



# Main Figure, Character Education, and Education Dichomy in the Movie of Laskar Pelangi and Freedom Writers as a Comparison Study of Literature

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**Abstract.** The LaskarPelangi film is the work of Riri Riza, while the Freedom Writers film is the work of Richard La Gravenese. The research tries to compare the two literary works with the aim of (1) describing the main characters in the films Laskar Pelangi and Freedom Writers; (2) describe the character education that appears in the films Laskar Pelangi and Freedom Writers; (3) describe the dichotomy of education in the films Laskar Pelangi and Freedom Writers as an illustration of current educational practice. This research method is a descriptive qualitative method with content analysis techniques and see notes in the data analysis. The data of this research are Laskar Pelangi and Freedom Writers films. The results of this study found the main character who played a role in the two films, the character education shown in the two films, and the dichotomy of education in the film as a reflection of educational practice in the country today.

**Keywords:** film · education · character · dichomy

## 1 Introduction

Film according to language can be interpreted as a show whose presentation is through images that move through wide layers, in a broader sense it can also be broadcast through television broadcasts. Film is one of the mass media in the form of audio-visual and complex nature [1]. Film becomes an aesthetic work as well as an information tool that can be a tool of entertainment, propaganda tool, and also a political tool. In addition, films can also be a delivery of education and dissemination of existing cultural values. Film is a work of art that is born from a creative process that demands creative freedom. Films are even able to make viewers inspired by scenes in films that give personal effect safter watching them [2].

In its preparation, the film is not easy to make in an instant. An idea, plot, setting, and other supporting things must really be thought out carefully so that it can become a film that has many values that can be taken, besides that if you want to convey criticism or messages in the film, it can be conveyed. Well in an elegant and aesthetic way. The

director has the task of interpreting a script entrusted to him into a form of audio or audio visual or performance, by coordinating all creative elements including actors, crew, and all production supporters [3].

Film is one of the literary works, literary works are expressions of one's inner being that are poured through language using depictions which are a bridge to the insight of an author, the reality of life, and the pure imagination of an author [4]. Literary works always present various symptoms of humanity. It introduces experiences that are directly related to life. Human experience in literary works is not merely something that is visible or can be observed in everyday life, but sometimes contains things that are wild, strange, foreign, and supernatural, which may not be reasoned by reason [5]. Literary work is a reflection of taste and intention, meaning that literary works are created to express feelings that contain certain intentions or goals, this makes literary works have advantages compared to other branches of art [6]. A good film can be said to be a film that contains learning or educational values that can be taken in it, one of which is character education.

The cultivation of character education values does not have to go through formal educational institutions such as schools, but in films, literary novels or reading books where there are a lot of character values that can be learned by students. Character education must accompany all aspects of life. Ideally, the formation or education of character is integrated into all aspects of life, including in schools through various strategies to ground the concept of character education [7]. In analyzing messages, or values or character education in films, it can be done by comparing two literary works, which is called the science of literary comparison.

Comparative literature itself is a literary science that has an attempt to investigate a similarity, difference or influence of various things. Comparative literature or comparative literature means making comparisons of one literary work with another. Meanwhile, Damono (2015) explains that comparative literature is an approach in literature that does not produce its own theory, it can be said that any theory can be used in comparative literature research according to the object and purpose of the research.

Laskar Pelangi film is a film adapted from the novel Laskar Pelangi by Andrea Hirata. The film was released on September 26, 2008 and has been watched by 4.6 million people. The Laskar Pelangi film has received many awards, both nationally and internationally [8]. The Laskar Pelangi film scene mostly focuses on the story of the struggle of Belitung children who live on the coast to pursue an education that has limited material and is accompanied by several conflicts in it [9]. This film depicts the story of 10 children from families who economy is middle to lower, they study at Muhammadiyah Elementary School, which is an elementary school owned by Muhammadiyah and can be said to be in a state that is no longer good to be used as a place for formal education. But from these conditions their enthusiasm never faded, they still did not want to lose to a magnificent school called SD PN Timah. Even though there are many things that distinguish them, starting from the buildings, uniforms, number of students, number of teachers, and infrastructure, they are persistent and struggle when competing in competition competencies. This is supported by two teachers who are sincere in educating, namely Mrs. Muslimah and Mr. Harfan. The school was almost closed due

to lack of attention from the government and the small number of students, but seeing the enthusiasm of the 10 children made Mr. Harfan not close the school.

