

**A TRIDIMENSIONAL BONE STRUCTURE ANALYSIS OF  
CHERYL ANN FERNANDO CHARACTER IN THE MOVIE  
*ADIWIRAKU***

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**FACULTY OF CREATIVE ARTS  
UNIVERSITI MALAYA  
KUALA LUMPUR**

**2021**

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OF CHERYL ANN FERNANDO CHARACTER IN  
THE MOVIE *ADIWIRAKU***

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**DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN FULFILLMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR MASTER OF PERFORMING  
ART (DRAMA)**

**FACULTY OF CREATIVE ARTS  
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**A TRIDIMENSIONAL BONE STRUCTURE ANALYSIS OF CHERYL  
ANN FERNANDO CHARACTER IN THE MOVIE ADIWIRAKU**

**ABSTRACT**

*Adiwiraku* brings about real-life settings about a teacher's determination to inspire and motivate her students to reach for greater heights in life. The character is defined by what he or she does, not by what they say. Hence, this research study analyses the physical, sociology and psychological aspects of the female protagonist in dealing with conflicts and challenges as a teacher. Psychological development of the character is a critical influence in order to understand the character's behaviour. This research uses qualitative research mode with Reissman's performative analysis method as the study design. The selected design of this study is to analyse the application of the Tridimensional Bone Structure to analyse the female teacher protagonist, which influenced the students' behaviour and in encouraging the learning of the English language. The ultimate finding shows that, although her physical attributes may have deemed her as an outsider, but, Cheryl Ann Fernando won over the Malay community's acceptance, admiration and trust. In the given sociological conditions, she is flexible, adaptable and nurtures the students with values, in the classroom and also their personal aspect. Her various teaching methods to uplift the students' English standards signifies the psychological aspects of her values and character. This research study proves that the 'Tridimensional Bone Structure' is an approach that can be used in developing and determining the behaviour and characteristics of the protagonist character in films, which can provide an incentive of aspirations to the Malaysian community.

**Keyword:** *Adiwiraku* Film, Lajos Egri, character analysis, female teacher protagonist

# A TRIDIMENSIONAL BONE STRUCTURE ANALYSIS OF CHERYL ANN FERNANDO CHARACTER IN THE MOVIE ADIWIRAKU

## ABSTRAK

Adiwiraku membawa suasana kehidupan sebenar mengenai keteguhan seorang guru wanita dalam memberi inspirasi dan memotivasi murid-muridnya untuk mempelajari Bahasa Inggeris dan sekaligus, mencapai tahap pembelajaran yang lebih tinggi. Kajian penyelidikan ini menganalisis aspek fizikal, sosiologi serta psikologi protagonis wanita dalam menangani konflik dan cabaran sebagai seorang guru. Perkembangan psikologi watak adalah pengaruh kritikal untuk memahami tingkah laku dalam watak. Kajian ini menggunakan kaedah penyelidikan kualitatif Reissman melalui kaedah analisis 'performative' sebagai reka bentuk kajian, dengan mengaplikasi 'The Tridimensional Bone Structure' untuk menganalisis watak protagonis guru wanita dalam filem Adiwiraku. Hasil penemuan menunjukkan walaupun secara fizikalnya beliau merupakan orang luar dari kawasan tersebut, Cheryl Ann Fenando berjaya mendapat kepercayaan, dikagumi dan sekaligus diterima oleh masyarakat melayu. Dari sudut sosiologinya pula, beliau dilihat fleksibel, mudah menyesuaikan diri dan mendidik pelajarannya dengan nilai-nilai murni, sama ada di dalam kelas mahupun sebaliknya. Pelbagai teknik pembelajaran yang beliau gunakan untuk meningkatkan penguasaan bahasa inggeris dalam kalangan pelajarannya dan ini sekaligus membuktikan nilai psikologi dan perwatakan yang ada dalam diri beliau. Di akhirnya, kajian ini membuktikan 'The Tridimensional Bone Structure' adalah satu kaedah yang dapat digunakan dalam membangunkan watak protagonis, dan sekaligus dapat menghasilkan filem yang dapat memberi aspirasi dan teladan kepada masyarakat Malaysia.

**Kata kunci:** Filem Adiwiraku, Lajos Egri, analisis karakter, protagonis guru wanita

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

*“Movies touch our hearts, and awaken our vision, and change the way we see things. They open doors and minds. Movies touch our hearts and awaken our vision, and change the way we see things. They take us to other places, they open doors and minds. Movies are the memories of our life time, we need to keep them alive.”*

~Martin Scorsese~

Movies gives us different perspective about the people and the world around us; it shows us some new truth about the society, hence, becomes a means of building common language and common associations. The quote above by Martin Scorsese, a prolific American director, film historian, screenwriter and producer whose career spans more than 50 years simply means that the message and its mystery in movies bridges the past, present and future.

Syd Field (1935-2013) acclaimed as “The guru of all screen writers” states that movies have become an integral part of our culture, part of our heritage and has influenced the way of life all over the world. He further asserts that movies connect people because stories are told with pictures, in dialogue and description, the action, characters, conflicts, scenes, sequences, dialogue, incidents, music, locations, etc. It taps into human’s deepest beliefs, attention and emotions and as a powerful communication tool with each other, and to create a community within cultural context. Cinema audience become one entity, sharing the same emotion that exists beyond time, place and circumstances. (Field. 2003, p.2).

Movies play a powerful role as an iconic medium of art and entertainment, and to raise critical awareness on how we perceive our everyday lives. Norman Yusoff (2013) states that “films can be used to understand discourses regarding identity, culture and social reality; as a 'universal language' which overcomes the barrier of textual learning for all backgrounds.” Visual, written, or spoken messages provides information about people, understanding how they communicate life and learning from their life experiences. Images are powerful communicators even in cultures where people reserved and discreet in sharing their feelings (Blasco, et al. 2015: p.4).

Characters in stories is the bridge between the story (author) and the reader/audience. The definition of a character is a representative of a person in a narrative or drama, such as a novel, acting or film (Stevenson, 2003). The word character is derived from the ancient Greek word "kharaktêr" which further associated with “the sum of qualities that defines a person.”, which includes qualities such as intellect, thoughts, ideas, motives, intentions, temperament, judgment, behavior, imagination, perception, emotions, loves, and hates, then developed into the understanding of “a character played by an actor”.

A character, especially when played by an actor in a drama or cinema, involves the "illusion of being a human being." Since the end of the 19th century, their art of character, as played by actors and writers, has been dubbed a reflection of nature. Among the two types of characters that are important to talk about are protagonists and antagonists (Baldick, 2001).

The author has a story to tell, a message to communicate, thus through the character, it makes the story believable and the message is communicated to the

reader/audience. Thus, the study of film and its literacy, is the study of the character; the driving force in a story. It's powerful representation in films and the key takeaways is crucial for shaping the future of our nation.

## **1.2 Background study**

This section describes on how knowing and understanding the background of the character and the character's development help readers and audience to have a better understanding of the character. Humans itself are real life characters in this world we live in. Howe (1989) states that characters in films is a mixture from the writer's moral and psychological experience, stories shared by other people, observations, imaginations and reading from various literatures.

Some literary theorist argues that characters in literacy are just fictional, made up of the author's imagination and perspectives. Howe (1989) argues that "imagination is part of reality, engaging reality". They do not exist in vacuum but in life itself. Howe cites neo-Aristotelian Critic R. S. Crane, "characters are concrete resemblances of real men and women". By resemblance means that characters in literacy have similar traits and characteristics of real people. Regardless of the genre of the story- based-on-a-true story or fictional, up to a certain extent, the emotions, experiences, conflicts and drama the characters go through does mimics reality.

Movies are a representation of the society and culture. Movie genres on education, represents teachers and students. It shows us different perspectives about the teaching profession. Differences in culture and economic background, shows us different conflicts and challenges faced by the teachers or from the students. Hollywood

films such as *To Sir with Love* (1967), *Stand and Deliver* (1988) (based on a true story), *Dead Poets Society* (1989), *Lean On Me* (1989), *Dangerous Minds* (1995), *The Ron Clark Story* (2006) (based on a true story), *Freedom Writers* (2007) (based on a true story), *Beyond The Blackboard* (2011), Bollywood films such as *Black* (2005), *Guru Taare Zameen Par* (2007), *Super 30* (2019), *Raatchasi* (2019) and Indonesian's *Laskar Pelangi* (2008), *Aisyah: Biarkan kami Bersaudara* (2016) are some of the films in an education setting, about teachers and their struggles and determinations in motivating their students to achieve greater heights in life. The values underlying the pedagogy are universal and enduring.

In addition, the movie experience creates a new learning process, acts as an emotional memory, develops attitudes and allows audience to “translate” life stories into their own lives. All of us have had the experience(s) and memories during our school years; be it good or bad, hence, as an audience, we are able to reflect and relate to the characters, the school culture and understand the emotional struggles and values in those stories. Fostering reflection is the main goal in this cinematic teaching. Audience reflect from the dramatic action of the character in the movie.

Literary work reflects or illustrates many life aspects, such as social, politic, culture, law, education, and religion. A film is one of parts of literary work which it's appearance is influenced by story or events. Movies is a visual medium placed within the context of dramatic structure, told with pictures, in dialogues and descriptions of all the elements in the story, a bridging relationship between media, politics, religion and society. (Gray, 2015)

With this notion, this research project aims to analyse the protagonist – the teacher character, who influenced the students’ behaviour and in encouraging the learning of the English language.

### 1.2.1 *Adiwiraku* - The new superhero film in Malaysia



Figure 1.1: *Adiwiraku* film poster

*Adiwira* is an Indonesian word, a combination of the word ‘Adi’, derived from Sanskrit which means great and ‘wira’ which means hero (www.wordsense.eu). Which simply means that *Adiwira* is a great hero. A hero is a person who is admired for having done something very brave, achieving something great, for good qualities or is the main character of a story, play or movie (dictionary.cambridge.org). In Malaysia, the first *Adiwira* superheroes was an animated character, the *Kluang Man* (1990’s); a television animation series influenced by American superheroes, Batman.

In 2006, the first superhero movie, *Cicak-Man* or 'Lizard-Man', also inspired by American superheroes 'Spiderman', hit the box-office. The movie collected RM5.2 million and is considered to be one of the most successful films in Malaysian film history. *BoBoiBoy*, a child animated superhero for television series was introduced in 2011 by Animonsta Studios. *Adiwira- Si Cilik Penyelamat Bumi* (The Little Earth Savior) children's comic book series was released in 2012. All of the *Adiwira* or superheroes portrayed in Malaysia, through books and digital media i.e. television and films, has been fictional characters intended for a predetermined target audience; children and is solely for entertainment.

The superheroes in *Adiwiraku*, are not fictional characters. They are based on a real story, real people with real life situations and even some of the student characters were played by the original characters. Life stories are a powerful resource in teaching (Blasco.et al. 2015). The movie is a reenactment of an actual event, most of the characters are played by the real students themselves and scenes are recreated accordingly. Moderate modification of facts is seen with changes to the storyline to suit the audience's understanding and expectations and some dramatization added to entertain the audience. But, without sacrificing the essence of the message in the story.

*Adiwiraku* produced and directed by Eric Ong, was inspired by the real-life story of students at SMK Pinang Tunggal in Baling, Kedah, which showcased the struggles faced by rural students such as poverty, having to work after school and very low proficiency in the English language. *Adiwiraku* tells a story about a dedicated English teacher, Teacher Cheryl Ann Fernando, of Teach for Malaysia Alumna, and how her students beat the odds at a choral speaking competition.



In 2013, Teacher Cheryl, a Public Relations (PR) consultant-turned teacher, traded her corporate job of 4 years to join Teach for Malaysia (TFM), an independent, non-profit organisation. Their main mission is to end education inequity through their ‘ambassadors’ i.e. volunteer teachers from different class of leaders from various sectors, to expand education opportunity for all children in Malaysia especially in the rural and underperforming schools under a two-year contract. Teacher Cheryl extended her contract for another year.

Teacher Cheryl was posted to SMK Pinang Tunggal, Kedah. Embarking on a heartwarming quest, teaching the English language to non-native English speakers in a rural school, mainly from deprived community in Kedah was highly-demanding mentally, physically, and financially. The secondary students’ English language proficiency performance level in SMK Pinang Tunggal was very low as the school is known as a **‘hotspot’ school**. A hotspot school is identified as having low English academic results. Some of the contributing factors to the low language performance may due to the widening achievement gaps between rural and urban learners. Subsequently, limited exposure to the English language deters the fluency and proficiency in the language (Hall, 2015: p.150).

Teacher Cheryl introduced a reward system (‘sistem ganjaran prestasi’) as a motivation for the students to participate in class as the students did not see the importance of learning the English language. The invitation to participate in a district level Choral speaking competition was the opportunity to encourage the students to learn and to be confident in speaking the English language. Armed with a strong sense of self and identity, teacher Cheryl along with teacher Constant Wong, a fellow teacher from TFM, took the initiative by introducing the 'choral speaking technique' by creating

a group of 35 students, consecutively forming their personal identity to become confident and highly collaborative students.

She taught / instill a mantra, “*sakit itu sementara, kegemilangan itu selamanya*” (Pain is temporary but pride is forever) for the students to persevere. Against all odds, the rural hotspot school won 5<sup>th</sup> place, defeating 20 other convents and cluster and Chinese schools. It was a huge achievement to the students and the school, as in the past, neither the students nor the school has never won anything with regard to the use of the English language in competitions.



Figure 1.2: Teacher Cheryl with students of SMK Pinang Tunggal



Figure 1.3: Teacher Cheryl with Balkish, Rizal, Zidane and Irdina

*Adiwiraku* is a poignant, drama about a teacher's determination to inspire and motivate her students to learn the English language, and consequently, reach for greater heights in life. The film is more than just a story about teaching and choral speaking. The story brings about real life settings which not only highlights the struggles and challenges of children/students from deprived backgrounds in learning the English language, but, to be able to obtain formal education.

The students' challenged demographics and deprived background stirred people's curiosity, and, but they were also curious on the methods, measures and approaches taken by the teacher (Teacher Cheryl) in educating and motivating the student to learn the English language. In the past, the failure of the English language proficiency in rural schools is put upon teachers and their pedagogy.

Hall (2015) in his article, *Malaysia's Challenges in English Language Teaching*, states that teachers' confidence in teaching and practice of the English language is

critical to ensure students learning outcome and improve proficiency (p.157). Teachers must possess the ability and proficiency to teach the English with adequacy in non-native English teaching and learning settings (p.681). This creates the perspective of life that educators should play an important role in producing students of high imagination in life.

The film's premise is the about a group of secondary students from a rural school, who were incompetent in reading, writing and speaking the English language, went on to win fifth place in a choral speaking competition. *Adiwiraku* explores several aspects and perspectives of the lives of students and educators without separating the two. The message in the film is nothing but abundance of determination, perseverance, empathy and inspired intuitive wisdom.

The title *Adiwiraku* literally translates as 'My Superheroes', which carries a deeper and heavier meaning than then typical 'Marvel' superheroes that exist in imaginary worlds. In *Adiwiraku*, heroes really are the ordinary people who are doing more than what they think possible.

### **1.2.3 Post-impact**

*Adiwiraku* received numerous award recognition for the film. The movie bagged the main prize at the 29th Malaysia Film Festival when it was named Best Film of the Year. Its executive producer and screenplay writer, Jason Chong, won the Best Original Story award. It was a triple win for uprising actor, Sangeeta Krishnasamy, (who played Cheryl Ann Fernando in the film) when she took home the award for Best Actress at the

29<sup>th</sup> Malaysian Film Festival (FFM) 2017, Best Actress Anugerah Skrin 2017, and also Best Actress Malaysian Critics Award 2017.



*Figure 1.4: Sangeeta Krishnasamy (actor) with the real Cheryl Ann Fernando.*



*Figure 1.5: The 29th Malaysian Film Festival.*

The film was one of the semi-finalist at the Equality International Film Festival 2016 and also hit the global market for official selection for the show and hit the "Crosscut Asia" slot representing films from the Asian countries at the 30th Tokyo International Film Festival (TIFF), Phoenix Film Festival Melbourne 2017, 11th Asia Pacific Screen Awards in Australia and the Malaysian Film Festival-Singapore (MFFSG17).



*Figure 1.6: The winning team at The 29th Malaysian Film Festival (FFM).*

The film's positive media highlights and numerous win, instigated people's curiosity and awareness about the issues depicted in the movie. It also caught the attention from The Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE).



*Figure 1.7: ADIWIRA PAK21 awards night (MOE).*

In April 2019, The Education Performance and Delivery Unit (PADU), under The Ministry of Education Malaysian (MOE) launched The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Teachers Strategies campaign to encourages teachers under the MOE to share their creative methods with the public and to be the inspiration to other teachers. The campaign urges teachers to submit a write up or short video align to the theme of 4CIV – communication, critical thinking, collaboration and creativity (values and ethos).

Ten exceptional teachers were celebrated for their best creative strategies. The ceremony was officiated by the Minister of Education, Yang Berhormat Dr. Maszlee Malik. Also present was the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE) Yang Berbahagia Dato 'Dr. Mohd Gazali Abas and Director General of Education Malaysia, Yang Berbahagia Datuk Dr. Amen Senin.



Figure 1.8: Adiwiraku movie screening with various schools by The Education Performance and Delivery Unit (PADU)

In November 2019, an Education Collaboration Program between The Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE), The Education Performance and Delivery Unit (PADU) and Sol Pictures held a movie screening for Teachers and School Students. The program aims to foster understanding and inspire students and teachers on the value of the teaching profession and the film industry in Malaysia.

Teacher Cheryl Ann Fernando in an interview with Berita Harian online (November 2017), a local newspaper, states that filmmakers in Malaysia hardly produces films about teachers and the field of teaching a. “I am proud and honored that a teacher's work has been brought to my attention. It is an honor not only to me but also to teachers in Malaysia.”

In summary, there is a need for more educational films in Malaysia. There are much to learn from stories about teachers and students, that change is not impossible and hope still exist even in any given situation. According to Camp M.D (2011),



teachers can and must develop positive and supportive relationships with their students so that these students truly have opportunities that are not in effect predetermined by the greater society. Stories about teachers, their dedication and hard work in inspiring students in films are scarce in Malaysia.

### **1.3 Problem statement**

The story of an English school teacher who brought success to a group of non-native English rural students by winning the 5th place in a choral speaking competition went viral on new media platform such as Twitter, Facebook, Blogs and Instagram. Superficially, the movie depicts in dealing with “real” students, and the other with teacher representations.

Quoting some of the online media highlights on the film: “How one woman became a teacher and ended up in a movie.” (Malaymail online. February 11. 2017), “An inspiring movie that all should see.” (The Star online. April 2017), “Filem Adiwiraku inspirasi video tular.” (Berita Harian online. April 2017), “These kampung students won an English competition. Now they’re stars in their own movie” (Cilisos.my. December. 2017), “How A Sekolah Kampung Beat 20 Elite Schools In An English Competition” (Says.com. 2015).

The publicity excitement in all media headlines and main highlights in the articles was about the students from a rural school, with low proficiency in the English language, winning the fifth place in an English Choral speaking competition as the English language is considered more a foreign language than a second language especially in rural settings. And the English language proficiency amongst students in

rural school in Malaysia has been poor, thus, this achievement raised many questions and interest in knowing about the teacher; her background, characteristics, methods and approaches in teaching the English language.

To note, the protagonist is a female teacher, a non-malay, who faced mental and physical challenges not only in the rural malay community but also in teaching the English language to students who have resistance against the English language. The problem intended to be solved is to analyse the female teacher protagonist in *Adiwiraku*. To date there has not been any study of the female teacher protagonist in Malay films. This research study will initiate new findings in the area of the study.

