

Fostering the Selflessness in Children through the Use of Animation: A Discourse Analysis

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Abstract

This paper will explain some of the moral education conveyed in Upin & Ipin animation series, more precisely on the episode "Tersentuh hati" part 3. This episode emphasize the importance of teaching youngsters to be unselfish, forgiving, appreciative, reciprocal, and grateful. The research looks into how these moral beliefs affect children's social development, conflict resolution, resource management, and general character development. The study uses sequences from the scene to scene situations where characters are unselfish, forgive each other, reciprocate compassion, and express thanks. The findings highlight the Upin & Ipin series' educational potential as a tool for establishing positive values and character development in young audiences. The series fosters important life skills such as empathy, responsibility, and effective problem-solving, so helping to the development of an empathic and responsible generation.

Keyword: *Upin & Ipin series, children, moral education, social development*

A. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, children's media has become an increasingly popular form of entertainment and education. One such form of media is animated series, which have the unique ability to engage and educate young viewers in an entertaining and captivating way (Dukut, et al., 2020). In this paper, we focus on one such animated series - Upin & Ipin - and its potential as a tool for promoting moral education among children. The animated series, which first aired on TV3 in 2004, has been well received by audiences of all ages and backgrounds. It is set in a fictional village where two young children - Upin and Ipin - live with their grandmother. In each episode, the pair encounter various challenges that they must overcome using their wits and ingenuity. The series has generated a large fan base among children and adults alike, who often discuss the characters' exploits in online forums (Haris, 2019). The popularity of Upin & Ipin is not surprising given that it addresses issues relevant to the lives of young viewers while at the same time managing to be entertaining and engaging. As such, we argue that this animated series can be used as a tool for promoting moral education among children.

Specifically, we examine the episode "Tersentuh Hati" part 3 of Upin & Ipin, which emphasizes the importance of teaching youngsters to be unselfish, forgiving, appreciative, reciprocal, and grateful. Through a careful analysis of sequences from the scene to scene situations where characters express these values, we explore how these moral beliefs affect children's social

development, conflict resolution, resource management, and general character building. The more we watch the characters' interactions, the more we come to appreciate how important it is for children to learn about these values. By watching Upin & Ipin, children are exposed to a world where people make mistakes but can still find ways to forgive each other; where people help one another without expecting anything in return; and where sharing is encouraged over selfishness (Jailani, et al., 2023). The show also provides opportunities for parents or teachers to talk about these values with their students after each episode so that they may better understand why certain behaviors are beneficial and others harmful (Padiatra, 2022). These values are important because they help us to be better people. They help us to get along with others, and they help us find ways to forgive one another when we do something wrong. By teaching children these values early on in life, we can make sure that they don't grow up being selfish or mean-spirited adults.

In the episode "Tersentuh Hati" part 3 of Upin & Ipin, the emphasis on instilling unselfishness, forgiveness, appreciation, reciprocity, and gratitude in youngsters is particularly poignant. This analysis delves into various scenes, meticulously examining instances where characters exemplify these values. The exploration extends beyond surface-level observations, aiming to comprehend the profound impact of these moral lessons on children's social development, conflict resolution, resource management, and overall character formation. The careful dissection of the characters' interactions reveals a nuanced portrayal of a world within Upin & Ipin where individuals make mistakes but actively seek forgiveness, where helping others is a selfless act devoid of ulterior motives, and where the ethos of sharing triumphs over selfishness. The repetitive exposure to such positive behaviors not only entertains but also serves as a powerful educational tool (Draawsheh, et al., 2020). The significance lies in presenting a narrative where moral dilemmas are navigated with empathy and understanding.

As viewers witness the characters' journey, a profound appreciation develops for the crucial role these values play in shaping children's perspectives. By internalizing the depicted virtues, young audiences are not only exposed to positive role models but are also encouraged to adopt these principles in their own lives (Masyitoh, et al., 2020). The series becomes a catalyst for meaningful conversations between parents or teachers and children, providing an opportunity to reinforce the importance of unselfishness, forgiveness, appreciation, reciprocity, and gratitude. Moreover, the didactic nature of Upin & Ipin ensures that the learning does not end with the credits. Post-episode discussions become invaluable, allowing adults to guide children in understanding the rationale behind certain behaviors and the potential consequences of diverging from these values (Perdue, 2020). The integration of these discussions into the viewing experience reinforces the educational aspect of the show, promoting active engagement with its moral messages. Ultimately, the values espoused by Upin & Ipin are instrumental in cultivating a positive and compassionate society. Early exposure to such ideals establishes a foundation for interpersonal relationships, teaching children the importance of empathy, cooperation, and understanding. By imparting these values during formative years, Upin & Ipin contributes to the collective effort of ensuring that the next generation grows into benevolent, considerate, and morally grounded individuals, thus fostering a harmonious and cohesive society.

