ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND BULLYING (AN ANALYSIS OF *LUCA*'S ANIMATED FILM)

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A b s t r a c t s
Artificial intelligence technology or artificial intelligence (AI) can be found in various aspects of life, for example in entertainment media such as animated films. One of the animated films that use AI technology is *Luca*. This film presents realistic visuals as it creates a vivid effect on the characters and the setting. Broadly speaking, the film *Luca* tells the story of the adventures of a sea monster boy named Luca Paguro and his relationship with humans. In this relationship, Luca and the sea monsters often experience bullying by humans. However, Luca is finally able to reconcile the relationship between his group and the humans who were initially lame. The purpose of this study is to describe the forms of bullying in *Luca*'s film and criticize the society. In this film, three forms of bullying are found; verbal bullying, physical bullying, and relational bullying. Criticism in this film is directed at parents, perpetrators of bullying, and society that is exclusive and also bullies those who are considered different. Through the results of the analysis it can be concluded that *Luca*'s film as one of AI's products can show a portrait of bullying as a social issue that is still commonly found in society. Through this film, the audience can monitor their surroundings as well as evaluate themselves so that bullying behavior can be reduced, or even completely eliminated.

Keyword:
Artificial Intelligence, Animated Films, Bullying, Social Criticism.

Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a kind of technology in the field of computer science that has a special ability to solve problems. With intelligence that is said to be able to rival human cognitive abilities, AI technology is believed to be able to help a variety of human jobs, from easy to even complex ones. This technology is also used in various aspects of life, such as in the fields of health, transportation, and education. Not only that, AI is also used by entertainment media and visual arts, such as in making animated films.

In making animated films, the use of AI technology is said to be able to make images look more realistic and even be able to create life-like effects. AI technology can scan every

detail of living things such as humans and animals to make animations more realistic. In addition, AI is also used to monitor the character's facial expressions and adjust lip movements to dialogue. Furthermore, AI technology can build characters, including processing the emotions and behavior of characters in films. The AI is even able to change the character's face according to the operator's wishes; becomes younger or older according to the time and age of the character being played. From animated films to visual arts, AI technology has indirectly made work easier in the creative industries.

One of the animated films that uses AI technology is *Luca* (2021). *Luca* is an animated film produced by Walt Disney Animation and Pixar Animation Studios which airs on Disney+ Hostar. The film, directed by Italian animator named Enrico Casarosa, tells the story of the friendship between sea monsters and humans. The film's original story is inspired by the director's childhood life and an adaptation of his childhood memories in Italy. The main character in this film is a sea monster named Luca who has a rule-abiding character and never does anything wrong. Once upon a time, Luca met Alberto who was described as a sea monster who was cheerful and full of spirit. Luca and Alberto eventually become friends and go on adventures in the human world. Long story short, as long as Luca and Alberto were on land with humans, they often got bullied. Luca and the sea monsters are often put in a lower position than humans. Even so, Luca was able to put up a fight until he was finally able to unite the relationship between the sea monster group and the humans who were initially lame.

In the realm of research, *Luca*'s film has been used several times as an object of discussion. The first research, for example, raised moral values in the film *Luca* and their relevance to children's character education (Pramita & Setyowati, 2022). In this study it was found that the moral values contained in *Luca*'s film include: parents' affection for their children, trying earnestly, parents must give freedom to their children, help each other, trust each other between friends and family, and trust self. Relevance to children's character education is found in the character values of hard work, creative, independent, curious, friendly, communicative, and peace-loving. Subsequent research is in the form of a thesis that discusses the representation of the moral message of youth in the animated film *Luca* (Jannah, 2022). This study uses Stuart Hall's theory of representation to dismantle the elements of the moral messages of youth in *Luca*'s films that represent the world. The conclusion in this study shows that the moral messages of adolescents represented in the *Luca* film scene are sincerity in trying, reasons for lying, self-confidence, mutual help, and parental love for children. Even though the object of previous research is the same as this research, the topic of the problem raised is different because this research only focuses on the issue of bullying.