#### **1.4 Research objective**

Literary research on a teacher character in Malay films, or contribution of film in education used as a platform to promote education is scarce in Malaysia. Psychological development of the character is a critical influence in order to understand behaviours in the characters. Examining human psychological behaviours i.e. the character' needs, attitudes, conflicts, motivations, how the character communicates and reacts in any given situation, help readers and audience to have a better understanding of the character. Therefore, the objective of this research project aims to identify the above stated domain with the following research objectives:

1. Examining the female teacher protagonist's physical attributes in the movie *Adiwiraku*.
2. Exploring the given sociological conditions faced by the female teacher protagonist.

3. Analysing the psychological aspects of the female teacher protagonist.

### **1.5 Research question**

Based on the background of the study and the focus of study above, this research project would like to specify the female teacher protagonist's physical attributes, social conditions and psychological aspects according to the content in the film *Adiwiraku* by applying the Tridimensional Bone Structure by Lagos Egri as the analysis framework in the study with the following research questions:

1. How physical attributes influence/affect the acceptance of society towards a teacher stranger?
2. How sociological conditions change/build the teacher-student relationship?
3. What are the psychological aspects which influence the students' social and academic change?

### **1.6 Scope of Research, Assumptions, Limitations and Delimitations of Study**

The research study will mainly discuss the movie *Adiwiraku*, focusing on analysing the main character – Teacher Cheryl, and subsequently investigates the conflicts and challenges faced in teaching the English language in a rural school. This research will attempt to establish this movie as an example to encourage more inspiring stories about teachers and educators in Malaysia.

According to Merriam (1997) the philosophical assumption of qualitative research is embedded in people's experiences; in the participants' perspectives, not the researcher's. Analysing the character's actions, attitudes, motivations and values will be beneficial in understanding the cause and effect of the dramatic actions in teaching students who are non-proficient in the English language. Hence, this research study assumes that the Tridimensional Bone formalist structure may be beneficial in examining the representation of female teacher as protagonist in Malaysian film, *Adiwiraku*. Leedy and Ormrod (2010) suggested, "Assumptions are so basic that, without them, the research problem itself could not exist".

The limitation and delimitation of this research project is only based on analysing the main character, the English teacher, in the film *Adiwiraku*. The boundaries include the choice of objectives, the research questions, variables of interest such as the participant, time of event, geographical setting and theoretical perceptions that clearly sets out the intended achievement (Simon.2011).

### **1.7 Significance of research**

Characters in films can be role models; to inspire and to educate on noble and moral values. The researcher aims to analyse the physical, sociology and psychological aspects of the female teacher protagonist in the film *Adiwiraku*, and subsequently, the noble and moral values and creativity of educators which is important in the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning strategies.

Teacher Cheryl in an interview with Berita Harian online (November 2017), a local newspaper, states that filmmakers in Malaysia hardly produces films about

teachers and the field of teaching a. “I am proud and honored that a teacher's work has been brought to my attention. It is an honor not only to me but also to teachers in Malaysia.”

“An inspiring movie that all should see. This is one movie that every teacher, student and educationist should watch. It is also a must-watch movie for leaders and decision-makers at all levels. It has all the trappings of a great movie – good story, good acting, good direction. And more importantly, it is a movie we need right now – a truly Malaysian movie with a cause.” (The Star online. 2017).

The results of this research project could be generalizable to the English language educators, to students who lack proficiency in the English language, at a rural government school in Malaysia. This research will hopefully be useful for future improvements of scripts and stories about teachers in Malaysian films, which could be useful in educating and motivating the young viewers to excel in life, and, perhaps be one of the best platform to help solve societal issues for future generation.

In the next chapter, the research project will explore how this research have been discussed by previous scholars and how it has been positioned in recent studies.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, as an overview in this chapter, in the context of film as both informative and influential, this literature review examined on female representation in Malay films and the portrayal of teachers in Malay films. Specifically, given the nature of this study, is concerned with a female teacher protagonist. Additional study on the representation of female teachers in foreign films and school culture and teachers, gives better understanding from past research on the representations of female teacher protagonist and generally the challenges and many hats teachers play in an education setting and society. The importance of understanding character and characterization at the end of the chapter gives some insight on the proposed theory in character analysis of the research study.

### 2.2 The female representation in Malay films

Malaysian cinema has always been diverse since it started some 90 years ago, with many non-Malays and non-Malaysian industry players like the Shaw Brothers and Tan Sri L. Krishnan, the Father of Malay Films. Over the years, we have had many good storytellers in the country and they have made good films, regardless of race and religion.

Films such during the digital era/ present time such as the late Yasmin Ahmad's *Sepet* (2005), *Gubra* (2006) and *Mualaf* (2008), *The Red Kebaya* (Oliver Knott, 2006), *Lelaki Harapan Dunia* (Liew Seng Tat, 2014) and *Ola Bola* ( Chiu Keng Guan, 2016)

and *Adiwiraku* (Jason Chong,2017), to name a few, certainly explores, projects and raised issues not only about the complex values and culture in defining the characteristics of Malaysian national identity such as ethnicity, religion, gender, tradition/modernity, and societal issues but also the diversity in the pool of film directors from different background, race and beliefs.

Sharing a quote by Norman Yusoff (2018) on his view regarding the endless discussion on Malaysian national identity in Malay films - 'the Malaysian cinema remains work in progress, just as how nation-building does not occur overnight; it is an ongoing journey.' On that note, women representation in Malaysian cinema as the voice of the diversity role models in women empowerment to act as champions of change is much needed as part of Malaysian nation-building society.

Ever since the 1930's, the portrayal of women and the roles they play has always been suppressed, victimized or as passive roles to the representation of powerful patriarchal principal. Women roles in malay films since the 1950s are seen as passive role to the male characters, kept back as domestic environment as a lover, wife, mother, widows, sister or domestic helpers or concubines with weak and emotional characteristics according to Asiah Sarji, (Norman Yusoff, 2013), subdivided to either the rich or underprivileged, good or bad (Fuziah and Faridah, 2000) but nevertheless, they are dependent or succumb to male prowess. Mastura Muhammad (2018) cites Kueh, claims that female representation in the 1950s are reduced to their beauty aesthetics, and without formal education.

Mastura Muhammad (2018) analysed seven Muslim female characters by various contemporary Malaysian filmmakers in the early 2000, namely *Gubra* (Yasmin Ahmad, 2006), *Syurga Cinta* (Ahmad Idham, 2008) *Muallaf* (Yasmin Ahmad, 2009), *Salam Cinta* (Azahari Zain, 2011) and *Tujuh Petala Cinta* (Azahari Zain, 2012), *Ombak Rindu*, (Osman Ali, 2011) and *Nur Kasih The Movie* (Khabir Bakhtiar, 2011) explains that for the past eight decades since 1930s till 2018 the central idea of female characters in Malay films are predominantly revolving around the issues and themes faced by the Malay-Muslim women. The films may not necessarily focus on Islamic idealism way of life but rather a general representation of women from different demographics.

Hanita (2011) in her analysis on *Female Representation and the Melodramatic Mode in Malaysian-Malay Films from the Early 1990s – 2009* from various films concludes that women in the 1990s until the new millennium have been exposed to social change, hence, they are independent-minded female characters, negotiating patriarchal rules, thus, it shines a new light on the representation of women in the Malaysian society.

Nur Azliza Mohd Nor and Nur Afifah Vanitha Abdullah (2019) in their journal article, *Female Protagonist's Self-Construction in Malay Film*, argues that films portraying women as protagonist are very limited ever since the era of Malay films (1930-1989) as well as the new Malaysian film genre (1990 until 2019). The researcher concludes that in the past, the female protagonist roles in Malay films have been constrained to certain stereotypical women roles, some weak, some strong, but, nevertheless, faces challenges in negotiating patriarchal or societal rules.



### 2.2.1 The portrayal of teachers in Malay films

Teacher's representation in Malaysian films are often underdeveloped, exaggerated, and/or distorted. Stories about teachers are scarce in Malaysian film industry. To date, there has only been four Malay films about teachers since 1965. *Masam-Masam Manis* (1965), a film directed and acted by Malaysia's legendary filmmaker, the late Tan Sri P. Ramlee. It tells the story of *Cikgu Shaari*, a teacher by day and a professional musician at night. The film follows the tenants at lodging *Mak Minah* which saw the life of city dwellers in the town of Kuala Lumpur in the 60's, hustling and bustling life challenges, finding refuge or making ends-meet in the world of entertainment; unconsciously risking their self-value.

In 1987, *Adik Manja* is the first Malay film that lifts the profession of the teaching to the silver screen. Produced by Merdeka Films Productions, directed by Othman Hafsham, the film highlights on teachers' behaviour in undergoing their daily duties in a full-boarding school for young ladies. *Adik Manja* collected the highest film collection of RM3.5 million and held the record for 14 years till 1994. The film won two awards at the first Malaysian Film Festival (FFM), and received an international recognition for Best Supporting Actress at the 26th Asia Pacific Film Festival in 1980.

*Main-Main Hantu* (1990), a horror comedy genre tells a story about a group of netball team and their teacher/coach Nancy, played by the beautiful actor, Dato' Nancie Foo, who found the true meaning of being a team. In 1997, *Baginda* directed by Aziz M.Osman, highlights high moral value in the teaching profession. Themes such as determination, high moral and dedication were the essence of the film.

In the movies mentioned above, the school is basically the background of another kind of story. The portrayal of teachers in an education setting are only as supporting characters, side-lined by the genre or theme of the film. The teachers are either busy and incompetent and don't monitor students, or teachers go out of their way to help but facilities are poor and the program is missing funds, and the principal is under pressure to be molded by ruthless bureaucrats.

In the past, there have been many studies on female teacher protagonist in Malaysian cinema, however, this research study bears no similarities with past academic researchers in analysing. The researcher's interest however is on narrative films where teachers, teaching and schooling is the central concern, particularly in analysing the female teacher protagonist. Hitherto, corpus studies for any of the films stated above or the representation of teachers or female teacher protagonist in Malaysian cinema is non-existence.

### **2.3 The representation of female teachers in foreign films**

Gilbert (2014) in her research on 'Cinematic Representations Of Female Teachers: A Narratological Analysis Of Mise-En-Scene In Recent Hollywood Film' states that although the majority of teachers in the United States are female, teachers in the movies are often male, exhibiting typically masculine traits that make the teachers effective at teaching (p.20). Past researchers shows a set of similar characteristics when analysing teachers as the protagonist in films. She asserts that the similar characteristics are 'personally connected life instructor, motivator, outsider, masculine, and opponent to authority' (p.17-18).

Some studies on teachers as protagonist are primarily focused on their charm or charisma and their capabilities in motivating the students. They may be great teachers but does not necessarily have effective teaching practices; they hardly ever seen actually teaching any content. The teacher's qualification, expertise or experience are not considered or emphasized (p.21-25). She argues that the similar characteristics mentioned are commonly associated with the portrayal of male teacher protagonist, while the female teacher protagonist are commonly seen as a 'nurturing mother' (p.25), subjected to the male gaze, in which 'a woman must maintain their female youth and beauty, to succeed in a man's world' (p.36-37).

Previous studies of teachers in films have shown that a common feature of Super-teachers is that they can motivate students in ways that no one else has, or poor areas lacking positive role models, teachers know how to encourage them to do so. Female teacher protagonists are not considered to have the ability of the 'Superhero' or 'Superteacher' i.e. the ability to motivate students in ways others have not, but seen more of an educated woman, a feminist or a liberalist, stereotypically focused on female concerns, without the extra capabilities, or, with similar characteristics as the male teacher protagonist (p.27). In earlier stories, the teacher protagonist is an 'outsider of the teaching field and community, or from a different socioeconomic and racial background, who must choose whether or not to fit in' (p.160-161).

In her analysis of three middle class female teachers of different stages in life, 20s, 30s and 40s from films of different genres; drama, romantic comedy, and comedy, she finds that all three teachers are not an outsider to the community or the teaching field. Their focus is on their personal lives and not to improve their classroom. One they

realized that they do not have any other life or career options, the only way to improve their situation is to change their attitude. Once their lives improve, so does the teaching.

Gilbert concludes that the image of teachers today not only reflects the film's prejudice against professional women, but also reflects the public's indifference to the teachers in the failed education system. 'Female teachers must know to defend themselves and their profession if they are to be depicted as professionals in the media' (p.166).

Brown (2015) states that numerous movies about teachers and schools emerged in the early twentieth century, gradually increasing in the 1950s and 1960s and a significant growth from the 1980s onwards. Most of the films are not primarily about the teachers or the education settings but only served as a backdrop to the bigger themes of the films such as teen romance, coming of age, sports achievements, redemption, comedy, etc. The portrayal of teachers as a heroic and self-sacrificing figures emerged with films such as *To Sir with Love* (1967), *Dead Poets Society* (1989), *Dangerous Minds* (1995) portraying the protagonist - a teacher's struggles and determinations to help students achieve greater heights in life. The values underlying the pedagogy are universal and ever-lasting.

American based on a true story films such as *Stand and Deliver* (1988), *Lean on Me* (1989), *The Ron Clark Story* (2006), *Freedom Writers* (2007), whilst French films *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1916), *The Class* (2008), *Skirt Day* (2009) and *Once in a Lifetime* (2014) are dramatic versions of biographies of real teachers and their experiences. The "fact-based" aspect of the films increases the authenticity of the

narrative and makes them appear "real," which is an important part of today's most intense political debate about school education (p.4).

To note, from the films mentioned above, in the context of Hollywood films, only *Dangerous Minds* (1995) and *Freedom Writers* (2007) portrays the female teacher as the protagonist. Brown cites Moore (2007) argues that these films are “presented as a celebration of teaching, but (the) message is that poor students need only love, idealism and martyrdom”. French films *The Class* (2008), *Skirt Day* (2009) and *Once in a Lifetime* (2014) portrays self-preservation female teacher protagonists who faces challenges in a class made up of students of many ethnic and religious origins (p.5-6).

It's often "based on a true story", an adaptation of the biography of a real teacher, but nevertheless aspects of the film add authenticity to the technique and make them look "real". If adult education is about facilitating mutual research to develop means of analyzing the personal and social world around us, understanding the struggles surrounding education with large-screen representative teachers for general public consumption is critical for development.

#### **2.4 Culture and social influence in school**

Different cultural group think, feel and act differently. In Malaysia, the socio-cultural influences and intercultural flow of new ideas and practices is apparent in a multifaceted society of diverse beliefs, cultures, and ethnicity. According to Brameld (200) two major roles of education is to transmit culture- how information within a society is passed on to the next generation and to modify culture – how culture can influence individual and community behaviour. The major elements of culture are

symbols, language, norms, values, and artifacts. These major elements in culture can also be seen in movies.

School cultures refers to the way teachers and administrators working together and sharing a set of beliefs, values and traditions. A positive school culture promotes students' ability to learn. Teachers are predominantly leaders or mentors to students. In an ideal situation, all teachers, especially those in challenging schools, would exercise creative leadership, and taking responsibility in students' learning outcomes and success.

Thomas (2000) states that the role of cultural context in developing knowledge and process in teaching students emphasises two key factors in multicultural classroom, namely the central position of learner and the importance of cultural context in teaching (p.106). The essence of intercultural education is that cultural diversity is closely related to societal enrichment (p.112). Enrichment could be aimed to all students in class with the ultimate aim of improving relations. Educators can make culture more socially relevant by building cultural bridges between school and society (p.201).

Education can be used a powerful socializing tool (Murphy, Mufti, Kassim.2009: p.7). Teachers need to strike a balance between allowing children to interpret the world around them and encourage their particular brand of aesthetic, while meeting the need to develop the prescribed skills, knowledge and in developing their individualities. (Thomas, 2000: p.5). Children from different cultural dynamics especially those from poor and rural communities usually learn from their "out of school" environment.

Teachers can use alternative ideas and strategies, when necessary, to incorporate formal education with children's "everyday cognition". This will encourage learners to understand, interpret and integrate new learning into their existing knowledge and skills. Through interacting with individuals from a range of socio-economic, religious, and ethnic backgrounds, students learn to understand, accept, and embrace differences (Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025: p.16).

## **2.5 The cultural dynamics of teaching and learning processes**

Jean Piaget (1936) a Swiss psychologist known for his work on child development, suggests that teaching is an active process in which teachers must firstly identify learner's existing capabilities, understandings and experience. Piaget's (1936) theory of cognitive development claims that intelligence is not a fixed trait, and regarded 'cognitive development as a process which occurs due to biological maturation and interaction with the environment.'

Teachers who are effective are those who remain true to their overall goal: to offer an outstanding education to all students whom they have a privilege of teaching (Bernard, 2004). Teachers who are actively engage in their students' learning together with their training knowledge, understanding of curriculum subjects and academic content, introduces a strong element of social value into students' learning. Complex relationship exists between the influence of religious values held by a particular society (Thomas. p.105). The complex relationship is apparent in Malaysia's society and education system. Secularism has been practiced both in government and vernacular schools in a multi-racial country such as Malaysia.

Teacher need to be aware that most students seek a structure and organisation in their day to day life in classrooms, and desire opportunities for better means of shared communications (Thomas. p.113). In developing teaching and learning strategies, teachers need to be sensitive to cultural diversity, so that it will benefit all students regardless of their background. Furthermore, leadership shown by teacher as well as their ability to manage relationship in the classroom through fairness, various form of communication and interaction, can lead to the creation of good psychosocial learning environment.

## **2.6 Character and characterization and the importance of character analysis**

Characters engages readers/audience to the story; it is the driving force of a story. Story telling is the oldest form of entertainment to convey information, to spark ideas and to instill good values and sharing lessons in life. Children are told bedtime fairytales and folklores stories with fictitious characters to invoke their imaginations and to convey good human values. Different character possesses diverse background, personalities, attributes which may represent different socio cultural narration. Knowing the character's background is a crucial aspect of story development and scripting. Characters are essential to the plots in a story because they are interrelated; characters are influenced by events just as events are shaped by characters.

Syd Field (2003), the guru of all screenwriters' states that, the main character is the most important foundation in a story. The character's interior and exterior are the two basic components in establishing the character's background. The interior forms the character while the exterior reveals the character. The interior tells us about the



character's biography from birth till the present time, where else the exterior defines the character's needs and action from the starting of the movie till the end.

The character's biography defines the gender of the character, place of birth, is the character the eldest, middle child or youngest? The parent's background, did the character come from the lower, middle or upper class, the school environment, the circle of friends, is the character an introvert or extrovert? etc. The exterior component in the character's need defines the character's goals. The character's action is divided in three sub-elements which are professional, personal and private.

The multidimensional facades make the character real (p. 45-49). Field stresses that dialogue is the essence in understanding the character (p. 105-106). He further explains that dialogues illuminates and reveal information about the character, thus, moves the story forward (p.108-109). Ransiek & Wundrak (2016) states that through dialogues, the audience or reader are able to see the character(s) position in society and the connections from the present and the past (p.49).

In the Art of Dramatic Writing, Egri (1946) states that a pivotal character is the essence of the story. The story revolves around the main character; it determines the course of story. He emphasizes the three dimensions of the character bone structure - psychology, physiology and sociology as a tool in analysing the character's characteristics, attitude and reaction (p 32-43). He further states two external factors that will change the character's dynamics- environment and dialectical approach. The character's struggles, ambiguities and environmental disturbance will alter the pattern, creating conflict and tension, which will force the character into making a decision, resulting to change and character growth.

A recent study on film characters: theory, analysis, interpretation by a German researcher, Eder (2010) states that, “Characters, as main and supporting figures, stand in a hierarchy of attention; as protagonists or antagonists in a network of relations of action and conflict; as fictional beings in a social system; as heroes or villains in a system of values; as parallel or contrasting characters in comparison.” (p.30-31). He develops a heuristic core model, “the clock of character” which emphasises four important elements of a character: (i) characters as artifacts as they are shaped by audiovisual information; (ii) characters are fictional with certain bodily, mental, and social features; (iii) characters are symbols, representing different meanings; and (iv) the cause and effect of socio-cultural interventions (p.16).

