

COMPARATIVE LITERATURE OF DISNEY FILMS *BEAUTY AND THE BEAST* AND *THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG*

Siti Mahmudah¹, Dyah Kurniawati²

¹English Education Study Program, ^{1,2}Universitas PGRI Ronggolawe Tuban

¹mudha54@gmail.com

²dk80kurnia@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This research explores the comparative literature of two Disney films, *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Princess and the Frog*. Both films are analyzed using a comparative approach to uncover similarities and differences in themes, plots, characters, settings, and cultural influences. The study employs a descriptive method and qualitative content analysis techniques to analyze data from the film scripts. The findings reveal that both films emphasize the transformative power of love and feature strong female protagonists challenging traditional gender roles. However, differences emerge in their specific themes, plot structures, character traits, settings, and cultural contexts. *Beauty and the Beast* centers around inner beauty and appearances, while *The Princess and the Frog* focuses on the power of love. The characters of Belle and Tiana have distinct personalities and aspirations, and the films' settings reflect different cultural backgrounds. Overall, this research showcases the richness and diversity of storytelling in different cultural contexts, highlighting the significance of comparative literature in understanding and appreciating the power of narratives.

Keywords: *Comparative Literature; Differences; Folktale; Similarities*

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi sastra perbandingan dari dua film Disney, *Beauty and the Beast* dan *The Princess and the Frog*. Kedua film ini dianalisis dengan pendekatan perbandingan untuk mengungkap kesamaan dan perbedaan dalam tema, alur cerita, karakter, pengaturan, dan pengaruh budaya. Studi ini menggunakan metode deskriptif dan teknik analisis konten kualitatif untuk menganalisis data dari skrip film. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa kedua film menekankan kekuatan transformasi cinta dan menampilkan protagonis wanita kuat yang menantang peran gender tradisional. Namun, perbedaan muncul dalam tema, struktur alur cerita, sifat karakter, pengaturan, dan konteks budaya mereka yang spesifik. *Beauty and the Beast* berpusat pada kecantikan batin dan penampilan, sementara *The Princess and the Frog* fokus pada kekuatan cinta. Karakter Belle dan Tiana memiliki kepribadian dan aspirasi yang berbeda, dan pengaturan film mencerminkan latar belakang budaya yang berbeda. Secara keseluruhan, penelitian ini memperlihatkan kekayaan dan keragaman penceritaan dalam berbagai konteks budaya, menyoroti pentingnya sastra perbandingan dalam memahami dan menghargai kekuatan naratif.

Kata kunci: Sastra Perbandingan; Perbedaan; Dongeng Rakyat; Kesamaan.

INTRODUCTION

Literature is an integral aspect of human existence as it comprises written works created by people during their era and has a profound impact on human life [1]. It serves as a valuable source of knowledge about various aspects of human existence. Comparative literature is an academic discipline that delves into the examination of literature and cultural forms transcending linguistic, national, geographical, and disciplinary confines. It involves analyzing and comparing literary works from different cultures, languages, and periods to uncover connections, themes, and cultural influences [2]. In this introduction, the researcher will delve into the comparative literature of two Disney films, *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Princess and the Frog*.

Beauty and the Beast and *The Princess and the Frog* are cherished animated Disney movies created by Disney, W [3]. However *The Princess and the Frog* is a Disney animated film that draws inspiration from the fairy tale by the Grimm Brothers. This film centers around strong female protagonists and themes of love, transformation, and self-discovery. While they share some

similarities, such as being part of the Disney Princess franchise and featuring enchanting musical numbers, there are also notable differences in their narratives, settings, and cultural contexts.

Comparative study of literature outside of two cultures [4]. The difference between the two cultures in this article is that male characters in *The Princess and the Frog* are depicted as disgusting frogs. Meanwhile, in *Beauty and the Beast*, male characters are depicted as enormous creatures referred to as beasts.. The similarities between both stories are the main characters have the same problem to find true love. The writer chooses *Beauty and The Beast* and *The Princess and the Frog* because from that the researcher found something that makes the story could be compared, both stories describe two cultures that are almost the same, namely, people can find true love with a sincere kiss.

