

THE PORTRAYAL OF AMERICAN ACADEMIC CULTURE IN THE BAD TEACHER MOVIE

Syahrani Junaid¹, Sardian Maharani Asnur², Masykur Rauf³,
Aisyah & Sri Sulastri

¹syahrani.junaid@uin-alauddin.ac.id, ²sardian.maharaniasnur@uin-alauddin.ac.id,

³masykur.rauf@uin-alauddin.ac.id.

Abstract

Education that is responsive to culture has the meaning of a manifestation of respect for the identity of all students as individual students who have the right to obtain quality education and learning, which maintains and upholds the culture that has been applied, their backgrounds, and their communities. The purpose of this study is to reveal the depiction of academic culture owned by the United States through the film The Bad Teacher. The method used in this study is a descriptive qualitative research design by applying conversational analysis in the film The Bad Teacher. The data for this study were obtained by watching and listening to conversations in films that show academic culture in the United States. The results showed that there were 6 depictions of academic culture and 1 depiction of toxic academics.

Keywords: *Portrayal, Academic Culture, The Bad Teacher Movie*

Abstrak

Pendidikan yang responsif terhadap budaya adalah pendidikan yang menghormati identitas semua siswa sebagai individu yang memiliki hak untuk memperoleh pendidikan dan pembelajaran yang berkualitas, yang mempertahankan dan menegakkan budaya yang telah diterapkan, latar belakang mereka, dan komunitas mereka. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengungkap penggambaran budaya akademik yang dimiliki oleh Amerika Serikat melalui film The Bad Teacher. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah desain penelitian deskriptif kualitatif dengan menerapkan analisis percakapan dalam film The Bad Teacher. Data untuk penelitian ini diperoleh dengan menonton dan mendengarkan percakapan dalam film yang menunjukkan budaya akademik di Amerika Serikat. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa ada 6 penggambaran budaya akademik dan 1 penggambaran akademis yang beracun.

Kata kunci: *Penggambaran, Budaya Akademik, Film The Bad Teacher*

A. INTRODUCTION

Education provides an image or meaning as the knowledge that will be

realized in society, education that is responsive to culture means an

embodiment of respect for the identity of all students as individual students who have the right to obtain quality education and learning, which maintains and upholds the culture that has been implemented, background, as well as their community (Karatas, 2015). Education that is responsive to culture will guide teachers to implement an education and learning system that connects students with social life, passions, and descriptions of the environment outside of the academic (Ambarwati et al., 2020).

The education system in the United States is almost the same as the education system in Indonesia, which consists of 3 layers of government, namely the federal or central government, provincial or state government, and city or district government. The educational culture that has taken root in the United States is that the role of providing learning is not only borne by the teacher but also by the community and the surrounding environment. Therefore, the education received by students is not only at school but interacts directly with the community. Education management in the United States was developed following all the aspirations and needs of society, this was done because the United States is a country with a decentralized system (Richard, 2000). Decentralization was carried out to clarify the person in charge of each level of educational institutions in the United States, for example, the main person in charge of the education system there is the government education department, but for daily activities

assigned to the government every education office or if in Indonesia it is known as the principal. (Syahrani et al., 2022).

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Educational management is of course in close contact with academic culture, because what is carried out by education management is based on the culture one has, in other words, education upholds cultural representation. Examples are telling the truth, maintaining the implementation of moral values, and upholding the truth so that they can build academics who understand every thought and action taken. Academic culture can be understood as something that is the totality of life and academic activities carried out, academic culture is often also interpreted as something where the community takes part in the development of educational institutions. Academic culture is one of the subsystems of learning by firmly holds a role in building and developing the culture and civilization of society, nation, and state as a whole. Academic culture is also often interpreted as something universal or owned by every individual in carrying out academic activities (Multazam, 2019).

