

COMPARISON BETWEEN LIVE-ACTION AND ANIMATION VERSION OF DISNEY *MULAN* USING DISNEY FORMULA

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Abstract

Mulan is a movie that has two versions in animation and live-action. This research aims to reveal the similarities and differences between both versions using the Disney formula. To show the problem of this research, it uses the Disney formula by Xu and Tian (2013). As the study results, good and bad characters can identify the visual image through behavior and dialogue. The helper is not only for the heroin, but the enemy also gets a helper in live-action. The love line in the live-action version is bittersweet. The theme song is the same, jokes, the stars, and the voice is original by the stars. The stars that appear in both versions are different. Disney used *Mulan's* story using the Disney formula to create similarities and differences in both versions.

Keywords: *Mulan* movie, Comparative Study, Disney Formula

Abstrak

Tujuan ditulisnya artikel ini adalah untuk membongkar persamaan dan perbedaan antara dua versi dari film *Mulan*, diketahui bahwa dua versi film *Mulan* menggunakan formula Disney. Teori dan konsep telah disajikan untuk membantu dan mempermudah analisa pada dua versi film *Mulan*, seperti Disney formula oleh Xu Mingwu dan Tian Chuanmao. Sedangkan data-data diperoleh dari film animasi dan remake live-action garapan Disney dalam bentuk dialog pada naskah film. Dari hasil analisa didapatkan hasil bahwa perbedaan dari dua versi film tersebut ditunjukkan dengan penambahan dan pengurangan, serta pengubahan pada karakter film tersebut. Dan juga, penggambaran karakter antagonis dan protagonis, karakter penolong, cerita cinta remaja, lagu latar, dan aktor pada film tersebut.

Kata kunci: Film *Mulan*, Studi Komparatif, Formula Disney

INTRODUCTION

Walt Disney Company was known as one of the famous companies that produced several popular movies for all ages. It brings stunning cinematography to attract the audience to watch their movies. This company has become a global company; it had produced several TV programs, movies, merchandise related to their works, and theme parks. This company has a significant impact on the American media and popular culture, but it also achieves remarkable effects to influence the world. (Yu, 2015). *Mulan* is a movie that tells about the situation of the North Wei Dynasty at the time.

The background of *Mulan's* movie is based on "The Ballad of *Mulan*" book. It takes the experience of a Chinese warrior story of Hua *Mulan*. She lived in the Northern and Southern

dynasties era between 420 and 589 CE. According to *Mulanbook.com*, there are several versions of *Mulan's* family background. There are three versions of it: *Mulan* is the only child in her family. *Mulan* has a younger brother. The last *Mulan* has a younger sister. According to anonymous (1976), in the story of "The Ballad of *Mulan*," she has described as a bold daughter. When her father had chosen into the military, she enlists herself to alternate with her father. It takes her to the battlefield with a uniform to hide her gender. Then, in a decade tour of the duty, the Emperor attempts to admit her achievement and give her an official high place in the Empire as a reward. But *Mulan* decides to return to her home and become an ordinary woman in her hometown. She wants to return the role of ordinary women that applied for years in the Northern Wei Dynasty. (Wang, 2020). According to *Mulanbook*, there are several versions of *Mulan's* family background. There are three

versions of it: Mulan is the only child in her family. Second, Mulan has a younger brother. Then the last is Mulan has a younger sister. (Retrieved from <https://mulanbook.com/>)

According to Wellek and Warren (1989:40), a comparative study is used to study oral literature, folklore, and migration, how and when the folklore reenters into more artistic, literary writing. The comparative study also involves the study of the relationship between two or more pieces of literature. It has appeared from the realization that the literature is not single, but the literature is plural. (Inggris et al., 2021)

