

# THE STRUGGLE FOR A BETTER LIFE IN DICKENS' *GREAT EXPECTATIONS*

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**Abstract** : The research is intended to reveal Pip's struggle for a better life. He never gives up to reach his dream for better life as seen in Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations*. This research is categorized as a qualitative research because the data are taken in the form of words. The data are collected from primary source that is the novel itself, and the secondary sources are collected from some books, articles, internet and other sources that are used to support the analysis. In analyzing the data, the writer used objective approach. The result shows the struggle of Pip for a better life. The first struggles to be a gentleman, and the second struggles to get his love. Pip is an orphan and Pip always tries to be a gentleman so that his life can be better and he never gives up on getting Estella, the woman he loves. And in the end the efforts that Pip can do, Pip can get what he dreams of becoming a respectable man and getting Estella's love a woman he loves so much.

**Keywords** : *Struggle, Never Give Up, Work hard, Great Expectations, Dickens*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

A better life can be defined as a situation in which a person has achieved his or her targets of life after dealing with all his or her problems so that he or she feels more comfortable and settled than before dealing with all his or her problems. Sabudu (2014:1) stated that: "*Literature is the reflection of human life better in the society or in their private life, every phenomenon that found in the society usually reflects in the literary works such as poem, novel, drama or short story. It can be implaid that literature is human reflection of experience which was shows*

*by using written form of language.*" Moreover, In research "Experimenting Jeremiadic Approach as an Alternative for TEFL in Meeting the Demand of the 2013 Curriculum" by Mister Gidion Maru, it says "*A Literary text provides learners with real world experiences, relationships between society and people where the target language is spoken, even if they are fictions*" (p.4).

Janet N Ahn (2013:11) states that : "*Struggle is a necessary part of success in school settings present us a set of unique challenges because of a variety of distracting factors.*" According to Muel

Kaptein (2017:120) “*Struggle is a good or bad does not depend on whether the goal is to defeat the bad or achieve the good, but whether the object one is trying to realize or preserve is deemed good or bad.*”

Wiesje Erna Sekeh, Donal M. Ratu, Ferry H. Mandang say on the research “*Character Education Values in the Little Prince by Antoine De Saint-Exupéry*” that character is a set of interrelated personal values and virtues that usually guide behavior” (p.69).

The novel needs to be researched because in this novel it tells about the struggle of a boy who comes from a poor family, and wants to change his life for the better. In this novel, lessons can motivate us to keep working hard and never give up in getting what people want.

Pip is an orphan, who lives with his sister (Mrs. Joe) and brother-in-law (Mr. Joe). His father & mother have passed away. They were buried in the churchyard near his home. Pip often stays quiet near his parent’s grave, running away from the pressure he feels at his own sister's house. His sister was not someone who could replace his mother's position, on the contrary, she was a person who was quite cruel to Pip. Contrary to his brother-in-law who, although he was less educated, but he was very fond to Pip. His mediocre life makes Pip realized that he has to be a gentleman.

## **2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

Since the data in this study is in form of word, the researcher used qualitative research. As Bogdan & Biklen (1992:30)

stated that: “*Qualitative research is descriptive, the data collected are in form of words and pictures rather than numbers. The written results of the research contain quotations from the data to illustrate and substantiate the presentation.*”

### **Data Collection**

Bogdan and Biklen (p. 30) stated that: “*a human being is able to interpret the existing meanings or message that cannot be reached by other instrument.*” The data was collected by the author by Reading the novel *Great Expectations* repeatedly until the writer get a complete understanding of novel well. Finding out what are the main character struggle in the novel. Selecting and picking the data up which relate to the problems. Finally, conducting and analyzing the collected data and making conclusion. In conducting this research, there are two kinds data collection. Primary sources from the novel and Secondary source from Books, Articles, Internet and other sources.

### **Data Analysis**

In analyzing data, the writer focused on analyzing The Struggle for a Better Life in Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations*. Because it is interested in discussing the things that often occur around us. In analyzing thr data, the writer uses Objective Approach. Rene Wellek (1903) states “*Objective Approach : For literary works begin with a complete description of it, if it is at the basis of poetry, it concerns physical elements or technical properties. It starts with the presentation of the physical elements of the literary work, about the length, shape, etc. which become the basic information and produce more complex information, in this case, the*

*content elements of the literary work, such as themes, arrangements, plots, character, point of view, and so on.*”

### 3. ANALYSIS

#### **The Struggle to Become a Gentleman**

The form of the struggle to be a gentleman is work hard. Pip comes from a poor family and he is trying to have a better life that is to be a gentleman.

