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Revealing Messages in Graphic Novel *The Hobbit*

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¹⁴ Abstract

This study was aimed at examining the implication of the messages in graphic novel *The Hobbit* and how the author sends the messages in it. The data of this study were in the form of utterances and pictures that refer to the moral values in direct and indirect messages of the novel. The method that the researcher used was descriptive qualitative. The steps of data collection technique used in this research were reading, finding and writing the utterances and pictures that imply a message. The steps of data analysis were data reduction, data description and making conclusion. From the data, the researcher found thirty four messages. The messages are mostly about how to behave and to have good attitude towards others. From the result of data, it was found that there were three messages which were delivered in a directly, and there were thirty-one data which were delivered indirectly.

Keywords: *Messages, Graphic Novel, The Hobbit*

A. INTRODUCTION

In literary work, there are always messages that are dissolved by the readers. The author gives the messages in his/her literary work because he/she wants to teach the readers the knowledge what he/she has and to make an impression to the readers. An author sends a message in his/her work in explicit and implicit ways.

Message is a whole from that is delivered by communicator (Wijaya in Kumalasari, 2017: 16). Message means command, advice, demand or moral value that is delivered (KBBI,1999:761). According to Hafied in Munifah (2016:17), message is a series of sign/symbol that is created by someone for specific purpose in hope that the symbol can deliver meaning. Thus, a message is an idea of communicator contains of sign/symbol that has a meaning.

Message can be found in a literary work. The importance of the message is we can know the opinion of author that has different ways about something so it can produce reflection for our life and can give a philosophy for ourselves. Thus, the

author has his/her opinions from his/her experiences, background knowledge, or from his/her personality background.

One example of literary works is comic. Comic is one of media information that has picture series that can help us understand the plot in a story. Thus, comic is a series in a picture diagram and there is a conversation between the characters. Comic can be read by the children. Comic is a fiction that is not based on a true story. According to Hayman and Pratt (2005:423), comics is “a sequence of discrete, juxtaposed pictures that comprise a narrative, either in their own right or when combined with text”. According to Bonnef comic is divided into two groups, they are comic strips and comic books (Bonnef, 1998 : 9). Besides comic is in strips and books form, comic is also found in novel forms : they are graphic novel and compilation novel (Maharsi, 2011: 18-19). Graphic novel shows the story with a more serious theme and is just for adults. Examples of graphic novel are *When the Wind Blows* (1982), *Ethel and Ernest* (1998), and *The Jungle* (2005).

In this research, the researcher took *The Hobbit* because *The Hobbit* is one of franchise story that has many fans. At first, *The Hobbit* was published in the form of novel and it had many readers. It is interesting to analyze messages in a graphic novel because different from novel, graphic novel has pictures. The researcher thought that it is important to analyze message from pictures because how the messages are delivered is different from how they are delivered from utterances. How the readers get the messages will also be different. Another reason why the researcher used graphic novel *The Hobbit* is because the content of story told about Bilbo Baggins, a unique character, who had an adventure and met many challenges. The researcher thought that there are many messages that the readers can take from Bilbo’s adventure.

In reading a literary work, including graphic novel *The Hobbit*, smart readers will choose the quality of the content of the story or know the quality or background of the author well. The quality of the content can be known from the mindset, characteristic of the author, and how much the experience that the author has. Many times, the messages can be implied here. However, not all readers can easily get the messages in a literary work. This depends on the reader and author. The readers

must be able to manage the information that they get. Here, the researcher wanted to analyze how an author sent messages to the readers implicitly or explicitly. Usually it is based on his/her experiences or based on his/her background knowledge.

The researcher took this topic because the message is really important for us to know how other person's thought, we can know the opinion in different way of another people. Thus, our mindset is not only just a little but also can big as far as we can.