Since *Mulan* is a movie produced by Disney Pictures, this movie consists of a Disney formula for both movie versions. The movie's background used to "The Ballad of Mulan" is a story that tells about China's warrior in the Northern Wei Dynasty, Hua Mulan. The main plot is Mulan do weaves at home, then the Khan calls for a troop of each family. She dresses like a man and joins the military with her father's position. After 12 years do her duties in the Army and gets a higher promotion as the Imperial minister. But she refuses that position, gets back to her hometown, and finds out that she is a woman.. (Xu & Tian, 2013). Anonymus states that Mulan is an ordinary who wants to substitute her father's position to following military training and struggle on the battlefield against the Khan. She hides her gender and pretends like a man due to her duties for years on the battlefield. After the battlefield, she receives a reward to fulfill a position as the Emperor's advisor. Still, she chooses to reveal her true identity and to go to her hometown and be an ordinary woman at the time. (Wang, 2020). From the original story of "The Ballad of Mulan," Disney reforms Mulan's account using the Disney formula, which creates some differences in animation and live-action versions. According to Artz 2004, Disney is one of the primaries focuses on American and popular culture worldwide and has shown strong power and influence in the movie industry (Xu & Tian, 2013). Several researchers have analyzed how Disney's cultural production from various perspectives, such as in gender role (Barber, 2015) and the concept of female beauty (SULISTIA, 2016) for the animation movie of Mulan. The comparison of both versions in Mulan's movie focusing on intrinsic and extrinsic. (Syafinah & Susilowati, 2021) (Inggris et al., 2021)

Disney Formula

Mulan's movie contains Disney formula since this movie tells a Chinese woman who is a brave and robust power. Disney formula is the element that is used in Disney's work which is their

characteristic. The element appears in some works, such as in *Mulan* movies. The elements of the Disney formula are 1) Disney animation use individualism as the theme of their movie for the hero and heroine. 2) Use a visual image to show the characters are good or bad. It is easy to identify the characters of Disney by dialogues, behaviour, and their stereotype of the images. 3) The main character, the hero or heroine, shows a strong, brave, and intelligent person. 4) Another Disney formula is young romance or romantic escape. It shows in several animation movies produced by Disney pictures, such as *Mulan* movies. 5) Another element is the hero has a helper who is a cute animal. 6) Disney also uses another formula that still after the arrangement, such as the emotion, easy listening song, humorous jokes, eclectic supporting cast, and using the original voices of the film star (Xu & Tian, 2013). The live version of *Mulan* movie also using *Mulan* as the main character, but in this version, the character of *Mulan* is bolder and braver than the animation movie. There are found several similarities and differences between the live-action and animation of this movie. Both versions consist of the Disney formula for creating the hero or heroine in this character and China as the movie's background.

METHOD

This study uses the Disney formula to analyze the similarities and differences in both versions of Mulan. To obtain the data of this research, it will use the quotation dialogues of Mulan's movie in both versions related to the problem. This research collecting the data of each movie based on several steps as follows: 1) Reading the manuscript of animation and live-action of Disney Mulan for understanding the story; 2) Identifying the dialogue that related to the problem. 3) Use tables to identify the differences between animation and live-action. It will analyze the movie using the Disney formula to find the similarities and differences in both versions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Disney Formula

Disney Picture is a home production released in several movies and TV shows. Disney creates a formula as the character of their works that called the Disney formula. Disney formula is a formula created by Disney. This formula shows their expected result from Disney and the other home production differences, producing TV shows

and movies. Several elements of the Disney formula are 1) use an individualistic theme to build a character that becomes a hero or heroine, 2) use a visual image to show the character is good or evil which is easy to identify the character through facial expression, behavior, dialogue, and the character's stereotype, 3) the main character who will become a hero or heroine showed their brave, strong power, and intelligent personality, 4) in several movies, Disney gives some of the love line or young romance between the characters, 5) For the fantasy genre, Disney also created the fantasy genre, which has the character that will become the helper (a cute animal in animation) to the hero or heroine, 6) giving several songs which are easy listening, funny jokes, the eclectic supporting cast, and use the original voice of the film stars (Xu & Tian, 2013).

