

## MULTICULTURAL VALUES IN DISNEY ANIMATED FILMS

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### ABSTRACT

This qualitative research focuses on the discussion of multiculturalism which is essential to do because in the current digital era, people are increasingly active moving from one place to another. Consequently, more and more countries are inhabited by people from different kinds of ethnic groups, cultures, races, etc. and multicultural values are indeed necessary to be applied. As the issue of cultural diversity has been broadly discussed, it is also found in Disney animated films. This study applied the semiotic approach to analyze data in the forms of dialogs as well as scene images obtained from the observation of Disney animated films. The results of study suggested that multicultural values can refer to respect and peace which play an essential role in multicultural society. The study also revealed that the observed animated films could represent multiculturalism through the portraits of animated film characters, traditions and customs as well as philosophy from different cultures.

**Keywords: multicultural values, multiculturalism, Disney animated films, cultural diversity**

### INTRODUCTION

A society usually is constructed by a group of people who live together in an area which consists of people with different backgrounds. This difference can be seen in terms of culture, for example customs, habits, language, beliefs, and so on. It can obviously be seen in many countries. This is influenced by the increasing number of immigrants from various regions or countries which have an impact on the emergence of ethnic, language, and cultural diversity (Grishaeva, 2012, p. 917). There are many countries with residents from different cultural background such as Indonesia, Singapore, United States, Australia, United Kingdom, etc. This situation is known as multiculturalism. The term indicated that there are various kinds of cultures and each culture has its own uniqueness.

Since the beginning of the year 2000s the discussion about multiculturalism has been increasing. People began to realize that there must be individuals who come from different cultural backgrounds. News media often reports many conflicts that occur in multicultural societies. This is due to discriminatory actions or unfair treatment toward certain ethnic groups. Berkes (Berkes, 2010, p. 4) argues that the idea of multiculturalism can be used to solve the problems experienced by minorities.

The United States of America for example, whose citizens comes from different cultures, sees discrimination as a problem that must be overcome. Therefore, people need to be educated on the importance of multicultural values.

The term 'multicultural' is often associated with several terms such as plurality and heterogeneity. However, if people interpret diversity in terms of variations including kinds of ethnic groups, languages, beliefs, etc., then according to Lan (2011, p. 280) it would be more appropriate to associate it with heterogeneity rather than plurality. Talking about the significance of knowledge on multiculturalism, there are actually many media, especially entertainment media, literature, and popular culture products that show experiences related to multicultural values such as television, films, advertisements, magazines, etc. Rapid development in technology has made films a more interesting and essential entertainment media for most people (Rudy, 2020, p. 15). Society consisting of individuals with different cultural backgrounds is often depicted in American films. This is something educative and interesting because movies as popular entertainment media play an important role in society. It should be realized that, many aspects in everyday life can be reflected in movies. Therefore, in terms of multiculturalism, Cortés (2000, p. 23) argued that various elements of media, including films, can shape a person's mindset in perceiving the meaning of being diverse.

The point above shows that studying films in order to explore the multicultural values contained in them is necessary. Since people like to watch film, especially Disney films, this opportunity can be used to identify essential elements related to multiculturalism and its relation to society. American films produced by Disney can be categorized as films which are popular among people of all ages. Almost all the films produced by Disney are loved by people from different countries. This is an indication that Disney films need to be discussed and analyzed because their influence on the world community is considered quite large.

So, this theme is considered worthy of discussion because in reality, the world consists of people from various types of cultural and social backgrounds who are now increasingly exposed because of the rapid development of science and technology. If people have less knowledge on multicultural values, problems will arise and will ruin the peace and harmony in society. In addition, to identify the issues related to multiculturalism, film is considered the right media because they (especially Disney production animated movies) are popular culture products that are in demand by many people. Thus, the objectives of this research is to identify the importance of having multicultural values and to analyze the way Disney animated films show multicultural values.

Studies that focus on multiculturalism can basically contribute in various ways. Therefore, the objectives of the study can be seen from two perspectives. Theoretically, all types of cultural studies can essentially contribute to enriching theories in the field of cultural studies or other relevant studies. By this way, researchers in cultural sciences can obtain more complete references. Practically, this study can be used by everyone to understand about multicultural values, especially those who live in countries with multicultural societies, so that people can create harmony in their lives.