According to the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI) bullying is an act that intentionally harms another person with the aim of intimidating, hurting, or other things. Bullying is a term that refers to teenagers who do physical or social bullying around them. Thus, bullying threatens the condition and security of a person or their social environment. Bullying victim usually refers to an individual who is routinely bullied by their peers. In other words, a victim can be defined as a person who is intimidated by an individual or a group. In addition, victims of bullying are less able to show the feeling to fight back because they are afraid that the perpetrators of bullying will intensify even more heinous acts of bullying (Rahadian & Heriyati, 2021).

Bullying also occurs in several forms of action. Bullying is divided into three types (Coloroso, 2011), namely verbal bullying, physical bullying, and relational bullying. Verbal bullying is the most common form of bullying used by both girls and boys. Verbal abuse is easy and can be said in the presence of adults and peers, undetected. Verbal abuse can be in the form of nicknames, reproaches, slander, cruel criticism, insults, and statements with sexual nuances or sexual harassment. In addition, verbal bullying can take the form of harsh, intimidating remarks, threats of violence, untrue accusations, and gossip. Furthermore, physical bullying is the most visible and most identifiable type of bullying among other forms of bullying. Types of physical abuse include hitting, choking, elbowing, punching, kicking,

biting, pinching, clawing, spitting, damaging and destroying the victim's clothes or belongings. The stronger and more mature the bully is, the more dangerous this type of bullying is. Lastly is relational bullying, which is the type of bullying that is the most difficult to detect from the outside. This oppression is related to the weakening of the victim's self-esteem, systematic oppression through neglect, exclusion, exclusion, avoidance, and elimination. Relational oppression can be used to isolate or reject victims intentionally to damage relationships. These behaviors can include covert gestures such as aggressive looks, eye glances, sighs, shrug shoulders, mocking laughter and rude body language.

In the animated film *Luca*, it is told that people in the city of Portorosso, on the Riviera coast, Italy, have a hereditary belief regarding the existence of sea monsters. The ancestors in that place thought that the sea monsters had to be killed because they could harm humans. The main character, Luca, and his best friend Alberto, who incidentally are sea monsters, often get bullied by humans. The forms of bullying in this film also vary, some in the form of ridicule, intimidation, to physical violence. Therefore, researchers are interested in examining the phenomena of forms of bullying, oppression, and violence perpetrated by those who feel more powerful. The researcher will also dismantle the criticisms behind the story in the animated film *Luca*.

Methods

This research is a qualitative research with descriptive method. According to Bogdan and Taylor, qualitative is a method which in turn produces descriptive data in the form of words, both written and spoken (Ratna, 2010). The main data sources in qualitative research are words and actions, the rest is additional data.

The approach used in studying *Luca*'s film is a mimetic approach. The term mimetic comes from the Greek word mimesis which means 'imitating', 'imitation' or 'embodiment'. In general, mimetic can be interpreted as an approach that views literary works as imitations or shadows of the real world. Mimetic can also be interpreted as a theory which in its method forms a literary work based on the realities of social life experienced and then developed into a literary work with the addition of scenarios arising from the author's imagination and creativity in real life.

The source of research material is the film *Luca* by Italian animator, Enrico Casarosa. *Luca* is an American computer-animated teen fantasy film published and produced by Walt Disney Pictures and Pixar Animation Studios and distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures. The film was directed by Enrico Casarosa in his debut, written by Mike Jones and Jesse Andrews, and produced by Andrea Warren. The film's voice actors include Jacob Tremblay, Jack Dylan Grazer, Emma Berman, Maya Rudolph, Marco Barricelli, Jim Gaffigan and Saverio Raimondo. *Luca* will be released on Disney+ on June 18, 2021. The research material is in the form of dialogues in films that contain elements of bullying, satire, or violence.

The data collection technique was carried out in several steps, namely: First, looking at the whole film *Luca* by Enrico Casarosa. Second, understanding every content of the storyline in Enrico Casarosa's *Luca* film. Third, identify the problems of bullying, oppression, or violence that are prominent in the film *Luca* by Enrico Casarosa. Fourth, to record the objects contained in the film *Luca* by Enrico Casarosa regarding forms of bullying, oppression and violence that are carried out intentionally or not by a group of people who are stronger or more powerful towards other people, with the aim of hurting and doing it continuously.

