An Analysis of Moral Message in Movie “LUCA” Using Semiotic Approach by Roland Barthes

Lalu Taufik Hasby Ash Shiddiq¹, Zainudin Abdussama², Titik Ceriyani Miswaty³

¹Universitas Bumigora, Mataram, Indonesia
lalutaufik07@gmail.com

²Universitas Bumigora, Mataram, Indonesia
zainuddin@universitasbumigora.ac.id

³Universitas Bumigora, Mataram, Indonesia
titikceriyani@universitasbumigora.ac.id

Received: 2nd October 2023 | Revised: 17th November 2023 | Accepted: 9th December 2023
Email Correspondence: lalutaufik07@gmail.com

Abstract
This research explores the moral messages embedded in the animated movie "Luca" by Disney Pixar through a semiotic lens. Literary works, including films, serve as a medium to convey messages that entertain and impart moral values. In a world where reading rates are low, movies become a popular means of storytelling. The study draws on Roland Barthes' semiotic science to analyse signs and symbols within the movie, emphasizing the moral messages they convey. The chosen movie, "Luca," not only garnered critical acclaim and awards but also offers an entertaining narrative with positive messages about coexistence between different beings. The research methodology involves qualitative analysis, specifically descriptive qualitative methods, focusing on scenes and conversations to unveil moral messages. Thomas Lickona's moral education theory complements the analysis, emphasizing the importance of knowing, desiring, and doing good. The findings reveal seven types of moral messages: honesty, a helping attitude, kindness and caring, courage and self-confidence, self-control, teamwork, and hard work. The study contributes to understanding how animated movies, such as "Luca," convey essential moral values. While prior research has explored moral values in movies, this study uniquely integrates semiotics, enriching the understanding of the visual and symbolic elements conveying moral messages. The identified moral messages provide valuable insights for individuals seeking positive behavior models in their daily lives. Future research could expand the dataset and explore additional films to validate and extend these findings.

Keywords: Luca, Message, Moral, Movie, Semiotic

1. INTRODUCTION

Literary works is a medium that provides a place for them to communicate a message through entertainment that has a moral message. Literary works are not only used as a means of entertainment but also to provide a valuable moral message for human life and can be applied in everyday life. Literary works itself consists of various types, in accordance to a book with title Apa itu Sastra? (What is...
literature?) which was written by (Ahyar, 2019), It is said that in general literary works can be divided into three types of genres of literary forms including poetry, prose, and drama, where these genres can be further divided into several sub-genres.

Movie is referred as a drama because of the function of the movie itself which is aims to display a story in audio and visual form that is can be enjoyed in the format of digital, the movie itself is an innovation of the developing world of literary works in conveying something. In a movie someone can see how a story is visualized directly with a combination of various elements in the movie covering shooting techniques, editing and visual effects, character acting and colorization in the movie, that is one of the reasons why many people are more interested in watching than reading. As reported on website Riau.go.id it is said that UNESCO recorded that the rate of reading among Indonesians is at the second from lowest and the website also mentioned that the level of interest in reading among Indonesians is only 0.001%, which means that if this is converted into 1,000 people in Indonesia, only about one person out of 1,000 people loves to read books, furthermore there was one conversation with one of the informants where he mentioned that "people nowadays prefer to look, see, and watch at the things rather than reading" (Dinas Komunikasi Informatika dan Statistik Provinsi Riau, 2022).

In general, every movie created has a message and sign that the creator wants to convey either directly or indirectly. For this reason, the creator usually uses a signs or symbols that is shown through a scene or a word spoken by a character. A science that studies about a sign and also has a close relationship with these signs is also commonly called Semiotic science. Based on the theory put forward by Roland Barthes in the journal article written by Isfandiyary et al. (2017) Roland said that Semiotics is a science or method that studies, examines, and understands a system of meaning in various media as the object of research such as images, movements, sounds, posters, poems, movies and other literary works.