There are some previous studies which conducted the same topic as this study. The first study conducted by Setyawati (2013) entitled *Analisis Nilai Moral dalam Novel Surat Kecil Untuk Tuhan Karya Agnes Davonar (Pendekatan Pragmatik)*. The theory that they used is moral value theory by Nurgiyantoro (2009). The data source of this study is an Indonesian novel entitled *Surat Kecil Untuk Tuhan* by Agnes Davonar. The method that they used is descriptive qualitative analysis method. The second research done by Nugraha (2014) entitled *Nilai Moral dalam Novel Pulang Karya Leila S Chudori*. The theory that they used is Nurgiyantoro (2013). The data source of this study is an Indonesian novel entitled *Pulang* by Leila S. Chudori. The method that they used is descriptive qualitative method. The third research done by Mahsuri (2015) entitled *Pesan Moral dalam Novel Habibie & Ainun Karya Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibie Tinjauan Sosiologi Sastra*. The theory that they used is Wa Rosdahliana (2013). The data source of this study is an Indonesian novel entitled *Habibie & Ainun* by Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibie. The method that they used is descriptive qualitative.

There are some differences between those previous studies and this recent study. First, the researcher used graphic novel that differs from novel because graphic novel provides the story with picture. Second, the researcher used theory from Mahsuri (2015) entitled *Pesan Moral dalam Novel Habibie dan Ainun Karya Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibie Tinjauan Sosiologi Sastra* about sending the message to the reader directly and indirectly. This study focused to describe the messages found in graphic novel *The Hobbit* and the ways the author sent the messages to the readers in graphic novel *The Hobbit*.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Literary work is very common in our daily activities. Literary work usually consists of social phenomena covered in unique words (Miswaty, T.C: 2014) Literary work is a container art that showing beauty through using interesting language, have variation, and full of imagination (Keraf in Adampe 2015: 3). Literature can defined by people as human creation with good language or lovely (Surana, 2001: 1). Thus, literary work is a work that contains phenomena in our life with beautiful words to create it.

Graphic novel is a kind of literary work that uses pictures as media to send information. The contains of graphic novel usually presented more one hundred pages and usually packed with hard cover (Soedarso, 2015: 502). The content of a graphic novel is not only pictures, but also texts. The differences between graphic novel and comic is if comic has series in it publishing but graphic novel is published at once. In general, graphic novel is always equated with another literary work, that is comic. That graphic novel is intended as a branch of caricature with purpose of giving critic, and insult policies taken by public figures (Ajidarma, 2011: 36). Thus, the content of a graphic novel is more serious than comic.

Message is a thing that the author wants to inform to the readers that is the meaning that involve in a literary work and the meaning that recommended through the story (Nurgiyantoro, 2009: 321). In fact, message is telling about the right and wrong in the society, which should be left and be used. Message is a thing that is delivered by communicator to receiver through communication process (Tasmara in Munifah, 2016:17). In short, messages contain attitude value, social value, and moral value. From story and action of the characters make the readers can take a message. Moral in literary work can be seen as message, instruction for our life. It can change our mindset or our way of life. A message that we can take it based on our perception from the readers.

How the Author Sends a Message to the Readers

Based on the Nurgiyantoro in Mahsuri (2015) there are two types how the author sends a message to the readers, it can be directly or indirectly.

Direct

There are some ways how to the author sends a message to the readers in a fiction work, like sending a message directly. Sending a message can be seen in the element of story itself. This means the author sends a message through the story itself. Type of how to send a message directly is divided into three ways:

1. Using the character of the story: the author describes characteristic of the characters in the story that can be an example to give messages.

Example: When Bilbo went through the tunnel, Bilbo found the gleam that he never met it before. Then, Bilbo took the Arkenstone and put it in his pocket. (page: 108 from graphic novel *The Hobbit*)

The message: never steal anything that does not belong to us.