The Freedom Writers film generally tells about children who have chaotic families and environments, the chaotic environment is caused by the enmity between the black and white races in America, the enmity is brought by them into the classroom which makes the class always chaotic, and clashed. From that there is a teacher who is very intelligent and dedicated to uniting them and changing their paradigm more broadly regarding the life around them. In addition, a teacher and even then managed to grow the spirit of learning from students who were originally lazy and a rioter to become students who are diligent, intelligent, and have courage.

From the description above, this study aims to (1) describe the main characters in the films Laskar Pelangi and Freedom Writers; (2) describe the character education that appears in the films Laskar Pelangi and Freedom Writers; (3) describe the dichotomy of education in the films Laskar Pelangi and Freedom Writers as an illustration of current educational practice.

## 2 Method

This research method uses a qualitative descriptive method, qualitative research is research that intends to understand the phenomenon of what is experienced by research subjects such as behavior, perception, motivation, action, and others, holistically, and by means of description in the form of words and language, in a special natural context and by utilizing various natural methods [10]. Descriptive research aims to explore and clarify a phenomenon or social reality, by describing a number of variables relating to the problem and unit under study [11].

The main data in this research are Laskar Pelangi film in 2008 directed by Riri Riza and Freedom Writers from the United States in 2007 directed by Richard LaGravenese. The Laskar Pelangi film is 125 minutes long, while the Freedom Writers film is 122 minutes long. The technique in data analysis in this study is to use the note-taking technique in which the researcher listens to the main data and then records it. The data that has been classified according to the problem formulation, then analyzed using content analysis theory. Content analysis or *content analysis* is research that is an in-depth discussion of the content of written or printed information in mass media, literary works, and so on [5].

## 3 Result and Discussion

### 3.1 The Main Character in Laskar Pelangi Film

In the film Laskar Pelangi, it tells the story of 10 children who attend Muhammadiyah Elementary School, which is a traditional school, different from other advanced schools, the 10 students are constrained by the economy, poor families do not make their enthusiasm for studying, this is also reinforced by the role of two extraordinary teachers, namely

Mr. Harfan and Mrs. Muslimah. The following is a review of the main characters in the Laskar Pelangi film:

### **Lintang**

He is a child who is a genius, intelligent, and passionate in his education. His enthusiasm for school can be seen when his home is far away, he always leaves with a happy heart to study, besides that he has high aspirations, he wants to be a mathematician, he also likes to read and has a broad perspective. His family is an economically disadvantaged family, but from that there is no influence at all on the spirit of learning.



### **Ikal**



Ikal, who always ranks second, has a classmate named Lintang, who is the smartest child in Laskar Pelangi. Ikal is interested in literature, it can be seen from her daily life that she likes to write poetry. Ikal has a caring, grateful, steadfast, honest, responsible, courageous character (Dewi et al, 2019:11)

### **Mr. Harfan**



Mr. Harfan is the principal at SD Muhammadiyah. Mr. Harfan instills a high enthusiasm for learning in his students. Mr. Harfan is a teacher who is sincere in educating his students. He also teaches courage, passion and hard work to achieve goals. He also taught that life should give as much as possible not receive as much as possible. He is a representative of the wise men. Such a charming idealism with extraordinary faith really made the elementary school stand even though it only had ten students and a building that was said to be unfit for a school.

### **Mrs. Muslim**



Mrs. Muslimah is a teacher at SD Muhammadiyah. Mrs. Muslimah is never tired of instilling character education for students at SD Muhammadiyah. She remains dedicated in teaching even though his salary has not been paid, he is patient, smart, and good at motivating.

### 3.2 The Main Character in Freedom Writers Film

Freedom Writers is a film that discusses the existence of disputes or conflicts between black and white groups living in America, where the conflict is carried over to their descendants, which causes them to hate each other, be hostile to each other, kill each other without having a definite reason. to do that, but suddenly that view changed when a teacher named Erin was sincere in trying to understand a wider life through various approaches in learning, as a result Erin succeeded in uniting them in one class room, and made the students broaden their views and no longer looked at them. Narrow meaning of the differences that exist. There are several main characters that will be reviewed in this study.

#### Erin



Erin is a teacher who is ready to become an educator, also patient in educating. This is evidenced by when he was placed in class 203 which is known to be the lowest class because it contains teenagers who like noise. He accepted with pleasure and enthusiasm, his days he met and faced various kinds of naughty students, students who grouped and were hostile to each other from one group to another just because of their lack of insight and paradigm related to group conflicts between black races. And white. And in the end, Erin was able to change their mindset and view of differences that should not be a

dispute that caused the fall of other people/people closest to them even though she ended up having to divorce her beloved husband.