The different school of thoughts in character analysis by various concepts of the human sciences examines different conceptions of the body, mind, sociality and behaviour of the fictitious character. Hence characterization is the various concepts of the human sciences on the traits the character possesses, which will enhance emotional response and encourage greater thoroughness of description. The results of character-analysis are dependent on the choice of suitable categories in which different conceptions of the mind and its properties will lead to widely divergent ideas of one and the same character.

Nielsen (2002) explains that when characters are created from scenarios, without a deeper knowledge about the characters, they become stereotypes because the characters are only a mental picture or born out of the writer’s imagination. Stereotypes are characters that does not have the same characteristics of a rounded character (based on facts not fiction), hence they are not the real thing. A good character must possess

descriptions based on knowledge of actual characters, on how they perceive the world, how they act and where they act.

## **2.7 Conclusion**

Through past studies in this chapter, the researcher discovers that there hasn't been any academic research done yet on analysing the female teacher protagonist nor any teacher character in Malaysian film. There is great potential for future research on the characterization of women as teacher/educator in films. Previous studies that deal with the representation of teachers particularly female teachers in Hollywood films shows that there is huge potential to identify stereotypes and images pertaining to women in the field of education.

The researcher looks into the culture and social influence in school and the cultural dynamics of teaching and learning processes to have an in-depth knowledge of the roles and responsibilities that teachers play as educators. Finally, the importance of analysing a character is to understand the character's background, its motives and action, the impact of sociocultural, which may lead to character growth and bring about change to the character. Therefore, the next chapter will discuss in detail the study design used in analysing the female teacher protagonist in the movie *Adiwiraku* based on the main principles of The Tridimensional Bone structure as the framework of research study.

## CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Introduction

The analysis in this chapter demonstrates in general the methods used to achieve the two objectives in this research study. Using the basic components of performative analysis structure by Reissman (2005) as the design study in research conducted on the movie *Adiwiraku*. While the main elements and principals in the Tridimensional Bone Structure stated by Lagos Egri (1945) are used as the theoretical framework for this study, entitled “A TRIDIMENSIONAL BONE STRUCTURE ANALYSIS OF CHERYL ANN FERNANDO CHARACTER IN THE MOVIE *ADIWIRAKU*”. Strategies, possible ideological positions related to character analysis and detailed selected related scenes from the movie *Adiwiraku* in the form of data collection which will also be applied to achieve the objectives of this research study.

### 3.2 Qualitative structure analysis

Paul Felix Lazarsfeld (1945) sociologist, psychologist and known as ‘father of qualitative research’ gave a new perception to use qualitative research to explore and explain human behaviour. He supported previous qualitative research works of analysing and interpreting market research through the importance of depth interviewing in focus groups, group interviews, radio interviews, data collection but argues that the world of psychology can offer much more with regards to human behaviours.

Lazarsfeld (1945) identified the importance of ‘why?’ questions; and had shown how ideas from psychology could be used to provide an interpretative model in qualitative analysis.

*“We never get useful explanations merely by ‘collecting the facts’. Interpretations are indispensable in addition – interpretations in terms of the motives and the mental mechanisms which determine conduct in given situations.”*

(Kornhauser & Lazarsfeld 1935)

Works of past researchers such as Hoyland (1938) and Hull (1940) on behaviours, emotions and understanding through verbal learning expanded immensely in the 1980s. It was the era in which behaviourism was encompassing aside ‘non-scientific’ explanations of behaviour; with hard numerical data, statistical tests, and generated through theoretical research in determining conscious and subconscious emotion (Bailey, 1987).

In quantitative research, the researcher is ideally an objective observer that neither participates in nor influences what is being studied (Camp, M.D. 2011). Qualitative research rest on descriptions of situations, behaviors or text (Rosenberry and Vicker, 2009). Durrheim (1999) states that qualitative data is collected in the form of language, whether it is written, spoken or visuals translated into language. Existing academic literature on female teacher protagonist in regards to the Malay movies in Malaysia is non-existent. Hence, this research project aims to conduct an exploratory narrative structure analysis of the movie *Adiwiraku* in which would play a significant role in research, particularly in film, educational and social research.

### 3.3 Textual analysis

Textual analysis is a form of “discourse analysis”; the method communication researchers use to describe and interpret the characteristics of a recorded or visual message. The purpose of textual analysis is to describe the content, structure, and functions of the messages contained in texts (McKee, 2001: p.3-4). The textual analysis structure involves in understanding the character through language (spoken messages), symbols (visual and written) and/or pictures (visual messages) presented in the film. Visuals and dialogue are primarily the communication involves in a film, which gives information regarding the people’s characters, how people make sense of and communicate life and life experiences. “If we want to understand the world we live in, then we have to understand how people are making sense of that world” (Egri.1945).

There are four major approaches to textual analysis: rhetorical criticism, content analysis, interaction analysis, and performance studies. Egri (1945) states that context of the text is the key when interpreting text. Textual context is in-depth information about the text. Different people from different background, believes and cultures will interpret a text differently. The reason is complex, but the basics of text analysis, which is simple and does not have a single real-life expression, which allows you to measure newspaper articles and movies to determine how "accurate" the expression is. It depends on the assumptions.

All versions of "reality" that we can measure text are always-inevitably different expressions-different text. Egri concludes that different texts in the same

language or different languages may present the same fact in different ways, but all are equally true and exact. He further explains that there are three levels of context:

- i) The rest of text are other elements in the text which will support the text such as the people, time (era) and the place where the story occurred.
- ii) The genre of the text is essential in characterizing the text. The specific form, context and style of the text helps us understand if the text is drama, fiction or non-fiction.
- iii) General context in which it circulates are images which are familiar to the audience which are the representation of visuals, such as the place, setting and time of events, will enable the audience to understand the story.

In addition, this research study will also analyse the function and performance of the narration integrated with visuals, which is crucial both for the film functions and its effect on the audience.

### **3.4 Narrative analysis**

Narratology is the theory of the structures of narrative and accordingly examines the ways that narratives structure our perception of both cultural artifacts and the surrounding world. Narrative show progress, arranged in sequence of events from the beginning to the ending of the story. It gives a sense of direction (Field, 2006: p.62). A

major benefit of narratology is that narratives are rich in detail derived from human relationships and a rich, in-depth, intensive description is required to begin to speculate on the multiple dimensions of teacher-student relationships (Benham, 1997).

According to Patton, M.Q (2002), narratology strives to “understanding lived experience and perceptions of experience” (p.115), focusing specifically on the interpretation of stories, emotions, life history descriptions, historical accounts, and creative literatures to unfold cultural and social patterns through the lens of individual experiences” (p. 478). Stories are at the heart of narratology. Narrative is a form for inquiry that can contain both the environment and the relations within that environment and those relationships become the focus of attention (Eisner & Peshkin, 1990).

Narrative analysis in storytelling connects the past, present and the future. Reissman (2005) in her heuristic study states four models thematic, structure, instructional, performative in narrative analysis which is suited to analyse different kinds of projects and text. Each models provides a way to systematically study personal narratives of experience:

i) Thematic analysis:

The thematic approach can be used to elaborate a developing theory or for finding common thematic components across research participants and the events they report. The emphasis lies in the content of speech; “what” is said and told rather than the way it is said, focusing on the meaning of the language in a story.



ii) Structure analysis:

Structural approaches emphasis on “how” it is said by selecting specific narrative to make the story believable. The focus is on analysing the arrangement of words and phrases to create sentences (syntactic) and intonation, stress and rhythm (prosodic) elements of speech. Reissman (2005) suggest that each narrative has six parts: an abstract, introduction, complication, evaluation, resolution and coda.

iii) Instructional analysis:

Instructional approach emphasis on the communication process between teller and listener, such as stories of personal experience, medical, social service and court situations, which requires transcripts that include all participants in the conversation, supported with body language, gestures, facial expressions, intonation and voice and stress (paralinguistic). Thematic content and narrative structure are included in the interactional approach, but the focus is mainly on the storytelling as a process of conformation, where teller and listener create a common meaning.

iv) Performative analysis:

In performative approach focuses on the who, what and why of the narratives (Reissman, 2005). Who is the story teller, is he or she involved in the story? What is the story about? What is the importance of telling this story? Why does the storyteller want his or her story to be heard? The performative analysis is known as the studies of identities, or as Reissman states – the presentations of “self”. There are six elements in performative analysis: -

- a. Content of the narratives
- b. Characters and their role in the story
- c. Settings (the setting of the performance and story)
- d. The performance of dialogue between characters  
(communication and interaction)
- e. Audience response (listener or reader)
- f. The interpreter of the story

“Storytelling is seen as performance – by a “self” with a past – who involves, persuades, and (perhaps) moves an audience through language and gesture, “doing” rather than telling alone.” (Reissman, 2005). Practicing ideas through adaptations and similarities of social components exist in performative analysis through dramaturgic and narratives. Reissman further explains that performative approach is appropriate for studies of communication practices, and for detailed studies of identity construction (how narrators want to be known).

‘Language can dwell at length on the mental life of characters, on their considerations of multiple possible courses of actions, on their philosophy of life, on their hopes and fears, on their daydreams and fantasies, because mental life can be represented as a kind of inner discourse, structured in the same way as language. Cognitive science may tell us that not all thinking is verbal, but the translation of private thought into language is one of the most powerful and widespread narrative devices.’ (Hühn, Peter et al. (eds.), 2019).

In narrative performative analysis, performativity can be positioned on two levels: (1) the level of the story, or history/background and (2) the level of the act of narration or narrator's action. Performativity (1) refers to the personified re-enactment of a narrative in which the performance of the story is presented by one or more actors. Performativity (2) refers to the level of the story that is presented are not mediated by a narrator. The act of narrations is presented as the narrator's self-reflection; the narrator makes explicit comments on the story and to address to the reader or spectator. These presentations of narratives (e.g. in writing, cartoons or film) stimulates a performance in the mind of the reader or audience.

### **3.5 Research design method**

This research study uses qualitative research mode with performative analysis method as the study design. The selected design of this study is to analyse the application of the Tridimensional Character Analysis concept in the movie *Adiwiraku*. Reissman (2005) states that variation exist in the performative approach. Humans are the actors in the play of life, with different roles, different social interactions and conflicts (drama), hence, Reissman further states that narrative researchers may choose to analyse different features, namely, content of the narratives or the voice of the narrator/protagonist, characters and their role in the story, settings (the setting of the performance and story), the performance of dialogue between characters (communication and interaction), audience response (listener or reader) and the interpreter of the story (p.5).

This research study through narrative performative analysis as its primary study which will be done by analyzing the content of the narrations in movie *Adiwiraku*, the characters and their role in the story and the performance of dialogue between characters (communication and interaction). Visuals, narrations and dialogues are primarily the communication involved in *Adiwiraku*, which gives information regarding the characters and, how the story communicates life and life experiences. In addition, this research study will also analyse the function and performance of the narration integrated with visuals, which is crucial both for the film functions and its effect on the audience. “Narratives are part of the world around us, assume different forms and are expressed in many ways.” (Lothe, 2009).

### **3.5.1 Content of the narratives**

One of the components of the narrative performative structure is the content of the narratives. Reissman (2005) states that narratives carry meaning as a form of communication and self-presentation. Therefore, the basic components of the first performative structure in this research study describes the narrations in the movie *Adiwiraku*. The movie *Adiwiraku* is a re-enactment based on a true story of an English teacher, Teacher Cheryl, which brought about pride and glory to a rural school after winning the fifth place in an English choral speaking competition. The performativity of the story is presented by a narrator (performativity 1), in which the narrations are the essence of the protagonist’s thoughts and emotions.

The data below is a detailed description of the background time (time code), place and narrations of the female teacher protagonist in some of the scenes in the movie *Adiwiraku*.

Scenes	Narrations
Scene 2 Location: School compound TC: 00:38-00:53	‘This is my 3 <sup>rd</sup> year in SMK Pinang Tunggal. Third year of being a teacher. You see, I wasn’t always a teacher, neither had I studied to become a teacher’.
Scene 3 Location: Office building TC : 00.55-01:00	‘Two years ago I was here.’ (flashback: Teacher Cheryl dressed in a blouse and pencil skirt while she was in the corporate world)
Scene 4 Location: Establish of SMK Pinang Tunggal TC: 01:10- 01:11	‘And today once again, I am here at SMK Pinang Tunggal to Teach for Malaysia.
Scene 5 Location: School corridor TC: 01:12- 01:27	‘In the past two years, I have gone through a lot.’ ‘I think I know my students now.’
Scene 6 Location: Classroom TC: 01:29-01:48	‘I was so tired after my two-year contract. I could have easily walked away but I choose to continue teaching for another year. I don’t know why but deep down in my heart, I feel that there is something that I have not done yet.’
Scene 7 Location: Classroom TC: 02:34-03:02	‘I used to dream of teaching these kids to love books like I do; to share the beauty of how books can be a window to the world of imagination. But now my expectations had drop. My goal now is getting the kids to pass SPM.’

<p>Scene 8</p> <p>Location: classroom</p> <p>TC: 03:44-04:05</p>	<p>‘So, I’m here to teach. By hook or by crook, I’m going to teach them well and good. As teachers, we are responsible to shape their future. I am tired of complaining about our education system. From now on, this is my war for education equity for all students.’</p>
<p>Scene 9</p> <p>Location: classroom</p> <p>TC: 05:47-06:23</p>	<p>‘Do they look like superheroes? No? Are you sure?’ (Khairi, a student, walks into class)</p> <p>‘Khairi’s heart is powered by battery (pace-maker). Yes, he is the Iron man, a superhero. But Khairi is not the only Iron man. All these kids, they are my superheroes.’</p>
<p>Scene10</p> <p>Location: classroom</p> <p>TC: 06:56-07:07</p>	<p>‘I have this particular student who loses her temper so fast that she would pick any item she uses to throw it at her friends. Now her outburst has progressed into throwing a chair.’</p>
<p>Scene 11</p> <p>Location: classroom</p> <p>TC: 07:40-07:49</p>	<p>‘It was a bad timing for my Teach For Malaysia fellow. I bet Constance is also like me. I asked myself on my first day as a teacher, how to save the future of the kids.’</p>
<p>Scene 12</p> <p>Location: classroom</p> <p>TC: 07:54-08:08</p>	<p>‘As teachers we can only try to inspire them, to gain their trust and never ever give up on them. The rest in their hands to make the right choices.’</p>

<p>Scene 13</p> <p>Location: classroom</p> <p>TC: 09:42-10:17</p>	<p>‘I practiced a reward system in my class. If I see them making the right choices, they get a sticker. If they misbehave, I take back the sticker. If the whole class misbehaves, the reward which is a surprise gift will be cancelled. Many of my kids come from troubled families, and they are often treated with a lot of anger. I didn’t want to add to it. I told myself that if they take anything home from me, at least let it be a mere fact that someone was nice to them.’</p>
<p>Scene 17</p> <p>Location: Teacher Cheryl’s home</p> <p>TC: 11:15-11:32</p>	<p>‘My house is always open to my kids. I hope they see this place as a gateway to literacy. Teaching is not just a job. It’s a life. Believe me!’</p>
<p>Scene 18</p> <p>Location: Teacher’s room</p> <p>TC: 11:42-11:52</p>	<p>‘Are you wondering why everybody are so excited? (cynical)</p> <p>SMK Pinang Tunggal is a hotspot for low English proficiency. Pardon my sarcasm.’</p>
<p>Scene 23</p> <p>Location: Classroom</p> <p>TC: 19:35-20:19</p>	<p>‘Even though deep down inside she doesn’t put any expectations to the team, but, she wants them to be committed and try their best.’</p>

<p>Scene 24</p> <p>Location: classroom (Form 1 Luffa)</p> <p>TC: 20:59-22:20</p>	<p>(Teacher Cheryl's narration overlays with the shot on the students)</p> <p>'I'm not teaching Black Beauty literature to 1 Luffa because these kids can't even spell poetry. Instead I am teaching them ABC.'</p> <p>(Teacher Cheryl's narration overlays with the shot on Iqbal)</p> <p>'Iqbal is the youngest in his family but unlike his elder brother, Afzal, he is more responsible and carries the most responsibilities on his shoulders.'</p> <p>(Teacher Cheryl's narration overlays with the shot on Alia)</p> <p>'Some students need time to open up. The trust between student and teacher is a sacred thing. Sometimes it's hard to earn. Rome wasn't built in a day anyways.'</p>
<p>Scene 31</p> <p>Location: Int- classroom (Form 1 Luffa)</p> <p>TC: 31:52-33.30</p>	<p>Teacher Cheryl's narration overlays on Iqbal)</p> <p>'Iqbal progress make me proud. From an ABC learner in no time he turns to be a brave speller.'</p>
<p>Scene 38</p> <p>Location: classroom (Form 1 Luffa)</p> <p>TC: 49:56-52:05</p>	<p>Teacher Cheryl's narration overlays on Iqbal)</p> <p>'Iqbal is one of my favourite students. He is a diligent student.'</p>



<p>Scene 40</p> <p>Location: exterior Alia's house</p> <p>TC: 54:30-57:17</p>	<p>(Teacher Cheryl's narration overlays on Kemboja)</p> <p>"Kemboja is catching up well and beating the rest of the class. She is very bright and smart."</p> <p>"Her swollen hand can heal but her heart might be wounded permanently. She is worried about Alia. That is why she follows her back, to witness it for herself."</p> <p>"Alone with a mentally unstable mom, barely has enough to eat and lives on no extras, yet she can still find it in her to go to school and be the best she can be. In my eyes, she is stronger than the man of steel."</p>
<p>Scene 41</p> <p>Location: Alia's house</p> <p>TC: 57:20-57:30</p>	<p>"The only help comes from the uncle who comes to visit them two to three times per week."</p>
<p>Scene 42</p> <p>Location: classroom (Form 1Lutf)</p> <p>TC: 57:58-58:20</p>	<p>'Kids who come from good families come to school to learn. Kids who come from challenging families, come to school to be loved.'</p>
<p>Scene 44</p> <p>Location: Kemboja's house</p> <p>TC: 1:00:34-1:04:12</p>	<p>'When I look at Kemboja's situation, it triggered me a question that I thought I will never ask. What would it take to ensure that our children are making the right decision to stay in school and get the education they deserve?'</p>

<p>Scene 46</p> <p>Location: school canteen</p> <p>TC: 1:09:24-1:10:12</p>	<p>‘Sometimes it’s the random ice-cream treat or simple meals and looking them in the eyes, shows that I believe in them. Talking about other things than school, laughing at random jokes, makes it easier for me to know them and love them.’</p>
<p>Scene 47</p> <p>Location: school hall</p> <p>TC:1:14:01-1:15:50</p>	<p>‘With superpowers come great responsibilities, but these kids are my own superheroes. Though often seen like they don’t have any super powers. They are still young and susceptible to threats. At times, I don’t believe they are strong enough to face life challenges. All I can do is to make them see and believe that they have the powers in them.’</p>
<p>Scene 48</p> <p>Location: Teacher Cheryl’s house</p> <p>TC: 1:16:57-1:17:20</p>	<p>‘Now my students also know the story of Nick Vuljicic. They know the lyrics of The Script- Hall of Fame, and can spend the entire day singing Bruno Mars’- Grenade. They come to my house in the afternoon just to practice spelling and reading in English.’</p>
<p>Scene 53</p> <p>Location: ext. road side</p> <p>TC: 1:25:37-1:28:10</p>	<p>(Teacher Cheryl is saddened by Iqbal’s passing.)</p> <p>‘I recognized Iqbal’s jacket on sight. I didn’t have the strength to look at him for the last time. Yes, Iqbal has been riding a motorbike without a helmet or a license. Yes, they have somehow managed to pack themselves three to a bike. Yes, this motorbike was the only means</p>

	<p>of transportation for Iqbal and his family. Yes, his father was robbed of their child with Hari Raya Aidilfitri were hours away. Like many of his classmates, Iqbal was boisterous, always fizzing with energy like a shaken bottle of carbonated soda. He had attempted to claim a prize from me having collected 14 stickers in a performance reward system I had devised. I had told him to wait for 20 stickers.</p> <p>Dear Iqbal, I wish I had given you the gift and duit raya as you had so innocently requested. You will be missed dearly. May your soul rest in peace.’</p>
<p>Scene 54 Location: school hall (night) TC:1:28:11- 1:32:36</p>	<p>‘What I am worried about of this replacement epidemic is if my kids begin to think that pride is actually temporary and the pain is forever.’</p>
<p>Scene 57 Location: Competition hall TC: 1:36:45-1:37:42</p>	<p>‘Just by showing up and being here, amazes me. They all amaze me.’</p>
<p>Scene 62 Location: Competition hall TC: 1:46:08- 1:48:00</p>	<p>‘I feel like something is not right. My kids at least deserve a certificate of participation.’</p> <p>‘They have never won in any competition. Words can’t describe the feeling, the joy and happiness when we heard the announcement for the fifth place.’</p>

<p>Scene 64</p> <p>Location: School hall</p> <p>TC:1:49:27-1:50:15</p>	<p>‘Kemboja suddenly appears and not too long after that we manage to bring her back to school. I am sure she will have a bright future now.</p>
<p>Scene 65</p> <p>Location: Teacher’s office</p> <p>TC: 1:50:20-1:52:52</p>	<p>‘Today is my last day at SMK Pinang Tunggal. After three years, I decided to fully concentrate on my doctorate study which I started recently in Penang.’</p>
<p>Scene 66</p> <p>Location: Ext SMK Pinang Tunggal</p> <p>TC: 1:52:54-1:58:20</p>	<p>‘No matter how much I loved my students, I knew it was time to leave and pursue my own dreams. I wasn’t afraid to leave. I know I wasn’t leaving ordinary students from Pinang Tunggal, but a bunch of Superheroes, ready to change the world. I know that all of them will be advocate for change and will go on to truly make a difference in the future.’</p>

### 3.5.2 Characters and their role in *Adiwiraku*

The basic component of the second performative method adopted in this research study is character and their role in the story. Thus, this research focuses on listing the important characters in the movie *Adiwiraku* with the description of the character.


