Olive quickly accepted the offer.

Eric Ling
Eric : "I will pay anything."
Olive : "I asked for $50 for a TJJMAX ticket" (Easy A, 54:20 – 53:36)

Eric's character is almost the same as the previous two characters; he is willing to spend any money to make rumors about dating Olive.

Without considering others
Brando
Olive : "Go, you are a boy now."
Brando : "Wow, I can enjoy life." (Easy A, 32:22 – 34:10)

At a teen party, Brando and Olive tried to make up their false rumors that they had sex together, but they did not do it. After the rumor became known, his friends did not consider Brando disgusting anymore because he had been dating Oliver the previous night.

Data Extraction 1
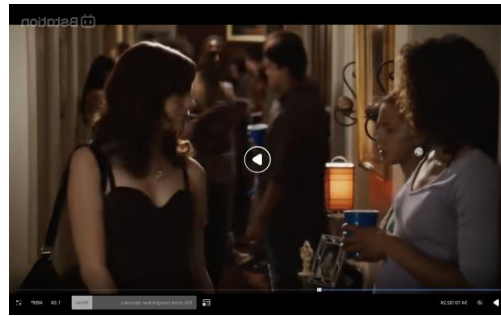
(Easy A, 34:14 – 34:19)

The picture above shows that after he made a rumor with Brando that he had sex with Olive. Brando looks relaxed and still feels happy that his friends can accept him without thinking about Olive, who turns out to be an evil woman in the eyes of others.

Evan
Evan : "Olive, would you like that?"
Olive : "Damn, you are free now."
Evan : "Thank you, Olive."
Olive's Friends: "Look at him doing anything for the money." (Easy A, 44:12 – 46:06)

Evan's character seems happy to be free from the exclusion of his friends, but he does not think that Olive has a lousy nickname and that he does everything for the money.

Eric Ling
Eric : "This is the ticket. Thank you."
Olive : "I accept, go ahead."
Mr. Griffith: "I have been hearing some gossip lately. What is Olive really like? You will be tested, but you have become like this."
Olive : "I want to become an existentialist."
Mr. Griffith: "Focus on studying." (Easy A, 59:24 – 1:00:45)

Eric's character has let go of his inferiority with rumors of dating Olive, but the BK teacher calls Olive to take responsibility for the gossip. At first, Eric Ling experienced self-doubt. He was a nerd who did not come from the United States, where Olive's reputation is known to be good but known very poorly in school because she dates many men. A character with no confidence can already release the problem in his diary. This character tends not to think about the impact of letting go of problems in himself.

CONCLUSION
It can be concluded that human personality is not far from self-confidence. The concept of insecurity sometimes arises because of the influence of something in life. In other words, the

feeling of lack of confidence is a feeling of inferiority towards something. In this study, through Adler's perspective on personality theory, there are four strategic concepts of how a person can let go of the feeling of inferiority in his life, namely by making excessive efforts, in a hurry or impatiently, strong encouragement, and without considering others. The film "Easy A" reflects that the three supporting characters, Brando, Evan, and Eric Ling, are trying to relinquish their inferiority complex due to the pressure around them. The suggestion that the researcher wants to convey after this research is for the community to be able to reduce the incidence of exclusion in all aspects of the social life of the community because this is related to a person's self-confidence, which is later feared to have a bad or good influence on each individual and the community can also emulate how the efforts of the three supporting characters in the film Easy A to stay enthusiastic and fight for let go of feelings of inferiority in living their social life well.

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