KOMUNIKA
Jurnal Dakwah dan Komunikasi

The Values of Character Education in an Animated Movie,"Pororo, The Little Penguin"

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Abstract

Building character values is highly fundamental for the growth of children. Media is one of the digital platforms for teaching children those values, particularly social roles, beliefs, and other values in society. Through media, children can access any information that attracts their interests. An animated movie is one of the media products most children like. In this study, the author aims to analyze the animated movie, "Pororo, The Little Penguin," which could be used as a teaching technique to teach preschool students about the importance of character values. The author used the qualitative method and applied Mise en Scene theory from Manon de Reeper and Decoding-Encoding approach from Stuart Hall. The study's object was taken from the YouTube channel of Pororo, The Little Penguin, Season 6, Episode 13, titled "We're Sorry, Loopy." The dataset was also derived from the comments on Common Sense Media to find out how the parents or kids react to this animated film, Pororo. Asides from it, the author also took the sources from the literary works and proceedings to support the analysis. The result indicates that the film's episode contains social and educational principles that should be ingrained in students at a young age.

Keywords: education values; decoding-encoding; Mise en scene; social; animated movie.

Introduction

Children's media consumption has increased as a result of technological development and the growth of the media industry, Marsh (2014) said in (Cvetkovic, V.B. & Olson, 2014). They are increased due to technological development and the growth of the media industry (Cvetkovic, V.B. & Olson, 2014). The media is also essential in children's socialization in acquiring social roles, values, and ideals since it is believed that young children are sensitive to external stimuli and tend to easily identify with others by internalizing attitudes, judgments, and messages from television (Collins, 1975).

The cartoon is part of the media industry, which children like. Zurcher, Webb, and Robinson (2018) and Bazzini et al. (2010) stated that cartoons portray children's culture. It is because children are immersed in cartoon art regularly. Animated cartoons also impact children's values, attitudes, beliefs, and behavior (Lacroix, 2004; Giroux, 1999). In closer observation, the author views media, especially animated cartoons, could contribute to students' characters. The author views that one of the animated cartoons that are good for kids, especially preschool students, is Pororo, The Little Penguin (Cvetkovic, V.B. & Olson, 2014).

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Pororo, The Little Penguin (hereafter Pororo) was created and aired by the Korean educational television network Educational Broadcasting System (EBS). Pororo has been exported to more than 140 countries, enjoys over 200 million monthly views on YouTube, and has been nominated for several international animation awards, including the International Emmy Kids Award for Preschool, Anima Mundi-Brazil, and Kids Screen Awards (Veale, 2008). Pororo is an edutainment program that encourages positive learning and uplifting fun. This instructional television program began airing in 2003; its sixth season aired from 2016 to 2017, with interruptions between seasons. Iconix Entertainment, Ocon, EBS, and SK Broadband produce Pororo as a cooperative venture. As a 3D computer animation, Pororo primarily targets children between the ages of 3 and 5; unlike most children's shows, which leave the character's age unresolved, Pororo makes it obvious that Pororo is four years old, placing him solidly in his audience's developmental demographic (Lee & Choi, 2018).

With tangerine-colored aviator goggles and a banana-yellow helmet, Pororo is mischievous and curious. Crong is a baby dinosaur with a little body that Pororo discovered buried in the snow. Poby is a large white bear with a friendly face and voice. Eddy is an imaginative fox character who loves to create new things. Loopy is a quiet, kind-hearted beaver that enjoys cooking for her buddies (Lee & Choi, 2018). Petty is a sociable, athletic, and fashionable penguin. Harry is a hummingbird that enjoys singing and consistently makes his buddies laugh. Rody is a powerful robot that aids Eddy. Tutu is an eco-friendly high-performance automobile. Tongtong is a dragon magician who invites his pals to the world of magic. Pipi and Popo are alien friends who are interested in everything on Earth. These characters reside in a village surrounded by a snowy forest (Lee & Choi, 2018). The secret to Pororo's attraction to young children is its brevity, with each episode lasting at least five minutes, its child-friendly characters, and its method of switching the episode's protagonist (Baek, 2015).