From the result of reviewing literature, there are indeed previous studies published in journals discussing about multiculturalism, for example, a research by McFeaters *et al.* in 2001 talked about the importance of applying multicultural literature at schools; Collins' research (2010) who talked

about multiculturalism in a Japanese movie in; Rhee (2016) discussed about multiculturalism in Korean movies; etc. In addition, there are also Indonesian researchers such as Akil (2010) and Alismail (2016) who both emphasized the application of multiculturalism at schools. Researches on multiculturalism in movies was discussed by Hartanti (2018) and Sukmono (2019) focusing only on Indonesian films. This study shows the discussion of multiculturalism will be something useful to enrich people's knowledge if it is related with the images shown by Disney animated films and is analyzed by using a semiotic approach to find the implied meanings. This is the research gap that this study can fill and to distinguish it from those previous studies.

## **DATA SOURCE**

The main data for this study are the dialogs and descriptions of the scenes from the observed films. There are about 9 American animated films produced by Disney used as the main data source: *Aladdin* (1992), *Pocahontas* (1995), *Mulan* (1998), *Lilo & Stich* (2002), *The Princess and the Frog* (2009), *Big Hero 6* (2014), *Moana* (2016), *Coco* (2017), and *Raya and the Last Dragon* (2021) The films were selected as data to observe because they can represent diverse culture.

## **METHODS**

This study is conducted by observing American animated films that could represent multiculturalism. Indeed, there are many American films which portray multiculturalism. However, considering the time, ability as well as cost of carrying out this research, the films chosen to be observed and analyzed were Disney's films. By this way, this research can proceed according to the plan. It is also possible that non-Disney American movies can be inserted as supporting data in the analysis process. This study is categorized as a qualitative research because it involves data in the form of text or statements obtained from various sources (Hasan, 2002, p. 83; Miles et al., 2019, p. 321).

The technique in collecting data was divided into several steps. Firstly, the Disney animated films were collected as the main source which were carefully observed to obtain important data for analysis. Secondly, one by one the films are watched and examined to get the main data – important dialogs and film scenes that represent multicultural values. The film scenes which include images of characters, settings, actions, etc. were described in the form of explanations. Finally, the results of data collection in this study are in the form of texts containing descriptions of the film scenes (images, actions, settings, etc.) which could signify multicultural values to proceed to the process of data analyzing.

## **THEORETICAL REVIEW**

This study is classified as a content analysis study. This type of study is usually used to explain, describe, and interpret text, media, etc. (Pal, 2017, pp. 483–4554). Researchers from cultural studies often use this kind of analysis to acquire as much as information about the objects they

research (Adi, 2011, p. 144). So, the purpose of the data analysis in this study is to obtain findings such as evidence, statements, as well as explanations that are essentially useful to answer the research questions. The next step, all the data that has been transcribed and compiled in the form of text is organized based on the categories which are presented in the discussion section. For interpretation, the data analysis process in the study involves the application of a semiotic approach described by Roland Barthes. What is important to understand in the semiotic approach is that everything may be considered to be a sign which can be interpreted to create a meaning (Berger, 2010, p. 11). Additionally, Storey (Storey, 2006, p. 118) explained that semiotics taught by Barthes can make something hidden (meaning) become clearly revealed. So, in this research, dialogs and movie scenes can signify a meaning. That way, the multicultural values contained in the films can be explored and studied.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The presentation of the study results begins with explanations of the concept of multicultural values which will pave a way to understand the significance of these values. Next, it also discusses the aspects related to multicultural values found in Disney animated films.

### **The Importance of Multicultural Values**

The discussion of multicultural values needs to relate to understanding the concept of multiculturalism. Therefore, in this section, multicultural values can be discussed simultaneously with the view of multiculturalism. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, the term “multicultural” commonly refers to the conditions in which a society has various cultures. To get to know the term better, it is necessary to look at the definition from a dictionary. *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary* defines the word “multicultural” as an adjective with the meaning: for or including people of several different races, religions, languages, and traditions (Wehmeier, 2000, p. 538). The definition reflects that “difference” can be something interesting to observe. When the word ‘multicultural’ is combined with the word “society”, it means a society consisting of people from different cultures.