*Adiwiraku* tells a story about an English teacher, Cheryl Ann Fernando, of Teach for Malaysia Alumna, and how her students beat the odds at a choral speaking competition. In 2013, Cheryl Ann Fernando, a Public Relations (PR) consultant-turned teacher, traded her corporate job of four years to join Teach for Malaysia (TFM), an independent, non-profit organisation. Their main mission is to end education inequity through their ‘ambassadors’ i.e. volunteer teachers from diverse sectors, to expand education opportunity for all children in Malaysia especially in the rural and underperforming schools.

She was posted to SMK Pinang Tunggal in Kedah. Embarking on a heartwarming quest, teaching the English language to non-native speakers in a rural school, from a rural and deprived community in Kedah was highly-demanding mentally, physically, and financially. Her secondary students could hardly speak nor write in English, hence she had to start from scratch. She came up with a creative idea of introducing a reward system (‘sistem ganjaran prestasi’), whereby a sticker will be given as a motivation for the students to participate in class. Once all twenty stickers have been earned by the students, they will receive a reward/gift from her.



The invitation to participate in a Choral speaking inter-school competition was an opportunity to encourage the students to be confident in speaking the English language. Against all odds, after months of rehearsals, the team from SMK Pinang Tunggal managed to place 5th place in the competition. This was a motivation booster for the students and the school as they have never won anything in the past.

*Adiwiraku* is a touching drama about a teacher's determination to inspire and motivate her students to reach for greater heights in life. The film brings about real life settings about teaching and the struggles and challenges of children/students from deprived backgrounds, in their quest to obtain formal education - Alia, who lives with a mentally disturbed mother; a very smart girl, Kemboja, who has to skip school to earn a living and take care of her sickly father; and Iqbal, who was looking forward to get more merit stickers to give his sister a new school bag. The title *Adiwiraku* literally translates as 'My Superheroes', which carries a deeper and heavier meaning than the typical 'Marvel' superheroes that exist in imaginary worlds. In *Adiwiraku*, heroes are the ordinary people who are doing more than what they think possible.



The following are the key characters in *Adiwiraku*.

No	Character	Characteristics
1	 <p data-bbox="451 1570 884 1675"><b>Teacher Cheryl Ann Fernando</b> played by Sangeeta Khrisnasamy</p>	<ul data-bbox="1007 1205 1449 1984" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PR consultant turned English teacher.</li> <li>• Teach for Malaysia alumna.</li> <li>• A dedicated teacher with a big heart.</li> <li>• Reading is her passion.</li> <li>• Motivates and believes in her students.</li> <li>• She believes that every child has the right to education.</li> <li>• She faced her challenges.</li> </ul>

2	 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Constant Wong</b> played by Xavier Fong</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constant Wong</li> <li>• An English teacher who assist Chery Ann Teacher Cheryl during choral speaking sessions</li> <li>• Teach For Malaysia alumna</li> <li>• Kind hearted and funny</li> </ul>
3	 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Kemboja</b> played by Fara Noradzlina</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kemboja, an intelligent girl, who lives with her sickly father and the breadwinner of the house.</li> <li>• She has to miss school to work to buy food and medicine for her father.</li> </ul>
4	 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Alia</b> played by Wan Azlyn Maasyah</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alia, a bright and smart girl who lives with a mentally unstable mom. They barely have enough to eat and lives on no extras. She sometimes comes to school with bruises on her but she tries to hide them.</li> </ul>

<p>5</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Iqbal</b> played by Muhammad Faiz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Iqbal, thirteen-year-old, is a hardworking student. He participates in class to earn stickers in hope to be able to get a new school bag for his sister. Although he is the youngest in his family but he carries the most responsibilities on his shoulders.</li> </ul>
<p>6</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">(from left) <b>Rizal Fahmi, Ahmad Adnin Zidane, Nur Idina Tasnim and Balqis Sani</b> with the real Teacher Cheryl Ann Fernando</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rizal, Zidane, Irдина and Balkish are the original students which were casted to play themselves.</li> <li>• Rizal is smart and has leadership qualities.</li> <li>• Zidane is from Kota Tinggi, speaks English well and is very ambitious. He is also the conductor for the choral speaking team.</li> <li>• Idina, a book-worm, speaks fluent English but talks fast like a speeding like a bullet train</li> </ul>



		<p>and a bit monotonous. She is a thinker and is able to handle when a conflict arises among her friends.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balqis, she is funny and also a bit loud, shy in person but daring with positive energy.</li> </ul>
7	 <p><b>Khairi</b> (right) played by Muhammad Khairi (original student) and <b>Imran</b> (left) played by Imran Shahaludin</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Khairi a.k.a. Iron-man has a pacemaker in his heart. He wants to be treated equally and to be able to do the things just like others.</li> <li>• Imran is a special child. He learns his English from playing video games. He can do anything if he puts his heart and mind to it.</li> </ul>
8	 <p><b>Ajwad</b> played by Ajwad Mohd Sobri</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ajwad, a rebel for fear he will be judged by his friends, but deep down he wants to be part of the choral speaking team.</li> <li>• He saved the team by filling the spot required for the team to participate in the competition.</li> </ul>

9



**The Choral speaking team of SMK Pinang Tunggai.**

All of the above characters have their respective roles to play in *Adiwiraku*. The teacher character is the protagonist in the movie where her behaviour serves to provide elements of dedication, motivation and inspiration for her students as well as to the audience. The movie also highlights on other characters; Alia, Kemboja and Iqbal which provides insights on some of the challenges and conflicts faced by the teacher (protagonist) and the students in learning the English language and obtaining proper education.

In addition, a detailed description on how the characters play a role in each scene, together with detailed description of the background time, place and situation is provided in the data below.

### 3.5.3 The chronology of events in the movie *Adiwiraku*.

Scene No.	Time-code	Location Exterior (Ext)/ Interior (Int)	Descriptions
1	00:20 – 00:39	Ext- SMK Sekolah Pinang Tunggal (school)	Establish of Sekolah Pinang Tunggal and students.
2	00:38 – 00:53	Ext- school	- The main character, Teacher Cheryl arrives at SMK Pinang Tunggal, Kedah in <i>baju kurung</i> (formal attire for Malay women in Malaysia), observing the culture of the school and society. (Cheryl's narration introduces her background.)  'This is my 3 <sup>rd</sup> year in SMK Pinang Tunggal. Third year of being a teacher. You see, I wasn't always a teacher, neither had I studied to become a teacher'.
3	00:55- 01:00	Ext - office complex	Narration- (flashback)  'Two years ago I was here.' - Teacher Cheryl dressed in a blouse and pencil skirt.
4	01:07- 02:21	Ext – school (Flashback 2013)	(Narration continues)

			<p>The main character shared her experiences during her first two years at the school. She was so tired of her two-year contract. The narration recaps on how the students were disrespectful of her, she was cat-whistled by the male students, being called names for not wearing a head scarf as majority of the students were muslims and mocked for speaking in English.</p> <p>Although her contract as a teacher under Teach for Malaysia was only for two years but she decided to extend for another year as she felt her duty is not done yet.</p>
5	02:22 - 02:50	Int – classroom (Present time - Form 1 Luffa)	<p>- In the classroom, students were sitting on the desk, chatting away ignoring school session has started. (Narration overlay with image of students in class)</p> <p>‘When she first came to teach at the school, her dream was to influence the students to love books just as how she loves books.’ In her opinion, “books are windows to your imagination”.</p>
6	02:51- 03:05	Int- classroom (Form 5 Luffa)	<p>- Teacher Cheryl is teaching in class. Her students are well behaved now and pays attention in class.</p>

			<p>(Narration continues)</p> <p>‘But now her expectations are diminished. Her main goal is to ensure her students passed The Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM)’.</p> <p>(SPM is the Malaysian Certificate of Education, a national examination taken by all fifth-form secondary school students in Malaysia.)</p>
7	02:06- 04:07	Int – classroom (Form 5 Luffa)	<p>- Teacher Cheryl explains the importance of reading to her students. She relates the notion of reading by relating to an Islamic story; quoting the angel <i>Jibril</i>'s (Gibran) first word to the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w – ‘<i>Iqra</i>’ which translates <i>bacalah</i> or to read. Her students were impressed by her knowledge in Islam.</p> <p>- Teacher Cheryl’s narration was played over images of the students in the classroom. The form five students are able to read English very well now. Teacher Cheryl is proud of them.</p> <p>(Narration overlay at the end of the scene)</p> <p>‘She is tired of complaining about the education system. It’s a never ending battle. Hence, she is determined to fight for education equity for all students.’</p>

8	04:30- 04:40	Ext – school corridor	(New Year – first day at school)  - Teacher Cheryl walks to class with a new student (Zidane) in tow.
9	04:41- 05:58	Int – classroom Form 4 Sasbania.	- Teacher Cheryl introduces herself as their English teacher. She then asked Zidane to introduce himself to the class. Zidane is from Johor and speaks very well in English. There was mix expression from the other students; some were impressed whilst some felt he was showing off.
10	05:59- 06:23	Int- classroom	-Introduction of a student - Khairi the Iron-man as he has a heart pacemaker. Khari apologies for being late as he easily gets tired climbing up the stairs.  This is the first mention of a superhero character or Adiwira.  (Teacher Cheryl's narration)  'To me, all of my students are Superheroes.'
11	06:25- 06:49	Ext- classroom (Form 1 Luffa)	- Constant Wong, a fellow teacher from Teach For Malaysia, walks past some noisy classes. It was his first day at the school. He was surprised to see the students were not paying

			<p>attention to the teacher teaching in class. He stops at the class where Teacher Cheryl is teaching. He watches the commotion between a female student (Wawa) and a male student. Out of anger Wawa threw a chair at the male student. Teacher Cheryl tries to calm and stop the fight.</p>
12	06:50-08:08	Int- classroom (Form 1 Luffa)	<p>- Teacher Constant knocks on the door and introduces himself.</p> <p>- Just then, Wawa furiously storms out of class. Teacher Cheryl goes after her leaving Teacher Constant to face the class. He introduced himself as the new English teacher, they all laughed at him.</p> <p>(Teacher Cheryl's narration overlays with the scene)</p> <p>'A teacher can only teach, gain their trust and inspire the student, the rest is up to the student. She is certain that Teacher Constant shares the same feeling just as how she felt on her first day at the school and what can teachers do to change the students.'</p>
13	08:18-08:55	Ext- classroom corridor	<p>- Teacher Cheryl confronts Wawa. She scolded Wawa for her temperamental behaviour and that it is not acceptable regardless what the reasons may be, and will not solve the</p>

			<p>problem. Teacher Cheryl told her that this time she will not report the matter to the disciplinarian but warns her the next time she will be go unpunished. Wawa felt remorse, she was teary eyed. Teacher Cheryl told her that she need some counseling help. She hugs Wawa. Wawa sobs at her shoulder.</p>
14	08:56- 09:20	Ext- corridor	<p>(Introduction to Alia)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Alia who was rushing to class accidentally stumbles and fall into Wawa and Teacher Cheryl.</li> </ul> <p>Teacher Cheryl ask if Alia is hurt, and helps her up.</p>
15	09:21- 10:30	Int- classroom (Form 1 Luffa)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teacher Cheryl introduce the ‘sistem ganjaran prestasi’ (reward system) to motivate her students to finish their homework and to be active participants in class.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20 stickers = 1 reward/ gift</li> <li>• Making the right choice = +1 sticker</li> <li>• Misbehaviour = - 1 sticker</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A sticker will be given for every satisfying homework and for students’ participation in class. They will receive a gift from her once they have successfully collected all twenty</li> </ul>



			<p>stickers. Any misbehavior will cause them lose a sticker.</p> <p>(Teacher Cheryl's narration overlays with shots of the students in the class.)</p> <p>In her narration, Teacher Cheryl expresses that she is aware that most of her students comes from an economically challenged background. They are also often scolded for various reasons, either, at home or at school. Hence, she doesn't want to add to their burden. She wants her students to know and feel that she cares about them.</p> <p>(Narration ends (the scene resumes))</p> <p>- Teacher Cheryl checks the student attendance list; she calls out for Kemboja. She hasn't been coming to school for quite some time. None of the other students knows anything about her absence.</p>
16	10:31- 11:05	Ext- school area	<p>End of school day.</p> <p>- Teacher Cheryl is driving out of school. She notices Iqbal sharing his motorbike with two other boys and without wearing a helmet. Just then, a female student knocks on the window screen confirming their attendance at her house later in the afternoon.</p>

17	11:15- 11:32	Int – Teacher Cheryl’s house	<p>(Teacher Cheryl’s narration overlays the scene)</p> <p>‘My house is always open to my kids. I hope the see this place a s a gateway to literacy.’</p> <p>Teacher Cheryl believes that ‘teaching is not merely just a job but it is a life’.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Students goes to her house for free extra classes. She helps them with their homework. She encourages them to read English books or even just to listen to English songs to help and motivate them to learn the English language.</li> <li>- Teacher Constant bought some snacks for the students. Teacher Cheryl told him to not over spend as they will be facing some financial constraint for the next six months.</li> </ul>
18	12:24- 13:02	Int- Teacher’s room	<p>(Teacher Cheryl narration overlay the scene)</p> <p>‘Are you wondering why everybody are so excited? (cynical). SMK Pinang Tunggal is a hotspot for low English proficiency. Pardon my sarcasm.’</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teacher Cheryl receiving a letter of invitation for an inter-school Choral speaking competition. Neither Teacher Cheryl nor the other teachers were excited as SMK Pinang Tunggal is known as a hot-spot school for low English proficiency.</li> </ul>

19	14:28- 15:35	Ext- school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A school exchange program representative (Mr. Franklin) visits the school to evaluate on the student's overall performance. Zidane, Irdina, Rizal and Balkish were chosen as student representatives.</li> <li>- Mr. Franklin was impressed with their English comprehension.</li> <li>- The Headmistress was also impressed. She suggests to teacher Cheryl that perhaps the students can participate again in the Choral speaking competition.</li> </ul>
20	15:36- 16:35	Int- teacher's refectory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teacher Cheryl and teacher Constant watches videos of past participants and winners of the Choral speaking competition. They were unsure on how to train the students as the last time the school participated in the competition was in 2013. Although the students trained very hard for the competition but due to their poor comprehension and proficiency in the English language, they couldn't even memorize a fifteen-minute script.</li> <li>- Teacher Constant feels that they are facing a losing battle but teacher Cheryl feels that this is a challenge to prove otherwise.</li> </ul>

21	16:36- 17:15	Int- classroom	<p>- In class, teacher Cheryl ask who would like to participate in the Choral speaking competition. Zidane was the only one who was excited with the idea.</p>
22	17:16- 19:32	Int- teacher's refectory	<p>- Teacher Cheryl told teacher Constant regarding the students' response to the competition.</p> <p>- Teacher Constant suggest to only send fifteen of their best students to participate. Teacher Cheryl explains that the rules and regulation states thirty-five participants for each team. They discuss and list down all potential students in hand.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irdina – a book worm, speaks fluent English but like a bullet train and dreams to study criminology.</li> <li>• Balkish – loud, funny and bursting with positive energy. She is great in team participation.</li> <li>• Rizal – he may be quite but has confidence. Very neat and proper. He has potential to be a great leader in the future.</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Imran – a ‘special’ child. He learns English from playing video games. He can achieve anything if he focusses and puts his heart to it.</li> </ul> <p>- They only have five students in hand (including Zidane). They need thirty more to be eligible to participate.</p>
23	19:35- 20:19	Int - classroom	<p>- Teacher Cheryl meets Zidane, Irdina, Rizal and Balkish. She appoints Zidane as the team leader and as the conductor for the choral speaking team. She delegates the task to Zidane and Irdina, to find and persuade thirty other students to join the team.</p> <p>(Teacher Cheryl’s narration overlays their discussion)</p> <p>‘Even though deep down inside she doesn’t put any expectations to the team, but, she wants them to be committed and try their best.’</p>
24	20:59- 22:20	Int- classroom (Form 1 Luffa)	<p>-Teacher Cheryl is concern about Kemboja as she has not been coming to school. Neither any of the students knows anything about Kemboja.</p> <p>Chery’s narration plays over the shot on the students.</p>

			<p>'I'm not teaching Black Beauty literature to I Luffa because these kids can't even spell poetry. Instead I am teaching them ABC. '</p> <p>- English poetry is part of the subject in English lower secondary, but since the student couldn't even spell the word 'poetry', Teacher Cheryl had to teach them basic English starting from A for apple, B for ball, C for cat and so forth.</p> <p>-Iqbal receives a sticker (reward) for actively participating in class.</p> <p>(Teacher Cheryl's narration overlays with the shot on Iqbal)</p> <p>'Iqbal is the youngest in his family but unlike his elder brother, Afzal, he is more responsible and carries the most responsibilities on his shoulders.'</p> <p>(Teacher Cheryl's narration overlays with the shot on Alia)</p> <p>'Some students need time to open up. The trust between student and teacher is a sacred thing. Sometimes it's hard to earn. Rome wasn't built in a day anyways.'</p>
25	23:30- 24:43	Ext- Teacher Cheryl's house	- Teacher Constant came by to Teacher Cheryl's house. As they were discussing about the choral speaking script, the song

			<p>Superheroes by The Script plays on the car radio. Teacher Cheryl was inspired by the song. Together, she and Teacher Constant came up with the script for the choral speaking.</p> <p>(Chorus-Superheroes)</p> <p>“When you’re fighting for it all your life,  You’ve been working every day and night,  That’s how a superhero learns to fly,  Every day, every hour,  Turn the pain into power”</p>
26	25:31- 27:47	Int- School hall	<p>(1<sup>st</sup> Choral speaking rehearsal)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teacher Cheryl and Teacher Constant arrives with three more students to join in the team. Zidane told her that they only managed to get seven students as the rest were too scared to join in.</li> <li>- Teacher Cheryl distributed the rough draft of the choral speaking script to the students.</li> <li>- Imran, who was busy playing video games, read through it briefly and was able to memorize and recite it fluently. They were amaze by it. They clapped for Imran.</li> </ul>

			<p>- That inspired the other students. Teacher Cheryl got an idea on how to lure the other students to join in.</p>
27	27:50- 28:40	Int-school hall	<p>- Students were queuing to register to join the choral speaking team. Zidane and Rizal were taking down names of those who wish to participate. Teacher Constant oversees the registration process. As an incentive to participate, each of them will receive a snack and a box of drink.</p> <p>- Khairi was amongst in the que. Teacher Constant pulled him by the side and told him that they can't allow him to participate due to his health condition unless there is a written consent from his parents. Khairi was disappointed.</p> <p>- Aswad registered to join in but he was more interested with the free snacks.</p> <p>- Teacher Cheryl arrives at the school hall to start rehearsal.</p>
28	28:41- 29:43	Int-school hall	<p>(Choral speaking practice session)</p> <p>- Teacher Cheryl coaches the students on how to pronounce the words and to recite the script. The students are struggling to pronounce some words due to their thick northern local dialect.</p>



29	29:45- 30:40	Int- school hall	(Choral speaking practice session) - The Headmistress came to check on their progress at the end of rehearsal. She was concerned about the low participation. Teacher Cheryl suggested about offering incentives as a motivation for students to participate in the choral speaking. The Headmistress was not convinced that the approach will work.
30	30:48- 31:51	Int-classroom (Form 1 Sasbania)	- Teacher Constant offers an incentive to his students; ten bonus points for their English paper assignment for those who participate in the choral speaking. The students bought the idea and agree to join in. - Teacher Cheryl listen and watches from outside the class. She is very happy their plan worked out well.
31	31:52- 33:30	Int- classroom (Form 1 Luffa)	- Iqbal is read out loud in class. He receives a sticker for his effort and good progress. (reward system) (Teacher Cheryl's narration) 'Iqbal progress make me proud. From an ABC learner in no time he turns to be a brave speller.'