Pororo, The Little Penguin, Season 6, Episode 13, titled "We're Sorry, Loopy" tells about Pororo and his friends playing with snowballs. While running, Crong and Pororo unintentionally dropped and trod on a painting that Loopy was working on. Crong and Pororo express their regret. The following day, Pororo and his friends enjoyed playing on the playground. Pororo took the initiative to advance Loppy's swing. Pororo and Crong push Loopy too hard to make him happy, causing him to fall, Loopy a bumpy head character. Loopy is upset and no longer wants to play with Pororo and Crong. Pororo and Crong devised a plan to make amends to Loopy on the way home. At Loopy's residence, Crong suggested that Pororo send flowers to Loopy. After delivering flowers to Loopy's home, Pororo and Crong assisted him in cleaning. They are informed by Loopy that he baked a cake and that his buddies will be there. Loopy left his home to invite his buddies over for dessert. At home, Pororo and Crong are tempted to consume the entire cake. They were perplexed. Then Pororo instructed the Crong to buy time to make the cake again. Crong first invited his buddies to play hide-and-seek with a very long count, which bored his companions. Then, as Crong was getting close to the Loopy house, she suddenly passed out. Pororo finished baking the cake right away. He instantly wiped the dining room

table. Finally, Loppy and her companions entered the house and devoured the cake. The cake could have been more tasty. After apologizing, Pororo and Crong leave Loopy's home and enrage him again (Fitri, 2018).

Previous research has explored Pororo as an educational text that imparts personality education through the conflict resolution and narrative of the major characters (Kong, 2013). According to Jung and Bang's analysis of Pororo, the program emphasizes personality traits, an understanding of others, respect, and cooperation, which were promoted by the "2007 updated preschool education course" and the "national childcare curriculum" (Jung & Bang, 2012, pp. 175–177). Then, Attard and Cremona (2020) conducted research that examined how animated cartoons influence the social reality perceptions of elementary school children. They applied a mixed-methods strategy. 9/10-year-old Maltese primary school children were allowed to engage in activities using cartoon characters. In these activities, children (n = 10) interpreted animated cartoon characters through drawings, writings, and verbal responses during semi-structured interviews and cartoon viewings. The children's vocal expressions and interpretations were analyzed using thematic analysis. Using the MIRROR multimodal framework, educational implications and cross-curricular pedagogical recommendations were developed from the investigation results. These pedagogical ramifications suggest that children can be taught critical thinking abilities by including animated cartoons in various curriculum disciplines. In addition, the results indicate that students must be allowed to express themselves in various ways, as illustrated by the suggested educational strategies.

Primary school teachers can use these pedagogical concepts, parents and guardians, to teach primary school students creativity, expressive abilities, and literacy (Attard & Cremona, 2022). Meanwhile, in this study, the author is interested in analyzing the movie elements of Pororo, The Little Penguin, that contain educational characters. Ultimately, it is expected that the educational characters portrayed in Pororo could be learned by preschool students.

According to Riskiana Widi Astuti, Herman Waluyo, and Muhammad Rohmadi, the significance of character education lies not only in the formal learning process but also in the environment, which influences the creation of attitude and character (Astuti et al., 2019). Their argument is also supported by Mansur (2011), who thinks education is the formation and development of a moral character (Mansur, 2011). In the meantime, Munir (2010) revealed that the nature of the interaction between a person's thought patterns, attitudes, and behaviors is innate and becomes a distinguishing trait (Munir, 2010). Character education is an issue of ethical concern and moral sensitivity (Noddings, 2002). In contrast to prior ideas, (Koellhoffer, 2009) suggested that teaching character is learning to analyze and instill good things and is a chance for young people to demonstrate honesty and fairness in the real world. Moreover, (Tridhonanto, 2014) described character education as a systematic attempt to help students or youngsters grasp the values of human behavior toward God, the environment, and society.

To support the analysis, the author applied the theory of Mise en Scene from Manon de Reeper and Decoding-Encoding from Stuart Hall. Mise en scène refers to the

director's conceptualization of the scene and the film. The author influences the audience's comprehension by selecting what is displayed inside the screen's constraints (Reeper, 2016). Mise en scène can convey meaning almost as well as conversation and narrative. It is crucial to the analysis of media and film studies because it describes how to identify significant visual codes and how some may have used them to construct meaning (The Media Insider., 2020).