To understand better about culture, it can be seen from the idea by Banks (1974, p. 7) arguing that it is necessary to realize that culture can be in the form of behavior patterns, signs, norms, and all the things created by humans which may vary and distinguish it from the culture of other communities. This statement shows that each individual may have a different cultural background and they occupy an area, mingle and form a society. Here lies the problem. The condition that people with different cultures joining the majority culture in a society is certain is certainly not a trivial issue.

Many countries in this world are multicultural. Indonesia, for instance, has different kinds of ethnic groups, languages, beliefs, traditions, etc. So, it shows that people with different cultures live in one society. Many cultural researchers see that “multicultural” is identical with the term “diversity”. It is appropriate to use to describe the condition of society with individuals who have many different cultures – two or more different cultures (Doğan, 2017, p. 72; Warikoo, 2019, p. 10).

In general, people often use the term “multiculturalism” (a noun of “multicultural”) to describe phenomena that reflect cultural diversity. Many people also often use the term “cultural diversity” to refer to multiculturalism because it has almost the same meaning as multiculturalism. According to Velten and Lashley (2017, pp. 105–106) cultural diversity is understood as a characteristic of a particular ethnic group which is different from other ethnic groups in terms of race, culture, religion, etc.

Since the fact that people with various cultural backgrounds living together in a place is not something simple, it is necessary to prevent conflicts in society. As a matter of fact, there have been a lot of cases, incidents, and conflicts that have arisen as a result of cultural differences, especially in terms of race, ethnicity, and religion. This occurs in almost all multicultural countries in the world. Issues related to cultural differences that are often seen in society, for instance, are discriminatory treatment toward African-Americans, Asian-Americans, etc. that has happened in the United States of America. There are also such cases found in South-east Asian developing countries against minority religious followers in those countries.

The explanations above help improve understanding of the concepts of “multicultural” as well as “multiculturalism”. When the word “multicultural” is combined with the word “value”, it can generate a fundamental meaning. The word “Value” according to Pauls (1990, p. 4) contains a broad meaning such as guiding beliefs or moral rules. Additionally, Dođru & Demirbař (2021, p. 26) argued that value is the basic part of principle that constructs a community and makes it different from other communities. Thus, the term “multicultural values can be interpreted as a set of standards or rules related to morals to be applied in the life of a multicultural society. In other words, people need values that can support togetherness and promote diversity. These values are perceived as multicultural values. The concept of multicultural values which has been discussed above shows that it is important for every individual (especially from a multicultural country) to understand and apply multicultural values in living their daily lives.

Multicultural values need to be understood and applied by everyone because they provide good benefits to the world. Countries with culturally diverse societies need to understand that multicultural values have a contribution to these countries. The discussion of the concept of multiculturalism above has paved a way to understand that this value can form good attitudes in every society. It helps reduce prejudice, encourage tolerance, respect and acceptance for different cultures (Dođan, 2017, p. 77; Olanrewaju & Asuelime, 2017, p. 41; Warikoo, 2019, p. 24). In other words, every individual needs to have good understanding of multiculturalism so that all people will respects and appreciate differences. By this way, prejudice, stereotypes, discrimination, etc. can gradually be removed.

The explanations of the concept of multiculturalism above can show that the multicultural values need to be practiced are respect and peace

**Table 1. Multicultural Values**

Multicultural Values	
respect	peace

The table above shows that the two values “respect” and “peace” are indeed significant in multiculturalism. Respect for differences and creating peace in life must be the main values that form the basis understanding of multiculturalism. Mutual respect for differences needs to be made as a policy that covers various fields such as education, work, media, social associations, etc. (Grishaeva, 2012, p. 921). Today, many people do not understand the importance of respecting differences. Ignoring the attitude of respect will certainly trigger conflicts related to differences in race, ethnicity, religion, gender, etc.

Additionally, Doğan (2017, p. 72) argued that respecting other cultural values in order to preserve their existence is a necessary attitude to have in a multicultural society. Respect basically includes a broad meaning. What must be understood in the context of respect is the importance of seeing differences as something real and natural in human life. The fact is that every individual is different in any way. Only then can respect be truly valuable and useful in life.