The Result Analysis of Live-Action and Animation Version

The animation version of this movie was released in 1998, and the live-action version was released in 2020. These versions have adapted a story of "The Ballad of Mulan." The first aspect Disney showed of Mulan's story about her family background. Both versions have similarities and differences; it's still related to Disney's formula, which is to reform the character and make a different approach through the original story of Hua Mulan. Both versions have their characteristic that still relates to the Disney formula. The Disney formula that adapted to Mulan movie is (Xu & Tian, 2013):

Use an individualism theme to build a character that becomes a hero or heroine. Table 1 compares the animation and live-action version regarding the heroine's character, which shows both versions' similarity.

Table 1: Comparison of the main character who is the heroin shown the individualism theme of Live-Action and Animation version

Similarity

Topic	Heroin's character who is an individualist.	
	Animation	Live-Action
Evidence	<i>Emperor:</i> See that this woman is made a member of	<i>Commander Tung:</i> The emperor urges you to reconsider his invitation to join our greatest decorated warriors as an officer in

	my council. (Script & Majesty, n.d.)	the Emperor's Guard. (Dreaming, 2021)
	The Emperor's dialogue shows how individualism leads Mulan to become a heroine to save China. Individualism consistently links to the story of the heroine.	It brings honor to her family after saving China, the village, and the ancestors. Commander Tung's dialogue shows Mulan's individualism that links to the heroine story to maintain the dynasty.

The result of the analysis in Table 1 shows the similarity in both versions of Mulan's movie. It shows in the dialogue of The Emperor in the animation version and Commander Tung in the live-action version. The conversations show individualism that is a central theme that links to the heroin of Mulan movie. In addition, is shown the privileged that shows in both versions of Mulan's character. It includes how the Emperor of China changed the government's law to get a prestigious position in government.

Use a visual image to show the character is good or bad; it easy to identify the characters through facial expression, behavior, dialogue, and the character's stereotype. It starts with the number of characters that show in both versions. Since the movie has good and bad characters, which will analyze through the character's dialogue, tables 3 and 4 will give some examples of good and bad characters through the character's dialogue. Artz (2004) states that individualism is the central theme in Disney animation; it links to the story of the hero or heroine.(Xu & Tian, 2013).

Table 2: The comparison of the good characters shows in both versions of Mulan's movie. It will show through the character's dialogue, behavior, and facial expressions.

Similarity

Topic	The good character in Mulan's movie
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	Animation	Live-Action
Evidence	<i>Mushu:</i> C'mon, you're gonna stay, you're gonna work with me. So heed my words, cause if the army finds out you're a girl, the penalty is death. (Script & Majesty, n.d.)	<i>Commander Tung:</i> The chi pervades the universe and all living things. We are all born with it. But only the most true will connect deeply to his chi and become a great warrior (Dreaming, 2021)
	Mushu is a good character that tells a guardian for Mulan that The Ancestor sent him to protect her. It represents a good character of this version which consistently attempts to remind someone before doing something.	Commander Tung is a good character who is a commander of the heroine. It represents how gentle and firm a surface that looks after everyone around him.

Table 2 is a comparison of the good characters in the animation and live-action version. The result of the analysis in table 3 shows the similarity in the good character of both versions in Mulan's movie. In Animation shows, in Mushu's character, this character always reminds the heroine before doing something (Script & Majesty, n.d.). Moreover, in the live-action version, the first impression of a good character is a gentle and firm person. This character shows his lovely and soft sides to the other person. This impression showed in Commander Tung's essence. (Dreaming, 2021).

Table 3: The result of comparing the bad characters shows in both versions of Mulan's movie. It will show through the character's dialogue, behavior, and facial expressions.

Similarity

Topic	The bad character in Mulan's movie	
	Animation	Live-Action
Evidence	<i>Shan Yu:</i> Stop me! He invited me. By building his wall, he challenged my strength. Well, I'm here to play his game. Go! Tell your	<i>Bori Khan:</i> We will crush every garrison until the Imperial Army is on its knees. And then the Imperial City will be laid bare. The emperor will be mine to kill. You have proved useful,

	Emperor to send his strongest armies. I'm ready. (Script & Majesty, n.d.)	witch (Dreaming, 2021)
	This character looks rude and arrogant; it seems the way how this character in the dialogue. It makes this character full of anger and fierce.	This character looks rude and arrogant in this dialogue. Bori Khan said so rudely to the witch since he gets help from her. But, it does not mean that he will be nice to her even he gets an advantage from her.