One of the things or contents that can be learned from a sign contained in a movie is a moral message about positive things. Quoting from the opinion of Soyomukti (in Akbar et al. 2021) states that morals are a lesson or also called the right advice that explains how humans should live properly and behave properly. In the theory of (Lickona, 2009), he said moral education is not newly known by the community, where in the world of education according to Thomas Lickona there are only two objectives, which consist of forming a person to become intelligent as well as changing their personality into a better person. Thomas Lickona (In Dalmeri, 2014) also state that there are 3 important aspects that must be known in the scope of positive moral messages these are knowing the good, desiring the good, and doing the good.
Luca animated movie was released by Disney also received many nominations and movie awards, cited from the IMDB (Internet Movie Database, 2021) website, Luca won 2 movie awards in 2021, namely the award at Capri, Hollywood as the best animated movie 2021 and also the award for the people's choice movie in the United States as a family movie 2021. Luca itself is chosen as the object of this research in addition to its interesting story, but on the other reasons is the researcher is sure and believes that in this movie there are many messages that conveyed through a signs and also positive things that can be learned and used as lessons to become a good person in a society in everyday life. 

Besides the various achievements that Luca's movie has achieved, this movie is interesting to discuss because it has an entertaining story as well as positive things and messages about how the differences between the lives of sea monsters and humans that can coexist with each other. Following that, the researcher is interested to analysing the type moral messages that are contained in Luca animation movie that are found through a sign in the scene and the conversations. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to finding out about the type of moral messages that conveyed through a sign in the Luca animated movie, so it is hoped this research can provide new information and insight to readers orther researchers about the moral values contained in a movie Luca with the theory of semiotic Roland Barthes.

However, there are several research or study that is also studied about the same topic. For instance, in the Thesis by (Fitriyani, 2022) entitled An Analysis of Moral Values in “The Professor and The Madman” Movie, which in this thesis to analysing the data researcher chose to use qualitative descriptive research methods with moral value theory proposed by Thomas Lickona, however, there is no discussion of signs or semiotics science in the thesis. Other study also founded in thesis by (Nurindahsari, 2019) with title Analisis Semiotika Makna Motivasi Pada Lirik Lagu “Zona Nyaman” Karya FOURTWNTY where the focus of this thesis is on discussing how the motivational messages in the song “Zona Nyaman” by FOURTWNTY, where the lyrics of the song use a lot of metaphorical words, there are some differences where in her thesis the researcher uses semiotic analysis of signs that rely on Ferdinand de Saussure's theory as well as the selection of objects as data to be studied, in other words, the researcher chooses songs as objects in her thesis.

In the end, Ayu Kushiella Apriliana (Apriliana, 2022) in her journal entitle An Analysis of Moral Value in “Imperfect” Movie, where the main discussion is to find some moral messages as well as explain what moral messages are contained in the movie Imperfect directed by Ernest Prakasa. However, in this current study, the researcher would be discussing on the moral message that is studied with semiotic approach by Roland Barthes. Semiotics, as developed by Roland Barthes, focuses on the study of signs and symbols in communication, aiming to uncover deeper meanings and messages. Applying this
approach to the analysis of moral messages in a movie adds an innovative dimension to the study of film. It suggests an exploration of how visual and narrative elements in "LUCA" serve as signs and symbols to convey moral concepts, providing a nuanced understanding of the movie's ethical underpinnings. Furthermore, the choice of "LUCA" as the subject of analysis adds another layer of novelty. By selecting a specific movie, the research narrows its focus and allows for a more in-depth examination of the moral messages within that particular cinematic work. This specificity contributes to the originality of the study and allows for a detailed exploration of how semiotic elements are employed to convey moral themes in this specific context. In summary, the novelty of this research lies in its combination of a specific theoretical framework (Barthes' semiotic approach) with a focused analysis of moral messages in the movie "LUCA," offering a fresh perspective on the study of ethics in film.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

