

A Comparison of Characterization and Moral Values in Cinderella and Bawang Merah Dan Bawang Putih Fairy Tales: A Comparative Literature Study

Asnita br Sijabat

Indonesian Literature Faculty of Humanities, University of North Sumatra

Received: 15 Juni 2023

Revised: 10 July 2023

Accepted: 21 July 2023

Abstract

In this research, the researcher intends to examine the character and moral values in the fairy tales Cinderella and Bawang Merah Bawang Putih as a comparison. Comparison is intended to find similarities and differences in the two fairy tales. The two fairy tales were chosen because the stories have similarities and differences. The two fairy tales can be compared because they have the same theme, namely injustice. This type of research is qualitative descriptive research. Research Target/Subject This research is library research. The research material is two fairy tale literary works entitled "Cinderella," which is the work of the American writer, Marcia Joan Brown in 1954, and "Bawang Merah Bawang Putih" (Collection of fairy tales: 2011), which is one of the fairy tales from Indonesia. The results of this research found similarities and differences in character and moral values in the fairy tales Cinderella and Bawang Merah Bawang Putih. Similarities and differences in the characters of the two fairy tales. In the Cinderella fairy tale, the main character is Ella, a girl who has a beautiful face and noble character. He was always abused by his stepmother and two stepsisters after his father died. Ella lives her life with patience in facing life's twists and turns, until finally she meets a good prince and becomes his wife. Meanwhile, in the fairy tale Bawang Merah Bawang Putih, the main character is Bawang Putih, who was also tortured by her stepmother and Bawang Merah. Even though he was treated unfairly, Bawang Putih lived his life steadfastly. Finally, she also found a royal prince who chose her as his wife.

Keywords: Fables, Literature comparison.

(*) Corresponding Author: sijabatasnita32@yahoo.com

How to Cite: Sijabat, A. (2023). A Comparison of Characterization and Moral Values in Cinderella and Bawang Merah Dan Bawang Putih Fairy Tales: A Comparative Literature Study. *International Journal of Education, Information Technology, and Others*, 6(3), 443-450. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10076601>

INTRODUCTION

Literary works can be said to be a description or expression of a person's thoughts created for a specific purpose. In a literary work there are two elements that build, namely extrinsic elements and intrinsic elements. The extrinsic elements include the author's background, the author's psychological and social conditions and the intrinsic elements consisting of Theme, Plot, Setting, and Characterization (Nurgiantoro, in Nadhila Shabrina Hendrianti, 2022: 1). Literary works are works that are fictitious (fabricated). A work, although the material (inspiration) is taken from the real world, has been processed by the author through his imagination so that it cannot be expected that the reality of literary works is the same as the reality of the real world. Because, the reality in literary works has been



added "Something" by the author so that the truth in literary works is the truth that is considered ideal by the author (Noor, in Rizqi Fithria Dinarratri 2021: 1).

Fairy tales are one of the right alternatives that can increase children's imagination while fostering children's character. (Dudung, in Ni Putu Candra Prastya Dewi 2021: 70) Fairy tales are an old form of literature that tells stories about extraordinary events that are full of fantasy (fiction) and do not really happen. Stories from fairy tales can be benefited, especially fairy tales that contain moral messages. Therefore, storytellers must be good at choosing fairy tales that are suitable for children's age and contain educational values that are beneficial to children. In addition to containing values that are beneficial to children, storytelling is the best method to make children learn. Children often use learning time arbitrarily. With the storytelling method, children will listen attentively because fairy tales are very interesting for children. Fairy tales tell wonders that contain moral messages and cannot be digested using logic, because they usually have clichéd opening and closing sentences (Danadjaja, in Milasari Fatimah 2017: 1).

Characterization is the quality of the characters' emotional reasoning in a work of fiction which can include not only behavior or character and habits, but also appearance (Minderop, in Yuliana et al 2018). Characterization is the portrayal of characters or story actors through their traits, attitudes, and behavior in the story. The overall nature of the human being highlighted includes feelings, beauty, ways of thinking, ways of acting and so on.

Characterization is also often called a fictional person or animal who experiences events or behaviors in the story. Humans who become characters in fictional stories can develop their characterization both physically and mentally (Rahma Fitriani et al 2019: 1).