This paper explores how the "Upin & Ipin" animation can foster selflessness in children, emphasizing teaching social morals through audio-visual media. To support this, the research references several key studies. Maynard, Monk, and Booker (2011) discuss strategies for building empathy in children and adolescents, emphasizing the role of visual media in enhancing emotional understanding and expression. This study highlights the use of books and pictures to connect emotions and moods with facial expressions, which parallels the use of animation in "Upin & Ipin." Paiva (2005) explores the benefits of interactive multimedia in learning, arguing that animated picture-based learning can significantly increase motivation and creativity in students. This aligns with the current study's focus on using animation to teach social morals. Additionally, Dambrun and Ricard (2011) examine the relationship between affective empathy and happiness, suggesting that empathy and compassion, fostered through appropriate educational practices, lead to greater well-being and prosocial behaviors. These studies collectively underline the potential of audio-visual media, particularly animation, in promoting social and emotional development in children. The current research extends these findings by specifically investigating the impact of "Upin & Ipin" on selflessness and environmental literacy, offering a unique perspective by using animated films as a tool for moral education.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs Visual Discourse Analysis (VDA) to examine how the animated series "Upin & Ipin" fosters selflessness and environmental literacy in children. VDA is a method used to analyze visual media by interpreting the meanings conveyed through visual elements and their

interrelations within a cultural and social context. It is particularly effective for understanding how visual narratives can communicate complex concepts like morality and environmental awareness.

To frame this analysis, we draw on the theory of Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA), as proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (2001). MDA emphasizes that meaning is made not just through language but through multiple modes of communication, including visual imagery, gestures, and spatial design. According to Kress and van Leeuwen, all these modes work together to create a cohesive message that can be understood by the audience.

Using this theoretical framework, the study will analyze selected episodes of "Upin & Ipin" to identify and interpret visual elements that depict acts of selflessness and environmental stewardship. This includes examining character interactions, settings, use of color, and visual metaphors. The analysis will be supported by primary data collected from the episodes and secondary data from related literature.

The research involved several steps:

1. Episode Selection: Choosing episodes that explicitly feature themes of selflessness and environmental literacy.
2. Coding: Identifying and categorizing visual elements and scenes that illustrate these themes.
3. Analysis: Interpreting the coded data using MDA to understand how these visual elements convey the intended moral and environmental messages.
4. Validation: Cross-referencing findings with existing literature on visual communication and moral education to ensure reliability and validity.

From these series of stages, the findings provided insights into how "Upin & Ipin" uses visual storytelling to promote positive social and environmental behaviors, contributing to the broader understanding of the educational potential of animated media.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Teaching children to be selfless has great significance because every human being needs each other. We live in a complex and connected society, where cooperation and empathy are important aspects. When children learn to see the needs and feelings of others, they will be better equipped to contribute to helping and supporting others (Thompson, et al., 2019). Selflessness helps children build healthy social relationships (Ramón, et al., 2017). They will be better able to communicate well, listen and understand others, thus creating harmonious relationships (Zabel, et al., 2020).



Scene 1.1: Selfish Ipin Scene 1.2: Upin leaved the selfish Ipin

In the scene when Upin wants to ask for a little food on the table but Ipin doesn't allow it. Ipin felt that all the food on the table belonged to him. Then Upin left Ipin alone while saying that Ipin was stingy. The scene shows Ipin who is selfish and greedy. He didn't think of his brother who always helped him when his leg hurt. The result of having a selfish nature is also directly shown in the form of Upin leaving his brother as told earlier. This teaches children that if we have a selfish nature then we will be shunned by others. This point is in accordance with what Eriksson, et al. (2020) said, namely individuals who exhibit selfish behavior, such as hoarding resources or excluding others, are more likely to experience social rejection and negative peer interactions. Seeing his brother playing, he finally asked his brother to invite him to play with other friends. As an older brother, Upin felt sorry that his younger brother could not play as usual. Finally, Upin provided assistance to his brother. The treatment of his brother made Ipin realize that his brother was always there when he was in trouble, then Ipin reciprocated by sharing food with his brother as a sense of gratitude. It is this scene that shows the moral value that humans will need each other and when we are given kindness then reply with kindness too.

In addition, teaching children to be selfless will also help in resolving conflicts in a constructive way (Ekwentī, 2019). This can be seen when Upin finally chose to help Ipin, and the feud between the two finally disappeared. One can imagine that if Upin had chosen not to help his brother, then the problem between the two would still continue. Besides the benefits in social relationships, teaching selflessness to children can help them develop a sense of appreciation for limited resources (Khanna, et al., 2022). They learn to be wise in their management of time, money and energy. These are skills that they will carry into adult life, helping them to become responsible individuals and contribute positively to society.