Results and Discussion

Bullying is an act or intentional aggressive behavior, which is carried out by a group of people or a person repeatedly and from time to time against a victim who cannot defend himself (Ahmad, 2021). In *Luca*'s film, sea monster characters are positioned as weak and different, so they often become targets of bullying. The forms of bullying against inferior figures are in the form of verbal bullying, physical bullying, and relational bullying. The following will explain each form of bullying:

Verbal Bullying in *Luca*'s Animated Film

The first bullying scene was performed by human characters named Ercole, Guido and Ciccio. In this film, the three characters are described as the most powerful teenagers in town, but have despicable traits and attitudes. In one scene, these three characters sneer at the appearance of Luca and Alberto, who in fact have just set foot on human land. Here is the proof scene:

Figure 1. Scene Luca's Animated Film about Verbal Bullying

At 31.21.00 minutes, Ercole Visconti, Ciccio and Guido appeared to insult Luca and Alberto. Even though their true forms as sea monsters were not detected, these two figures still received criticism and negative nicknames from human figures. In this scene, Luca and Alberto are called "corpses" just because their clothes are shabby. They are also insulted for smelling like a fish shop. The two of them were even nicknamed "losers" by a human figure who

incidentally had just met Luca and Alberto that day. Luca and Alberto were even kicked out and asked to leave just because they looked different from most of the townspeople.

Physical Bullying in *Luca*'s Animated Film

Apart from being verbally abused, the characters Luca and Alberto are also described as being physically abused by powerful figures, namely Ercole, Ciccio and Guido. Here is the scene at minute 57.37.00, when Alberto is forcibly blocked so he can't move by Ciccio and Guido, while Ercole hits his stomach freely. It didn't stop there, Ercole also pushed Luca to the ground when he was about to help Alberto:

Figure 2. Scene Luca's Animated Film about Physical Bullying

The physical abuse that Luca and Alberto received is very clear. This is because physical bullying is the most visible and identifiable type of bullying. Luca and Alberto in this film are inferior. They don't have wealth, rank, and relations in the human world like Ercole. This shows that the victims of bullying tend to come from a minority party who are considered to have no power and strength to fight against a superior party.

Relational Bullying in *Luca*'s Animated Film

As previously mentioned, relational bullying is very difficult to detect from the outside because it is related to weakening the victim's self-esteem. In *Luca*'s film, this type of bullying can also be found as the dominant form of bullying perpetrated by the authorities against groups that are considered weak. As in a scene at 47.17.00 minutes, Ercole did not hesitate to insult, mock, and even laugh at Luca, Alberto, and Giulia to make the three of them feel intimidated and fail the race:

Figure 3. Scene Luca's Animated Film about Relational Bullying

From the three stills of the scene, it appears that Ercole and his friends deliberately challenged and even threatened Luca, Alberto, and Giulia. They also make insulting jokes to provoke laughter from the people around them. This condition indirectly made Luca and his friends feel isolated and insecure. Luca and his friends are again positioned as victims of bullying who cannot put up a fight because they do not have enough power.

Luca's Resistance Stops the Bullying

As described in the several scenes above, the position of authority in *Luca*'s film is attached to the character Ercole. Ercole is described as a figure who is physically strong and has wealth so that he has the power to rule others. Ercole does not hesitate to bully others to get what he wants. He is also used to cheating to perpetuate his power. This is lame with Luca as a character who doesn't have anyone in the human world. He also still doesn't have the experience and knowledge of how to live out his days as a human. Coupled with the existence of myths in the city about the dangers of sea monsters. This made Luca feel weak and inferior.

Even though there seems to be an imbalance of power, that doesn't mean victims of bullying like Luca can't put up a fight. In *Luca*'s film, a character who is bullied can change his position and even change the order that has been wrong so far:

Figure 4. Scene Luca's Animated Film about Stop Bullying

From the cut scene at minute 60.19.33 it appears that Luca, Alberto, and other sea monsters show their true forms in the midst of a crowd of people. This happened after Luca and his friends managed to beat Ercole who cheated and was able to prove that sea monsters can be friends and coexist with humans. This happens because victims of bullying like Luca want to fight back, don't continue to hide, and quickly get up from their slump.