Characterization is the portrayal of characters or story actors through their traits, attitudes and behavior in the story. The overall nature of the human being highlighted includes feelings, beauty, ways of thinking, ways of acting and so on. A character is also often called a fictional, tangible individual who experiences events or behaviors in the story. Humans who become characters in fiction can develop characterization both physically and mentally. Characterization is the logical quality of the feelings of the characters in a work of fiction which can include not only behavior or character and habits, but also appearance (Minderop, in Yuliana et al 2018). Characterization and characterization are descriptions of story characters, both their physical and mental conditions that can change, their outlook on life, attitudes, beliefs, customs, and so on (Suharianto, in Yuliana et al 2018) According to Sudjiman (Yuliana et.al, 2018; Lubis & Ritonga, 2023) character is the quality of reason and soul of a character that distinguishes him from other characters.

Moral values are what a person must do, because if he does not do it, he will be permanently disadvantaged. For example, keeping a promise if he is bound by an agreement with other people. If a person repeatedly breaks a promise, it will be difficult for others to trust him again. If others do not trust him anymore, then he will have difficulties in his social and material life (Lickona, in Amir Syamsudin 2012: 107). Moral values are defined as the content of the overall order that regulates human actions, behavior, attitudes and habits in society based on the teachings of values, principles and norms (Sjarkawi, in Lia Yuliana, M.Pd 2013: 3).

Comparative literature is a research that not only tries to examine the similarities and differences between literary works textually, but furthermore, it tries to find out the background of the socio-cultural life that underlies the birth of a text (Endaswara, in M.A Nurmalita 2023: 170). Comparative literature is an approach in literary science that does not produce its own theory (Domono, in N. Maelasari 2018: 13). Comparative literature is the study of literature beyond the boundaries of a country and the study of the relationship between literature and other fields of science and belief such as art (for example: painting, sculpture, binda art, and music), philosophy, history, and social science (for example: politics, economics, sociology), science, religion and others (Remak, in N. Maelasari 2018: 13). Comparative literature is a study or study of the literature of a nation that has historical links with the literature of other nations, how the process of influencing each other is intertwined, what literature has taken, and what it has contributed (Nada, in N. Maelasari 2018: 13).

In this study, the researcher intends to examine the characters and moral values in the fairy tales of Cinderella and Bawang Merah Bawang Putih as a comparison. The comparison is intended to find similarities and differences in the two fairy tales. The two fairy tales were chosen because the stories have similarities and differences. The two fairy tales can be compared because they have the same theme, namely injustice. The main character in both fairy tales has the same character. The language used is easy to understand and contains moral values conveyed by the author through the characters in the story. Bawang Merah Bawang Putih is one of the fairy tales from Indonesia that tells the story of a girl named Bawang Putih who has a kind nature who has a stepmother and stepbrother named Bawang Merah. Bawang Putih never gets justice. Bawang Putih is always asked to do all the housework while Red Onion is just lazy.

This Cinderella fairy tale is the work of American author Marcia Joan Brown in 1954. The fairy tale of Cinderella tells the story of a girl who lives with her mother and two stepsisters every day, she gets mistreated and treated as a floater in her own home. She is also tormented by her mother and stepsisters. However, she never hated or was angry with her mother and stepsisters. She also never complained or felt tired of all the work she was given.

RESEARCH METHOD

This type of research is descriptive qualitative research. Target/Subject of Research This research is a library research. The research materials are two literary works of fairy tales entitled "Cinderella," which is the work of American author Marcia Joan Brown in 1954, and "Bawang Merah Bawang Putih" (Collection of fairy tales: 2011), which is one of the fairy tales from Indonesia.

The fairy tale "Cinderella" tells the story of a girl who lives with her mother and two stepsisters. Every day, she is mistreated and treated as a servant in her own home. She was also tortured by her mother and stepsisters. Despite this, she never hated or was angry with her mother and stepsisters. She also never complained or felt tired of all the work she was given. "Dongeng Bawang Merah Bawang Putih" tells the story of a girl named Bawang Putih who has a kind nature. She has a stepmother and a stepbrother named Bawang Merah. Bawang Putih never gets

justice. She is always asked to do all the chores around the house, while Red Onion just lazes around.

The procedure or steps of this fairy tale research are as follows:

1. Carefully read and understand the entire manuscripts of the fairy tales "Cinderella" and "Bawang Merah Bawang Putih."
2. The researcher records data on the object of research in the form of words, phrases, and sentences that show similarities and differences in the two fairy tales. Data recording aims to facilitate researchers in analyzing.
3. The researcher categorizes the data according to its type, namely character traits and moral values that are compared in tabular form.
4. The researcher describes the characterization of the characters and moral values contained in the fairy tales.
5. The researcher draws conclusions.