*“ Ours was the marsh country, down the river, within, as the river wound, twenty miles of the sea... .. who d’ye live with-supposin’ you’re kindly let to live, which I can’t made up my mind about? My sister, sir – Mrs. Joe Gargery – wife of Joe Gargery, the blacksmith, sir. My sister, Mrs. Joe Gargery, was more than twenty years older than I,.....she had brought me up by hand. She made a grab at Tickler, and she Ram-paged out. Joe was a mild, good natured, sweet – tempered,....”(2-9)*

In that event above Pip experiences external conflict; his sister is brought him up by hand. Mrs. Joe is a hard woman because she is verbally and physically abusive to Pip. She uses a tickler to beat Pip. It is a piece of cane that will really hurt him. Pip’ family is a common one and they do not have a great of money. So, Pip always works at the forge as a blacksmith to help Joe and his life is surrounded with simplicity. He is humble and does not care at all about what class he is in. His goal is only to be apprenticed as a blacksmith with his friend and Joe. It is only through a progressive life hidden by unfilled ambition. It suggests that Pip is unambitious.“When I was old enough, I was to be apprenticed to Joe, and until I

could assume that...I was favoured with the employment.” (41)

Little Pip is an honest child. He is afraid of doing something bad such as lying and stealing. As the example, when the convict treats Pip to steal Joe’s file and to bring some foods, Pip is forced doing it and lying to Joe about this action. He does it because he is afraid of the convict who will kill him if he does not bring the file to the convict and some meals to eat. From this incident, Pip is haunted by his guilty feeling all day long (p.23-26). His fear of doing something bad comes from his belief that if someone has done something bad, he or she will get a bad consequent such as being picked up by police as shown “ *I fully expected to find a Constable in the kitchen, waiting to take me up. But not only was there no Constable there, but no discovery had yet been made of the robbery.* ” (30)

Pip expects there is a police officer in the kitchen who will pick him up to release him from his guilty feeling of this robbery. Pip has a strong desire to be an educated person. We know that Pip comes from poor family and he does not have money to have a better education, so he learns from anything around him. He learns how to read by practicing to read his parents’ tomb stones.

*“ At the time when I stood in the churchyard, reading the family tombstone, I had just enough learning to be able to spell them out. My construction even of their simple meaning was not very correct, for I read “wife of the above” as a complimentary reference to my father’s exaltation to a better world.... ” (48)*

The paragraph above shows that Pip always tries to develop his reading skill

from something simple around him such as reading the tombstone of his family. The other evidence that Pip has a strong desire to develop his skills, when Pip becomes a teenager, he begins to learn anything from Joe. He asks Joe to teach him how to read and write. Pip also works to have money and collect them in a box to pay the tuition as shown in this quotation.

*“ When I was old enough, I was to be apprenticed to Joe, and until I could assume that dignity I was not to be what Mrs. Joe called “ Pompeyed ,” or (as I render it) pampered. Therefore, I was not only odd-boy about the forge, but if any neighbour happened to want an extra boy to frighten birds, or pick up stones, or do any such job, I was favoured with the employment. In order, however, that our superior position might not be compromised thereby, a money-box was kept on the kitchen mantel-shelf, into which it was publicly made known that all my earnings were dropped.” (48)*

Pip’s desire to have a better knowledge is very strong. He will do anything in order to get money and collect them to pay the fee. He gains his knowledge in Mr. Wopsle’s great-aunt school. In this school Pip learns writing and reading properly with his teacher, Biddy and when the school time is over, he learns and practices writing, reading, and spelling with Joe at home (49-50).

The next evidence that Pip has a strong desire in improving his knowledge is proven when Pip tells Biddy that he wants to be the real gentleman. Pip does not want to have a monotonous life and he has tired to lead his life as a worker and as a common villager, he wants to have a better

education. Here, Pip shows that he has tired with his life as a common villager and as common worker, so he wants to be a better person as shown in quotation below :

*“ Biddy,’ I exclaimed I’m patiently , ‘I am not at all happy as I am . I am disgusted with my calling and with my life. I have never taken to either, since I was bound. Don’t be absurd. “Well then, understand once for all that I never shall or can be comfortable—or anything but miserable—there, Biddy!—unless I can lead a very different sort of life from the life I lead now.”(118)*

Pip is tired with his monotonous life in the village. He wants something new in order to improve his life although no one agrees with him. He ignores all what people say including Biddy. He is still in his own words although other people do not agree with him.