In this study, the representation of an academic culture that researchers are trying to uncover comes from a film called *The Bad Teacher*, this film begins with a background at the end of the academic year where Elizabeth, as the teacher, decides to leave her job and marry a rich young man, but their

relationship does not get the blessing from the man's mother resulting in the termination of the relationship between Elizabeth and her boyfriend. Time then passed until Elizabeth decided to return to teaching at school and met apprentice teacher Scott Delacorte who made her excited about attending school activities until she was promoted to guidance counselor, there are many scenes showing Elizabeth's bad behavior that is inappropriate for a teacher, such as sleeping in class, taking drugs during class time, even being busy getting drunk compared to teaching students well.

The second half of the film *The Bad Teacher* shows significant changes to Elizabeth's way of teaching, there is no more watching in learning but instead focusing on running quizzes with questions that will be faced in the upcoming exam, not without reason Elizabeth makes changes, but because the prize money that will be given to the winner is sufficiently big and Elizabeth did everything possible to get the bonus. In the end, the high school got the highest score in the state and made all the teachers there proud. The end of the film *The Bad Teacher* is the continuation of the relationship between Elizabeth and sports teacher Russel and Elizabeth's awareness that education is important and life is not just about earning money.

C. METHOD

The method used in this study is a descriptive qualitative research design by applying conversational analysis in the film *The Bad Teacher*. The data for this study were obtained by watching and

listening to conversations in films that show academic culture in the United States.

The initial step that is often taken in analyzing conversations is to find a scene that describes the needs of research data, then after getting a scene that is immortalized with pictures as documentation of the explanation of the research results (Saleh, 2015).

D. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

1. Findings

The first portrayal of academic culture

In making announcements regarding achievements at the end of each semester, teachers do not need to hold a formal meeting, this is sufficient to do in a relaxed situation and the most important thing is that the teachers have gathered and given their most comfortable position, as happened in the opening scene of the film *The Bad Teacher*, some teachers only standing and some are sitting on the table while waiting for the principal to make an announcement.



Figure 1: 02:20

Headmaster: Let's all calm down for a second, now is not the time for pranks. Let's have little pleasantries. So here comes another great year at JAMS. Who can forget the haunted class Mr. Pinkus, Thanks Sandy for that. Or the extraordinary success of a women's

prisoner's book trip sponsored by Mrs. Pathacheks.

The second portrayal of academic culture

There are no rules for the use of uniforms for teachers and students, in terms of school attributes that are used



according to their respective wishes, this is often shown in the film *The Bad Teacher* in a school setting, the example is:

The third portrayal of academic culture

As a form of adaptation to social life, every year John Adams High School holds a car wash event as well as raising funds to be used to visit the state museum.



Figure 4: 22:42

Class leader: I'm the leader on a trip to Springfield, we're having a car wash this Sunday, if you come maybe we can wash your car. A trip to Springfield is the best moment for 7th graders, last year this car wash brought in 6000 dollar

The fourth portrayal of academic culture

As said in the introduction society also plays an important role in the development and culture of education in



the United States, this is shown in the class scenes held by schools to answer questions from parents.

Figure 5: 33:28 Figure 6: 33:30

Elizabeth: Hai, My name is Elizabeth Halsey. Any questions?

Sasha's Mother: I'm a little worried about the benefits of watching your film teaching, I'm wondering what are your plans regarding state exams?

Elizabeth: Look, the school took me because I'm good at this, I use film as one of my ways but I also have a variety of other multimedia techniques.

The Fifth portrayal of academic culture

Every school Christmas celebration will hold a Christmas event together as shown in the following scene:



The sixth portrayal of academic culture

The second half of the film *The Bad Teacher* shows the seriousness of studying but still shows that sitting at a desk while teaching, doing actions that injure physically, and doing anything to get high marks is normal.



Figure 9: Shows a change in Elizabeth's teaching method because she wanted to get a bonus if the class she was tutoring achieved the highest score, but what caught her attention was Elizabeth as a teacher sitting and talking at the table.