Social Criticism in *Luca*'s Animated Film

Film can be a tool that is able to describe reality which is then presented to the audience (Giovani, 2020). Not only as a media for entertainment and media for audience education, film is also used as a medium for representing problems that occur in social society. Films contain implicit messages that the filmmakers want to convey which are then packaged in a neat and attractive way. In its function of representing social problems, film is one of the media used to convey social criticism. Social criticism is said to be a form of communication in society which controls the course of a social system in society (Safitri, 2022).

Even though it is an animated genre and can be watched by all family members, *Luca*'s film does not only function as an entertainment medium, but also contains social criticism aimed at the audience. The issue of bullying raised in this film is actually a social issue that is commonly found anywhere. In *Luca*'s film, bullying does not only target adults, but also targets teenagers and children. This is in line with the current social conditions, where the number of cases of bullying is very high. In Indonesia alone, the KPAI noted that from 2011 to 2019 there were 37,381 complaints of acts of violence against children with reports of acts of bullying, both in education and social media, which reached 2,473 cases (Hutabarat et al., 2021). Seeing this, it is conceivable that the number of similar cases in other countries is also high.

The social criticism in this film is aimed at several parties. First are parents. Parents become important actors in anticipating child bullying. This role can be performed before or when the child is bullied. Parents should learn about the character or characteristics of children who have the potential to experience bullying. If these characters are likely to be possessed by their children, parents need to take anticipatory steps to strengthen their character. That is why children should be open and willing to tell their parents about their condition. This is something that Luca does not have. He is described as being very closed off to his parents because he is

too restrained and not allowed to go far from home. Seeing this, parents must start self-introspection regarding how to raise children. An overly restrictive attitude will actually make children inclusive and vulnerable to becoming victims of bullying.

Subsequent criticism is directed at the perpetrators of bullying, most of whom are considered to have great power and are difficult to defeat. In *Luca*'s film, the perpetrators of bullying are reflected in the character Ercole, who is depicted as likes to suppress the weak and always justifies any means to perpetuate his power. In the film, Ercole's character seems impossible to lose because he has great strength and power. But at the end of the story, this character is actually positioned as the worst party and loses everything. This is actually a criticism as well as a message implied in the film, namely that acts of bullying also have a negative impact on the perpetrators. Bullies usually have high self-confidence and self-esteem. He always feels more dominant, aggressive, does not hesitate to do violence, gets angry easily, and is impulsive. If this continues, the perpetrators of bullying will no longer get empathy from other people.

The final social critique is directed at society, which should be responsible for creating a world without violence and bullying. In *Luca*'s film, the people of Portorosso City are initially portrayed as exclusive, closed, and who really hate sea monsters. Several groups of people are also said to be easily provoked and instigated to take part in bullying people who are considered different. However, people's attitudes changed after realizing Ercole's evil deeds as a bully. They also thanked Luca for successfully uniting sea monsters and humans. Seeing this, we can all realize that as a society, we should position ourselves as helpers for victims of bullying and as crushers of all acts of bullying.

Conclusion

The film *Luca* (2021) is an AI product made with the aim of entertaining. However, this film also shows a portrait of a social problem that is relevant to the real world, namely bullying. In *Luca*'s film, bullying can be found in various forms, ranging from verbal, physical, and relational abuse. All forms of bullying are directed at figures who are considered inferior and weak. However, the inferior character in this film is ultimately given the opportunity to fight back and reverse his marginalized position to become dominant. This proves that victims of bullying will not always be victims. If they have the will to stand up and fight, they will get out of the cycle of bullying, and can even become heroes who break the line of bullying that seems somehow able to be stopped.

Furthermore, *Luca*'s film also contains criticism directed at parents, perpetrators of bullying, as well as a society that is exclusive and contributes to bullying those who are considered different. Through this film, the audience will realize that any form of bullying will not lead to anything good, let alone generate profits. Therefore, all parties have a responsibility to stop bullying.

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