

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents the theoretical framework supporting the analysis of educational values in the animated film *Orion and the Dark* (2024). It discusses film as an audiovisual medium and the *Profil Lulusan* framework developed by *Kemendikdasmen* (2025), along with children's cognitive, moral, and emotional development. In addition, this chapter reviews relevant previous research to identify research gaps and position the present study within existing academic discussions.

A. Film

Bordwell and Thompson (2019) describe film as an audiovisual medium that uses moving images, sound, and narrative structure to construct meaning. They emphasize that the arrangement of visual and auditory elements, such as framing, lighting, dialogue, and sound, shapes how viewers interpret characters, actions, emotions, and events. Villarejo (2020) also defines film as a cultural text that carries social, moral, and psychological meanings by representing the values and experiences of the society that produces it. This perspective positions film not only as a form of entertainment but also as a medium that influences audiences understanding of human behavior and moral issues.

According to film scholarship, film functions as both a narrative system and a cultural product that communicates meaning through its coordinated audiovisual elements (Bordwell & Thompson, 2019; Villarejo, 2020). Scholars classify film into two primary categories: non-animated (live-action) films and

animated films, each employing distinct production techniques and offering different potential for conveying educational and moral messages (Wells, 2018; Villarejo, 2020).

1. Non-Animated Film

Non-animated or live-action films are a type of film produced through the recording of real human actors, physical settings, and real performances (Villarejo, 2020). This type of film relies on genuine gestures, facial expressions, dialogue, and real settings to build emotional meaning and support the development of the narrative (Villarejo, 2020). The realistic showing of space, movement, and human behavior enables audiences to understand scenes by drawing on experiences that resemble real-life situations (Bordwell & Thompson, 2019). Together, these perspectives suggest that live-action film constructs meaning through its close alignment with everyday human interactions and social contexts (Bordwell & Thompson, 2019).

Based on these theoretical explanations, non-animated film functions as a medium that conveys moral, social, and cultural messages by mirroring real-life situations (Villarejo, 2020). Its emphasis on realism allows viewers to relate more easily to the situations presented, making moral lessons and social behaviors more accessible and meaningful in context (Bordwell & Thompson, 2019). These characteristics also make live-action film effective for educational purposes, particularly in illustrating real human behavior, moral problem, and practical life experiences (Villarejo, 2020).

2. Animated Film

Animated film is defined as a cinematic form created through illustrated images, computer-generated imagery, or stop-motion techniques that construct narrative meaning without relying on real human actors (Wells, 2018). Animation possesses a unique ability to express ideas because its visuals can be designed, symbolic, and creatively exaggerated, allowing filmmakers to portray emotions, abstract ideas, and moral concepts in ways that exceed the limits of physical realism (Wells, 2018). This theoretical perspective highlights that animation does not simply imitate the real world but reconstructs it imaginatively to enhance clarity, emotional impact, and thematic depth (Wells, 2018).

Animated films are also considered especially effective for young audiences because amplified visual cues help children interpret emotional and moral messages more easily (Nathanson, 2018). This is consistent with the view that children in middle childhood understand moral lessons more effectively when emotional expressions and character actions are presented in clear and visually intensified forms (Eisenberg & Sulik, 2012). These theoretical explanations indicate that animated films offer strong educational value, as the use of symbolic imagery, stylized characters, and strong emotional expression enables viewers to internalize moral and emotional lessons through observation and engagement (Nathanson, 2018). As a result, animated film functions as a meaningful medium for introducing and reinforcing moral, emotional, and educational concepts (Wells, 2018).

3. **Orion and The Dark**

Orion and the Dark (2024) is an animated film produced by DreamWorks Animation that centers on the story of Orion, a young boy who struggles with intense fear of the dark (IMDb, 2024). The narrative follows Orion's unexpected encounter with Dark, a character who personifies darkness and guides him through unfamiliar nighttime environments, helping him confront his anxieties and reinterpret his fears in a more positive and realistic manner (IMDb, 2024). Throughout their journey, Orion gradually develops important values such as courage, empathy, honesty, responsibility, and curiosity, which are conveyed through character interactions, emotional scenes, and visual symbols that highlight the film's educational potential (Nathanson, 2018).