Respect in the context of multiculturalism is certainly a form of tolerance for various types of cultural differences. Tolerating means accepting differences as they are and not judging (Raeder, 2017, p. 75; Stanley et al., 2021, p. 37; Suharyanto, 2013, p. 198). This explanation shows that one of the most essential values in multiculturalism is respect. Everyone wants to be respected. Showing respect for another person can make him or her feel well treated. Therefore, this value needs to be taught to every individual starting from childhood, especially those who live in multicultural countries so that the next generation of nation will keep maintaining the value of “respect” in everyday life. Families, formal and non-formal educational institutions, community organizations, workplaces, etc. must encourage the “respect” as a significant value to shape good individuals in multicultural societies.

Another multicultural value that is also essential is peace. Creating a state of peace is also a basic aspect in multiculturalism. The essence of multiculturalism is to achieve peace in a multicultural society. This value shows a strong attachment to value of “respect” because it is can also be perceived as the result of “respect”. Peace is something which can be felt and created. Therefore, it can be interpreted as a condition in society where everyone is free to choose and live their lives with all the differences they have in a good way (Jarstad et al., 2019, p. 3). Peace is viewed as something that needs to be realized in society because only with peace can people live happily and peacefully A sense of peace is certainly a significant aspect in a multicultural society because it is not easy to create peace in a culturally diverse society. Many conflicts will occur within a country which consists of people from different cultures. Thus, everything related to peace must always concentrate on eliminating violence and supporting the realization of peace culture (Massaquoi, 2009, p. 63). That is why peace needs to be a priority for all countries.

However, peace can be perceived in a broader way. It does not only mean a state of non-violent, peace includes one’s stable condition, relationships with others, respecting, being able to

forgive, and getting along with others, and tolerating (Yilmaz, 2018, p. 141). So, in simple terms, peace should be related to the good values needed to interact with other people from other cultures in social life. Since it is strongly connected to kindness, therefore, according to Galtung (1969, p. 185) peace usually contains elements of unlimited love which are often taught in religion. The more individuals in a society understand the importance of bringing about peace, the fewer conflicts associated with discrimination or prejudice against a particular culture or gender will be.

### **Multiculturalism in Animated Films**

The spirit of multiculturalism also seems to be embedded in Disney animated films. Disney films depicted multicultural values by involving cultures from various countries. By this way, fans of Disney animated films of all ages can see and get to know other cultures with their own uniqueness. After all, every country with its own culture needs to be known by people. The uniqueness of cultures from other countries is used by Disney Films to enrich their work and reach more audiences. From the analysis of the animated films of this study, there are elements related to multiculturalism found in Disney animated films. They were shown through at least three kinds of portraits as followings:

### **The Characters of Animated Films**

Disney film production has proved that cultural diversity can also be used to show the different and unique characters in their animated films. Each character has a role to convey a certain meaning in animated films. However, it is general to see that characters in animated films are not dominated by white-skinned and blonde-haired images. They have included characters from other races or countries as main characters. A main character is always portrayed as characters who is preferred because of his/her kindness and is also usually described as more attractive than the supporting characters (Bazzini et al., 2010, p. 2697). Talking about the main character in a film especially an animated film, in general, most people (particularly children or teenagers) who watch the film immediately think about the beauty of the character.

The depiction of a character, whether male or female in an animated film, is closely related to the attractiveness of facial appearance. According to Little (2014, p. 621) face has always become something significant in art since the past and many people are quite sensitive to things related to their faces. In other words, people have set a standard regarding the beauty of a person's face. For instance, in general, perception about the beauty of a woman's face is often associated with a white colored skin, straight blonde hair, and a slim body. This perception has always been used as a benchmark in portraying attractive female characters in animated films, especially skin color. However, this view may not represent the concept of beauty.

From a multicultural perspective, the beauty described in animated characters is not always dominated by characters with white skin, blonde hair, European culture, noble family background. The main character, Tiana in the animated film *The Princess and the Frog* (2009), for example, is depicted as a black (African-American) princess. This shows that a beautiful princess is not always white. Regarding the view of beauty, Ichaba and Akpa (2018, p. 1329) argued that the beauty shown

in something, whether it is an individual, a film character or anything else, can somehow complement each other to create beauty as an entire. When it comes to the appearance of Disney animated characters from other countries, Mulan from Chinese culture, Pocahontas from Native-American culture, Moana from Hawaiian culture, Jasmine from Middle Eastern culture and Raya from Southeast Asian culture the beauty they display seem to be able to signify the beauty of the faces of women in the world.