### **Eva**



A student who comes from an African family, can be said in this film to be part of the black race. He has tenacity in defending the honor of his race/group, he has a bad past because his family was arrested and killed by the government police. But after receiving an education from an Erin, their teacher in grade 203, his mindset immediately changed, he became a student who dared to speak the truth and the truth, he even dared to tell the truth in the trial regarding the case of his race friend who shot ethnic Asians.

### **Marcus**

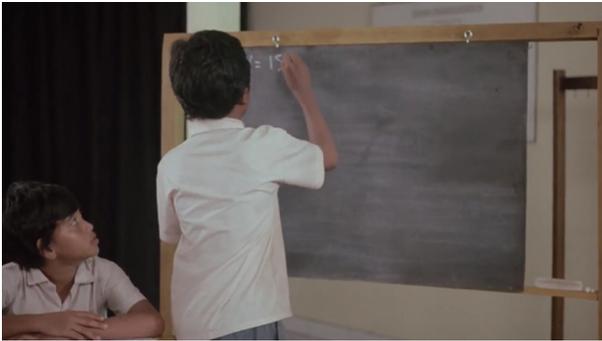


A student who from his childhood has experienced life in a prison cell, he has been taught how to be fanatical/must defend his race to the last drop of blood, because according to him, if he dies defending his group, it will be said or labeled as an honorable death. But that changed, when he got advice/education from Erin, that people who have died will only rot in the ground, and those who are alive will continue their lives and will not remember you anymore because what you leave behind is only a dispute that causes a lot of unrest.

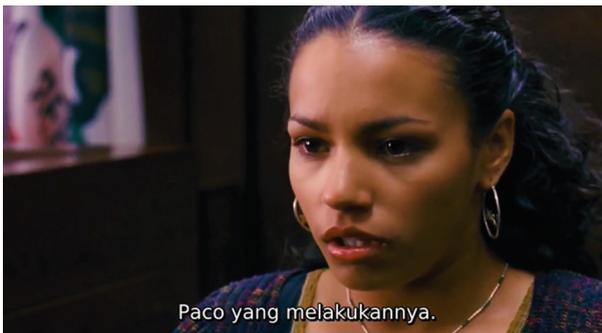
### 3.3 Featured Character Education

#### Honest

Honest behavior or character is one of the characteristics of people who believe, if in Islam they are called believers. This is the definition of a person who tells the truth without lies and lies. Honesty is a reflection of a healthy personality, like a jasmine flower, white, clean, and beautiful and spreads fragrance in the surrounding environment, surely many people will want to come closer to kiss it (Kustyarini, 2016:17). An honest person's life will be peaceful and peaceful, because there is no falsehood in him, nothing is closed from him, so that his heart will be calm and not anxious because there is no fear of revealing something that is hidden in him.



The scene when Lintang proves his honesty that he is not cheating when answering questions while participating in competitions (*Laskar Pelangi*).



"I saw that Paco did it," said Eva as a witness in the trial who explained the chronology of the incident in the shooting at one of the shops that killed ethnic Asians (*Freedom Writers*).

#### Sincere

Sincerity is the fruit of our sincerity in doing something, if someone does all activities sincerely, then there is calm, lightness, and no burden (Kustyarini, 2016: 18). The two

films also show how sincere an educator is for the formation of intelligent and broad-minded youths.

In the film “*Laskar Pelangi*”, how Pak Harfan and Mrs. Muslimah who sincerely took their time to teach education for children from underprivileged circles, limited facilities and infrastructure did not dampen their enthusiasm for imparting knowledge to their students. In addition, Mrs. Muslimah also continues to teach without getting tired even though the salary that should be her property has not been paid.



Meanwhile, in the film “*Freedom Writers*” it is told that Erin is willing to work part-time besides being a teacher, she does this to buy books that she will use as teaching materials in the classroom because her students don’t approve of borrowing and using school facilities. Because according to the principal, it will not be achieved and is not suitable for children who are naughty and in the lower class.



### **Respect for others**

The form of respect for others is one of the characters that needs to be possessed, someone who is smart will respect the opinions, ideas, and views of others, indicating that he has broad insight into his paradigm regarding differences. Both films feature characters who understand that they will respect other people.