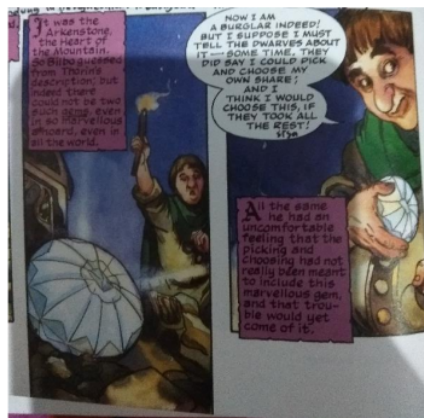


Figure 1. Part of using the character of the story

2. Through plot of the story: using story line in the graphic novel *The Hobbit*.

Example : It was condition when they discussed and work together to cross the magic river. They found a boat and the rope for crossed the river. (page: 72 from graphic novel *The Hobbit*)

The message: if we are in a good cooperation, surely it we can solve any problem



Figure 2. Part of through plot of story

3. Using the dialogue between the character :The messages are inserted in the dialogue of the characters.

Example:

Beorn : “And never leave the path. That you must not do, for any reason. That is all the advice I can give you. You must depend on your luck and your courage and the food I send with you. At the gate of the forest I must ask you to send back my horse and my ponies, but I wish you all speed, and my house is open to you, if ever you come back this way again.”

Gandalf : “We are ever at your service, o Master of the Wide Wooden Halls!”

(page: 67 from graphic novel The Hobbit)

The message: You have to depend on good luck and courage when you are in a risky condition.

Indirect

Sending a message indirectly is a way the readers connect the life of the author with the elements of the literary work. The author writes his/her literary work based on what he/she believes. The author does not send the message implicitly. That we

know from the way of the author sends the message with indirectly, this way is less communicative.

Example: Page 108 from graphic novel *The Hobbit*

When Bilbo Baggins get a permission from the dwarves to know the condition of the cave, he found an Arkenstone, the Heart of The Mountain. Then, he took and picked it.

The message : Do not be easy to complacent with a thing that not our knit.

C. METHOD

¹⁶
Research method used in this research was descriptive qualitative. Based on ⁸ Creswell (2009 : 3): Research designs plans and the procedures for research that span the desicions from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis . furthermore, Cresswell (2009:4) said ³ that qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. Thus, this format analysis of this descriptive contain more correct that used by researcher for express and doing analyze in graphic novel *The Hobbit*.

The research data are in the form of utterances and picture at graphic novel *The Hobbit* that contain messages. Data that the researcher analyzes is in the conversation both the characters at graphic novel “ The Hobbit “.

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The data source of this research is a graphic novel entitled “The Hobbit” by J. R. R. Tolkien that published by illustrations David Wenzel 1990 and story adaptation with Charles Dixon and Sean Deming 1990.

The followings step were procedures of data collection of this research:

1. Reading the graphic novel *The Hobbit*.
2. Finding the messages in the form of utterances and pictures in every chapter in graphic novel *The Hobbit*.
3. Writing / noting down the utterances and pictures that imply a message.

The researcher uses theory of Nurgiyantoro in Mahsuri (2015) on the messages found in graphic novel *The Hobbit* and how the author send the messages to the readers implicitly and explicitly.

1. Doing data reduction by choosing the relevant messages
2. Describing the messages found using Nurgiyantoro's theory on Messages (2007)
3. Describing how the author sends messages based on the type using Mahsuri's theory (2015)
4. Concluding the data.

D. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Datum 10

Thorin : “ Carry the gold outside. We'll bury it for our return trip. Take any food that hasn't rotted. “ (page : 22)

The dialogue was a command from Thorin when he found Trolls' cave after what happend to Trolls that Trolls be came stone because Gandalf made the Trolls doing debate in a long time it was make the Trolls did not aware that the sun would be bright soon. The Trolls had to hide to the cave before the sun rose or they would be a stone if they touched the bright sun. Thorin was wishing to take the Trolls' stuff for their stock along the journey. From the data, we can take a message that do not take things that do not belong to us. The author sent this message **indirectly**. The researcher could catch the message by concluding the data.