The last evidence, after being in London , Pip’s desire to reach his expectation becomes stronger. He starts to learn anything from Mr. Mathew Pocket and treat him as his teacher and his master as well, as shown in quotation below :

*“ He advised my attending certain places in London, for the acquisition of such mere rudiments as I wanted, and my investing him with the function of explainer and director of all my studies. He hoped that with intelligent assistance I should meet with little to discourage me, and should soon be able to dispense with any aid but this. Through his way of saying this, and much for similar purpose, he placed himself on confidential terms with me in an admirable manner; and I may state at once that he was always so zealous*

*and honorable in fulfilling his compact with me, that he made me zealous and honorable in fulfilling mine with him. If he had shown indifference as a master, I have no doubt I should have returned the compliment as a pupil; he gave no such excuse, and each of us did the other justice. "* (175)

Pip is zealous in learning every little thing such as taking a walk exploring London, and Mr. Pocket as the explainer for him to gain the knowledge. Pip also very respects Mr. Mathew Pocket not only as his teacher, but also as his friend.

### **The Struggle for Love**

The form of struggle to get love is he never giving up. Since the first time he met Estella, Pip has been in love. Estella often insults Pip because of her style and looks. even Estella always turned down Pip, but pip keeps trying to get his.

*" I took the opportunity of being alone in the court-yard, to look at my coarse hands and my common boots. My opinion of those accessories was not favourable. They had never troubled me before, but they troubled me now, as vulgar appendages. I determined to ask Joe why he had ever taught me to call those picture-cards, Jacks, which ought to be called knaves. I wished Joe had been rather more genteelly brought up, and then I should have been so too. "* *" 'He calls the knaves, Jacks, this boy!' said Estella with disdain, before our first game was out. 'And what coarse hands he has! And what thick boots!' I had never thought of being ashamed of my hands before; but I began to consider them a very indifferent pair. Her contempt for me was so strong, that*

*it became infectious, and I caught it. "* (105)

Estella's insult to Pip for her style and appearance. Pip starts to think that if he could become a respectable and respectable person in this case being a rich person he wouldn't be embarrassed like that anymore. Finally he took a special class and studied with Bidly until finally there was a philanthropist who wanted to help him become a rich man and had to leave his village and live in London. He only thought he wanted to be a rich man to get Estella.

Besides having a strong desire, Pip also has a strong heart. He always tries to be firm in facing some insulting words from others without revolting what somebody does to him, for example when Pip is working at Satis House, Mrs. Havisham's house. At Satis House, Estella and Mrs. Havisham always despise Pip by saying something which is very insulting Pip's feeling. When Pip and Estella are playing cards and Estella says.

*" He calls the knaves, Jacks this boy!' said Estella with disdain, before our game was out. "And what coarse hand she has. And what thick boots!' I had never thought of being ashamed of my hands before; but I began to consider them a very indifferent pair. Her contempt was so strong, that it became infectious, and I caught it. She won the game, and I dealt. I misdealt, as was only natural, when I knew she was lying in wait for me to do wrong; and she denounced me for a stupid, clumsy labouring-boy. "* (62)

Pip is very insulted by Estella's words. She always despises Pip and tries to make Pip shame of himself because of having coarse hands and thick boots. Here, Pip

tries to be strong and be patient by ignoring all of insulting speeches from Mrs. Havisham and from Estella.

The other evidence that Pip has a strong heart is shown in the quotation below, when he has finished playing card, and then having his meal in a courtyard

*“ She came back, with some bread and meat and a little mug of beer. She put the mug down on the stones of the yard, and gave me the bread and the meat without looking at me, as insolently as if I were a dog in disgrace. I was so humiliated, hurt, spurned, offended, sorry—I cannot hit upon the right name for the smart—God knows what its name was—that tears started to my eyes. ”* (64)

By looking at the previous page quotation, we know how hard Pip’s mental burden in receiving that kind of action, but Pip has no strength to revolt Estella’s and Mrs. Havisham’s action toward him. He only tries to be strong however his heart is broken. He can only cry and hide his face, so someone cannot see his true feeling. He also has to receive this kind of humiliating action from both Estella and Mrs. Havisham as long as he is working at Satis House.