Since the main characters in animate films are often considered to represent their beauty, the concept of beauty needs to be understood well. Human's beauty is considered subjective and is formed by social and cultural conditions that exist in every culture (Kim & Lee, 2018, p. 25). This idea makes people understand that someone's beauty is not only based on skin color or physical appearance of certain races. The Disney animated films observed in this study have symbolized that female characters with various faces and skin colors. They portrayed female characters from various kinds of cultures who generally have yellow, light-brown, and brown skin color and straight black hair.

The description of diversity of skin and hair colors on Disney animated characters is portrayed in the animated films observed in this study. Moana and Lilo, for example, are depicted as brown-skinned and black-haired Polynesian cultural characters; Jasmine in the animated film *Aladdin* is described as a princess from Middle-Eastern culture who has typical olive skin and black hair. The main character of *Raya and the Last Dragon*, Raya is shown with typical light brown skin color of Southeast Asian culture and black hair as well as the Native American character, Pocahontas in the animated film *Pocahontas* is depicted as a lively woman with light brown skin and black hair. Meanwhile, the character, Tiana in the animated film *The Princess and the Frog* is pictured as an African princess with beautiful black skin and hair. Besides, there is also Mulan, a popular female character representing Chinese culture in the animated film *Mulan* depicted with yellow skin color and black hair. The depictions of characters from different cultures with different skin and hair color can signify that the beauty of the characters in Disney animated films is also related to the existence of the beauty in ethnic diversity.

Those characters are still able to attract the interest of the audience from various cultural backgrounds. This can prove that people are fascinated to see another kind of beauty of the films characters from different cultures. This idea can be connected the perspective from Taylor and Hoechsmann (2011, p. 221) stating that knowledge of cultural diversity needs to be perceived as a way to know an individual's openness to knowledge, consciousness and respect as a process of interacting. In relation to multicultural values, the portrait of characters from different cultures in animated films can help the audience develop the sense of respect for the beauty of individuals of different countries. This is indeed useful, especially in teaching children or teenagers so that they can understand that each culture has its own beauty.

### **Traditions and Customs**

The discussion of the diverse culture portraits shown in Disney animated films observed in this study included descriptions of the customs, traditions as well as characteristics of cultures from



different countries. Traditions are inseparable from a culture. Every culture of any country must have its own traditions which can be perceived as the hallmark of that culture. The traditions and customs of various cultures shown in Disney animated films can tell that this world is rich in unique and valuable cultures. The diverse traditions and customs depicted in Disney animated films can be seen through clothing, daily habits, arts, and food.

Firstly, in term of clothing for instance, the variety of clothes depicted in those animated films shows that the characters from different cultures display their distinctive clothes. Clothing can be a tool to reflect one's identity to others (Hristova, 2014, p. 83). The identity discussed here can be interpreted as cultural identity. The characters with their cultural clothing shown in Disney animated films can reflect the richness of cultural costumes from different countries. The character of Fa Mulan in *Mulan* (1998), for example, is depicted in Chinese classical clothing commonly known as "han-fu". The classic Chinese clothing such as "han-fu" is still synonymous with the Chinese national culture. This was also explained by Sun and Ha (2020, p. 19) as the identity of national ethnic which focuses on ethnicity, blood-ties concept, ancestral descent, beliefs and cultural habits that encourage the formation of a national culture. Disney also showed culture from the Middle East. Princess Jasmine in the animated film *Aladdin* (1992), for instance, is depicted in typical Middle-Eastern women's clothing and "harem pants" as her signature costume. Besides, a typical Middle Eastern head cover made of a cloth known as the turban also appeared as one of the images in the film.