In this study, the researcher chose to use qualitative research method with type of descriptive qualitative method. As in the theory mentioned by Bogdan & Taylor in the book *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif* by (Abdussamad, 2021), Bogdan and Taylor said qualitative type research is a way to examine the results in the form of data that is descriptive in the form of words either in writing or verbally sourced from a person or an activity. Due to the fact in this study, the researcher is more focused on examining the type of Moral Message that were found through a signs in *Luca* animated movie, combined with 2 specific theory in order to analysing the moral message researcher rely on theory Thomas Lickona with the analysing of semiotic sign by relying one of the expert in field of semiotics Roland Barthes. Therefore, the scope of this study is more focusing on the topic of discussion on moral messages contained in certain scenes and conversations which are found through the signs that exist in the scenes and conversations in the movie *Luca*.

The main source of data obtained in this research comes from the movie itself, which is the animated movie *Luca* by Disney Pictures Pixar in 2021, and sample data taken from the scenes and conversations between characters in the movie *Luca* with the method to collecting the data the researcher relying on statement by Zed which is cited at journal written by (Kumala S, 2021) where he states that are 4 things to collect information consist of providing a writing tools to write important things needed as research material, collect materials such as scenes, conversations, journals, theses or articles as used for research purposes, planning a regular schedule to work on research in order the making of research can be done with consistency and maximum and last understand and record things that are needed for research purposes.
In the last to analysing the data that have been obtained, in this study the researcher used the data analysis techniques according to Miles & Huberman in book *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif & Kuantitatif* by (Hardani et al., 2020) they are described that there are several processes that must be carried out by researcher in analysing with descriptive qualitative research method with library research data collection techniques. These processes are separated into 3 parts, consisting of reducing the data it means the researcher need to manage the data that has been obtained where the data aims to be able to add information and answer the problems that exist in the study, presenting the data means that the researcher will describing the data that has been obtained in this case the scenes as well as conversations that contain moral message which found through a sign by relying on theory Thomas Lickona and Roland Barthes, and lastly make a conclusion or verification where it means the researcher needs to drew a conclusion based from what has been researched, conclusions in qualitative research are generally in the form of an explanation of what is being studied.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After conducting an analysis and observing each scene as well as conversations that occur between characters in the *Luca* animated movie, The researcher finally realized and found in total there are 7 Data contained in *Luca* animated movie that are related to the types of moral messages that consist of many positive things, which all of the type of moral message are founded through a sign. These are some of the data gathered by the researcher after conducting the analysis:

3.1 The Moral Message of Honesty

Conversation between Luca & his mom (in Minutes 6:29-6:39).

Luca’s Mom : You’re two minutes late. Was there a Boat? Did you hide?

Luca : Yes, Mom.

Luca’s Mom : Because if they catch even a glimpse of you, you think they come around to meet new friends, huh?

Luca : No, I don’t, No.

The conversation that took place in the early minutes told how Luca had just returned from herding his fish and when he got home, he met his mother then when he just arrived his mother realized that he was late getting home and asked Luca and Luca answered honestly that he was late getting home because on the way he saw a boat that could be catch him therefore he must hide for a while. After the researcher analyzed and tried to understand every word in the conversation, the researcher found a deeper meaning which was indicated by Luca's words when he answered the question from his mother, Luca personally
answered the question asked by his mother according to what actually happened, from the word “Yes, mom.” that Luca said to his mother. The researcher can determine that Luca's words show an honest words and behavior based on what he has done before. Therefore, the researcher is convinced and believes that how Luca answers his mother's question is in accordance with what has happened before and the attitude shown in the conversation is how as an individual to keep on being honest in the words as well as deeds which this moral message is shown through Luca's answer to his mother.