			<p>- Kemboja appears at the door. The students suggest that she should be punished for being late. Teacher Cheryl explains that since she is a new student, she proposes that they should give her a warm welcome instead. Teacher Cheryl and the students sang a welcoming song to welcome Kemboja back to school.</p> <p>“Peel banana, peel, peel banana, Cook banana, cook, cook banana, Eat banana, eat, eat banana, Sleep banana, sleep, sleep banana, Shake banana, shake, shake banana, Yeay!”</p> <p>- The song is funny yet heartfelt. It made Kemboja feel at ease to be back at school.</p>
32	33:34- 36:42	Int- school hall	<p>(Choral speaking practice session with full ensemble) -- They finally have all 35 students for the team, but Ajwad did not attend for rehearsal.</p> <p>- Zidane is conducting the team. They are showing tremendous improvement.</p> <p>- Khairi is watching and listening sadly from a distance.</p> <p>- Ajwad ditched choral speaking practice to play football instead.</p>

33	37:27- 38:30	Ext- school compound	<p>- Teacher Cheryl waits for Alia after school ends. She confronts Alia about her injured arm. She tries to reach out to Alia but Alia refuses to share her problems.</p>
34	38:32- 39:23	Int- school hall	<p>(Choral speaking practice session)</p> <p>- Teacher Cheryl is bewildered with the turn up for rehearsal. Out of 35 students, only 22 students showed up that day. They are unable to rehearse if the full team is not present.</p> <p>- Teacher Cheryl discuss with Zidane, Rizal, Imran, Balkish and Idina and ask them to find out about the missing students whereabouts.</p>
35	39:25- 41:52	Int- school hall	<p>(Next day- choral speaking practice session)</p> <p>- Cheryl spoke to the thirteen students who didn't show up for the practice session the day before. Eleven students are unable to continue due other extra activities, family problems and some were just not interested. Ajwad was one of them who did not want to be involve for no particular reason.</p> <p>- The eleven students left. Teacher Cheryl's heart sank.</p> <p>- Khairi watches from a distance.</p>

36	42:08- 44:10	Int- teacher's room	<p>- 'Iron-Man' Khairi persuades Teacher Cheryl to allow him to join in the choral speaking. Teacher Cheryl explains that they can't afford to take any risk due to his health condition. Khairi argues that he has desires too and he wants to live a normal just like everyone else.</p> <p>- Teacher Cheryl apologize for not realizing how he feels. She promised to discuss the matter with his parents but he must promise to rest whenever he feels tired during rehearsals. Khairi takes her hand, puts it on his heart and promised with all the battery in his heart.</p>
37	42:20- 49:55	Ext/Int- montage	<p>(Series of montage on the lives of Iqbal, Kemboja and Alia)</p> <p>- Iqbal lives with his father and two other siblings; an elder brother and a sister. He helps his father to feed their cows every morning before getting ready for school. They only have one motorbike which he uses to sends his sister to school, then back again to fetch his brother to school.</p> <p>- Kemboja lives with her sickly father. She prepares some thin tea and biscuit for him to take his medicine. There is only one biscuit left</p>

			<p>in the biscuit tin. Her father asked if she has eaten, she lied and left for school. Kemboja leaves very early in the morning as she has to walk to school which is a distance from their home.</p> <p>- Alia lives with her mother. She prepares some food for her and place it next to her bed before leaving for school. Alia rides an old bicycle to school.</p>
38	49:56- 52:05	Int- classroom (Form 1 Luffa)	<p>- Iqbal shows very good progress in class. From an A, B, C reader, he now could spell more difficult words. He receives a sticker for his effort. He shows-off the sticker to his classmates.</p> <p>(Teacher Cheryl's narration overlays on Iqbal)</p> <p>"Iqbal is one of my favourite students. He is a dilligent student."</p> <p>(Teacher Cheryl's narration overlays on Kemboja)</p> <p>"Kemboja is catching up well and beating the rest of the class. She is very bright and smart."</p> <p>- Teacher Cheryl notices Alia writing with her left hand. She insisted to take a look at Alia's right arm. She was surprised to see bruises on</p>

			her arm. Alia told her that she had a bad fall. Teacher Cheryl was not convinced.
39	52:10- 53:42	Int- doctor's clinic	<p>- Teacher Cheryl and Teacher Constant takes Alia to the clinic to get her arm checked.</p> <p>(Teacher Cheryl's narration overlays the scene in the clinic)</p> <p>"Alia is hard to tame, yet she keeps the deepest secret amongst all her student."</p> <p>- Teacher Cheryl wants to pay for the medicine but she is short of cash. Teacher Constant chips in to pay for the bill. Alia watches them in silence. She is touched by their kind gesture.</p> <p>(Teacher Cheryl's narration overlays Alia's reaction)</p> <p>'I am bound to keep Alia's secret to gain her trust.'</p>
40	54:30- 57:17	Ext- Alia's house	<p>- Teacher Cheryl convoys with Alia back to her home.</p> <p>(Teacher Cheryl's narration overlays with the journey to Alia's house)</p> <p>"Her swollen hand can heal but her heart might be wounded permanently. She is worried about</p>

		<p>Alia. That is why she follows her back, to witness it for herself.”</p> <p>- Alia’s mother was furious when she came home late. She questions her whereabouts. Alia told her she was at school. Her mother didn’t believe her and accused her of being truant. She started hitting Alia with a rubber pipe. Suddenly, she stopped beating and broke down asking for Alia’s forgiveness. Teacher Cheryl watches in disbelief.</p> <p>- Alia’s mother is surprise to see Teacher Cheryl. She ran into the house and hid by the door. Alia walks to Teacher Cheryl and hugs her. Alia introduces Teacher Cheryl to her mother. She led Teacher Cheryl to her mother and told her to not be afraid as her teacher is a kind person.</p> <p>(Teacher Cheryl’s narration overlays the scene)</p> <p>“Alone with a mentally unstable mom, barely has enough to eat and lives on no extras, yet she can still find it in her to go to school and be the best she can be. In my eyes, she is stronger than the man of steel.”</p>
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41	57:20- 57:30	Ext- Alia's house (night)	<p>- Alia's uncle send some basic needs and groceries for them.</p> <p>(Teacher Cheryl's narration overlays the scene)</p> <p>"The only help comes from the uncle who comes to visit them two to three times per week."</p>
42	57:58- 58:20	Int- classroom (Form 1 Luffa)	<p>- Teacher Cheryl is concerned with Kemboja. She hasn't been coming to school for the five consecutive days.</p> <p>(Teacher Cheryl's narration overlays with the scene in the class)</p> <p>'Kids who come from good families come to school to learn. Kids who come from challenging families, come to school to be loved.'</p>
43	58:30- 1:00:30	Ext- petrol station	<p>- Teacher Cheryl visits Kemboja at the petrol station where she works. She tries persuading Kemboja to come back to school. She stresses the importance of education for her future. Kemboja hasn't been able to attend school as she had to work to earn a living and take care of her sickly father. Kemboja explains that</p>



			going to school will not put food on the table nor buy medicine for her father.
44	1:00:34- 1:04:12	Int- Kemboja's home	<p>- Teacher Cheryl sends Kemboja home. She told him about Kemboja's academic excellence; she is the smartest and brightest student she has ever taught. She tries to persuade him to allow Kemboja to continue her education. Teacher Cheryl offers some monetary help but he declines. He explains that ever since he is unable to work, he has to rely on Kemboja. He would like Kemboja to go to school, but unfortunately, the decision is up to Kemboja, as he is dependent on her.</p> <p>- Teacher Cheryl leaves with a heavy heart. She watches helplessly as Kemboja feeds her father from a rice packet they both share.</p> <p>(Teacher Cheryl's narration overlays the shot on Alia and her father)</p> <p>'When I look at Kemboja's situation, it triggered me a question that I thought I will never ask. What would it take to ensure that our children are making the right decision to stay in school and get the education they deserve.'</p>

45	1:04:54- 1:07:10	Int- school hall	<p>(Choral speaking practice session)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Choral speaking practice session resumes with full participation. Zidane and his team managed to gather thirty-five students.</li> <li>- They students gave their all. They help each other in memorising and pronouncing the words correctly.</li> <li>- Ajwad who is no longer in the team, listens and recites the script from a distance.</li> <li>- Teacher Cheryl and Teacher Constant gives the students a ride home after rehearsals.</li> </ul>
46	1:09:24 1:10:12	Int – school hall	<p>(Choral speaking practice session)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The students request for a longer break after rehearsal. Teacher Cheryl suggests they all go for a break together. Teacher Cheryl and Teacher Constant bought ice-cream as a treat for everyone.</li> </ul> <p>(Teacher Cheryl’s narration overlay the scene during break time.)</p> <p>‘Sometimes it’s the random ice-cream treat or simple meals and looking them in the eyes, shows that I believe in them. Talking about other things than school, laughing at random jokes, makes it easier for me to know them and love them.’</p>

47	1:14:01- 1:15:50	Int- school hall	<p>(Choral speaking practice session)</p> <p>- The competition is two months away yet they still have a lot to work on. Teacher Cheryl suggest they should double up their practice session. The students were not happy as it is the month of Ramadhan (fasting month for the muslims), hence, they are tired of practicing over and over again. She understands their plea but they have been practicing for months now, they just need to put the extra effort just for two months. She assures them that all their effort will not be in vain. She shares a mantra to boost their spirit - “<i>sakit itu sementara, kegemilangan itu selamanya</i>” (pain is temporary, victory is forever)</p> <p>- the students gather around to rehearse again.</p> <p>(Teacher Cheryl’s narration overlay the rehearsal)</p> <p>‘With superpowers come great responsibilities, but these kids are my own superheroes. Though often seen like they don’t have any super powers. They are still young and susceptible to threats. At times, I don’t believe they are strong enough to face life challenges. All I can do is to make them see and believe that they have the powers in them.’</p>
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48	1:16:57- 1:17:20	Int- Teacher Cheryl's house	<p>(Teacher Cheryl's narration overlay the scene of a group students doing various activities at her house)</p> <p>The students were listening and singing to English pop songs. Some were reading English story books.</p> <p>'Now my students also know the story of Nick Vuljicic. The know the lyrics of The Script-Hall of Fame, and can spend the entire day singing Bruno Mars'- Grenade. They come to my house in the afternoon just to practice spelling and reading in English.'</p>
49	1:17:23- 1:19:04	Int- Teacher Cheryl's house	<p>Iqbal takes extra classes at teacher Cheryl's house. He is counting the stickers he's earn. He only need six more stickers to complete all twenty stickers.</p> <p>He asked what will the prize be when he has collected all twenty stickers. Teacher Cheryl ask him what would he like to have? He told her he would like to have a school bag for his sister's upcoming birthday as her school bag tore and bore a huge hole recently. Teacher Cheryl ask him to recite a <i>kampung</i> story (story about his village) in English to earn a sticker for the day.</p>

50	1:19:12- 1:22:40	Int- school hall	<p>(Choral speaking practice session)</p> <p>– Zidane threw his frustration at Alif for not memorizing his lines. Teacher Cheryl reminds him that the competition was not about personal glory but a team work; collaborative effort. Zidane walks away from the practice session. Idina goes after him to coax him. Teacher Cheryl watches on.</p> <p>- Zidane apologise to teacher Cheryl for his behaviour. Teacher Cheryl told him that it's all part of learning to work together as a team.</p> <p>- Khairi chants the mantra '<i>sakit itu sementara, kegemilangan itu selamanya</i>' to uplift their spirit again. One by one they join in to chant the mantra over and over again.</p> <p>- Ajwad looks on from a far.</p>
51	1:23:35- 1:24:03	Int – classroom (Form 1 Luffa)	<p>- Teacher Cheryl advise her students to stay safe during the upcoming <i>Hari Raya Aidilfitri</i> (Muslim religious celebration) holidays.</p> <p>- Iqbal invites her to his house for <i>Hari Raya</i> and jokingly asked Teacher Cheryl for <i>duit raya</i> (token sums of money given during the festive season) and when can he gets the reward for the stickers as he has collected fourteen stickers. Teacher Cheryl promised the</p>

			reward shall be given once school resumes after the festive holidays, after he has collected all twenty stickers.
52	1:24:05- 1:25:35	Ext – Alia’s house (night)	<p>- Teacher Cheryl visited Alia on her way back to Kuala Lumpur. She bought new clothes (<i>baju kurung</i>) for Alia for the upcoming <i>Hari Raya Aidilfitri</i>.</p> <p>- She receives a phone call about Iqbal’s mishap.</p>
53	1:25:37- 1:28:10	Ext- roadside (night)	<p>- Iqbal’s belongings and books are strewn all over by the roadside. Teacher Cheryl arrives at the accident scene. Some of her students showed her Iqbal’s jacket and the sticker book.</p> <p>- Teacher Cheryl is saddened by Iqbal’s passing.</p> <p>(Teacher Cheryl’s narration overlay the scene and memories of Iqbal)</p> <p>‘I recognized Iqbal’s jacket on sight. I didn’t have the strength to look at him for the last time. Yes, Iqbal has been riding a motorbike without a helmet or a license. Yes, they have somehow managed to pack themselves three to a bike. Yes, this motorbike was the only means of transportation for Iqbal and his family. Yes,</p>

			<p>his father was robbed of their child with <i>Hari Raya Aidilfitri</i> were hours away. Like many of his classmates, Iqbal was boisterous, always fizzing with energy like a shaken bottle of carbonated soda. He had attempted to claim a prize from me having collected 14 stickers in a performance reward system I had devised. I had told him to wait for 20 stickers.</p> <p>Dear Iqbal, I wish I had given you the gift and <i>duit raya</i> as you had so innocently requested. You will be missed dearly. May your soul rest in peace.'</p>
54	1:28:11- 1:32:36	Int – school hall (night)	<p>(Choral speaking session)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Alif finally recites his lines perfectly. Everyone was surprised. They all cheered for him. Alif is pleased and surprised with himself.</li> <li>- Teacher Cheryl receives a text message from Faiz. He is down with dengue fever, hence, is unable to attend rehearsals, nor participate in the choral speaking competition.</li> <li>- The students are worried. The competition is two days away. Will they be able to find a replacement in time?</li> <li>- Teacher Constant feel sorry for the students as they have worked so hard for months. It will</li> </ul>

			<p>be a pity for the team if they can't find a replacement.</p> <p>(Teacher Cheryl's narration overlay her reaction as she faces the dilemma)</p> <p>'What I am worried about of this replacement epidemic is if my kids begin to think that pride is actually temporary and the pain is forever.'</p>
55	1:32:36 1:34:00	Ext – school field	<p>- Teacher Cheryl and Teacher Constant seeks Ajwad's help. They try to persuade Ajwad to replace Faiz. She knows he has been watching the team rehearse. She has seen him listening and watching the rehearsals from a distance. Although he may appear to be uninterested or portrays himself as big bully in school but she knows deep down inside his flawless public façade masked his true self. Aswad walked away apathetically.</p>
56	1:34:36- 1:36:00	Ext- Competition waiting hall	<p>(Choral speaking competition)</p> <p>- All the students are at the waiting hall. They are feeling anxious.</p> <p>- Alif is walking around at the back of the hall feeling scared and nervous. Teacher Cheryl assures him that he will be perfect just as how he was during rehearsals.</p> <p>- Zidance is rehearsing with Irdina</p>



			<p>- Teacher Constant feels an attachment to the kids even though he has only been teaching at the school for a few months. Teacher Cheryl understands how he feels; it's the urge to help them to fight all challenges in their lives so they can make their own decisions.</p>
57	1:36:45- 1:37:42	Ext- Competition hall	<p>- Teacher Cheryl keeps calm although she is worried as the group is still short of one speaker. The students keep asking her who will replace Faiz as it will be their turn to perform soon.</p> <p>- Aswad appears which surprises everyone. Everyone feels relieve and happy to see him.</p> <p>(Teacher Cheryl's narration overlay the end of the scene)</p> <p>'Just by showing up and being here, amazes me. They all amaze me.'</p>
58	1:38:05- 1:41:20	Ext- Competition corridor	<p>- The students are watching the performance from one of the strongest contender, SMK Sin Min, a Chinese school. Their performance is flawless which made the students feel demotivated and even more scared.</p> <p>- Teacher Cheryl tells them that people may look at their off coloured uniforms and their</p>

			<p>old shoes. They may be laughing and jeering at them. But, it is up to them to prove them wrong. Participating and memorising a fifteen-minute script is already an achievement. They've beaten all odds to be there. In her eyes they are champions already.</p> <p>- Teacher Cheryl reminds them of their maxim, '<i>sakit itu sementara, kegemilangan itu selamanya</i>'. (Pain is temporary; victory is forever)</p>
59	1:42:05- 1:44:56	Int – Competition hall	- The students are performing the choral speaking about Superheroes. They present it with confidence.
60	1:44:58- 1:45:42	Ext – Competition hall	- Teacher Cheryl watched her students anxiously. They perform very well. She was very proud of them. After their performance, she told them that she didn't see anything on stage, except for her thirty-five Superheroes!
61	1:45:48- 1:46:00	Int- Competition hall	- A teacher from the previous winning school, SMK Sin Min, congratulated Teacher Cheryl on her students' good performance.