Datum 11

Gandalf only shook his head and said nothing. ⁵ He knew how evil and danger had grown and thriven in the Wild, since the dragons had driven men from the lands, and the goblins had spread in secret after the battle of the Mines of Moria. (page: 29)

⁶ The utterance was a narration about what in Gandalf head or what he thought when he continued the journey after met with Trolls. He thought Bilbo and his company

had to be ready to face a dangerous situation after the battle of the Mines of Moria. The dwarves just knew that they wanted to take ancestors of Thorin's treasure and after the company of adventure came to Last Homely House. That was a transit before Bilbo and his friends passed by a forest and the met chief of the Last Homely House was Erlond. From the data, we can take a message that an adventure will always meet dangerous situation, so we should be ready to face it. The author sent this message **indirectly**. The researcher got the message by drawing a conclusion.

Datum 28

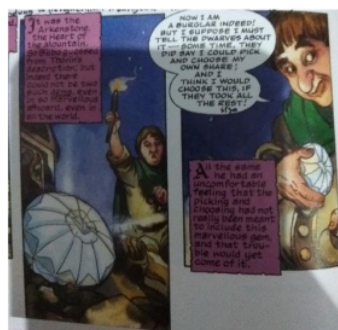


Figure 3. Stolen of Arkenstone, the Heart of Mountain by Bilbo (page: 108)

It is a picture of Bilbo after he found an Arkenstone, the Heart of Mountain like what Thorin story. When Bilbo went through the tunnel, Bilbo found the gleam that he never met it before. Then, Bilbo took the Arkenstone and put it in his pocket. Bilbo thought that he had uncomfortable feeling that the picking and choosing had not really been meant to include this marvellous gem, and Bilbo did not know that trouble would yet come of it after he found the Arkenston, he thought that there could not be two such gems, even in so marvellous a hoard, even in all the world. The shiny Arkenston had blinded Bilbo's eyes and mind. From the data, we can take a message that never steal anything that does not belong to us. The author sent this message **directly** by using the character of the story. The researcher could catch the message by taking conclusion the data.

Datum 34

4
The old Master had come to a bad end. Bard had given him much gold for the help of the Lake-people, but being of the kind that easily catches such disease he fell

under the dragon-sickness, and took most of the gold and fled with it, and died of starvation in the Waste, deserted by his companions. (page: 134)

The utterance was a narration when Gandalf, Balin and Bilbo met each other for the first time after they doing adventure. They met in Bilbo house. They told each other what happened after the treasure came back to the dwarves. Gandalf told that the Master of town of Lake was died in bad condition. When Bard, the hero was giving him the portion of the treasure, he was gone, and forgot the people of town of Lake. Then, the Master died of starvation and left by the company in the field. The new Master was of wiser kind and very popular, of course he got most of the credit for the present prosperity. From the data, we can take a message that we should not be greedy or our life will end in a bad condition. The author sent this message **indirectly**. The researcher got this message by concluding the data with the context.

There were indirect and implicit ways of how the author sent the messages to the readers. The researcher thought that it was because the author did not want to act like a teacher to the readers. The author wanted the readers to feel free to interpret what the messages that the readers can take from his master piece. It could make the readers feel comfortable when reading his literary work and it was easier for the readers to think critically.

The result from the analysis showed that there were thirty four data from the dialogue and utterances in graphic novel *The Hobbit*. The messages found from the data that the researcher got is mostly explaining about attitude values, such as bravery, politeness, self-control, carefulness, positive thinking, honesty, friendliness, sincerity, independence, arrogance, affection, modesty, helpfulness. The way the author sent the messages to the readers mostly is in indirect way, there are thirty one data. Besides, there are three data of direct way. The author just used three ways because he wanted the readers to think more creatively and he wanted the readers feel free to take the messages from the object.