When conducting this research, there was the formulation of the problem was examined namely what are similarities and differences in both stories of *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Princess and the Frog*. The researcher used a structural and comparative literary technique to identify similarities and differences between the two folktales [4]. Both literary pieces feature an identical male character, Specifically, both are cursed and unattractive men but possess distinct personalities. Hence, this study employs a qualitative approach rooted in literary research.

Drawing from stories originating in distinct regions, cultures, and languages, it becomes fascinating to compare the events within both narratives through the lens of comparative literature. [5]. By utilizing comparative literature, it becomes intriguing to examine and compare the events depicted in two stories originating from diverse locations and cultures[6]. This analysis would delve into the inherent components of the stories, including themes, plots, characters, settings, and culture. Comparative literature serves as a theoretical framework or methodology for comparing literary works that share elements to be compared, such as the narrative itself, cultural aspects, characters, or various other factors.

A folktale is a traditional narrative that has evolved within a society over time, dating back to ancient periods. Folktales fall within the oral folklore category, which is a part of the broader folklore genre. Many countries possess folklores that have been passed down through generations. A folktale is a narrative from folk traditions, often conveyed as if it were a real event, primarily for entertainment purposes. While it may contain elements of truth and moral lessons, it is typically a fictional story[7].

Folktales are often associated with specific regions or areas, as they tend to reflect the cultural and geographical context of the communities from which they originate. In reality, folktales from one region can share similarities with those from other areas, and even fairy tales in specific countries may exhibit resemblances to fairy tales from different countries. In essence, the similarity can be attributed to two main explanations: (1) monogenesis, where it originates from one source and spreads through diffusion, and (2) polygenesis, which arises from self-discovery (independent invention) or parallel development. Across various locations and time periods, as well as simultaneously, similar story motifs can emerge (Danandjaja, 2002:56; Endraswara, 2009:143-144).

In this case, there are several studies on comparative literature analysis that have been carried out by previous researchers. The first research entitled *The Comparative Historical Study of Malin Deman and Puti Bungsu* legend from Indonesia with *Niu Lang and Zhi Nu* from China by N. Syahrul, S. Sunarti, P. et al. [8]. The findings of this research indicate that there are four motifs that illustrate the connection between Indonesian and Chinese literature and culture. These four motifs encompass themes related to (1) women and family, (2) color, (3) numbers, and (4) animals. The second research entitled *A Comparative Study: The Folktale of Jaka Tarub (Indonesia) and Tanabata (Japan)* by R. Wadarita, G. Puspo [9]. The study's outcome revealed that there were both commonalities and distinctions in the story structure and cultural aspects. Nevertheless, *Jaka Tarub* and *Tanabata* did not exert influence on each other, as they each represented the distinct characteristics of the societies from which they originated. The third research entitled *Comparative Literature in Indonesian Folktale'S Timun Mas and Disney'S Beauty and the Beast* by I. Masofa, I. Sumarsono [10]. The study's findings highlight the following: 1) Both stories share similarities in how they confront a monster; 2) They differ in their descriptions of the monster and story endings. In *Timun Mas*, the monster is a large green male, and the story concludes when the protagonist defeats the monster. In *Beauty and the Beast*, the monster is depicted as a large animal, and the main character marries the

monster. This research portrays *Timun Mas* as representing Asian culture and *Beauty and the Beast* as representing Western culture. From the previous studies above, the differences between this research and previous research are the theory that the researchers used and the research subjects. In the previous research, the data analysis used the manual method.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The method used in this research is qualitative descriptive method [11]. Data were analyzed using a qualitative approach to content analysis techniques data collection primarily focused on extracting words or sentences from the film script, or does it involve sourcing information from other relevant materials that align with the Bogdan theory [12]. The primary theoretical framework employed in this study is Comparative Literature, which, as previously discussed, involves comparing and identifying similarities or differences between two literary works. The data used in this research is from the film script *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Princess and the Frog*. The objective of this research is to identify both commonalities and distinctions between two literary works and analyze their inherent elements.