Table 3 is a comparison of the bad characters in both versions. Shan Yu is an evil character in the animation movie. It shows how a bad character has a conversation full of anger and a rude character (Script & Majesty, n.d.). Bori Khan is one of the bad characters in the live-action version. His character shows how he has aimed to take revenge on his father's death. Also, he is rude, full of anger, and fierce to his unit. (Dreaming, 2021).

The main character who will become a hero or heroine shows their bravery, strong power, and intelligence. This section will analyze the dialogue which is related to this point.

Table 4: The comparison of the main character shows their bravery, strong power, and intelligence.

Similarity

Topic	The main character shows their braveness, strong power, and smartness.	
	Animation	Live-Action
Evidence	<i>Mulan:</i> Shang! [She pulls him up onto the saddle]. [Mulan grabs Mushu and her sword and runs over to the other soldiers.] . (Script & Majesty, n.d.)	<i>Sergeant Qiang:</i> You are an impostor. You've betrayed the regiment. You've brought disgrace to the Hua family. (Dreaming, 2021)
	The dialogue shows how the heroine combines her power and brain	These dialogues show how brave the heroine is to reveal her true gender in front of her sergeant. She

	simultaneously, which creates the braveness that shows in the heroine character since she saves all of them.	knows the consequence of her action.
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how heroic the heroine reveals the true gender in front of her sergeant even she knows the consequences. The heroine knows her ability in power, intelligence, and brave at the time. (Dreaming, 2021).

Disney gives some of the love line or young romance between the characters. Disney gives a young romance for the heroine to find her “prince”(Xu & Tian, 2013). Table 6 looks into the love line or young romance for the heroin in both versions.

Table 5: Comparison of the love line between the heroin of the both version.

Difference

Topic	Love line between the heroin	
	Animation	Live-Action
Evidence	<i>The Emperor:</i> You don't meet a girl like that every dynasty! [He puts on his hat and walks away.].(Script & Majesty, n.d.)	<i>Chen Honghui:</i> You still won't take my hand? I will see you again, Hua Mulan. (Dreaming, 2021)
	The dialogue shows The Emperor holds a part as the matchmaker between Mulan and Li Shang.	The dialogue shows how the “prince” has a feeling for the heroin, but she does not know about it—the love story between them stops after the farewell.

Table 5 shows the differences between heroin and “prince”. In the animation version, “Prince” does

not realize his feeling for Mulan. Then, Li Shang attempts to approach her and get through it. The Emperor plays a role to match Mulan and Li Shang. (Script & Majesty, n.d.). However, Mulan’s love line in live-action does not grow further. Even Chen Honghui shows his gesture, his eyes sight to Mulan does not make the feeling between them grow up into a lover. (Dreaming, 2021).

Disney also creates the fantasy genre which has a character that will become the helper (for example, the cute animal in animation) to the hero or heroine. There is a difference between animation and live-action movies. The difference is a character who is being Mulan’s helper through her struggle at the time. Table 7 will compare the difference in helper character of the movie.

Table 6: Comparison between the helper character of each version

Difference

Topic	Helper character in both version of Mulan’s movie	
	Animation	Live-Action
Evidence	Mushu (dragon), Cri-kee(Cricket) (Script & Majesty, n.d.)	A witch is a woman that can transform into a bird called Xian Lang(Dreaming, 2021)
	The character of Mushu and Cri-kee is the helper for the heroine in this version.	A new character that appears in this character being a helper for the bad character, Bori Khan.

Table 6 is the result of the helper character of the movie. Mulan has a helper who is a tiny dragon and a cricket. The dragon guides and helps her to solve the problem that she met at a hard time. (Script & Majesty, n.d.). But, there is no animation character like a dragon or cricket-like animation movie in the live-action version. Mulan struggles and solves the problem with her strength; it concludes that this formula does not seem in live-action. The heroine only relies on herself and gets some help from Chen Honghui, Yao, and Ling. The Huns get helps from a witch to attack the Emperor instead of Mulan.