62	1:46:08- 1:48:00	Int – Competition hall	<p>- Teacher Cheryl, Teacher Constant and the students waited anxiously for the results. They are baffled when their school was not announced even for the consolation prize.</p> <p>(Teacher Cheryl’s narration)</p> <p>‘I feel like something is not right. My kids at least deserve a certificate of participation.’</p> <p>- Just as Teacher Cheryl is going to check with the organizing committee, the emcee announces SMK Pinang Tunggal as the fifth place winner in the competition. They are surprise and thrill upon hearing the announcement.</p> <p>(Teacher Cheryl’s narration overlay with the visual of the students winning the fifth place in the choral speaking competition.)</p> <p>‘They have never won in any competition. Words can’t describe the feeling, the joy and happiness when we heard the announcement for the fifth place.’</p>
63	1:48:07- 1:49:15	Int- SMK Pinang Tunggal school hall	<p>- The headmistress launched the <i>Tabung Sayang Murid</i>, a campaign to help raise funds for students who are in need, which will simultaneously help them with their education.</p>

			<p>She thanked Teacher Cheryl and Teacher Constant for their hard work and dedication.</p> <p>- To kick start the campaign, the school presents a new bicycle to Alia.</p>
64	1:49:27- 1:50:15	Ext- school hall	<p>- Kemboja arrives. She asks if she can continue to study at Teacher Cheryl's house. Teacher Cheryl tells her that she is welcome anytime.</p> <p>(Teacher Cheryl's narration)</p> <p>'Kemboja suddenly appears and not too long after that we manage to bring her back to school. I am sure she will have a bright future now.'</p>
65	1:50:20- 1:52:52	Int- teacher's office	<p>(Teacher Cheryl's narration opens the scene)</p> <p>'Today is my last day at SMK Pinang Tunggal. After three years, I decided to fully concentrate on my doctorate study which I started recently in Penang.'</p> <p>- Teacher Cheryl is packing her stuff at the teacher's room. The students appeared one by one singing her a goodbye song.</p> <p>'When the time has come Ms. Teacher Cheryl, The time has come for you to go, We need you to be here, we need you for one more year, We don't want to see you go,</p>

			<p>Can you stay please Ms. Teacher Cheryl?</p> <p>Do you really have to go?</p> <p>Can you hear our pleas?</p> <p>Can you see it in our eyes?</p> <p>Hoping that you'll stay a while,</p> <p>Don't want to say goodbye.'</p>
66	1:52:54- 1:58:20	Ext- SMK Pinang Tunggal	<p>- Teacher Cheryl giving words of encouragement to her all her students for the last time. They are in tears; didn't want her to leave. She reminds to believe in themselves, just as how she believes in them.</p> <p>(Teacher Cheryl's narration overlay till the end of the movie)</p> <p>'No matter how much I loved my students, I knew it was time to leave and pursue my own dreams. I wasn't afraid to leave. I know I wasn't leaving ordinary students from Pinang Tunggal, but a bunch of Superheroes, ready to change the world. I know that all of them will be advocate for change and will go on to truly make a difference in the future.'</p>

This research study is limited to tridimensional character analysis of the protagonist (Teacher Cheryl Teacher Cheryl) in the movie. It is also delimited by time

(limited to data collection) and by place (situated at SMK Pinang Tunggal, a local school in Kedah).

### 3.5.4 The performance of dialogue between characters (communication and interaction)

The third component adopted in this research study is the performance of dialogue between characters. Field (2006) states that dialogue is not only a tool of character but also a function of character; it is the essence in understanding the character (p. 105-106). He further explains that dialogues illuminates and reveal information about the character, thus, moves the story forward (p.108-109). Ransiek & Wundrak (2016) states that through dialogues, the audience or reader are able to see the character(s) position in society and the connections from the present and the past (p.49).

Scene no.	Descriptions
7	<p><b>Time code:</b> 02:06 - 04:07</p> <p><b>Location:</b> Classroom (Form 5 Luffa)</p> <p><b>Characters:</b> Teacher Cheryl and Form 5 students.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TEACHER CHERYL</p> <p>‘Okay class. Listen. Read, just read as many pages as you can. In school. At home. That’s why you come to school rite? Remember what <i>Jibrail</i> said to Prophet Muhammad? (pause) ‘Iqra’ means bacalah.’</p>

	<p>Teacher Cheryl explains the importance of reading to her students. She relates the notion of reading by relating to an Islamic story; quoting the angel <i>Jibril</i>'s (Gibran) first word to the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w – '<i>Iqra</i>' which translates <i>bacalah</i> or to read. Her students were impressed by her knowledge in Islam.</p>
13	<p><b>Time code:</b> 08:18-08:55</p> <p><b>Location:</b> Classroom corridor</p> <p><b>Characters:</b> Teacher Cheryl, tantrum student</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TEACHER CHERYL</p> <p>What is wrong with you Wawa. I just wanted to help. (pause) Listen here carefully. I won't take any disciplinary action against you, but this is the last time I let you go unpunished. You understand me?</p> <p>The student was teary eyed. Teacher Cheryl hugged her to console her.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TEACHER CHERYL</p> <p>You might need some counseling. It's okay. It's okay.</p>
36	<p><b>Time code:</b> 42:08-44:10</p> <p><b>Location:</b> Teacher's room</p> <p><b>Characters:</b> Teacher Cheryl and Khairi (Iron man)</p> <p>Khairy approach Teacher Cheryl. Anxiously he asked if he could be part of the choral speaking team.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">KHAIRI</p> <p>Teacher, may I talk to you.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TEACHER CHERYL</p> <p>Khairy. Yes of course. What you want to talk about?</p>

KHAIRI

Can I join choral speaking team?

TEACHER CHERYL

Hmmm...Khairy. It's hard for me to say this but. Me and Teacher Constant decided we don't want to take any risk on you. You know. What if...

KHAIRI

(point dada) What if I die? Or what if suddenly my battery gone? It's all about this. Tapi tidak sorang pun yang pikiaq about me. No this, no that, only because I have battery inside. Teacher tak tahu ke saya ada pun ada hati, teringin mau buat macam orang biasa.

Khairy tarik nafas, tapi tahan sebab marah. Teacher Cheryl bangun sambil toleh pada guru yang melihat mereka.

TEACHER CHERYL

Khairy...I'm sorry Khairy. I never see it like what you've said before. I'm sorry sayang. Okay, I will sort out your parent approval today. And if they agreed. You can join the team.

KHAIRI

(seronok) Betui teacher?

TEACHER CHERYL

Yes! but promise me, if you ever feel tired during the practice. You're must take rest.

KHAIRI

I promise with all the battery power in my heart!



43

**Time code:** 58:30-1:00:30

**Location:** Petrol station

**Characters:** Teacher Cheryl and Kemboja

Kemboja is working at the petrol station. Teacher Cheryl watches from a far before deciding to approach her.

KEMBOJA

Eh! teacher. Buat apa di sini?

TEACHER CHERYL

Kemboja kamu yang patut jawab saya kenapa kamu di sini? Sekolah macamana? Teacher risau Kemboja tak datang.

KEMBOJA

Saya teacher, saya tak boleh nak pi sekolah lagi dah.

TEACHER CHERYL

Kenapa?

KEMBOJA

Pak saya sakit balik, kalau saya tak kheja. Macam mana kami mau makan.

TEACHER CHERYL

Tapi pelajaran tu penting Kemboja. Datanglah ke sekolah, untuk masa depan Kemboja juga.

KEMBOJA

Teacher pernah dak tak makan dua tiga hari? Saya selalu teacher. Macam mana saya nak belajaq, nak pi Sekolah tengah saya lapaq... Pak saya lapaq teacher.

	<p style="text-align: center;">TEACHER CHERYL</p> <p>Kamu boleh belajar Kemboja, Kemboja pandai, cepat dan masa depan kamu cerah jika kamu teruskan belajar.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">KEMBOJA</p> <p>Saya rasa teacher tak faham cakap saya. Kalau saya mati kebuluq pun tak ada masa depan teacher.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TEACHER CHERYL</p> <p>Rumah Kemboja di mana, boleh teacher jumpa ayah..Pak Kemboja</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>58</b></p>	<p><b>Time code:</b> 1:38:05- 1:41:20</p> <p><b>Location:</b> Choral Speaking competition hall</p> <p><b>Characters:</b> Teacher Cheryl, Teacher Constant and the Choral Speaking team.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TEACHER CHERYL</p> <p>Look. We are a <i>sekolah kampung</i>. When they see us walking up on stage with our off-coloured uniforms and old shoes, they are not even going to look up at us. Yes! When they hear our school name, many might choose to leave the hall at that time to take a break. Yes! They would laugh and jeer at us. Yes! They would be wondering what do we have against all the other prestigious schools in the district. But it is now all up to you all to prove everyone wrong. Participating in this is an achievement. Memorising the entire text is an achievement. Standing up and speaking in English is an achievement. Win or lose, in my eyes, you guys are already champions.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ALL TOGETHER</p> <p>Sakit itu sementara, kegemilangan itu selamanya!</p>

All the scenes listed above are interpreted in detail in Chapter 4 of this research study. The analysis will look into understanding the main character's Bone Structure, character growth and dialectics in the movie *Adiwiraku*.

### **3.6 Study Instrument**

The study instrument for this research study is performative analysis by applying Lagos Egri's character bone structure (tridimensional character analysis concept) to interpret and analysis the teacher character in the movie *Adiwiraku*. This research project does not attempt to generalize but to specify, according to the three principals of qualitative analysis to describe, understand, and explain in which the results are believed to be generally applicable (Yin. R.K, 2009).

### **3.7 Data Collection**

The initial preparation for this research study was based on online research (secondary), involving mainly on online newspaper and articles on the movie *Adiwiraku*, early literary works on teacher character in malay films in Malaysia, teacher's portrayal in malay and foreign films, and understanding formalistic elements in films. These resources were obtained from books, e-books, online thesis, journals and articles, online newspaper articles and other online resources.

This research study uses three methods of research involving watching the film *Adiwiraku* (primary) on YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LnuP4xvHj2o>.

These include:

- i) detailed study of the movie *Adiwiraku*

- ii) collecting data by identifying and extracting information from all the relevant scenes involving the female teacher protagonist
- iii) and detailed study of teacher-student relationship.

This research study through narrative performative analysis as its primary study which will be done by adopting the tridimensional character analysis to analyse the protagonist and the content of the narratives in movie *Adiwiraku*. All the data collection involves the use of identifying and analysing the character of the English teacher in the movie, in order to provide an in-depth understanding of the teacher's behaviour and practices in influencing the students to learn the English language.

### 3.8 The Tridimensional Character Analysis

“If we want to understand the world we live in, then we have to understand how people are making sense of that world”

-The Art of Dramatic Writing – Lagos Egri (1946)

Egri (1946) states that “Everything has a purpose, or premise. Every second of our life has its own premise, whether or not we are conscious of it at the time”. He explains that in understanding the characteristic of a character, we must also understand why the character behaves or responds in a given situation. He emphasizes the three dimensions of the character bone structure in understanding character(s)- physiology, sociology and psychology (p 32-43).

- i) Physiology is our physical attributes or how we look: - height, skin colour, health condition, if physically challenged with disabilities and

cognitive abilities. Our self-representation and how others perceive us plays a role in being part of society. These factors will have an effect to the outlook in life and mental development.

- ii) Sociology encompasses social behaviours, associations and interactions such as family background, childhood life, education, circle of friends, during school years, working environment, religion and beliefs, choice of books, music and food, etc. It refers to every social aspect that surrounds everyday life.
- iii) Psychology is understanding the character's background, physiology, heredity and education. Knowing the background will determine how the character behaves; is he or she from the lower, middle or upper class, are they the eldest, second or youngest or the only child, what kind of environment did they grew up with, etc. All these foundations functions as a basis for superiority and inferiority development.

All the elements in psychology, physiology and sociology will naturally intertwine with one another determining the behaviour and characteristics of a character. These elements are crucial when understanding and analysing a character. As we grow, the way we behave, how we react to situation(s) or how we think about a particular issue may change with time and experience. 'Everything is changeable, only change is eternal' (p.46). Change is inevitable. In the Art of Dramatic Writing, Egri states two other factors that will influence change to the character; environment and dialectical.

Environment is one of the principal of change in character. The smallest shift in daily routines, health conditions and economic background will rock the equilibrium and create mental disturbance. As our lives is constantly moving, change will naturally take place. For example, a person gets an invitation to a friend's dinner gathering, depending if the person is an extrovert or an introvert will result in different decision making (to accept or not to accept the invitation) and development, thus, will have different consequences to the character. Egri concludes that a character is a summation of physical attributes and the influence of environment (p.43-49).

The Dialectical Approach focuses on the law of all movements. Dialectics derives from the old Greek word which means dialogue; "dia" - through or across and "logue" - conversation or talk. Dialogues and conversations, also known as the "Socratic method", is a technique used to investigate and understand in order to obtain the truth. The law of all movements derives from the thesis (the idea or statement of proposition), antithesis (contradictions to the proposition or conflict), and synthesis (resolution from the combination of the proposition and contradictions).

The character's struggles and ambiguities and environmental contradictions, creates conflict and tension which will force the character into making a decision, resulting to change. These in turn will lead to new decision and new conflict, hence new goal to achieve. Hence, the dialectical approach is understanding the conflict caused by the character's physical and environment paradoxes. Everything in nature including humans are constantly growing, changing and evolving. As Egri states "Growth is evolution; climax is revolution" (p.49-75).

In conclusion, the character's physical, psychological, sociological and environmental influences are significant for the character to grow. Conflicts will influence growth, regardless whether the character makes the right decision or otherwise. Conflicts generates new ideas, forcing into a new decision, leading to change and subsequently to character growth.

### **3.9 Conclusion**

This research study uses qualitative research mode with performative analysis structure as the design study, focusing on analyzing the teacher's behaviour in negotiating with secondary students who have a history of failures in the English language. There are three research instruments used throughout this research namely the study of performative structure, library study and website references. While the main elements and principles in *The Bone Structure* by Lajos Egri are used as the theoretical framework to analyse the female teacher protagonist in the movie *Adiwiraku*, and subsequently demonstrates the approaches and the complexity of teaching the English language to secondary students who are incompetent in the English language. The next chapter will discuss the findings of the data analysis from the interpretation of the data conducted.

## CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses in detail by adopting the Tridimensional Bone Structure by Lajos Egri (1946), in analysing the female teacher protagonist in the movie *Adiwiraku*. This research will also describe the method of the Bone Structure in analysing the main character through the dialogue, narration and action in the movie *Adiwiraku*. The three principles of the Tridimensional Bone Structure, namely, physiology, sociology, psychology. All the elements in psychology, physiology and sociology will naturally intertwine with one another determining the behaviour and characteristics of a character. These elements are crucial when understanding and analysing a character. Finally, environment and the natural laws of dialectic are applied to analyse the character growth and dialectics in the movie *Adiwiraku*.

### 4.2 The Tridimensional Bone Structure in analysing Teacher Cheryl in the movie

#### *Adiwiraku*

*"As teachers and even as leaders, it is not enough to give them knowledge and tell them how to use the knowledge. We should be teaching them to create new knowledge for their own generation. The only way we can start doing this is by listening to their voices and more importantly, giving them a voice."*

- Cheryl Ann Fernando (2017)



The analysis in this fragment is based on the data collection by applying the performative analysis structure, then relating to the elements of the Tridimensional Bone Structure stated in the theoretical framework in chapter three. The Bone structure focuses on the fundamentals in a character; knowing the character as thoroughly as possible. (Egri, 1945: p.32). The first dimension is physical attributes which will shape our behavior, influence our mental development and state of mind, and how others perceive us, which consequently, affects our perspective on life. Secondly, the character's sociological history i.e. family, education, choice of books, the circle of friends, beliefs etc. are essential in understanding the character. The character's behaviour and state of mind are the product of his or her upbringing, physiology, heredity and education. Finally, psychology which combines the first and second dimension together. The outcome of the three-dimensions will influence character, personality, ambition, attitudes, developments, conflicts and motivation (p.33-35).

#### **4.3 When Physiology, Sociology and Psychology Intertwine**

Reissman (2005) states that the performative analysis structure looks in to the representation of self – who, what, when, where and why? In the movie *Adiwiraku*, teacher Cheryl's narrations represent herself as she takes us on her journey as a volunteer English teacher at a secondary school, SMK Pinang Tunggal, a rural school in Kedah. The character's epigrammatic background is told through her narration at the few opening scenes in the movie as an introduction to the character.



*Figure 4.1 Teacher Cheryl's first day at SMK Pinang Tunggal in 2015.*

The movie began by establishing the location of the premise, a rural school in Kedah; SMK Kampung Pinang Tunggal. School students were entering the school gate, some chatting away with friends, some in bicycles and motorbikes. A white *Perodua Kancil* enters the school compound. This is teacher Cheryl's first establishment of character to the audience (*figure 4.1*), accompanied by her narration as a prelude on how she became an English teacher at the school. The image above shows that the protagonist is an attractive educated female Indian, 29 years of age (as stated in Malaymail.com, a local online newspaper portal), physically small frame, slim with an average height about 150 -152cm (the information was obtained from the actor who played the teacher character).



*Figure 4.2: Teacher Cheryl as a Public Relations Consultant.*

The movie *Adiwiraku* uses the main character's voice as the narrator to provide the necessary background information which tells the audience the time lapse or journey to the current time. The image above from scene 2, *figure 4.1* (time code:00:38 – 00:53) and scene 3, *figure 4.2* (time code:00:55-01:00) shows the change of appearance from a person in a blouse and pencil skirt as a professional in the corporate world to the *baju kurung* as a teacher in a rural school. Her narrations shared some insights to the character's background, that she did not study to be a teacher nor dreamt to be a teacher, and, previously, she was working in the corporate world.

The change of appearance to suit different work cultures shows that she is conforming to societal standards. The character drives a small white car shows that although she was previously in the corporate, the researcher assumes that she probably didn't come from an opulent background or she is trying to assimilate in the underprivileged world. She only wears the *baju kurung* when she is at school not only

shows that she is conforming to societal standards but also to fit the expectations and to be accepted to those of the society.

The *baju kurung* is a traditional Malay costume, symbolizing a distinctive form of socially accepted femininity, represents grace and tradition for the Malays. Thus, when the character wears the ubiquitous *baju kurung*, it means that she is trying to "fit in" with a predominantly Malay Muslim group, especially, trying to win the hearts and attention of the students. As an experienced public relations consultant, she understands the importance of image and brand reputation to send a positive message to obtain positive responses from the target audience.

Present time in 2015, scenes 17 (time code:11:15-11:32) and 48 (time code:1:16:57-1:17:20), shows teacher Cheryl wearing a blouse and pants tutoring extra lessons for her students at home, a vast contrast to her image at school. She is seen more relaxed and the students are comfortable and receptive of her. Clothing has social significance and a non-verbal communication for the audience. It demonstrates authority, mood, interest, culture, level of confidence, age, values, personality and identity of a person.

In scene 5 (time code: 01:12- 01:27), teacher Cheryl's bridging narration between the past and present time states, 'In the past two years, I have gone through a lot. I think I know my students now', concludes one of the factors on why she decided to continue teaching for another year. Her psychological differences were not an obstacle anymore as the students have learn to know and accepted her beyond her physical make-up. Her adaptation to certain social standards and expectations, such as wearing the *baju*

*kurung*, made her identity and subjectivity for her physical characteristics somewhat complex, fluid and dynamically created.

Teacher Cheryl taught an important lesson to her students in which to never judge a person from their appearance. Scene 7 (time code: 02:06-04:07), she explains on the importance of reading to her students. She relates the notion of reading by relating to an Islamic story; quoting the angel *Jibril's* (Gibran) first word to the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w)- 'Iqra' which translates *bacalah* or to read. Her students were impressed by her knowledge in Islam. The scene demonstrates that teacher Cheryl uses cultural sensitivity to build the students' interest and trust in her.

Egri states that the underlying expository material about the character may not necessarily be mentioned in the story but nevertheless must be identified as this detailed information will determine the behaviour of the character (attitude and reaction) when he or she is confronted with a situation and if he character is strong enough to prove the proposition without forcing (p.42-43). Since there wasn't much information in the movie about the character's background, and the character is based on a real person, additional readings were conducted on online websites and media articles to obtain more background facts about teacher Cheryl.