In addition, there is also a main character named Moana in the animated film *Moana* (2016) who is depicted in typical Polynesian culture clothing. The clothes are mainly made of natural materials such as leaves and grass as well as the accessories made of sea-shells. The clothes worn by Moana was also the hallmark of traditional Polynesian clothes made from plant materials. Another example is the character Lilo in the Disney animated film *Lilo and Stich* (2002) which depicted a Hawaiian-style costume with leaf-patterned cloth and beach sandals as the character's outfit on a beach background. People living in coastal areas such as Hawaii, Tahiti, Samoa, etc. have their own distinctive clothing which can be perceived as the epitome of their culture and dress habits.

In Pocahontas for instance, the main character Pocahontas from the Powhatan tribe (one of the Native American tribes) is pictured in clothes made of deer skin (buckskin). This is also a description showing that Native Americans also have their own distinctive clothes. Different from Pocahontas, *Raya and the Last Dragon* (2021) portrayed the main character Raya wearing a conical hat made of bamboo used especially by Southeast Asian when farming.

Secondly, portraits of diversity in terms of traditions and customs can also be seen from the arts and cultural activities. There are certain characteristics of tradition and customs of each culture portrayed in Disney animated films analyzed in this study. Each film showed the characteristics of the traditions and customs found in each culture. In the animated film *Aladdin* (1992), for instance, there were images showing the characteristics of Middle Eastern culture such as the use of camels as a means of transportation and the term 'sultan' used to describe a wealthy ruler or a king.

Native American (Indian-American) traditions and customs were shown in the animated film *Pocahontas* (1995). The main character in the film is Pocahontas, the daughter of the chief of the

Powhatan tribe. She was portrayed as a typical Indian-American woman who is natural, simple and dedicated to her tribe. There were also images showing that the custom of women in Indian tribes is to deal with work such as cooking, gathering herbs, etc. In 1998, Disney film production released an animated film with the title *Mulan* which is a legend from China with the main character Mulan, a brave female character who was agile and able to fight for her country. The animated film pictured several images identical with the Chinese traditions and customs such as the Chinese custom of using chopsticks to eat

In addition, the traditions and customs in Polynesian culture were also pictured by Disney through the animated films *Lilo & Stich* (2002) and *Moana* (2016). The two main characters Lilo and Moana who represented Polynesian culture can show that beach and sea are commonplace for the Polynesian people because they live in areas surrounded by ocean. Thus, beach background frequently appeared in them. Some images associated with Polynesian culture were reflected in the two animated films, for instance, an image of surfing activity and Polynesian traditional dance. Likewise, Moana was also involved in boating activity, a characteristic of community life in coastal areas.

There is also Hispanic (Mexican) culture, for example, a celebration known as “Day of the Dead” one of important celebrations in Mexico was also described in the film *Coco* (2017). In 2021, Disney released an animated film with a Southeast Asian culture entitled *Raya and the Last Dragon*. What catches the attention of this film is the name of the main character, Raya. The word “raya” is commonly used by Malay and Indonesian people which means “huge or grand”. Disney used such a term to symbolize that it would portray more cultural diversity by including Southeast Asian culture. Besides, the author of this film is an American writer born in Malaysia.

Thirdly, the pictures of food that appeared in animated films can also signify the diversity of traditions and customs. For instance, *Raya and the Last Dragon* pictured several Southeast Asian culture special food such as Thai spicy soup, congee, satay, etc. as well as fruits of tropical countries of Southeast Asia such as jackfruit, mango, mangosteen, and dragon fruit. Whereas *Big Hero 6* pictured a type of plant used for spicy flavoring called *wasabi*.

Finally, the arts described in this part include dance, martial arts and traditional weapons used in self-defense. In *Big Hero 6*, for instance, there was a picture of a mask used in a Japanese-style art performance called *kabuki*. There was a depiction of traditional lion dance which is normally performed during the Chinese New Year in *Mulan*. In terms of martial arts, Chinese martial art known as *wushu* appeared in the film *Mulan*. There were scenes in *Raya and the Last Dragon* depicting Southeast Asian martial arts such as Indonesian *Pencak Silat*, *Muay-Thai*, *Arnis* and Southeast Asian traditional weapons such as *Keris* (Indonesia) and *Krabi-Krabong* (Thailand). The use of bows and arrows as the weapons of Indian tribes were described in *Pocahontas*.