### **The Struggle to Be an Educated Person**

Pip was born in a poor family, and it is impossible for him to have a good education. it makes him uneducated, unlike the other men in his age. In order to improve his understanding about the world, he cannot learn on the formal education, he is helped by bidley, and she is quite smart. it cannot be denied that estella is the main cause. previously, Pip did not care about miserable condition, being uneducated

person or living in a poor life. it changes since estella his mind.

*” It came of my lifting up my own eyes from a task I was poring at - writing some passages from a book, to improve myself in two ways at once by a short of stratagem - and seeing Bidfy observant of what I was about. I laid down my pen, and Biddy stopped in her needlework without laying it down. 'Biddy,' said I, 'how do you manage it? Either I am very stupid, or you are very clever.’”* (113)

By learning to Bidley. he feels a good change in his understanding about the world and all the phenomena in it. He views Bidley as teaches who taught him so many things that he will never forget. *“Yes, Biddy. I observed, when I had done turning it over, 'you were my first teacher, and that at a time when we little thought of ever being together like this, in his kitchen.’”* (114) even though Pip does not get education in school or kind of it, he feels satisfied and he keeps it, so that he can be a better person. Those two quotations above prove Pip's efforts to enhance his quality of life. it is considered as a vital thing to possess. It is beneficial for him as a man, and his desire to be accepted by Estella. *“ Biddy,' said I, after binding her to secrecy, 'I want to be a gentleman.' 'Oh, I wouldn't, if I was you!' she returned. ' I don't think it would answer.' 'Biddy,' said I, with some severity, 'I have particular reasons for wanting to be a gentleman.’”* ( 115)

Estella becomes the main reason of Pip's want to be a rich. He decides to live different way of life. The way, he will never be discriminated and insulted.

Through acting and thinking like a real gentleman, nobody will underestimate him.

Biddy supports Pip to change his life entirely, although she is not the reason of Pip's commitment. She cannot force Pip to choose him, remembering their close relationship. Pip's heart has been directed to Estella since they met in the Satis House. *"Biddy rose from the bank, and said, with a fresh and pleasant change of voice, 'Shall we walk a little further, or go home?' 'Biddy,' I cried, getting up, putting my arm round her neck, and giving her a kiss, 'I shall always tell you everything.' 'Till you're a gentleman,' said Biddy."* (117) it means that Pip needs someone to love or a goal to achieve, so that he can be encouraged to change and try to live a better.

Pip's desire to be a real man is not just a dream. It is able to happen. it is more possible when the presence of Mr. Jaggers brings him hope. He promises Pip a good future as a real gentleman. by accepting the consequence that he should leave his family, Joe Gargery the Blacksmith and also Biddy. It is the heaviest thing to do. Mr Jaggers gives Joe an offer to let Pip leaves him and enjoys a better life in London. It requires Pip to sacrifice his togetherness with family.

*" I am instructed to communicate to him," said Mr. Jaggers, throwing his finger at me sideways, 'that he will come into a handsome property. Further, that it is the desire of the present possessor of that property, that he be immediately removed from his present sphere of life and from this place, and be brought up as a gentleman - in a world, as a young fellow of great expectations.' My dream*

*was out ; my wild fancy was surpassed by sober reality; Miss Havisham was going to make my fortune on a grand scale."* (123)

Pip wants to take the offer given by Mr. Jaggers, because of his seriousness to be in that level, and he will be able to prove that he deserves Estella's love and acceptance.

Pip trusts the man fully about the offer, he is donated by an unknown benefactor and Pip thinks that he benefactor is Miss Havisham. It is still kept on being untold till Pip grows older as real gentleman, as he wishes, *'I should think not! Now you are understand, secondly, Mr. Pip, that the name of the person who is your liberal benefactor remains a profound secret, until the person chooses to reveal it.* (124) It signs that Pip consciously accepts the offer, and he has his own readiness to face it.