Through the readings, this research study concludes that Chery Ann Teacher Cheryl was a public relation (PR) consultant for four years. She found for her love in teaching when she taught the children from the church she goes to, a trait she possessed from her mother who is also an English tutor. She then joined an international school for a year before deciding to join Teach For Malaysia to learn their learning system and methods, in hope to teach other children of different education system. Understanding

the characters' background will enable us to understand reasons behind the character's actions and motivations which will be analyzed in the next section of this research study.

Egri (1946) states that in order to find the reasons to every phase of human conduct and their motivation; is to understand the three dimensions of the character. This research study has look into the first two elements in the Tridimensional Bone Structure i.e. physiology and sociology, consequently, in this section of the research study will analyse the third component of the Bone Structure – psychology, which also intertwines with the two former elements.

This research study aims to identify and analyse some of the character's fundamentals i.e. commitments, personal premise, frustrations, temperament, attitude toward life, complexes, IQ, abilities and qualities according to Lajos Egri's bone structure of a character (p.37). The selected scenes are supported and expressed either through the teacher's dialogues or narrations.

#### **4.3.1 Complexes**

As an outsider, adapting to the new environment or rather, for the students to accept her is shown in scene 5 (01:12-01:27), a flashback in 2013 (*figure 4.3 and figure 4.4*) during the first two years at the school. Complex relationship exists between the influence of religious values held by a particular society (Thomas. p.105). The students mocked her for speaking in English. She is subjected to the male gaze and cat-whistled by some of the male students. She is also criticized for not wearing a head scarf as majority of the female students are muslims.



*Figure 4.3: A female student judges her by her appearance.*



*Figure 4.4: A male student thinks its rude and snobbish of her for speaking in English.*

‘Physical differences between the individuals and their psychological development will influence their reaction to the same sociological conditions.’ (Egri. p.38). Confronted challenges can be expected from the physiology of the character as the character is an outsider, of an Indian origin, teaching in a rural school of students who are mainly from disadvantaged Malay community, infamous for the lack of knowledge in the English language. Although their physical and psychological

differences were apparent, she persevered. The students eventually accepted her, or rather, she realizes the real issues surrounding the students and the school system, which resulted in her extension for another year after the end of the two-year contract under the Teach for Malaysia program.

*'Teaching is not just a job. It's a life'.* Teachers who inspires are teachers that are committed to their students inside and outside the classroom; beyond their academic achievement. Quoting teacher Cheryl's narration in scene 12 (time code: 07:54-08:08), *'As teachers we can only try to inspire them, to gain their trust and never ever give up on them. The rest in their hands to make the right choices.'*

#### **4.3.2 Personal Premise**

Scene 7 (time code: 02:34-03:02), *'I used to dream of teaching these kids to love books like I do; to share the beauty of how books can be a window to the world of imagination. But now my expectations had drop. My goal now is getting the kids to pass SPM.'* Teacher Cheryl's hopes and dream was to influence the students to love books. She believes that "books are windows to your imagination". Reading not only enhances imagination and practice new vocabulary but also allowing them to explore different places and understanding different cultures and beliefs.

In the last two lines of her narrations *'But now my expectations had drop. My goal now is getting the kids to pass SPM.'*, there is a tone of frustration that the students are not interested in reading. As they are in their final year of school, the least she can do is to help them get through the major exam, to go on to the next journey in life. The National Education Blueprint 2013-2025 states that the English language is an



international language of communication, therefore, it is necessary upon leaving school, students are able to possess a decent proficiency in the English language.

In scene 17 (time code: 11:06- 12:23) - *'My house is always open to my kids. I hope they see this place as a gateway to literacy. Teaching is not just a job. It's a life. Believe me!'*. The scene shows a few lower secondary students who goes to her house for free tuition. She also encourages them to read English books or even just to listen to English songs to help and motivate them to learn the English language. The contrast of emotions narrated in the former and later scenes is obvious with regards to encouraging her students to love reading.

The former narration is about the form five students who will be sitting for the national examination, the Malaysian Certificate of Education (SPM). Attempts to harness the power of reading to the form students diminished because they are in the final year at school, hence, they now have to concentrate in getting through the national examination in order to pursue higher education. Subsequently in the later scene and narrations expresses that there is still time and hope in encouraging the lower secondary students to enjoy learning the English language. The researcher assumes that the narrations suggests that there are flaws in the school or teaching system. Children have to be nurtured from an early age, in various ways, but without compulsive pressure, for them to enjoy learning or reading.

In scene 8 (time code: 03:44-04:05), teacher Cheryl declared that *'By hook or by crook, I'm going to teach them well and good. As teachers, we are responsible to shape their future. I am tired of complaining about our education system. From now on, this is my war for education equity for all students.'* The narration reveals the subtext of

the film i.e. that there is a problem in the education system, yet, it has remained the same; a never ending battle. Change doesn't happen to those who wait, so she will have to take matters into her own hands in order to give the best knowledge and skills for her students to become productive members of society.

Her determination, perseverance and effort yield positive results in scene 48 (time code: 1:16:57-1:17:20), *'Now my students also know the story of Nick Vuljicic. They know the lyrics of The Script- Hall of Fame, and can spend the entire day singing Bruno Mars' - Grenade. They come to my house in the afternoon just to practice spelling and reading in English.* The scenes mentioned shows teacher Cheryl's commitment and dedication in developing her student's interest to learn the English language. She sacrificed her personal time and space for her students.

A successful learning must begin with interest. Once the interest is instilled, it will be easier for the person to comprehend the knowledge. Teachers need to strike a balance between allowing children to interpret the world around them and encourage their particular brand of aesthetic, while meeting the need to develop the prescribed skills, knowledge and in developing their individualities (Thomas. 2000. p.5).

Egri (1946) states that no two of us are alike, even identical twins and change is inevitable to every living thing in the universe. Every action has a reaction upon the particular situation and condition. Everything is changing and moving according to the given moment (p.38). Different approaches and techniques are required to deal with different people from different background and beliefs especially in nurturing children. Children who are given the opportunity to go to school are able to obtain knowledge and skills and to develop their cognitive abilities that can be transferred to their personal

development. They also learn to socialize at school. Teachers are not merely educators but also play a vital part in students' socialization process.

Teacher Cheryl's background as a PR consultant definitely give her an edge. The only difference is the organization, policies, stakeholders and targeted audience. In the corporate world, a PR person is the communication manager of the organization. Although predominantly the main task of the education setting, rules and policies falls upon the head of the education setting, the administrators and teachers are part of the whole setting which plays a pivotal part to form a positive image of the school, in-which will simultaneously increase confidence and reinforce trust in the school's capabilities towards success.

Primarily, a teacher's challenge is shaping, motivating, building positive relationships with her students and most importantly, trying to develop confidence in her students. Bernard (2004) states that effective teachers are those who are actively engaging in their students' learning, training knowledge and successively introduces a strong element of social value into students' learning. They remain true to their overall goal.

### 4.3.3 Abilities and Qualities



*Figure 4.5: Teacher Cheryl calms Wawa..*

Scene 13 (time code: 08:18-08:55), figure 4.5 above, displays Teacher Cheryl's approach when confronted with an aggressive student. She cautioned the student (Wawa) that she will not report the matter to the disciplinarian for her behaviour but warns her that the next time she will go unpunished, and suggests to get counseling help. Teary eyed Wawa shows remorse, perhaps by teacher Cheryl's kindness. Generally, a person who demonstrates aggression or tantrums are either expressing their frustrations, they lack control of their emotions or merely seeking for attention. Perhaps the student was going through a difficult situation at home and decided to throw it at her friends at school.

Teacher Cheryl's affection gave her some sense of emotional comfort and attention needed while building teacher-student trust and support. Embracing the student during the intense emotional outburst will help calm them down, avoiding any emotional crash. It is a way of assuring that she is there to support them during tough

times. Teacher Cheryl's decision to not report the matter to the disciplinarian exhibits empathy; the ability to comprehend and feel for one's emotional experience. This is a valuable characteristic and skill for teacher Cheryl to possess especially when she faces extreme environmental stressors.

Scene 36 (time code: 42:08-44:10) 'Iron-Man' *Khairi* persuades teacher Cheryl to allow him to join in the choral speaking. Teacher Cheryl explains that they can't afford to take any risk due to his health condition. *Khairi* argues that he has desires just like everyone else; to be able to experience and live a normal life. Teacher Cheryl apologizes for not realizing how he feels. The scene demonstrates that she is a good listener and is flexible and adapting to change. More importantly, she unashamedly admits her mistake and apologizes for differentiating *Khairi's* abilities, needs and interest.



*Figure 4.6: Alia and her mentally ill mother.*

*“Alia is hard to tame, yet she keeps the deepest secret amongst all her student.”*

In scene 40 (time code- 54:30-57:17), Teacher Cheryl came to know the truth about Alia's situation. Although Alia is very quiet in school, yet, she is one of the brightest.

Her kind gesture of taking Alia to get her arm treated, and a promise to keep her secret sealed the trust leading to Alia's invitation to meet her mother. Teacher Cheryl is appalled to know that Alia has been living with a mentally ill mother; which explains the bruises on her arms she tries to hide in school.

Initially, the mother was afraid of Teacher Cheryl (because she is stranger) but Alia assures her mother that her teacher is a kind person. "*Her swollen hand can heal but her heart might be wounded permanently*". Meeting Teacher Cheryl eased the mother's fears, and lessen the pain in Alia's heart. This scene proves that students will connect, respect and feel more comfortable with a teacher who they feel cares about them. Zakrzewski (2012) states in an online article in the Greater Good Magazine published by berkeley.edu, 'a caring relationship have a greater impact on students' education.' A teacher's support can be meaningful to a person's life.

*'Some students need time to open up. The trust between student and teacher is a sacred thing. Sometimes it's hard to earn. Rome wasn't built in a day anyways.'*

*Teacher Cheryl Ann Teacher Cheryl*

#### 4.3.4 Commitments



*Figure 4.7: Teacher Cheryl introducing the reward system in class.*

The reward system as a motivation tool is probably one of the oldest practices around the world. Rewards can either be in a form of gifts or monetary. Parents reward their child for showing good behaviour, or when they obtain good grades in their exams, for tidying-up their room, or when they have performed a difficult task, etc. In an organisation, rewards are in a form of bonus, a raise in salary or position or other incentives to motivate employees to achieve the company's goal. In *Adiwiraku*, there are four scenes which demonstrates different kind of rewards system to meet different goals. But sometimes, offering rewards or incentives doesn't necessarily mean the goal will be achieved.

In *figure 4.7*, scene 15 (time code: 09:21-10:30), Teacher Cheryl introduces the 'sistem ganjaran prestasi' (reward system) to motivate her lower secondary students to finish-up their homework on time and to be active participants in class. A sticker will

be given for every satisfying homework and for students' participation in class. Once all 20 stickers have been collected, they will receive a reward or a gift. Any misbehavior will cause them lose a sticker. This reward system works well to those who are eager to learn or to those who are willing to take the challenge in class as most of the students are timid and scared of even trying for fear of making mistakes.

The reward system approach is a constructive approach to maintain control during class and school curriculum. Spending time with the student to get to know them better, giving occasional treats will convince students that the teacher cares about them. It creates a teacher-student bond, hence, will influence positive teacher-student relationship and builds trust to one another. Behaviour effects social norm.

Scene 27 (time code: 27:50-28:40), a drink and snack is given as an incentive to lure students to register for the choral speaking team. They received a promising numbers during registration but poor turnout during rehearsals. In scene 30 (time code: 30:48-31:51), Teacher Constant offers ten bonus points to be added into their English paper assignment as an incentive to those who participate in the choral speaking. The initial response was enthusiastic but most of the students had family commitments that they couldn't commit for the rehearsals.





*Figure 4.8: Sharing and bonding time.*

*“Sometimes it’s the random ice-cream treat or simple meals and looking them in the eyes, shows that I believe in them. Talking about other things than school, laughing at random jokes, makes it easier for me to know them and love them.”*

*Figure 4.8*, scene 46 (time code: 1:09:24 -1:10:12), Teacher Cheryl treating ice-cream as a way to build trust and bond with her students. Teacher Cheryl’s approach is a great motivation and has the biggest affect to her students’ behaviour. The teacher’s positive behaviour will lead to positive behaviour for the students to follow. The scene demonstrates that building meaningful teacher-student relationships is another form of motivation. The personal connection will make students feel that their teacher cares for them and will help them succeed. As a result, it will foster positive attitudes and values, thus, pique students’ interest in learning.

Stewig (2012) states that choral speaking develops different learning values such as personal values, whereby the students will learn to enjoy literature by participating instead of just listening to the teacher. Students will learn social values by learning to co-operate as a team and learning to help those who are weak. The feeling of acceptance and belonging to a group will instill psychological values as such as confidence, self-esteem and emotional strength.

Choral speaking develops the cognitive abilities (cognitive-emotional values) to read, understand and process information, and to read and train the mind to pay attention (auditory and visual) to the necessary period attention. Affective values involve motivations, feelings, attitudes. When a person is actively responding, it shows that the person is committed to the discourse. Students express art through language learning. They learn the value of language by exploring different forms of grammar, intonation, tone, repetition, syntax, and accent. As choral speaking is also social and energetic, emphasizing soft skills, speaking skills, and body language, in which the quality of communication and interaction is shared, negotiated, and created by individuals as a team.

#### **4.3.5 Frustrations**

Through teacher Cheryl's narrations, she shares that most of her students comes from economically challenged backgrounds. The contributing factor to the energizing rebelliousness can be due to pressure from home or at school for various reasons. Hence, she doesn't want to add to their burden. She wants her students to know and feel that she cares about them.



*Figure 4.9: Teacher Cheryl tries to persuade Kemboja to come back to school.*

*Kemboja: Teacher pernah dak tak makan dua tiga hari? Saya selalu teacher.*

*Macam mana saya nak belajaq, nak pi sekolah tengah saya lapaq... Pak saya*

*lapaq teach Teacher Cheryl: Kamu boleh belajar Kemboja, Kemboja pandai, cepat dan masa depan kamu cerah jika kamu teruskan belajar.*

*Kemboja: Saya rasa teacher tak faham cakap saya. Kalau saya mati kebuluq pun tak ada masa depan teacher.*

Figure 4.9, scene 43 (time code: 58:30-1:00:30), above is the conversation between teacher Cheryl and Kemboja (ironically the background shows stack of biscuit tins) at the petrol station where she works. Kemboja explains that going to school will be meaningless if she and her father are starving. In scene 44 (time code: 1:00:34-1:04:12) Teacher Cheryl tries to persuade her father to allow Kemboja to continue her education, offering some financial assistance but he declined. He understands the importance of education, but unfortunately, he is unwell and unable to work. The scene demonstrates teacher Cheryl's concern for Kemboja's future. It builds a positive teacher-parent relationship which is crucial to a child's academic success, but, unfortunately, it

may not be necessarily for children who are economically challenged. Her sadness and frustration are further expressed in her narration:

*‘When I look at Kemboja’s situation, it triggered me a question that I thought I will never ask. What would it take to ensure that our children are making the right decision to stay in school and get the education they deserve.’*

*Figure 4.9* in scene 49 (time code: 1:17:23- 1:19:04) shows Iqbal taking extra classes to improve his English language proficiency. His improvements from an ABC learner to be a brave speller is the result of the reward system introduced in class supported by teacher Cheryl’s dedication as a teacher. Watsons (1913) believes that any person regardless of their background or traits can be trained to perform any task within the limits of their physical, regardless of their personality traits and genetic background. Although his motivation to earn all the merit stickers is to get a new school bag for her sister, but because the element of trust was built between them, it simultaneously helped him to be a better learner.

Sadly, Iqbal did not manage to collect all twenty stickers as his life was cut short (scene 53, time code: 1:25:37- 1:28:10). Teacher Cheryl was saddened by his passing as he has been robbed of what could’ve been a new point in his life; when he was showing wonderful progress in school. She regrets for not giving him the reward gift he had so innocently requested. The story about Iqbal story showed how students’ development regardless inside or outside school settings are equally important and some student learn best by being rewarded for right responses or may lead to ‘right responses’.



*Figure 4.10: Teacher Cheryl helping Iqbal with English homework.*

#### **4.3.6 Temperament**

Scene 34 (time code: 38:32-39:23), teacher Cheryl is bewildered with the turn up for rehearsal. Out of 35 students, only 22 students showed up that day, hence they are unable to rehearse if the full team is not present. In the following scene, scene 35 (time code: 39:25- 41:52), the students explained that they are unable to continue due to family responsibilities/problems, while some are just uninterested. In these scenes, though her dominant personality and direct manner of speaking can be misunderstood as anger, but, it helped her realize and understand why the school's last attempt to participate in a choral speaking competition was back in 2013.

Teacher Cheryl's temperament in this scene shows that she is just a normal person who will feel anger and frustrations when dealing with frustrating situations. She did not blow out her anger publicly, but instead she remains calm which shows her positive mindset, self-confidence, independent, friendly, enjoys taking risks and steadfast in her ideas.

#### 4.3.7 Attitude Toward Life

*'With superpowers come great responsibilities, but these kids are my own superheroes. Though often seen like they don't have any super powers. They are still young and susceptible to threats. At times, I don't believe they are strong enough to face life challenges. All I can do is to make them see and believe that they have the powers in them.'*

The narration above, suggest a nurturing, mother-like tone who is worried for her students, thus, she has to prepare them with some basic skills involving physical development, intellectual development as well as the emotional development of the students. The best, kindest and passionate teacher could teach any subject to anyone. Teacher Cheryl's listening skills, approachable attitude and patience shows qualities of a good teacher. She has compassion and empathy for her students. When students trust their teacher, they will feel motivated to involve themselves in the learning process.

Scene 47 (time code: 1:14:01-1:15:50), Teacher Cheryl suggest they should double up their practice session as the competition is only two months away. It is the month of Ramadhan (fasting month for the muslims) so the students are feeling very tired. She assures them that all their efforts will not be in vain. She taught them a mantra *sakit itu sementara, kegemilangan itu selamanya* (pain is temporary, victory is forever) to boost their spirit.

In scene 50 (time code: 1:19:12- 1:22:40) Zidane threw his frustration at Alif for not memorizing his lines. Teacher Cheryl reminds him that the competition was not about personal glory but a team work; a collaborative effort. Zidane walks away angrily from the practice session. Irdina goes after him to coax him. Teacher Cheryl watches

on; she didn't run after Zidane nor tried to calm him. Zidane apologises to teacher Cheryl for his behaviour. She forgave him. She knows Zidane has a strong desire to master challenges and is motivated by achievement, but, having the competitive edge and alienating other people doesn't necessarily lead to the attainment of goal. It is important for each and every one of them, especially as the team captain, to learn to understand, tolerate and work together as a team. Khairi chants the mantra 'sakit itu sementara, kegemilangan itu selamanya' to raise the team spirit again. They all join in chanting the mantra over and over again.

Scene 58 (time code: 1:38:05- 1:41:20) The students felt demotivated after watching the flawless performance from one of the strongest choral speaking contender, SMK Sin Min, a Chinese school. Teacher Cheryl told them that people may look at their off-coloured uniforms and their old shoes, or laugh and jeer at them, it is up to them to prove otherwise. In her eyes they are champions already. She points out that participating and memorising a fifteen-minute script is already an achievement and they've beaten all odds to be there. Teacher Cheryl reminds them of their maxim, *sakit itu sementara, kegemilangan itu selamanya*. (Pain is temporary; victory is forever)

In the three scenes above, reflect on teacher Cheryl's attitude toward life. Her leadership qualities and positive attributes set as a strong example for her students to follow. The students learn to respect one another, forgive others' mistake and work as team to achieve their goals. She taught them values; to have a positive attitude, to persevere and to be optimistic in facing challenges, no matter what others may say, hence, the mantra 'pain is temporary, victory is forever'.