From the story we took messages based on the plot of the story. The researcher took everything that contained the message in the dialogues of the characters and utterances. The messages always told about positive and good behaviours that

people should do. These behaviours can be seen from the characters in graphic novel *The Hobbit*.

From Bilbo, we can learn about bravery, carefulness, and honesty. These behaviours can be seen when Bilbo had his adventure. During Bilbo's adventure with his friends, helpfulness, affection, politeness, and friendliness are the behaviours that can be taken as positive examples for the readers. Other positive behaviours can also be seen from other characters such as Thorin, Bard, and Beorn. They show self-control, independence, sincerity, positive thinking, modesty.

Positive values of Bilbo's character are bravery, politeness, self-control, carefulness, positive thinking, honesty. Positive values of Gandalf's character are bravery, positive thinking, helpfulness. Positive values of the dwarves's character are positive thinking, self-control, politeness, honesty, helpfulness, independence, affection, bravery. Positive values of Goblin's character is self-control. Positive values of the chief of Goblin's character is positive thinking. Positive values of Gollum's character are friendliness, carefulness. Positive values of Elf soldier's character are positive thinking, self-control. Positive values of Master of Lake Town's character are sincerity, self-control. Positive values of Smaug's character is modesty. Positive values of Beorn's character is bravery. Positive values of Bard's character is bravery. Positive values of Trolls's character is self-control.

Some previous studies related to this current research analyzed the moral values found in novel. These moral values included carefulness (Setyawati, 2013), honesty (Nugraha, 2014), sincerity (Setyawati, 2013), affection (Setyawati, 2013). In this research, the researcher found carefulness, honesty, sincerity, and affection from the messages revealed in the graphic novel. The researcher can conclude that, this study also found carefulness, honesty, sincerity, and affection both in graphic novel and novel. The moral values that the researcher did not find in this research compared to previous studies are devout, pray to God, patient, responsibility, advising each other, strong determination, optimist, regret, respect, religion, culture, and education side. It happened because graphic novel *The Hobbit* more focus to adventure.

There are some ways how the author sends the messages to the readers that found in novel, such as: direct (through description of the author, through character of the story) and indirect ways (through incident and conflict) found in Setyawati (2013) and Nugraha (2014) thesis. How the author sends the messages to the reader that not found in this research in direct ways (through thinking of the character) in Mahsuri's thesis (2015)

Thus, from the results of the previous studies and this current research, we could see that whatever fictional work like novel, comic, graphic novel, usually there were messages the author wanted to reveal to the readers although they were in direct (through plot of the story, through character of the story, through dialogue between the character) and indirect ways. The moral values found in this research are bravery, politeness, self-control, carefulness, positive thinking, honesty, friendliness, helpfulness, sincerity, independence, modesty, and affection. The aim of the author sent the messages to the readers were usually to decant his/her feeling to his/her work because the author wanted to involve his/her feeling into his/her literary work.

E. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

From the data obtained, it can be concluded that there are some messages that we can take from a literary work, particularly from graphic novel *The Hobbit* that contained of pictures and utterances. The messages told about good attitude and behaviours. In other words, this graphic novel teaches the readers positive values through the characters and the story line. Messages delivered by the author will be more effective to the readers if they can get them easily. Messages can be understood easily if they are in the form of pictures because visual will help the readers interpret the messages.

Besides, by sending the messages directly, the readers know the messages of the story easily in the utterances like in narration or dialogue. Thus, sending the messages directly is usually communicative. Sending the messages indirectly, is less communicative because not every readers can take the messages delivered by the author. There is no information in the story just a description so the readers must

catch the point by themselves. However, it is less interesting if the author directly give the messages. There are no challenging thing to the readers. It is different if the author sends the messages indirectly. The readers can think more creative and using their imagination freely so the author does not act like teacher to the readers.

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