The research data in this study consisted of words and sentences used to categorize the similarities and differences in character traits and moral values between the fairy tale "Cinderella" and the fairy tale "Bawang Merah Bawang Putih." The research instrument used in this study is the researcher himself, who acts as a "human instrument." The researcher conducted a careful reading technique of the two fairy tales. In addition, the researcher also used books and computers as supporting tools to record data generated from the reading and recording process. Data collection was done through reading and note-taking techniques.

The data analysis technique used in this research is qualitative descriptive analysis technique. Qualitative descriptive technique is used because the data in this research are in the form of words, phrases, and sentences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Cinderella and Bawang Merah Bawang Putih are two popular fairy tales that have different cultural roots. However, they also have similarities and differences in the characterization of the main characters as well as the moral values implied in their stories.

The first similarity between Cinderella and Bawang Merah Bawang Putih is that both are young female characters who possess good traits, such as kindness, humility, and patience. Cinderella is a girl who suffers harsh treatment from her stepmother and stepsisters, but she remains kind and patient. Onion and Bawang Putih are also kind-hearted girls, although they face conflicts with their stepmother.

The first difference is the background and setting of the story. Cinderella is a European fairy tale, while Bawang Merah Bawang Putih comes from Indonesian folklore. This reflects the difference in culture and values represented in the stories, although both stories emphasize the importance of kindness.

The second difference is the root of the conflict in the stories. Cinderella faces difficulties due to mistreatment from her family, while Bawang Merah Bawang Putih faces problems due to conflicts between the mother and stepchildren. This illustrates the difference in the sources of social conflict that individuals in European and Indonesian societies may have faced in the past.

In terms of moral values, both Cinderella and Bawang Merah Bawang Putih teach that kindness and patience will lead to good results. They also emphasize the

importance of honesty and integrity. However, the specific values emphasized in both stories may differ according to their cultural backgrounds.

Thus, although Cinderella and Bawang Merah Bawang Putih are two fairy tales that come from different cultures, they still have similarities in the main character's characterization and positive moral messages, which can be a guide for young readers in understanding the importance of good and honest behavior in daily life. The similarities and differences in characterization and moral values in the fairy tales of Cinderella and Bawang Merah Bawang Putih. The similarities and differences in the characterization of the two fairy tales are as follows:

The main difference between the two well-known fairy tales, "Bawang Merah Bawang Putih" and "Cinderella," lies in the characterization and the number of characters that appear in the stories.

In "Bawang Merah Bawang Putih," the main character is Bawang Putih, a beautiful, kind, obedient, and hardworking girl. Her half-sister, Bawang Merah, is the opposite of Bawang Putih's character; she is a cruel and vengeful girl. Bawang Putih has only one half-sister, and the conflict in the story revolves around their contrasting domestic relationships.

Meanwhile, in "Cinderella," we have a main character named Cinderella, who also has a beautiful face and a kind heart. Here, the main difference lies in the number of stepsisters that trouble Cinderella. Cinderella faces harsh treatment from two cruel stepsisters. This creates conflict in the story and affects Cinderella's journey.

Besides the differences in the main characters, both stories also involve animal characters as supporters. In "Bawang Merah Bawang Putih," Bawang Putih has a relationship with a goldfish while washing clothes in the river, which adds a magical element to the story. While in "Cinderella," Cinderella has little mice as loyal friends who are always there when she is sad. There are also animal characters such as lizards in "Cinderella," who help Cinderella in facing challenges.

The most striking difference is the presence of a fairy godmother in "Cinderella" who provides help and changes Cinderella's life. This fairy godmother character is not present in "Bawang Merah Bawang Putih," and this adds an element of fairy tale magic and fantasy to "Cinderella."

With these differences, the two fairy tales present unique story nuances and different moral values, but still teach the importance of kindness and the struggle against adversity in life.

Although there are notable differences in the two fairy tales "Bawang Merah Bawang Putih" and "Cinderella," there are also many similarities that reflect similar themes and moral messages. In both "Bawang Merah Bawang Putih" and "Cinderella," the main characters have beautiful faces, good natures, kindness, humility, hard work, and patience. They also share life experiences with their cruel and abusive mother and stepsisters.