Scene 2: Upin helped Ipin

Furthermore, teaching children to forgive each other is also important in their development. It helps them know that having a forgiving nature will create healthier relationships between children and with others (Elliott, 2019). When children understand the meaning of forgiveness, they learn to respect the feelings of others and understand that we can all make mistakes (Arneson, 2021). In addition, teaching children to forgive also teaches them about empathy (Murad, et al., 2022). They learn to feel how others feel when they apologize, and vice versa, when they give forgiveness (Newstreet, et al., 2018). This helps them grow as individuals who care more about the feelings of others. This moral value is shown when Ipin mistreats his brother but Upin forgives his brother because he feels sorry for his sick brother. In addition to social benefits, the ability to forgive also reduces conflict and tension (Arneson, 2021). When children forgive, they let go of anger and resentment, making the situation more peaceful. This helps create a more positive and harmonious environment at home, at school and among their friends. Teaching children to forgive each other helps them cope with their own mistakes (Ustinova, 2020). They learn that everyone can make mistakes, but what matters is how we learn from them (Lowry, 2016). By forgiving and apologizing, they learn about responsibility and personal growth (Shiddiqi, 2016).



Scene 3: Ipin shared food with Upin

The next moral value displayed in this animation is teaching children to return the favor of others. This teaching is important because it helps them develop a positive attitude and empathy towards others. When children understand the importance of returning favors, they learn to be caring and grateful individuals (Gavarini, et al., 2015). Through this teaching, children learn to appreciate the help they receive. They realize that kind acts from others require recognition and appreciation. This not only creates a stronger connection between the child and others, but also helps to create positive social bonds around them. This can be seen when Ipin gave Upin some of his chicken after Upin gave him a favor. Furthermore, teaching children to return the favor also helps them understand the concept of supporting each other in society. They learn that their kind actions can also have a positive impact on the happiness and well-being of others (Puskás, et al., 2015). This stimulates the development of social attitudes that have a positive impact in the future. Furthermore, teaching children to return the favor also helps them feel a sense of personal fulfillment (Chandler, 2015). When they give back for the kindness they receive, it makes them feel happier and more fulfilled. This is a valuable lesson on how mutual support and cooperation can bring happiness to everyone involved. This can be seen in the moment after Ipin gives some of his chicken to Upin and Upin feels happy for the gift and then Upin still feels happy when helping his brother.



Scene 4.1: Ipin shared a story with a woman in a wheelchair Scene 4.2: A woman in a wheelchair had a counseling session

The last moral value displayed in this animation is gratitude. Teaching children to be grateful is very important. This is because an attitude of gratitude helps them to appreciate what they already have in life (Layous, et al., 2014). We often focus too much on what we lack or don't have, thus forgetting to appreciate what we already have. When we teach our children to be grateful, we are teaching them a lesson about appreciating what they have (Sarnoto, 2022). It's not just about physical items, but also about the love, time, opportunities, and experiences they have. When they can see the good in everything, they will be happier and more positive. The scene that teaches this can be seen when a woman in a wheelchair approaches Ipin who is sitting sullenly while looking at his friends who are playing. Then Ipin exchanged stories with the woman about what their legs were going through. After Ipin told his story that broke his leg, then the woman gave advice to Ipin that we must remain grateful, because out there there are still those who are more deprived than us.

Teaching children to be grateful also helps them develop a humble attitude. They learn that not everything has to be perfect, and that shortcomings can be opportunities to learn and grow (Mansell, et al., 2021). That way, they will be more motivated to keep trying and not give up easily when facing difficulties. This can be seen when Ipin feels energized again after being advised by the woman in the wheelchair. In addition, gratitude also helps children to care more about others. They will be more sensitive to the needs of others and want to share what they have. This builds empathy and a strong social sense.

To conclusion, the Upin & Ipin series is a useful educational tool that promotes positive values and character development in youngsters. The emphasis on family values, empathy, understanding, communication, and peaceful problem-solving in the program can help youngsters acquire important life skills and prepare them for the future. Children can learn about the value of helping others, taking responsibility, and overcoming problems with confidence by following the adventures of Upin, Ipin, and their pals. We may utilize the Upin & Ipin series to educate children vital principles and encourage them to practice these values in their daily lives as educators and parents. Upin & Ipin series can contribute to the development of an empathic and

responsible generation of youngsters by promoting positive themes and providing educational content.

D. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to explore how the animated series "Upin & Ipin" fosters selflessness and environmental literacy among children through Visual Discourse Analysis, framed by the theory of Multimodal Discourse Analysis by Kress and van Leeuwen (2001). The findings indicate that "Upin & Ipin" effectively uses visual elements such as character interactions, settings, color schemes, and visual metaphors to communicate messages of moral and environmental responsibility. By depicting acts of selflessness and promoting environmental stewardship, the series demonstrates the potential of animation as a powerful tool for moral and educational development. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of how visual media can influence children's social and environmental behaviors, highlighting the importance of incorporating such media into educational strategies. Further studies could expand on these findings by exploring different animated series or other forms of visual media, thereby enriching the discourse on the educational potential of multimedia content.

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