### 3.2 The Moral Message of Helping Attitude


![Image of Alberto and Luca helping Giulia](https://journal.universitasbumigora.ac.id/index.php/humanitatis/

Figure 1. Alberto and Luca help Giulia's Cart

In the scene that occurs in those minutes, as seen in figure 1 which is shown how Luca and Alberto help Giulia’s Cart, it is clearly shown how the attitude to help each other to someone who is in trouble is seen how Giulia's cart tires are stuck and Alberto sees this inviting Luca to help him push the cart. The next data which is also related to the moral message of helping is found in a scene in minute 35, where the scene tells about Luca and Alberto wants to team up with Giulia who at that time was preparing herself for the competition that will be staged in the village of Portorosso, because Luca and Alberto knew the reward money from the competition could be used to buy the Vespa they’ve been dreaming of. After that, the scene shows when Giulia doesn't want to join and she wants to leave with her cart bike but the tire got stuck, Alberto noticed what happened to Giulia and asked Luca to help him pull Giulia's cart so that the tires wouldn't get stuck. After the researcher examines and tries to understand what happened in the scene, the researcher realizes that there is a broader meaning that occurs in the scene. Where in this scene the researcher found one of the moral messages that were contained in it, which this scene referred the moral message to help each other, where this helping attitude is **shown through a sign from Alberto's attitude when he invites Luca to help him pull Giulia's cart that gets stuck in the pothole**. Alberto's actions immediately indicated that he was willing and able to help Giulia who was in trouble with her stuck cart.

### 3.1 The Moral Message of Kindness & Caring

Conversation between Luca & his mom (in minutes 6:40-6:43).
Luca’s Mom : They’re here to do murders.
Luca : Uh-huh.
Luca’s Mom : So, I’m just making you sure, you know.
Luca : Thanks Mom.

The first data that contains one type of positive moral message of kindness and caring is shown in the conversation that occurs in data 1 which happens in the early minutes when Luca has just arrived home after herding his fish. In this minute, there is a conversation between Luca's mother and Luca who is late getting home because he needs to hide from a passing boat that could be dangerous for Luca and that is the reason why he is late getting home. After the researcher has observed and tried to understand every word that occurs in the conversation, the researcher finds that there is a deeper meaning that Luca's mother tries to convey to Luca when he is late arriving home. researcher noticed one of the moral messages of caring shown through Luca's mother words to Luca, this is signified in the sentence “So, I’m just making you sure, you know.” which was spoken by Luca's mother, it can be seen directly that the sentence refers to one type of moral message of caring, this can clearly be seen how she is worried and also does not want something happens to Luca and Luca’s mother tries to make sure that there is nothing happen to Luca by saying that to Luca.

3.2 The Moral Message of Courage & Self-confidence


Luca : Holy crap, no I can’t.
Ercole : I know, I know. Haha, and remember piccoletto!...
Giulia : Forza, Luca. Don’t let him get in your head. You can do this!
Luca : Okay. Silenzio Bruno! Here we go.

In this next data, there is a conversation where it occurs between Luca, Ercole and Giulia where at that moment it is told how Luca is practicing cycling and tries to pass a steep way down and Luca is not sure of himself to try to pass that steep way down but at the same time Ercole who is also practicing, he passed Luca and told Luca that Luca would never be able to try it then Giulia who was at the time accompanying Luca in training tried to encourage Luca and after that Luca ventured to try to get down that steep way down with his bike. After the researcher understands and tries to understand every utterance in the conversation, the researcher finds another meaning that is trying to be conveyed through a sign that Luca says when he will try to go down from the ramp. This sign is founded in the sentence when Luca said “Okay. Silenzio Bruno! Here we go.” In this sentence, the researcher believes that there is one
moral message that refers to the attitude of courage, it is clearly seen in the sentence how Luca tries to fight his fear and dare himself to go down the slope.