Elizabeth: Hurry up we have a lot of work to do here everyone sits down hurry up.

Student: Where is the tv?

Elizabeth: Now turn to "To Kill a Mockingbird" page 1. Now answer who explained why Jem cried when the tree hole was filled with cement.

Student: Because he is a crybaby.



The other students laughed

Elizabeth: Get out. We're here to study. Does anyone have any problems with that?

Figure 10: Shows the scene of Elizabeth as the teacher pressing a star hard on the forehead of her student who is enthusiastic about answering questions.

Elizabeth: Things are about to change here now, lazing is over Sasa: Because birds represent freedom

Elizabeth: Good, Okay do you want to add to that answer?

Figure 11: Shows a fairly rough learning scene when compared to Indonesian culture, where Elizabeth as the teacher throws a basketball if the questions given by her are not answered correctly.

Elizabeth: So what limitations does Scott have as a narrator? next questions, Student: Because Atticus has always been the voice of reason and justice Elizabeth: Good, now throw it anywhere as long as you don't head.

Figure 12: Shows a scene where Elizabeth gives unfriendly scribbles on her student's answer sheet and demands learning outcomes.

Elizabeth: Stupid answer, wrong spelling. Are you fucking me? It's sad, this is why Japan surpassed us, you guys haven't put in enough effort I need results.
The seventh portrayal of academic culture

Unhealthy academics are clearly shown in the film *The Bad Teacher*, some examples are:

Figure 13: Shows the condition where a teacher who is supposed to teach students prefers to sleep and let his students watch television under the pretext of being a new learning medium.

Figures 14 & 15: Shows a bullying situation that occurred at lunch but the teacher who saw it chose to be indifferent and not pay attention.

Amy: Someone seems to be asleep in here Elizabeth: What?

Amy: Did you see the coleslaw fight earlier?

Elizabeth: Yes, one child throws lettuce at the other child.



Figure 16: Shows the situation in that Elizabeth as a teacher did not attend the meeting which decided that lunch should be supervised as a form of request from parents and as a filler in the curriculum quadrant implemented at John Adams High School.

Amy: You didn't attend orientation yesterday. At orientation, I suggested a new lunch monitoring system, the quadrant system

Elizabeth: Look, I have to go, cover me.

Amy: Elizabeth lunch is only 7 minutes away, who's gonna see your quadrant Figure 17: Shows the scene where Elizabeth asks the principal to supervise the class 7th car wash to make a profit for herself

Elizabeth: I want to participate in supervising the Class 7 car wash Headmaster: That's been Amy's job for the past 2 years

Elizabeth: Yup but maybe that's enough, maybe it's better to give it a little rest Headmaster: it's great to see you being a real part of the JAMS family

Figure 18: This scene shows Elizabeth's disguise to get state exam questions, this happened because the quiz results shown by her students did not match what Elizabeth expected, so she decided to get state exam questions.

Elizabeth: You know what helps Carl Carl: Nod.

Elizabeth: Let me see a little of your test this year

Carl: Oh sure I'll show it the day after the test, I'll give you a copy of it Elizabeth: I hope to see him soon, I'm running out of deadlines

Carl: No it can't be very secretive unless you're accompanied by a bad guy right here (Shows his business card)

Elizabeth: Wow, you know Carl I think our business will be finished tonight



Figure 19: The disapproval of the man she likes is taken over by Amy, Elizabeth gives something that makes Amy's face disfigured and takes her place to accompany the students on the way to Springfield.

Headmaster: Elizabeth you saved us
Elizabeth: Is Amy all right

Headmaster: Well, I hope he's okay

Figure 20: This scene shows the threat given by Elizabeth if Carl tells the truth that the state exam questions have been leaked to him, which causes Amy to be fired for allegedly defaming Elizabeth.