In the film “*Laskar Pelangi*” that ten students at SD Muhammadiyah really respect Mr. Harfan and Mrs. Muslimah who are teachers in their class, they always pay attention to what is ordered and conveyed by the two teachers.



Whereas in “Freedom Writers” the youths or students who initially did not respect each other, even clashed with each other, became students who knew their differences, they became united and respected their friends of different races, besides that they already considered Erin as their mother because it is a form of appreciation as a teacher who is sincere and able to change the minds of the naughty children.



### 3.4 Dichotomy in Education

The distinction between public and private schools, superior and unseeded, is no stranger to the course of education. It is as if education is only for those who are able to receive it, are able to pay, are able to compete, and are able to think. This also resulted in a negative view in the general public who denied the quality of private schools. Quality schools are often identified with visual displays that brighten expectations. Starting from the facilities, facilities and infrastructure, teachers who teach, elite uniforms, magnificent buildings, and smart students in the classroom. Quality schools are expensive schools, this perception is a perception that is not always true (Martono, 2010:342).

Similar to these two films, the practice of educational dichotomy is still common, the distinction between smart and less intelligent students, naughty and not naughty students, schools for poor children and rich children, private schools and public schools can illustrate that the nature of education has uprooted from the roots.

The is data related to the description of the dichotomy of education in these two films:

### **Education Dichomy in Laskar Pelangi film**

This is the building of the Muhammadiyah Elementary School. It can be seen that the walls of this school are still made of wood, the yard is still sandy soil and it only has one class (Fig. 1).

This is the building of the PN TIMAH elementary school. It can be seen that this school has good buildings and facilities (Fig. 2).

These are teachers from the Muhammadiyah elementary school, they don't have uniforms and there are only two of them. This is because there are no teachers who want to register to teach at Muhammadiyah schools (Fig. 3).

This is a description of teachers who teach in PN TIMAH elementary schools. They have uniforms for teaching. Their number is sufficient to teach many classes (Fig. 4).

The following is a picture of PN TIMAH elementary school students practicing drum-bands for them to perform at the carnival commemorating Indonesia's independence day (Fig. 5).



**Fig. 1.** Building of Muhammadiyah elementary school



**Fig. 2.** Building of PN TIMAH elementary school



**Fig. 3.** Teacher of Muhammadiyah elementary school



**Fig. 4.** Teacher of PN TIMAH elementary school



**Fig. 5.** PN TIMAH elementary student

Meanwhile, the following is a picture of Muhammadiyah elementary school students practicing dancing in the meadow (Fig. 6).

The following is a description of the clothes and appearance of the PN TIMAH elementary school during the carnival. They wear modern drum band uniforms (Fig. 7).



**Fig. 6.** Muhammadiyah elementary school student



**Fig. 7.** PN TIMAH elementary student

Meanwhile, the following is a description of a Muhammadiyah elementary school featuring traditional dances. They use leaves to make their dance costumes (Fig. 8).



**Fig. 8.** Muhammadiyah elementary school student

### Education dichomy in Freedom Writers film

The following is a scene when Erin's request was rejected by Margaret, a senior teacher. Erin tries to borrow books to use in class 203. Margaret says that the students in room 203 are naughty students and they will destroy the books Erin gives them.



The data shows that educational practices are still not available for all, the autonomy and diversification of education that should be implemented is clearly not being implemented, the stigma of those who are not yet smart enough to have the right to learn more is still inherent in educational practices in general in this country, the grouping of students in class smart and not smart is a real form of the dichotomy of education. In addition, the assumption that a magnificent school is a quality school is still a common view of the community.

## 4 Conclusion

From the results of the analysis through these two literary works of film, it is concluded that (1) there is a main role/character from each film that can be inspired by; (2) There are several values of character education shown in these two films; and (3) The dichotomy of education shown in these two films should still be carried out and still exist in the practice of implementing education in the country.

The film *Freedom Writers* and *Laskar Pelangi* tries to show the story of the sincerity of an educator who is willing to sacrifice his personal interests just to see his students have big hopes and dreams. This film also teaches that broad insight, broad knowledge can change a narrow way of thinking. This film also describes how people who are sincere in giving change are sometimes hindered and not supported by the authorities and have policies.

The similarities between the two films are related to the theme, the theme raised from the film is about education. How important is character education given patiently by educators. While the difference from the film is the setting of the place and the atmosphere.

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