Furthermore, Reeper (2016) underlined that it facilitates scene analysis and interpretation. The viewpoints of Gail Lathrop and David O. Sutton are also considered. Mise-en-scene, a French term that translates to "place on stage," refers to all the visual elements of a theatrical production that exist inside the confines of the stage. Filmmakers have hijacked the word and enlarged its meaning to refer to the director's control over the film's visual elements (Reeper, 2016).

The following theory is Decoding-Encoding from Stuart Hall. Encoding refers to the process by which the disseminator of information transforms the message, meaning, intention, or perspective transmitted in spoken or non-verbal form into a symbolic code or information form that is easy to grasp and translate. Like any other communication or language, the encoding process is structured by codes functioning within a discourse's semantic chain (Hall, 1973) (Zhao, 2014). Decoding refers to the recipient's interpreting the code and recreating the ideology imparted. The complexity of the communication process and the diversity of society were mirrored in the decoders' decoding or interpretation operations. Some codes, such as easily recognizable photographs of something or someone, conveyed potential connotations

based on established social conventions (Murdock, 2017). Encoding is a component of mass communication, and its anticipated impacts on social behavior depend on the receiver's decoding efforts. Hall's theory suggests that the receiver is active in media and cultural studies (Alasuutari, 1999). In media communication, the audience can be viewed as both the recipient of the television's (or other mediums) message and the information source (Hall, 1973). The reception of media information is a step in the information's manufacturing process, which is its origin (Wang, 2017). Through decoding, the message entered the structure of social practice, providing a particular meaning and impact. The collection of decoded meanings or speech is a succession of complex perceptual, cognitive, emotional, ideological, or behavioral outcomes (Hall, 1980: 130; Alasuutari, 1999: 3; Zhao, 2014: 14; Wu, 2016: 16) in (Xie, 2021). In order to generate "an encoded message in the form of meaningful discourse," media encoders must have a sufficient grasp of the target information, especially the decoded information from the audience's response (Hall, 1973).

Stuart Hall stated that a message's encoded and decoded meanings can differ; encoding and decoding are not always symmetrical. There are three hypothetical positions when a decoding process occurs in communication. The first is the dominant-hegemonic position. This ideal position occurs when individuals interpret connoted messages, where each act following their feelings, and that code dominates other codes. The second is negotiated position. This position is held by those who have accepted the dominant ideology and, with a few exceptions, act following it. Third, resistance

position. It occurs when a person receives and comprehends a message but encodes it oppositely. This position will exist only when individuals capable of critical thought reject all forms of communicated messages and choose to interpret them on their own (Savitri, 2020).

Method

This study focused on the character education values in the animated film Pororo, The Little Penguin. The author used Manon de Reeper's Mise En Scene method and Stuart Hall's Decoding-Encoding theory to analyze it. By selecting the applicable episode from Pororo, The Little Penguin, the authors employed a qualitative method to aid in their investigation. The author obtained the data from Season 6, Episode 13 of the Pororo YouTube channel, titled "We're Sorry, Loopy." Thus, the author of this paper went through various steps. The author began by selecting relevant Pororo, The Little Penguin scenes. The author then utilized the film technique Mise En Scene to analyze the scenes. The author then provided several comments from Common Media Sense to see how parents or children react to this animated movie. After that, the author analyzed the comments by applying Stuart Hall's Decoding-Encoding theory to discover different meanings. The author concluded the complete observation.

Result and Discussion

The author divided the observation into several sections to analyze the values of character education that could be learned and applied by students. The first analysis is taken from the scene at minute 1:04 (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Crong unintentionally stepped on Loopy's painting
Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_YlQV58MHR0

In Figure 1, the camera shot focused on Crong's feet that stepped on Loopy's painting. The scene also shows there is a possibility that Crong did not notice he stepped on Loopy's painting. He walked without looking at something in the snow. In this scene, Crong acts following what he feels. He thought that everything was running well without any problems. He acted like nothing wrong happened. From its encoding aspect, this scene attempts to teach the students to be more careful in doing something and not being careless.