In "Bawang Merah Bawang Putih," Bawang Putih is a figure who exudes kindness and honesty. When the prince searches for a gold-leaf plant to cure his sick father, the plant comes from a goldfish eaten by his mother and stepsisters. Bawang Putih patiently and sincerely helped uproot the plant and gave it to the prince, who eventually asked Bawang Putih to be his wife. This shows that kindness and good actions will be rewarded with happiness.

In "Cinderella," Cinderella has the same characteristics as Bawang Putih, namely kindness and patience. She meets the prince while trying to escape into the forest and meets him while he is hunting. The prince falls in love at first sight, but Cinderella leaves without telling him her identity. This reflects the theme of first love and luck, which can also be found in "Bawang Merah Bawang Putih."

Furthermore, both "Bawang Merah Bawang Putih" and "Cinderella" involve the element of disguise. In "Bawang Merah Bawang Putih," the disguise occurs when the stepsisters steal the gold-leaf plant. Bawang Putih then goes undercover to investigate the theft. While in "Cinderella," the disguise occurs when Cinderella goes to a folk party with the help of the fairy godmother. This creates tension in the story, and the element of disguise becomes the key to uncovering Cinderella's identity.

The difference between the two stories lies in the way Cinderella has to return home before midnight, and the prince searches for the owner of the glass slipper that was left behind. Cinderella finally marries the prince after all obstacles are overcome, just like in the classic fairy tale. While in "Bawang Merah Bawang Putih," the story focuses on the encounter with the prince that begins with an act of kindness from Bawang Putih.

Overall, despite the differences in story details, both fairy tales teach similar moral messages: kindness, patience, and honesty will bring happiness and success. They also emphasize that first love and luck can change one's life. Therefore, these two tales, although originating from different cultures, still have universal moral values that can be applied in everyday life.

Responsible (in the fairy tale Cinderella)

In the Cinderella story, the main character, Cinderella, is a kind and hardworking girl. Although she is forced by her stepmother to do very heavy housework, such as cleaning and tidying the house before the party, she always does it with great patience and humility. Cinderella was eager to go to the party with her stepsisters and stepmother, but she knew that she had to finish all the housework first.

Cinderella's clean and meticulous actions reflect her kind nature. She knew that if she didn't finish the work, her stepmother would give her a very harsh punishment or lesson. Therefore, Cinderella remained faithful to her duties, not only out of obligation, but also because of her kind and patient character.

The moral of the story is that kindness, patience and hard work will eventually bring happiness. Although Cinderella is faced with mistreatment and hardship, she still maintains her good nature, and this eventually leads her to a change for the better as she meets the prince and experiences a happy ending.

Responsible (in the fairy tale Bawang Merah Bawang Putih)

In the story "Bawang Merah Bawang Putih," Bawang Putih is the main character who has a kind, hardworking nature and great patience. When he was washing his mother and stepsisters' clothes in the river, the cloth was washed away by the strong current. Although losing the clothes could have earned him a very harsh punishment or lesson, Bawang Putih did not despair.

Bawang Putih diligently tries to go down the river to look for the lost clothes. This action reflects his fortitude and determination to fulfill his responsibilities, despite the difficulties he faces. Although ultimately unsuccessful in finding the lost clothes, Bawang Putih continues to struggle and undergo a journey filled with perseverance.

The moral message that can be learned from this episode is about kindness, patience, and persistence in facing challenges. Despite the failure of Bawang Putih in his search for the lost clothes, his kind-hearted nature and spirit of endeavor remained strong. This is an important lesson about perseverance in living life, even when facing unexpected obstacles and difficulties.

CONCLUSION

In the fairy tale Cinderella, the main character is Ella, a girl with a beautiful face and noble character. She was always abused by her stepmother and her two stepsisters after her father died. Ella lives her life with patience in facing the twists and turns of life, until finally she meets a good prince and becomes his wife. While in the Bawang Merah Bawang Putih fairy tale, the main character is Bawang Putih, who is also abused by his stepmother and Bawang Merah. Despite being treated unfairly, Bawang Putih lives his life steadfastly. Eventually, he also finds a royal prince who chooses him as his wife.