In order to achieve his purpose, Pip should go to London, as soon as possible. His better life is waiting for him. Being in his old house, around the swamp cannot give him good atmosphere and circumstance as a real gentleman. He must obey the rule and the deal. Without knowing the real person who helps him, he takes the risks. He believes in it, the mysterious and untold benefactor. *'- And (I added), I would gladly try that gentleman. 'Good, you had better try him in his own house. The way shall be prepared for you. and you can see his sin first, who is in London. When will you come to London?' I said (glancing at Joe, who stood looking on, motionless), that I supposed I could come directly.* ( 125)

It is realized that Joe, Pip's brother in law, has been in charge of Pip's daily needs for a long time. Therefore, Mr. Jaggers

gives him compensation because of having paid all Pip's needs as a little boy, his foods and drinks, his clothes and so on. *'But what,' said Mr. Jaggers, swinging his purse, 'what if it was in my instructions to make you a present, as compensation?' 'As compensation what for?' Joe demanded. 'For the loss of his services.'* (126) It is done, so that Joe can allow Pip to leave him. It is not easy for Joe to allow Pip. They have had many beautiful memories as a family, but also as a friend who understands Pip, unlike Pip's cruel sister. The urgent thing to do is leaving the old house as soon as possible. It is very difficult for Joe and Pip for parting one another. *'Well, Mr. Pip, I think the sooner you leave here - as you are to be a gentleman - the better.'* (127) Both Pip and Joe believe in their meeting in the future.

When Pip arrives in London, he eventually enjoys the facility given to him to act like a real gentleman. It allows him to have a style like a man in London. It is quite different with his previous life. He becomes more confident and it makes him sure that Estella will consider his change, hoping someday that Estella will sincerely love him, with the new condition of Pip.

*" I selected the materials for a suit, with the assistance of Mr. Trabb's judgement, and re-entered the parlour to be measured. For, although Mr. Trabb had my measure already, and had previously been quite contented with it, he said apologetically that it 'wouldn't do under existing circumstances, sir - wouldn't do at all.' So, Mr. Trabb measured and calculated me, in the parlour, as if I were an estate and he the finest species of surveyor, and gave himself such a world of trouble that I felt that no suit of clothes*

*could possibly remunerate him pains. .... ' I know, sir, that London gentlemen cannot be expected to patronize local work, as a rule ; but if you would give me a turn now and then in the quality of a townsman, I should greatly esteem it. Good morning, sir, much obliged. - Door!'* (134-135)

Pip tries to behave like a London gentleman and it requires him to forget his habit as a villager. He becomes a prestigious young man and his behavior must reflect it. In London, all his needs are paid, he does not need to work and he is given much money to fulfill his needs.

*" I want to know what you make it.' 'Twenty pounds, of course.' 'Wemmick!' said Mr. Jaggers, opening his office door . 'Take Mr. Pip's written order, and pay him twenty pounds.' 'Never mind what I make it, my friend,' observed Mr. Jaggers, with a knowing and contradictory toss of his head."* (127)

The life in London changes his life entirely. The logical consequence is the change in speaking, the change in table manner and the change in social relationship. It makes him more cultured, more prestigious and more conventional.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

##### Conclusion

After conducting the result about the character of Pip struggles to achieve a better life , The writer it can be concluded that Pip has characters that he never give up to achieve a better life and happiness. There are some efforts of struggles that the

character of Pip invest in the novel *Great Expectations* to live her life.

The first Struggle to become a gentleman. Pip come from poor families which has a very bad economic conditions. An increasingly difficult economic situation, forced Pip to work hard with his brother-in-law as a blacksmith when his parents were dead.

The second Struggle for love. Since the first time he met Estella, Pip has been in love, and she has begun to feel embarrassed by her social status. To get Estella, Pip wants to change her life. He wanted to be a rich and respectable person so that he could be equal to Estella and be able to get her love.

The third Struggle to be an educated person. Pip who comes from a poor family. To improve his understanding of education, Pip is assisted by Biddy. By studying Biddy. He feels a favorable change in his understanding of the world and all the phenomena in it. He saw Biddy as a teacher who taught him many things he will never forget.

The result shows the struggle of Pip for a better life. Pip always work hard to be a gentleman so that his life can be better and he never gives up on getting Estella, the woman he loves. And in the end the efforts that Pip can do, Pip can get what he dreams of becoming a respectable man and getting Estella's love a woman he loves so much. And finally the life in London changes his life entirely. He get an educated Life, change in speaking, the change in table manner and the change in social relationship. It makes him more cultured, more prestigious and more conventional

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