The film's storytelling approach aligns with the characteristics of animated media, which often employ stylized imagery, expressive characters, and strong emotional expression to make moral messages more accessible to young audiences (Wells, 2018). These features support the film's ability to illustrate emotional regulation, decisions based on values, and character development in ways that are clear and engaging for children (Hamdanah et al., 2023). The credibility of *Orion and the Dark* as a meaningful educational text is further supported by its critical recognition. The film received multiple awards, including Best Animated Special Production at the Annie Awards and two additional wins at the 2025 Kidscreen Awards, and was nominated for several categories in the Children's and Family Emmy Awards, the NAACP Image Awards, and the MPSE Golden Reel Awards, totaling five wins and sixteen nominations overall (IMDb, 2024). These achievements indicate that the film is

not only artistically successful but also widely acknowledged for its production quality and narrative impact, strengthening its relevance as a subject of educational and moral analysis.

B. 8 Dimensi Profil Lulusan

Conceptually, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (Kemendikdasmen, 2025) defines *Profil Lulusan* as a competency framework developed to support the implementation of the Deep Learning approach in Indonesian education. Rather than focusing solely on academic achievement, *Profil Lulusan* emphasizes students' holistic development by integrating cognitive, moral, emotional, social, and physical competencies. Through this framework, students are expected to develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and character needed to face the challenges of the twenty-first century.

According to Kemendikdasmen (2025), *Profil Lulusan* consists of eight interconnected dimensions that represent the competencies students are expected to achieve upon completing their educational process. These dimensions provide a comprehensive framework for developing students who are intellectually capable, morally responsible, emotionally resilient, socially aware, physically healthy, and able to communicate effectively. The eight dimensions of *Profil Lulusan* are explained as follows.

1. Faith and Devotion to God Almighty

Faith and Devotion to God Almighty refers to students' ability to understand, internalize, and practice religious teachings as the foundation of moral integrity and spiritual awareness. This dimension encourages individuals to demonstrate gratitude, honesty, empathy, compassion, responsibility, and respect for others while reflecting ethical values in their daily lives.

2. Citizenship.

Citizenship refers to students' awareness of their rights and responsibilities as members of society. This dimension emphasizes respect for diversity, appreciation of different cultures and perspectives, active participation in society, social responsibility, and commitment to contributing positively to the community and the nation.

3. Critical Reasoning.

Critical Reasoning is the ability to think logically, analyze information objectively, evaluate evidence, solve problems, and make appropriate decisions based on careful consideration. This dimension enables students to reflect critically, understand situations from multiple perspectives, and apply knowledge effectively in various contexts.

4. Creativity.

Creativity refers to the ability to generate original ideas, express imagination, and develop innovative solutions to problems. This dimension encourages students to

think creatively, adapt to new situations, and produce meaningful ideas or works through various forms of expression.

5. Collaboration

Collaboration is the ability to work effectively with others to achieve shared goals. This dimension emphasizes teamwork, mutual respect, shared responsibility, constructive communication, and appreciation of different perspectives while solving problems collectively.

6. Independence

Independence refers to students' ability to regulate themselves, take responsibility for their learning and actions, make decisions confidently, and complete tasks without excessive dependence on others. This dimension also promotes resilience, self-confidence, and lifelong learning habits.

7. Health and Well-being

Health and Well-being emphasizes maintaining physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being. This dimension encourages students to adopt healthy lifestyles, manage emotions effectively, cope with challenges positively, and maintain balanced relationships with others.

8. Communication

Communication refers to the ability to express ideas, thoughts, and emotions clearly and appropriately while understanding messages conveyed by others. This dimension includes verbal and non-verbal communication, active listening, empathy, and effective interaction across different social and cultural contexts.

C. Educational Values in Animated Film

Animated films are widely recognized as powerful media for delivering moral and educational messages because they combine visual storytelling, character actions, and emotional cues that appeal strongly to young audiences. Hamdanah et al. (2023) state that animated films function as effective tools for moral development in early childhood because they present relatable characters, simple narratives, and vivid visual elements that help children understand moral consequences more clearly. By following storylines in which characters face challenges, experience conflict, or learn from their mistakes, children are able to observe concrete illustrations of positive behaviors and internalize them through modeling. This aligns with social learning theory, which emphasizes that children tend to imitate behaviors they observe in media characters who appear attractive, competent, or emotionally expressive (Bandura, 2001).