Thus, all the characteristics observed in Disney animated films in this study can signify an attempt by Disney film production to reflect that United States of America as a country consisting of basically various races and ethnic groups considers multiculturalism an essential aspect. With fascinating images or pictures on the traditions and customs of different ethnic groups, the understanding of multiculturalism will also increase, particularly in the world of education. The

purpose of introducing different ethnicities and cultures can help eliminate inter-ethnic or inter-racial conflicts (Banks, 1974, p. 16; Ramirez, 2006, p. 200; Warikoo, 2019, p. 24).

### **Philosophy from Other Cultures**

Behind the diverse culture portrayed in Disney animated films, there is also a rich philosophy of each culture which can be learned by everyone. Disney animated films analyzed in this study revealed that there is a philosophy about filial piety to parents. This is found in the film *Mulan* (1998). In Chinese culture, filial piety is a significant attitude. The history of Chinese cultural development has shown that every individual has been educated to be a dutiful child to his or her parents. Since the time of dynasty, the Chinese have emphasized the importance of filial piety and it has even become one of the most essential teachings in the Confucian era. According to Nichols (2013, p. 204) the meaning of filial piety to parents in Confucianism is behavior and characteristic related to obligation and concerns for parents, elders, ancestors both living and dead. The philosophy of filial piety to parents in the Confucian concept then spread to other countries around China and has become significant culture for many Asian countries (Chungang, 2015, p. 324).

Another one is the philosophy of respect and remembrance of family members, relatives or friends who have passed away. It is also something that can be used to enrich one's knowledge. This philosophy is found in the celebration of "the Day of Dead" portrayed in the animated film *Coco* (2017). This philosophy can also be found in several countries, especially in Asian countries. For example, in Cambodia, there are rituals held to remember and honor those who have died. According to Holt (2012, p. 71) Cambodians who have learned Buddhism believe that this is a way to accumulate merit. Additionally, Filipino culture also has various ways of showing honor to those who have passed away because they believe that spirits have passed to heaven and they need to be cherished and remembered (Mercurio, 2021, p. 92). This view contains valuable moral points which can be passed down from generation to generation.

Basically philosophy behind every culture reflected in Disney animated films can be advantageous to everyone, especially the audience. Philosophies from other cultures may contain knowledge values because they can help people get familiar and understand interesting as well as useful philosophies from different countries. Basarab (Basarab, 2015, p. 39) pointed out that recognize and accepting the fact that culture is diverse can be significant for increasing knowledge. From the results of analysis shown above, there is no doubt that cultural diversity exists in this world is an undeniable fact. Thus, cultural differences should not be an obstacle in everyday life and understanding of multiculturalism is necessary in every aspect of human life by developing multicultural values in every society.

### **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, there were at least four essential points obtained from the results of the study. First, the discussion of multicultural values is indeed phenomenal as well as significant because the issue of multiculturalism in world society has been seriously discussed, especially countries with

multiethnic citizens. This issue seems to attract entertainment media. Disney animated films, for instance, have also included the theme of multiculturalism and displayed cultural diversity.

Second, the analysis suggests that basically multicultural values play a vital role in social life, particularly a society consisting of people from different cultural, ethnic, racial and religious backgrounds. Multicultural values that are necessarily needed in society are respect and peace, particularly in encouraging people to show tolerance. By this way, problems or conflicts related to discrimination, prejudice, etc. will be eliminated. Third, the results of analysis showed that there were three kinds of images which portrayed multiculturalism in the animated films observed in this study. The portrait of characters from different cultures revealed that the image of a beautiful physical appearance in Disney animated films is not only dominated by white-skinned and blonde-haired characters. The multicultural view shows that the beauty of characters also includes any kinds of skin and hair colors.

Fourth, the portrait of traditions and customs from various cultures including clothing, arts, special food, scenic backgrounds, habits, etc in the animated films can signify that those images are essential aspects that Disney film production shows in their animated films so that cultural diversity can be represented in American animation culture. The result of analysis revealed that behind the diverse cultural images portrayed in the films, there were interesting philosophies such as filial piety to parents and remembering and respecting people who have passed away. Finally, the findings of this study can emphasize that cultural diversity needs to be understood as a reality and a driving force to encourage respect and bring about peace in every society.

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