This study focuses on comparing folktales, specifically the folktale of *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Princess and the Frog*. The data for this research is derived from these two folk tales. The study employs various techniques such as library research, watching the film, reading, and note-taking to gather and analyze the data. The analysis will be conducted using a comparative approach, specifically comparing the two folktales as the primary data sources. The researcher will employ a structural theory to compare various elements, including themes, plots, characters, settings, and culture, within the two folktales. Each country has various folklore. Indonesia with its cultural diversity has many folklore [13].

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After analyzing the gathered data, the researcher identified various aspects that exhibit both similarities and differences between the two folktales, employing the comparative literary method [4]. The following are the findings of the researchers: themes, plots, characters, settings, culture.

1. Themes

The similarities theme contained in the folktale *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Princess and the Frog* films explores the transformative power of love. They emphasize the importance of looking beyond appearances and embracing inner beauty. Meanwhile, the differences theme *Beauty and the Beast* emphasizes the importance of looking beyond appearances and embracing inner beauty. Whereas, *The Princess and the Frog* focuses on the transformative power of love.

2. Plots

The similarities in plot between the folktale *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Princess and the Frog*, both films feature strong female protagonists who undergo personal growth and self-discovery. They involve a central romantic relationship that develops throughout the story. Both films include elements of magic and enchantment. Meanwhile, the differences in the plot *Beauty and the Beast* recounts the tale of a young woman who develops affection for a prince under a curse, condemned to exist as a beast until he encounters genuine love. Whereas, *The Princess and the Frog* follows the journey of a young woman named Tiana who dreams of opening her restaurant and is transformed into a frog after kissing a prince who has been cursed.

3. Characters

The similarities characters between the folktale *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Princess and the Frog*. In both films, the female protagonists challenge traditional gender roles and societal expectations. Both films feature male love interests who play significant roles in the narrative. The supporting characters in both films contribute to the overall themes and provide comedic relief. Meanwhile, the differences in "Beauty and the Beast," Belle is a book-loving young woman who challenges societal expectations and learns to see beyond

the Beast's exterior. Whereas, In "*The Princess and the Frog*," Tiana is a hardworking and ambitious young woman who aspires to achieve her dreams without relying on a prince.

4. Settings

The differences in *Beauty and the Beast* are set in a medieval French village. Whereas, *The Princess and the Frog* takes place in 1920s New Orleans, Louisiana. In the setting, there is no similarity between the folktale *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Princess and the Frog*

5. Culture

The similarities in culture between the folktale *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Princess and the Frog*. Both films are part of Disney princess franchise and are aimed at a family audience. They showcase different cultural elements, with *Beauty and the Beast* set in a medieval French village and *The Princess and the Frog* set in 1920s New Orleans, Louisiana. Meanwhile, the differences *Beauty and the Beast* draws inspiration from European fairy tales and folklore. Whereas, *The Princess and the Frog* incorporates elements of African-American culture and jazz music, reflecting the unique cultural heritage of New Orleans

DISCUSSION

Beauty and the Beast and *The Princess and the Frog* has commonalities in their themes, plots, characters, and cultural representation. Both films explore the transformative power of love, feature strong female protagonists who challenge gender roles, and include elements of magic and enchantment.

Beauty and the Beast and *The Princess and the Frog* differ in their themes, plots, characters, settings, and cultural influences. While both films explore love and transformation, *Beauty and the Beast* focuses on inner beauty and appearances, while *The Princess and the Frog* emphasize the power of love. The plots differ in the curse and transformation elements, and the characters of Belle and Tiana have distinct personalities and aspirations. The settings of the films also differ, with *Beauty and the Beast* set in a medieval French village and *The Princess and the Frog* set in 1920s New Orleans [14], showcasing different cultural contexts.