Mantras are a form of reminders of what's important; an affirmation to remind one's principle in realizing goals in life. She taught them to believe in themselves; that they have the ability to do anything if they put their heart and soul in it. Winning 5<sup>th</sup> place in the choral speaking competition proved the mantra; victory is forever, and, most importantly the students' identity is shaped and changes their attitude toward life.

#### **4.4 Environment and Dialectic = Character growth**

In the sub-heading above, this research study looks into the all the elements in psychology, physiology and sociology to examine the behaviour and characteristics of the teacher character. In this section, this research study will further analyse by observing the environment and dialectical factors, in-which, influence change to the character and subsequently, influence her students.

In the movie, the premise is about a group of secondary students with a poor level of English competency winning 5th place in a choral speaking competition. There are also three sub-plots which highlights some of the other students' who are not a part of the choral speaking group namely – Kemboja, Alia and Iqbal. The movie also highlights on the lower level secondary students' struggles in getting a proper education.

Egri (1946) states, challenges and conflicts will force the character to make a decision that will lead to character change, be it good or bad. This research study will analyse some of the incidence which forces the character to make decisions to rectify those situations, thus, bringing about change and character growth for the protagonist.



At the beginning of the movie when teacher Cheryl first arrived at the school, her physical make-up was her first challenge; to be accepted by the students, even though she wears the *baju kurung* daily to school. It is unclear on what are the conflicts and challenges she faced during her two-year tenure other than the students being rude and disrespectful as it wasn't shown in the movie. As Malaysia is a multi-cultural country, the researcher assumes that the female teacher's physical attributes nor her racial differences should not be the cause for the students' defiant nature towards her. Children usually learn and mirror these behaviours from home, or as a result of negative reinforcements by peers, parents, teachers, or other authority figures.

In her narration in scene 5, '*I think I know my students now*' and in scene 6, '*I don't know why but deep down in my heart, I feel that there is something that I have not done yet.*', signifies that perhaps teacher Cheryl realized that being an 'outsider' or her racial background is not the root cause of the problems with the students. She faced many challenges with the delinquent students, yet she persevered. This is perhaps due to the years of experience as a PR consultant in communication and strategic planning. Her communication skills, strong-minded character, together with her determination and dedication in teaching, has led her to continue for another year. This is an indication of character growth for teacher Cheryl.

The task of teaching English to students who are non-native speakers of the English language was definitely an uphill battle. She used various approaches to encourage an interest in learning the English language; introduced the reward system method to motivate her students in class, she offered her house for students to have extra classes to learn the English language, exposed them to English books to cultivate the love for reading or just listening to English songs to aid fluency in the English language.

When students are comfortable with their teacher, it will be easier for the teacher to teach, encourage and motivate them to do anything, thus, winning them over. Once the interest to learn the English language is instilled in them, only then can the teacher take it to the next level. By using different approaches in teaching the English language will allow the teacher to learn and understand her students' strength and weakness, their wants and needs, hence, this will also lead to character growth for the female teacher protagonist.

The responsibility of leading the Choral speaking team is not an easy task. The school had participated in such competition in 2013 which was not a success due to their poor comprehension and proficiency in the English language; they couldn't even memorize a fifteen-minute script. Teaching the English language to students who are non-native speakers of English is challenging enough, what more in trying to persuade the students to join the English choral speaking team. Teacher Constant feels that they are facing a losing battle but teacher Cheryl is determined to prove otherwise. This indicates that the female teacher protagonist possesses leadership qualities, a risk taker and is determined to achieve her goals.

The second challenge was teaching the students to pronounce and memorize the English words with correct intonation (the students had thick northern dialect) and expression. Teacher Cheryl's devotion, determination, motivation and kindness inspires strength in her students to overcome any obstacle, and, stimulates confidence to move towards the ultimate goal. Nearing the competition, they faced a conflict when one of the team member (Faiz) fell ill and is unable to participate in the competition. Teacher Cheryl is forced to find a solution or the team will not be able to participate in the competition.

She persuades Ajwad, a student whom she had seen silently listening from a far during their rehearsals as a replacement to help the team. (scene 55, time code: 1:32:361:34:00)

*Teacher Cheryl: We really need your help. I'm sure you have a good reason for not wanting to commit yourself to the team. You won't tell, and I respect that, but deep down I know you're not a bad person although you portray very hard to be one. (hand out the choral speaking script to him)*

*Ajwad: You think you know each and every one of us? And I don't need the script. (walks away)*

On the day of the competition, the team was worried if they will not be able to participate as they haven't found a replacement for Faiz. Teacher Cheryl hides her worries, assuring them that there will be a replacement. When Ajwad showed up, this is the turning point in their lives. The researcher assumes that when teacher Cheryl told him that she knows deep down inside he is not a bad person as he tries so hard to portray, and pleaded for his help made Ajwad felt important. Being needed or accepted as a part of a group gives him a sense of belonging with people who shares the same interest.

This research study observed that the film focused on the story of three student characters who are socioeconomically challenged. The film also addresses other themes and issues of the current social problems in schools such as poverty, energizing rebelliousness, low self-esteem, lack of student motivation, poor attendance, poor parental support, academic issues, the importance of teacher-student relationships. According to Fay and Funk (1995), students who do not feel they enjoy positive relationships with their teachers are more disruptive, are less likely to be academic engaged, and are more likely to drop out.

The three sub-plot in the movie, namely, in the case of Kemboja, Alia and Iqbal, the movie shows Teacher Cheryl's concern and efforts to help these children who faces challenging environments. Teacher Cheryl's concern over Alia, developed trust for Alia to share her problems which led her. Her visits to Alia establishes a connection between them as it is crucial for Alia to have an adult that she can trust and share her woes to avoid further psychological damage that can affect her future. This is a type of character growth for the teacher as her role transforms into a support system, allowing Alia to reach out when needed. Confidence and comfort will help ease some of the pain and allow her to focus on her education.

Losing someone to death is a painful experience to anyone. The scene shows teacher Cheryl in disbelieved and speechless when she arrived at the accident scene. An expression of sadness as she looks at Iqbal's reward sticker book. Teacher Cheryl's devastation over Iqbal's passing is expressed in her narration (scene 53, time code: 1:25:37- 1:28:10),

*'I recognized Iqbal's jacket on sight. I didn't have the strength to look at him for the last time.....Dear Iqbal, I wish I had given you the gift and duit raya as you had so innocently requested....You will be missed dearly. Al-Fatihah'.*

Interestingly, the eulogy narration for Iqbal ended with *Al-Fatihah*, which is the name of the first chapter in the Qur'an and the most recited Quranic verse amongst Muslims in their daily prayers. Reciting the verse will obtain reward bestowed to man by *Allah*. Therefore, when Muslims recites the *Al-Fatihah*, or send condolence messages for those who have passed away, it is an act of giving the goodness of the

deed for the deceased. The narration demonstrates that teacher Cheryl is sensitive to the Malay/Muslim beliefs and culture.

As an outsider, before proposing to make any changes for the students, especially in ensuring the underprivileged students to stay in school, Teacher Cheryl had to prove her worth. The golden opportunity came about after the English choral speaking team won 5<sup>th</sup> place in the choral speaking competition, which went viral on social media platforms. The school launched the *Tabung Sayang Murid*, a campaign to help raise funds for students who are in need, which simultaneously, will help them with their education. To kick start the campaign, the school presented a new bicycle to Alia. Soon after, they managed to help support Kemboja to continue her education.

In *Adiwiraku*, the school is known as a 'hotspot' school for the students' poor English proficiency, but from teacher Cheryl's narrations, the researcher gathers that there are other factors contributing to the root cause of the problem such as unmotivated teachers, the lack of discipline among students, education inequality, underfunded schools, etc. This research study concludes that environmental influences and conflicts didn't only bring about change and character growth to the teacher but also to the students and the school.

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

The character's reaction is determined by their physiological, sociological and psychological attributes and background. All these elements will unite and intertwine, determining the person's cognitive abilities. This research study concludes that once all

key contributing factors are identified by applying the Tridimensional Bone Structure, only then then we can understand the motivation behind the action.

Teacher Cheryl's background coming from a mother who is also an English language tutor, she taught tuition to children at the church she goes to and her experience as a PR consultant, shaped the person she is now. She has been exposed to the language since her young age, she knows what is required when it comes to teaching children and as a PR consultant, she is well versed with handling conflicts and finding solutions to achieve goals.

Egri (1946) states that there are three steps which governs the law of all movements, namely; thesis, antithesis and synthesis. In the movie *Adiwiraku*, the thesis or proposition is teaching the English language to secondary students who are non-speakers of the language. Teaching the English language requires more time than just the few hours in a week, hence, extra measures are required to support the learning process.

Some of the challenges and conflicts of teaching the English language like it is the ABCs, applying the reward system to encourage active participation in class, giving extra tuition without charging extra fee, providing a haven for the students to cultivate the love of reading and listening to English songs to learn the English language.

Praises, reward system, verbal and non-verbal communication and choral speaking techniques were some of the ways adopted by Teacher Cheryl to motivate, influence, inspire and encourage her students in learning the English language. These

in and out of classroom teaching approaches will push the students from one state of mind to another bringing about change, which leads to character growth.

Teacher Cheryl could have ignored the invitation to participate in the Choral speaking competition but instead she saw it as an opportunity because Choral speaking is a popular technique in learning the English language. These contradictions from the thesis is called antithesis. Winning the 5<sup>th</sup> place in the Choral speaking competition brought about change to the teacher and students. This is the synthesis; a resolution from the contradictions of the original proposition, proving the premise. Egri (1946) states that dialectical approach is a result on how the character reacts to conflict in moving towards achieving the goal. Every action has a reaction, conflict begins with a decision which sets another conflict and another decision, it is always moving and changing. When the environment or circumstances changes, the characters are forced to develop, change and grow.

Scene 66 (time code: TC: 1:52:54-1:58:20), in her narration, *'No matter how much I loved my students, I knew it was time to leave and pursue my own dreams. I wasn't afraid to leave. I know I wasn't leaving ordinary students from Pinang Tunggal, but a bunch of Superheroes, ready to change the world. I know that all of them will be advocate for change and will go on to truly make a difference in the future.'*

The narration concludes with teacher Cheryl's original goal which is to teach the students the English language. But instead she found her purpose for staying for another year; she taught the students to find their strengths, develop morals and generosity and discovering their values. The experience changes her perspective in teaching, it shaped and built her confidence to then pursue her own dreams. Everything

that happen in life has a reason and purpose that will alter the current situation, changing the past, creating a future. The result of the study will be discussed in final chapter - chapter 5 including the objectives, questions and hypotheses of this research. To conclude, the recommendations and discussions are explained for future research purposes.

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## **CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This research study has discussed and analyse the character in detail by adopting Lajos Egri's Tridimensional Bone Structure. There are three objectives achieved in this research study; the first objective is to examine the character's physical attributes, secondly, to explore the given sociological conditions faced by the character and finally, analysing the psychological aspect of the character.

All the objectives of this research have been resolved in chapter 4 in the analysis section of the research study by using the data collected in chapter 3 in the methodology of the research study. This research study has used the three basic components of performative analysis structure by Reissman (2005) namely, the content of the narrations in movie Adiwiraku, the characters and their role in the story and the performance of dialogue between characters (communication and interaction). While the main elements and principles of the Tridimensional Bone Structure by Lajos Egri (1946) are applied as a theoretical framework in this research study.

### **5.2 Research outcome**

The research study concludes that by applying The Tridimensional Bone structure in analysing the main character in the movie Adiwiraku allows us to identify the character's physiology, sociology, psychology elements in order to obtain an in-depth understanding of the character, in-which will lead to an understanding the character's mental strength, subsequently translated into actions when faced with

conflicts and challenges. It demonstrates the importance of understanding actions and motivations as a source of influence in behaviour.

Characters are the essence in a story hence it is important to build and understand the character's background, esthetics, behavior, motivation, personality type, and its relationship with other characters. Analyzing the character can help to understand the internal and external qualities of a character.

### **5.3 The application of The Tridimensional Bone Structure to examine the female teacher character's physical attributes.**

The first dimension in the Tridimensional Bone structure is physiology, which refers to the physical attributes of the character i.e. sex, age, weight, height, skin colour, health condition, posture, if physically challenged with disabilities and cognitive abilities and heredity. Their representation and how others perceive them plays a role in being part of society. These factors will have an effect to the outlook in life and mental development.

Teacher Cheryl's most prominent physiological characteristic is that she is an outsider, a female teacher, a non-malay from the city going into the malay community. She is small built, fairly tan skin with prominent big eyes, a sweet face and a warm personality. She has a soft and soothing voice sets the atmosphere of the film as it reflects her character. Teacher Cheryl endures many obstacles and challenges during her course as a teacher, one might argue way too many for the average educator, especially during the first two years as she was deemed culturally and racially 'different'. She persevered and was determined to teach and help her students in the best way possible.

In school, she wears the *baju kurung* to fit in and be accepted by the majority which is the Malay rural community, whilst during extra classes with her students at home, she changes her appearance into a more relax and casual manner to put on a perception of comfort amongst the students. The process of dressing transforms the character's personality in some specific way.

Often times, children just want to be seen and heard. They want to be understood. Teacher Cheryl's warmth and enthusiasm inspired her students to try harder and to give it their all. Moreover, the students found comfort in an authoritative figure looking out for them. Her character depth is no longer superficial, as her representation of self and how her students perceive and react to her plays a vital role to influence and motivate the students in learning the English language.

#### **5.4 The application of The Tridimensional Bone Structure to explore the given sociological conditions faced by the character**

Teacher Cheryl made the effort to get to know and find out as much as possible about her students' background and struggles. She recognizes each student's capacity to learn and tailored her teaching methods to the students' capabilities. Getting to know the students shows her personal interest towards them in which will inspires their loyalty to her. Socio-economic condition will have an effect to children's learning process. Thus, when her efforts of motivating and teaching the students become apparent, said students are equally as motivated to succeed.

By applying The Tridimensional Bone Structure, the researcher discovers that teacher Cheryl's abilities, passion and compassion are the result of her sociological

background. Sociology includes social behavior, association and interaction, such as family history, childhood life, education, circle of friends, school years, working environment, religion and belief, books, music, etc. It refers to all social aspects surrounding daily life.

Teacher Cheryl did not study to be a teacher, nor dreamt to be a teacher, but, her experience as a Public Relations consultant and teacher training under the Teach for Malaysia program gave her the experience and knowledge to face challenges as a teacher, and her love for books is mentioned a few times in her narrations. Although she is seen as an outsider to the community and the teaching field, she is highly motivated to improve her classrooms. She believes that every child deserves equal opportunity in education. She is more than a complainer; she is combative and ready to make change as she is aware that the establishment is not helping the students. Since the school does not have the expertise to revise or upgrade the teaching methods nor essential teaching materials, hence, she has to find alternative solutions by using different approaches in teaching.

Teacher Cheryl experienced conflicts surrounding the poverty and familial struggles of her students. With enough burdens to last them lifetimes, her students did not have time to prioritize education. She has to put on different hats as counselors and motivators; taking upon the responsibility of guiding, nurturing and in shaping the student's academic and social development. The use of activity-based and student centered pedagogical approaches is encouraged to reinforce and facilitate the development of critical and creative thinking skills. These include problem solving, analytical decision -making, high level questions, inquiry and discovery. Her tenacity,

and most of all her compassion for them, influenced her students dramatically, both socially and academically.

In one of her narrations, Teacher Cheryl expressed that children in poverty have to struggle to get a proper education, somewhat stating that some privileged children take their privileges for granted. The comparison of the former and later school children is deduced based from her experience teaching rural children at SMK Pinang Tunggai and as an assistant teacher in an International school in Kuala Lumpur. This research study is able to identify the connection from Teacher Cheryl's background information by applying the principles of The Tridimensional Bone Structure in analysing character.

### **5.5 The application of The Tridimensional Bone Structure analysing the psychological aspect of the character.**

The third component of the Bone Structure is psychology, which also intertwines with physiology and sociology. Psychological traits form the background of a character and determine logically how the character is going to act at the beginning of the movie, during the rising action of the conflict, and in the final action at the climax of the movie. The main psychological points of a character are moral standards, commitments, personal premise, frustrations, temperament, attitude toward life, complexes, IQ, abilities and qualities. The character's physical, psychological, sociological and environmental influences are significant for the character to grow. Conflicts will influence growth, regardless whether the character makes the right decision or otherwise.

Different child has different level of learning and understanding. Every child has the ability to be literate depending on the right methods at their current level of understanding. Praises, reward system, verbal and non-verbal communication and choral speaking techniques were some of the ways adopted by Teacher Cheryl to motivate, influence, inspire and encourage her students in learning the English language. Her approach in positive fostering, building trust amongst her students and applying different teaching styles to engage the students' interest in class.

This research conclude that teacher Cheryl is the embodiment of the saying "appealing to one's humanity". She claims her students are her 'Superheroes', as she sees them as equals, more than just numbers on a cheque. As *Adiwiraku* is based on a true story, and therefore may be seen as a representational and real life accounts. The themes that have emerged may be seen as a reflection on the current state of the profession rather than a stereotype. The manner in which the dimension was revealed in the narrative was significant and noteworthy.

### **5.6 Suggestions for future research**

Movies is not just purely for entertainment but have always been an effective way to communicate messages and ideas to a captive audience. It is an ideal catalyst for change as it has the capacity to change the world. Through the advancement of technology, i.e. the internet and digital media, it has helped us to share content and ideas and allows us to keep those messages alive even after the movie screenings has ended. The prolonged impact that films has, makes it easier to bring about awareness about an issue into action that brings about real change.

Amongst The Malaysia Education Blueprint target and goals is to provide equal and quality educational opportunities for all students regardless of background or socioeconomic status and to instill a sense of common Malaysian identity amongst all students. Movies about teachers and schools can be a platform to instill the Malaysian identity. Stories about teachers and pedagogy may encourage the new or existing teachers to develop realistic expectations and identities as aspiring teachers to teach, guide, motivate and inspire students.

This researcher study faced challenges in finding past academic literatures on the representation of teachers in Malay films. Thus, the focus of the study is analysing the female teacher protagonist in the movie *Adiwiraku* in hope that it will be able to contribute to local literatures. There is a great potential in the study of the portrayal of teachers in Malaysian films, their struggles and contribution to society.

## **5.7 Discussion**

Stories about teachers and their pedagogy in teaching students from various economic and environment background, should be told through various media platforms. This will help raise social awareness and the governing institution on the challenges faced by students, educators and education institutions, which can have a dramatic impact on real life. These are excellent examples of how films play an important role in changing the landscape of our popular culture or in the world at large. Storytelling changes according to the social, cultural and political interests and interests of the time and also forms in the environment. The most powerful films reflect the world to us and can be a battlefield over the interpretation of the social world.

On a final note, the limitations that this research study has been subjected to which may or may not have a significant on the conclusions of this thesis. The interpretation of the film is narrowed down by the selected topic in performative narrative approach and *The Tridimensional Bone Structure*'s relevance in analysing character and how stories communicates life (environment and dialectical approach).

This research study focuses primarily on Cheryl Ann Fernando character, the female teacher protagonist's narrations, actions and attitudes which influence the students' social and academic change. The outcome of this research study is expected to be useful as it may create an awareness for future improvements on scripts primarily in the Malay cinema (fiction or non-fiction), especially on the importance of developing character(s) with an in-depth knowledge of the character's physiological, psychological and sociological elements alongside environment influences and dialectics, resulting in character growth and change. Character(s) are a representation of the diverse society and their stories reflect on the society which they belong, hence, the representation which denotes the laws of human nature is crucial in highlighting societal issues through the Malaysian cinema.



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