### 3.3 The Moral Message of Self-control

Conversation between Ercole & Giulia (in minutes 47:11-47:25).

| Ercole | Oh, no. I don’t believe it. Spewlia, you teamed up With these vagrants? |
| Giulia | **Ignore him.** |
| Ercole | Oh, I wish for you that you could. I’m afraid your Friends still need to pay the out-of-town weirdo tax. |

* (Elberto Friend take a money from Giulia).

In this first data, there is a conversation that occurs between Ercole and Giulia, which the researcher believes that it contains one type of the moral messages to self-control from revenge. Previously at that time it was told that Ercole was teasing Giulia because she was in the same group with Luca and Alberto, but Giulia who was teased by Ercole simply ignored him and preferred not to respond to what Ercole did to her. After the researcher sees and understands every word in this conversation, the researcher finds a moral message of self-control which is signified through Giulia's words when she is being teased by Ercole. This moral message is signified by Giulia's words in the sentence “**Ignore him.**” In this sentence, the researcher believes that it contains one type of moral message of self-control because it can be clearly seen from how Giulia's response when she was teased by Ercole she stayed calm and preferred not to revenge what Ercole did.

| Ercole | Oh, I wish for you that you could. I’m afraid your Friends still need to pay the out-of-town weirdo tax. |

* (Elberto Friend take a money from Giulia).

In this first data, there is a conversation that occurs between Ercole and Giulia, which the researcher believes that it contains one type of the moral messages to self-control from revenge. Previously at that time it was told that Ercole was teasing Giulia because she was in the same group with Luca and Alberto, but Giulia who was teased by Ercole simply ignored him and preferred not to respond to what Ercole did to her. After the researcher sees and understands every word in this conversation, the researcher finds a moral message of self-control which is signified through Giulia's words when she is being teased by Ercole. This moral message is signified by Giulia's words in the sentence “**Ignore him.**” In this sentence, the researcher believes that it contains one type of moral message of self-control because
it can be clearly seen from how Giulia's response when she was teased by Ercole she stayed calm and preferred not to revenge what Ercole did.

Ercole : Oh, I wish for you that you could. I’m afraid your Friends still need to pay the out-of-town weirdo tax.

(Elberto Friend take a money from Giulia).

In this first data, there is a conversation that occurs between Ercole and Giulia, which the researcher believes that it contains one type of the moral messages to self-control from revenge. Previously at that time it was told that Ercole was teasing Giulia because she was in the same group with Luca and Alberto, but Giulia who was teased by Ercole simply ignored him and preferred not to respond to what Ercole did to her. After the researcher sees and understands every word in this conversation, the researcher finds a moral message of self-control which is signified through Giulia's words when she is being teased by Ercole. This moral message is signified by Giulia's words in the sentence “Ignore him.” In this sentence, the researcher believes that it contains one type of moral message of self-control because it can be clearly seen from how Giulia's response when she was teased by Ercole she stayed calm and preferred not to revenge what Ercole did.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, we can discover that the researchers found several types of positive moral messages that are very useful for our daily life and it is important for an individual to be implement this behaviour of moral message in our daily life. Finally, the researchers found seven types of moral messages which are honesty, a helping attitude, kindness and caring, courage and self-confidence, self-control, teamwork, and hard work after doing some observations and analysing each conversation as well as certain scenes in the movie, the moral messages that were found consisted of moral behaviour to be being honest in words and also actions, moral behaviour to help and support each other, moral behaviour to be being kind and care to each other’s, moral behaviour of courageous and confident in ourself, moral behaviour of control ourself from such a negative things, moral behaviour of work together, and lastly moral behaviour of work hard in achieving something.
REFERENCES


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>DOI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mudjiono, Y.</td>
<td>Kajian Semiotika Dalam Film. Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi, 1(1).</td>
<td><a href="https://jurnalfdk.unsby.ac.id">https://jurnalfdk.unsby.ac.id</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachmat Djoko Pradopo.</td>
<td>Semiotika Teori, Metode, dan Penerapannya.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>