CONCLUSION

Beauty and the Beast and *The Princess and the Frog* are two beloved Disney animated films that share some similarities but have notable differences in their themes, plots, characters, settings, and cultural influences. Both films explore the transformative power of love and emphasize the importance of looking beyond appearances and embracing inner beauty. They feature strong female protagonists who challenge traditional gender roles and societal expectations and include elements of magic and enchantment. However, the plots of the films differ, *Beauty and the Beast* narrates the tale of a prince who endures a curse, transforming him into a beast until he discovers genuine love, while *The Princess and the Frog* follow the journey of a young woman named Tiana who dreams of opening her restaurant and is transformed into a frog after kissing a prince who has been cursed. The characters of Belle and Tiana have distinct personalities and aspirations, and the films' settings also differ, with *Beauty and the Beast* set in a medieval French village and *The Princess and the Frog* set in 1920s New Orleans [14], showcasing different cultural contexts. Overall, the comparative analysis of *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Princess and the Frog* highlights the richness and diversity of storytelling across different cultures and mediums. It invites us to explore the connections and contrasts between literary works, fostering a deeper understanding of the human experience and the power of storytelling.

REFERENCES

- [1] [1] A. Nur, D. Kurniawati, and U. Yuliasari, "An Analysis Of Conflict And Main Character ' s Personality In A Movie Me Before You," no. 1949, pp. 235–240, 2021.
- [2] S. T. de Zepetnek, *Comparative Literature : Theory, Method, Application*, 18th ed. amsterdam, atlanta, 1998.
- [3] W. Disney, *Beauty and the Beast*. Canada: Buena Vista Pictures Distribution.Inc., 1991.
- [4] H. Remak, "Compa rative Literature, Its Definition and Function. In: Stallknecht, N.P. and

- Frenz, H., Eds., Com parative Literature: Method and Perspective,” *South. Illinois Univ. Press. Carbondale*, 3, 1961.
- [5] A. Noryunita and D. Purwatiningsih, “COMPARATIVE LITERATURE OF NOVEL SURAT KECIL UNTUK TUHAN AND OSCAR AND THE LADY IN PINK Andri Noryunita and Dewi Purwatiningsih Trunojoyo Madura University,” pp. 46–56.
- [6] wordpress, “Theory of comparative literature.” Wordpress, pp. 1–14. doi: <https://maenglishsite.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/theory-of-comparative-lit-an-overview.pdf>.
- [7] James Danandjaja, *Folklor Indonesia :ilmu gosip, dongeng, dan lain-lain*. Jakarta: Pustaka Utama Grafiti, 1994.
- [8] N. Syahrul, S. Sunarti, P. Purwaningsih, and S. Suryami, “The Comparative Historical Study of ‘Malin Deman and Putri Bungsu’ Legend from Indonesia with ‘Niu Lang and Zhi Nu’ from China,” 2022, doi: 10.4108/eai.15-9-2021.2315609.
- [9] R. Wardarita and G. Puspo Negoro, “A Comparative Study: The Folktale of Jaka Tarub (Indonesia) and Tanabata (Japan),” *Adv. Lang. Lit. Stud.*, vol. 8, no. 6, p. 1, 2017, doi: 10.7575/aiac.all.v.8n.6p.1.
- [10] I. Masofa and I. Sumarsono, “Comparative Literature in Indonesian Folktale’S Timun Mas and Disney’S Beauty and the Beast,” *Ling. Sci.*, vol. 28, no. 2, 2021.
- [11] M. B. M. Michael Huberman, *The Qualitative Researcher’s Companion*. London: SAGE Publications, 2002.
- [12] B. S. K. Bogdan Robert, *Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theories and Methods*. California: Pearson A & B, University of California, 2007.
- [13] A. Naufalia, “Character Education in Malin Kundang and Shim Cheong, a Filial Child: A comparative literary study,” vol. 424, no. Icollite 2019, pp. 102–106, 2020, doi: 10.2991/assehr.k.200325.062.
- [14] D. M. Siegel and S. H. McDaniel, “THE FROG PRINCE: Tale and Toxicology,” *Am. J. Orthopsychiatry*, vol. 61, no. 4, pp. 558–562, 1991, doi: 10.1037/h0079283.
- [15] S. Bassnett, “Comparative Literature A Critical Introduction,” *UK Blackwell Publ.*, 1993.