For further observation, the author provided the comment in Common Sense Media TV Review (Media, n.d.)**Comment by WillMystery**

A lot of the characters are cute and likable. The titular protagonist, Pororo is a mischievous, playful, and curious little penguin. Crong is also a mischievous yet cute little spinosaurus. Eddy is an intelligent and inventive genius. Loopy is a shy and sensitive beaver who is an amazing cook. Poby is a good-natured, warm-hearted, and trustworthy polar bear. Petty is a tomboyish penguin who is great at sports. Harry is quite temperamental, yet likes to sing a lot. Other characters like Tong-tong, Popo, Pipi, and Tu-tu are good side characters. Most of the episode's plots are quite entertaining. Nice and colorful CGI animation, which got better as the

show went on. Cute character designs. It has good morals and messages, such as being good friends, being honest, it is okay to be slow, believing in yourself, etcetera. The catchy theme song underlined this message, especially "Hello Friends" (later "Hello Everyone") in Season 3 and onward. Decent voice acting, in both Korean and English, usually. Good soundtrack. The humor can be quite clever. I am one of the biggest fans because I watched it in my childhood, as well as an admin in the FANDOM wiki. I love the show, except that it has some poop jokes, Harry and Loopy can be unlikable sometimes, and it has two bad episodes, "Grumpy Pororo" and "Transforming Troubles". I would mark that as made for children.

From the audience's perspective, the author views the audience as in a hegemonic position. The audience views that this animated movie not only provides entertaining and good characters but also teaches the audience how to behave well. As a result, this film is one of the recommended ones that could teach kids especially preschool students, how to communicate and interact with others.

Comment by MMC Rater

Pororo, The Little Penguin, is a very entertaining show for pre-schoolers and maybe even for older kids Lots of good role models and LOTS of positive messages. In each episode, Pororo and his friends learn a new positive lesson. Pre-schoolers will love this show. I recommend it.

In this comment, the author interprets the audience's comment as in a hegemonic-dominant position. MMC Rater places himself as the one who got an impact from this movie. He describes that this movie provides various good models and positive messages which could affect preschool students to behave well like the characters shown in the film.

The following analysis can be seen in Figure 2, minutes 1:12.

Figure 2. Petty was mad at Pororo and Crong
Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_YlQV58MHR0

In this scene, we can see Petty and Loopy's facial expressions. The camera shot shows that Petty looks mad at Pororo and Crong. She stared at them and asked, "What did you guys do in Loopy's painting?" Meanwhile, Loopy looked sad, and she did not say anything. From this scene, the author views that this scene encodes the messages between anger and friendship. Petty shows her resistance position. She did not like something bad happened to her best friend. She did not want her best friend, Loopy sad. Thus, she got mad at Pororo and Crong. The author views that friendship must be maintained well. A good relationship does not hurt each other. Hence, the issue that the scene attempts to show is friendship.

In a closer context, friendships are special kinds of relationships for various reasons (Hays, 1988). Friendships are essential since they are self-selected. Friendships are formed to develop ties, whereas familial bonds occur without the people's agreement. Mutual support is another critical factor. Friends help each other out without giving the necessary reciprocation any thought. Finally, Hays suggests that friendships are based on a shared socio-emotional tie. Friends can then stop acting a certain way around each other (Patterson et al., 1993).

The next observation is taken from the scene at minute 1:37 (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Pororo and Crong felt guilty

Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_YlQV58MHR0

In this scene, the camera shot focused on Pororo and his friends, Crong, Loopy, Hary, Pobby, Petty, Eddy, and Roddy. The angle showed that Pororo and Crong felt guilty. They tried fixing Loopy's painting, but it was getting worse. They bravely apologize to Loopy in front of their friends. From this scene, the author views that this scene encodes the messages between apology and true friendship. This scene shows that Pororo and Crong tried to fix the problem they made by fixing the painting, but the result was unsatisfying. They felt sorry about their mistake and did not want to ruin their friendship.

In a closer observation, Eileen Kennedy-Moore and Christine McLaughlin (2017) argued that childhood friendships are complex. Moore and McLaughlin believe that half of first-grade best friendships do not last the entire school year. Even among late-elementary and middle-school students, one-fourth of their strongest friendships dissolve between September and June. It is a significant number of breakups. They think almost every kids or teenagers experience social difficulties at some point. They also stated disagreeing with a friend, being mocked, or attempting to make friends in a new classroom. Although these are common issues, they can be uncomfortable for both genders (Eileen Kennedy-Moore, 2017). They emphasize that friendship skills are never limited to a single action. They believe that kids must be adaptable and able to adapt their behavior to the circumstances. They must be able to reach out to create friends, but they must also be able to step back when they do something offensive to respect a friend's feelings. Moore and McLaughlin also added that it is fantastic when children can blend in and enjoy the camaraderie of a group. They also think that because no one is flawless, children must be able to let go to overcome obstacles and open their hearts to forgiveness (Eileen Kennedy-Moore, 2017). The author believes the scene attempts to show a sense of forgiveness among friends.