Animated films also encourage children to reflect on ethical situations and emotional experiences in ways that support deeper moral comprehension. Azminah (2020) explains that films expose young viewers to a variety of moral dilemmas and emotional conflicts, allowing them to understand moral lessons by observing how characters resolve problems, negotiate relationships, and respond

to emotional challenges. Through this process, animated films help foster empathy, cooperation, emotional regulation, and awareness of others' feelings. Furthermore, Shahid and Ali (2020) argue that contemporary animated films provide an effective platform for character building by incorporating positive values such as respect, responsibility, cooperation, and anti-bullying attitudes into storylines that are engaging and developmentally meaningful for young learners.

In addition, animated films support children's cognitive and moral development during late childhood, particularly around ages 10-12, when learners begin to develop more advanced moral reasoning and emotional understanding. At this stage, children are increasingly able to evaluate characters' motives, understand complex emotional expressions, and relate media experiences to real-life situations (Kostyrka-Allchorne et al., 2020). Therefore, animated films are not only sources of entertainment but also valuable educational tools that reinforce the goals of character education (Shahid & Ali, 2020; Azminah, 2020). By presenting moral values through appealing stories and visual symbolism, animated films help children internalize important principles such as honesty, responsibility, courage, and empathy in ways that are enjoyable, meaningful, and developmentally appropriate (Nathanson, 2018; Kostyrka-Allchorne et al., 2020). These values can be further interpreted within the framework of *Profil Lulusan*, as they reflect key dimensions such as faith and devotion to god almighty, citizenship, critical reasoning, creativity, collaboration, independence, health and well-being, and communication (Kemendikdasmen, 2025).

D. Previous Research

Several previous research have examined educational and moral values in animated films, showing their potential as media for character learning. Masriani et al. (2021) conducted research on Adit dan Sopo Jarwo, Nussa dan Rara, and UpinIpin and identified moral values such as honesty, discipline, tolerance, cooperation, and courage, which reflect everyday moral behavior expected in children. Their research emphasized that animated films can effectively introduce ethical values and social manners to children aged 7 to 12 years, who are in the early stage of developing moral reasoning. Similarly, Sihombing (2022) conducts research on Pororo the Little Penguin and found moral messages including honesty, patience, democracy, and bravery, all of which are relevant for young viewers aged around 5 to 10 years, categorized as younger audiences in her research. In addition, Hasanah (2022) analyzed Moana and identified 15 educational values expressed through both dialogue and character actions, such as responsibility, curiosity, creativity, patriotism, honesty, tolerance, and environmental care, highlighting the role of animated films in shaping children's character development. These findings demonstrate that animated films serve as powerful tools for moral and emotional education.

However, the majority of previous research have focused on local or early childhood animated films and primarily analyzed moral messages through verbal expressions, without examining how visual elements also contribute to the delivery of educational values. Therefore, this research aims to fill that gap by analyzing the educational values represented in *Orion and the Dark* (2024)

through both its verbal and visual elements to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how moral values are constructed in modern animated films.

In relation to the previous research, several similarities can be identified. All previous works focused on animated films as media that contain moral or educational values and used qualitative content analysis to interpret how these values appear through characters, dialogues, and narrative events. Despite these similarities, some differences also emerge. Earlier research mostly analyzed local or early childhood animated films, while the present research examines a modern global animated film, *Orion and the Dark* (2024). Furthermore, previous research tended to focus on verbal expressions only, whereas this research incorporates both verbal and visual elements to provide a multimodal analysis. Based on these differences, a research gap is identified, particularly the lack of research that analyze how verbal and visual modes interact to construct educational values in contemporary animated films, especially when interpreted using the *Profil Lulusan* framework developed by Kemendikdasmen (2025). Therefore, this research fills that gap by offering a more comprehensive multimodal analysis of how educational values are represented in *Orion and the Dark* (2024).