Troll: I'm Elizabeth's friend, take this and open it. Not bad for a phone camera, you can keep that too

Carl: Fuck

Headmaster: Thank you for coming
Mr. Carl

Carl: I guess I should start by saying my statement last week was wrong, I've never seen this woman (Elizabeth) before.

2. Discussion

The film *The Bad Teacher* shows that anything can be done by a person for his own sake, some of the academic culture depicted in the film *The Bad Teacher* is: First, the habit of conveying important things does not require a formal situation, this can be done simply

by gathered teachers who would pay attention and filled with drinks that shouldn't be in school. Second, the rules related to the use of school uniforms do not apply in the United States, in that students have the freedom to wear clothes that make them feel comfortable, because the use of uniforms is not regulated in the United States education system. Third, one of the educational goals of the United States is to introduce students to social life, and one of the ways described in the film *The Bad Teacher* is to hold an annual routine car wash to get funds for a trip to the state museum, but this welcomed by students and also the community because of a clear purpose. Fourth, parents' supervision of students' teaching in schools also applies in the United States, this synergizes with the prevailing academic culture that the role of the community in developing education is also very necessary. Fifth, in American culture holding a Christmas event at school is a common thing to do, this is shown in a scene in the film *The Bad Teacher*, where the school holds a night party to celebrate Christmas together. Sixth, a significant change occurred in the learning method brought by Elizabeth, at first this was done because of the big prize but in the end, she realized that education was very important for her students to get.

In addition to the depiction of academic culture shown in *The Bad Teacher*, several other things related to academic damage are also clearly depicted in this film, such as teachers who sleep in class, carry out learning activities in a drunken state, and not caring about the situations and conditions experienced by students, regardless of the system and school rules, taking advantage of students to get money to the point where they do everything to get bonus money from the school under the pretext of providing the best education.

E. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research found in the film *The Bad Teacher*, it is not only a depiction of American academic culture, but also the toxic nature of the academic possessed by the teacher. However, it should be underlined that developed countries like the United States must pay attention to the quality of education they have and the depiction in films is not entirely correct.

Another hope with this research is to provide an overview of the positive things that can be taken that each teacher has his way of conducting learning, the role of the community needed in the education system, and a clear educational goal, namely allowing students to socialize directly with the community from every activity that takes place owned.

Apart from that, it is hoped that this research can also be continued as a reference by making comparisons with the academic culture of other countries, including the academic culture that is owned by Indonesia.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ambarwati, A., Sari, I. N., & Zahro, A. (2020). Pendidikan Responsif Budaya Berbasis Objek Pemajuan Kebudayaan Daerah. *International Conference on Indonesia Culture Proceeding*, 1(December), 708.
- Dalton, M. M. (2013). A bad teacher is bad for teachers. *Journal of Popular Film and Television*, 41(2), 78–87. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01956051.2013.787352>
- Karatas, K. & O. B. (2015). Teacher's Perception on Culturally Responsiveness in Education. *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Studies*, 2(2), 47. <https://doi.org/10.29333/ejecs/39>
- Multazam, U. (2019). Kepemimpinan dan Budaya Akademik di Perguruan Tinggi Ulil. VII(232), 128–147.
- Sahal, M., Musadad, A. A., & Akhyar, M. (2018). Tolerance in Multicultural Education: A Theoretical Concept. *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding*, 5(4), 115. <https://doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v5i4.212>
- Saleh, A. (2015). Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Multikultural Analisis Isi. 1, 71–80.
- Stensaker, B. (2018). Academic development as cultural work: responding to the organizational complexity of modern higher education institutions. *International Journal for Academic Development*, 23(4), 274–285. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1360144X.2017.1366322>
- Syahrani, A. W., Maulani, A., Saubari, A., Yusuf, M., & Ilham, M. (2022). Sistem Pendidikan Di Negara Maju Amerika Serikat. *Adiba: Journal of Education*, 2(3), 311–317.