Disney uses several attractive songs, funny jokes, various supporting cast, and the film stars' original voice. This formula shows how Disney produces some songs as the original soundtrack of

their works. Funny jokes, various supporting stars, and the original voice of the stars indicate the characteristics of each piece produced by Disney. Table 8 will reveal the formula at this point of each version.

Table 7: Comparison of attractive song, funny jokes, the cast, and the voice of the stars

Similarity

Topic	Attractive songs sang by the heroine of Mulan's movie	
	Animation	Live-Action
Song	Reflection, I'll make a man out of you. Both of these songs are written in the manuscript in Mulan's movie animation version. The second song sang by Li Shang. (Script & Majesty, n.d.)	Reflection, Loyal Brave and True. Both of the lyrics of these songs are written in Mulan's movie live-action version. (Dreaming, 2021)
	The first song sang by famous singer Christina Aguilera tells about Mulan forced to be someone else that she does not mean to be. She expresses her feeling and attempts to figure out what the exact what she wants to be.	Both of these songs have been sung by Christina Aguilera, who is a famous singer. The first song tells about Mulan's feeling what she wants to since her family forces her. The second song tells about the excellent balance of invulnerability and strength.

The analysis in Table 7 shows the similarity in the lovely song's original soundtrack in both versions of Mulan's movie. Those songs represent the true feeling of heroin and tell about the heroine's ability and strength that has been a struggle at the time.

Table 8: The comparison in funny jokes in both versions of Mulan's movie

Similarity

Topic	Funny jokes of Mulan's movie
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	Animation	Live-Action
Funny jokes	<i>Mushu</i> : 'Course, Ping did steal my girl- <i>Mulan</i> : Yes. My name is Ping. (Script & Majesty, n.d.)	<i>Mulan</i> : Courageous, funny, smart. <i>Yao</i> : Hua Jun's not describing a woman. He's describing me. <i>Ling</i> : That's not you, Yao. (Dreaming, 2021)
	The dialogue shows how silly Mulan follow what Mushu tells her about the pseudonym that she will use.	These dialogues show how Mulan pretends to answer the ideal type of woman, but Yao being too confident that she describes him.

The analysis in Table 8 shows the similarity in the funny jokes in both versions of Mulan's movie. The quotation in those dialogues how silly and too confident of Mushu and Yao creates the intense jokes in Mulan's movie. Both of these characters create stupid and ridiculous moments in Mulan's movie.

Table 9 : The comparison in the cast of both versions in Mulan's movie

Difference

Topic	The cast and the voice of the stars of Mulan's movie	
The cast	Animation	Live-Action
	The casts of this version are the actors and actresses who are American actors that have a massive name in the movie industry. The animation movie only appears in the voice of the casts; the stars do not appear in the film. The voice that arises is the actor's voice when they are dubbing the characters.	This version casts the actors and actresses who have a massive name in the film industry, such as Donnie Yen and Jet Li. The voice of the stars is their voice when they speak.

Table 9 reveals the difference between the cast and the voice of the stars. Only the cast's voice appears in the movie, the actor dubbing the animation characters in the animation version.

Instead of live-action, the actors appear and use their voices when they speak. Also, the actors and actresses in both versions are different.

CONCLUSION

According to the result of the research, it described several differences between animation and live-action versions of Disney Mulan. Both versions found the visual images of good and evil characters through the characters' behavior and dialogues. The love-line or young romance in animation is to grow up and become a lover. Instead, the heroine and her "prince" only show the bittersweet conversation between them in the live-action version. Another difference found out in the helper character, in animation, the heroine has a helper, but in the live-action movie, who gets the helper is the enemy of the heroine. Another difference in the Disney formula is the live-action version appears; the actors appear different in both versions. Instead of the animation, the cast is only dubbing the animation characters. The beautiful songs in both versions tell the true feeling of the heroine that are the same, funny jokes show similarity in silly and too confident, which creates a ridiculous moment, and the actors and actresses' original voices are the same. It shows their authentic voice them. In addition, Mulan's character shows how women have the power to empower themselves with brave, have strong power, and intelligent as a woman.

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