Main Characters

- 1) Cinderella (Ella): A beautiful girl with noble character. Abused by her stepmother and two stepsisters. Becomes the wife of a good prince.
- 2) Onion Puti: A kind-hearted girl who is abused by her stepmother and Bawang Merah. Eventually, becomes the wife of a prince.
- 3) Mother and Step-Sister Characters: Cinderella: Her stepmother and two stepsisters are unkind and always mean to Cinderella. Bawang Merah dan Bawang Putih: The stepmother and Bawang Merah also have bad characters and always torment Bawang Putih.
- 4) Prince: Cinderella: The Prince is portrayed as a young man who praises women and keeps promises. Bawang Putih: The prince has a good character, but cannot control his emotions.
- 5) Animal Characters: Cinderella: Cinderella has mice, lizards and horses as animal friends. Bawang Putih: Bawang Putih befriends a golden fish.
- 6) Additional Characters: Cinderella: There are characters like the maidens who help Cinderella, the prime minister, the king, Cinderella's father, and the fairy godmother. Bawang Merah Bawang Putih: There is a golden fish-like character who helps Bawang Putih.

In terms of similarities, both stories have a beautiful main character who has to live with an evil stepmother and stepsisters. They also show kindness, patience, and steadfastness. Both stories also include characters whose stepmother and stepsisters have negative traits such as envy, spite, and contempt. The main difference lies in the number of characters in both stories and the character of the prince. In "Cinderella," there are more characters with the prince having more positive traits. In contrast, in "Bawang Merah Bawang Putih," there are fewer characters, and the prince has a character who cannot control his emotions. In conclusion, the learning values that can be drawn from both stories involve traits such as steadfastness, patience, noble character, polite, kind, helpful, compassionate, hardworking, forgiving, willingness to apologize, moderation, ability to warn, and keeping promises. These stories provide examples of how good character can overcome adversity and ultimately achieve happiness.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Dinarratri, R. F., & Parnaningroem, R. D. W. (2021). Perbandingan Unsur Intrinsik Pada Dongeng Der Froschkönig Karya Brüder Grimm Dan Film Der Froschkönig Karya Franziska Buch. *Identitaet*, 10(2), 1-16.
- Fitriani, R., Priyadi, A. T., & Seli, S. (2019). Perwatakan Tokoh Dalam Novel Mariposa Karya Luluk Hf. *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran Khatulistiwa (Jppk)*, 8(10).
- Hendrianti, N. N. S. (2022). Perbandingan Perwatakan Dan Alur Dalam Dongeng" Der Froschkönig" Karya Bruder Grimm Dan" Pangeran Katak" Cerita Rakyat Bali: Kajian Sastra Bandingan (Doctoral Dissertation, Universitas Negeri Jakarta).
- Lubis, Y., & Ritonga, A. (2023). Mobilization School Program: Implementation of Islamic Religious Education Teacher Preparation in Elementary Schools. *Jurnal At-Tarbiyat :Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 6(1). <https://doi.org/10.37758/jat.v6i1.632>
- Nurmalita, M. A., & Hartati, D. (2023). Perbandingan Interpretasi Novel Antares Dengan Web Series Antares Karya Rweinda. *Lingua Rima: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia*, 12(1), 167-178.
- Pebriana, P. H. (2017). Analisis Kemampuan Berbahasa Dan Penanaman Moral Pada Anak Usia Dini Melalui Metode Mendongeng. *Jurnal Obsesi: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 1(2), 139-147.
- Putrayasa, I. B., & Sudiana, I. N. (2021). Membentuk Karakter Anak Melalui Habitiasi Dongeng Pada Pembelajaran Di Sekolah Dasar. *Jurnal Ilmiah Bahasa Dan Sastra*, 8(2), 68-77.
- Rukiyah, R. (2018). Dongeng, Mendongeng, Dan Manfaatnya. *Anuva: Jurnal Kajian Budaya, Perpustakaan, Dan Informasi*, 2(1), 99-106.
- Syamsudin, A. (2012). Pengembangan Nilai-Nilai Agama Dan Moral Pada Anak Usia Dini. *Jurnal Pendidikan Anak*, 1(2).
- Yuliana, L. (2013). Penanaman Nilai-Nilai Moral Pada Anak Usia Dini. *Jurnal Ilmiah Wuny*, 15(1).
- Yuliana, Y., Salem, L., & Wartiningsih, A. (2018). Perwatakan Tokoh Dalam Novel Genduk Karya Sundari Mardjuki. *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran Khatulistiwa (Jppk)*, 7(3).