The following analysis can be seen in the scene at minute 1:41 (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Loopy forgave Crong and Pororo's fault

Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_YlQV58MHR0

In Figure 4, the camera focuses on Loopy's facial expression. Loopy smiled after her friends Pororo, and Crong apologized for their mistake. Loopy answered, "It is okay. It was just an accident." In this scene, the author views Loopy as sad because her painting was ruined. However, she did not want to take any longer to be sad as her friends, Pororo and Crong, had said sorry. Then, Loopy forgave

them and forgot what happened. Her smile showed that she was okay and wanted a good friendship. Thus, she did not mind her friends' mistakes.

In a closer observation, the author views that this scene teaches the students or kids the value of true friendship, where everyone has to forgive each other. According to Michael E. McCullough (2001) and McCullough, Rachal, and Hight (1998), despite the harm caused, forgiveness can be defined as a prosocial shift in attitude toward the offender (McCullough, 2001) (McCullough et al., 1998). Forgiveness is essential for sustaining interpersonal connections (Fincham, 2000). A forgiving response is often associated with relationship happiness and stability. Furthermore, forgiving has been associated with better psychological and physical health (Karremans, J. C., Van Lange, P. A. M., Ouwerkerk, J. W. & Kluwer, 2003) (VanOyen Witvliet et al., 2001). The author believes Loopy, Pororo, and Crong have shown good character. Even though Loopy is sensitive and somewhat princess-like, she negotiates herself to be a character that forgives her friends' mistakes. She successfully has given a good role of a good friend. Then, Pororo and Crong also have character values. They know they made mistakes and quickly ask for an apology and even try to fix any problems by helping each other. Hence, the author sees that this scene attempts to show the character's values in relationships.

The subsequent investigation is taken on the scene at minute 1:41 (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Pororo and Crong had fun with Loopy
Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_YlQV58MHR0

In this scene, the camera angle focuses on Loopy's happy face taking on the swing. At that time, Pororo and Crong came approached Loopy and offered help. They said, "Loopy, do you want us to push you?" "Really? Thanks so much", answered Loopy. From this scene, we can see that Loopy was okay with Pororo and Crong's mistakes before. It was over, and she forgave them. They played together and had fun.

In this context, the author views that the scene attempts to encode the same aspect: forgiveness's value. Through forgiveness, kids might be able to recover and reestablish the ties that are so essential to their social and emotional growth (Berndt, 2002). In addition, children's psychological and physical health is likely correlated with their capacity to forgive offenses (Van der Wal et al., 2017). The ability to respond with forgiveness may have a favorable effect on children's peer relationships and their overall well-being. Positive associations were found between forgiveness and self-esteem, and negative ones with social anxiety (Flanagan et al., 2012).

The last observation is from the scene minutes 3:43 (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Pororo and Crong cleaned up Loopy's house

Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_YlQV58MHR0

In this scene, the camera shot focuses on Pororo and Crong cleaning up Loopy's house. They still felt sorry about their previous mistake. Thus, they tried to recover it by helping Loopy. As we can see, Loopy looked happy with that. Previously, Loopy said they did not need to clean her house up, but they kept doing it.

Another thing that made Loopy happy was the flowers. Pororo and Crong gave Loopy a bouquet as they knew that Loopy liked flowers. The author views that they were in negotiated position. They forgave each other and continued playing without thinking about what happened before. Helping friends is a good character that the children must learn and apply. As a result, children will care about anything that happens to themselves and their friends.

Conclusion

In conclusion, animated films allow children to discover the importance of educational characters. Pororo, The Little Penguin is one of them. This animated film, episode 13 of season 6, clearly demonstrates that youngsters must preserve positive relationships. Even though someone has made mistakes, we must forgive him. Hence, the character education principles that could be taught through this animated film include the importance of true friendship, the value of forgiving one another, and the importance of helping each other. By watching this animated movie provided by teachers or parents, it is expected that the character values in the movie could be applied by the kids, especially pre-schoolers.

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