ECRANISATION OF LASKAR PELANGI NOVEL AND ITS FUNCTION AS EDUCATIVE MEDIA (STUDY OF LITERATURE RECEPTION)

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this research is to describe the reception of the community about ecranisation of Laskar Pelangi novel and its function as educative media.

Methodology: This descriptive qualitative research was conducted by the literature reception synchronized approach. The research data was collected through the reference technique, content analysis, and in-depth interviewing. Data validation was checked through a triangulation source. Data analysis was performed by a synchronized analysis in literature reception and then analyzed by an inductive method, with interactive analysis model.

Results: The results of this research are first, the community has good reception about ecranisation of the best-seller Laskar Pelangi that being box office film. Generally, the community assumes that the beauty of the story in the novel can be well visualized through the image and dialogue of the character’s cast, although there is a slight change in storyline and characterizations. Secondly, Laskar Pelangi film is a product of a successful creative industry both at home and abroad.

Implications: Thus, the Laskar Pelangi film has functioned as an educative media for people to understand the value of human relationships with themselves, with others and environment, and with God, which is the moral value conveyed by the author. The education process is effective because the values are delivered through a means of beautiful, interesting, and touching stories.

Keywords: Laskar Pelangi novel, ecranisation, literature reception, educative media, human relationships

INTRODUCTION

Laskar Pelangi, by Andrea Hirata (2006), is the best-seller novel category in 2006-2007 that has made the author become a phenomenon in Indonesia. Since the novel was published in Indonesian literary world, it has attracted the attention of many people. Literary experts and observers, teachers, and community leaders, including leaders in Muhammadiyah organizations who held Muhammadiyah schools as the setting of the story in the novel, were interested in reading this novel, especially after it was being produced and adapted into a film that was very popular too. (Jenaabadi and Shad, 2013; Nugrahani, 2017)

Laskar Pelangi novel was one of the phenomenal fiction, as it brought up the topic of reality portrait of the Indonesian education world, precisely in the remote areas of Belitung island which communities were mostly poor, underdeveloped and uneducated. This novel was also very monumental because it is published when the nation was experiencing various problems in the education, mainly due to the arising of commercialization of education and the declining quality of education processes and products in general.

The novel was read and liked by many circles. Because of its popularity, the novel was reproduced as a film which was released on Sept. 26, 2008. The film adaptation was produced by Milles Film Production (2008) with director Riri Riza and screenwriter Salman Aristo.

Historically, there were lots of ecranisation novels that were produced based on popular novels. For example, the novel adaptations into a film from abroad, such as Harry Potter based on a novel by J.K. Rowling, and The Lord of the Rings from Tolkien’s novel. The examples of film adaptation from within the country, actually been found since the early 1920s. Those films were entitled Loetoeng Kasaroeng (1926).

In the 1930s and 1950s, the film adaptation of the Bunga Roos dari Tjikembang (1931) was produced based on the novel by Kwee Tek Hoay. Siti Noerbaja (1941) from a novel by Marah Roesli. Moreover, in the 1960s until 1980s, Senja di Jakarta (1976) film was produced from a novel by Mohctar Lubis. Badai Pasti Berlalu (1979) from a novel by Marga T, and Gita Cinta Dari SMA (1980) from a novel by Eddy D. Iskandar. Lastly, in the 2000s, there were CaBau Kan (2002), Eiffel I’m
Like other ecranisation product, Laskar Pelangi film was produced two years after the novel itself gained its popularity and became the best-seller novel. Through the Laskar Pelangi film, the audience can see the visualization of the story in a novel; a portrait of the poverty in Belitung village’s community with their various problems. Despite the poor environment, there was a group of children who keep fighting for their future destiny by taking education in a school with inadequate facilities, and unfit environment for the school. This group of children is called a Laskar Pelangi (The Rainbow Warriors) by their teacher, which became the title of the novel as well as the film.

In connection with the transformation of the Laskar Pelangi novel into the film, this study will answer the following two issues. (1) How was people’s reception about the adoption of Laskar Pelangi novel into a film through literary ecranisation? (2) How did Laskar Pelangi film perform its function as an educative media for the community?

Before it was produced into a film, Laskar Pelangi is originally a novel. A novel is a literary genre in the form of fiction, narrative text, or narrative discourse. (Mills, 1990) Fiction means imaginative story, a narrative story in which the content is not aligned with the history or not happened in reality. (Abrams, 1981; Kennedy and Gioia, 2007)

Literary worked as a reflection of socio-cultural circumstances that had great potential in influencing the changing character of a person. Literature was an expression of language art that was reflective and interactive. It can be the spirit for the emergence of changes in society, the source of inspiration and motivation for the dissemination of life values, and the agent for the development of the cultural order to a more advanced civilization. Essentially, literature should be both entertaining and useful.

Besides entertaining, literature could also be useful. The advantage could be used when the author brought up the theme based on real life. It created a good paradigm about life, as well as the quality and the structure, which can be lived, through the emotions in an individual’s life in a world full of objects.

According to Abrams (1981) theory, literary works could be seen from four points of view: (1) as an objective, autonomous work, regardless of any elements; (2) as a mimetic work, an imitation of the universe and the rest; (3) as a pragmatic work, which benefits the reader; (4) as an expressive work, mirror the experience and thoughts of its creator. From this theory, it can be said that literary works have benefits to the audience, especially with regards to the values to enrich the insight of knowledge and experience in life. In other words, literature could be used as educative media to the community’s life.

Meanwhile, ecranisation was an adaptation of changed form of literature become a film. Adaptation of any kind was often described as deeply problematic; it was a real and common phenomenon that nevertheless constitutes a problem. During the transformation of a story from one form to another, there is a basic question of adherence to the source that can be lost. (Bloom, 1997)

The theory of the relationship between literature and film was valuable in identifying some of the issues in the adaptation process, as there was a fundamental difference between these two media. Criticism of adaptation problem in a literary novel into a film is usually associated with the following: (1) differences in audience perception of the cinematic form and the original literary work of the originated film; (2) differences in raw materials in novels and movies involving camera effects, and edits that continues to move and directly affect the perception of the audience; (3) differences in language used in a film that should be summarized because of the limited duration. In short, discussing the adaptation of a novel into a film was discussing the differences in the use of media to deal with space and time. Of course, this is not a simple job, because it requires a process that is far more creative and constructive than simply translating the text in simple, because there are many aspects to consider. According to Hutcheon, for the adaptation process, the most important note was the story, because a story includes the content of the narrative, which consists of chain events, characters and setting stories (Lieblein and Hutcheon, 2006; Matandare, 2018)

The creative process in the ecranisation could be the addition or reduction of the story of the adapted novel. There were possible variations to achieve these aesthetic goals. The various additions or reductions can lead to the assumption that there was a difference between the novel and the film of its extraction. (Davidson, 2014; Sáfiñari et al., 2013) In addition to the differences in the transformation of the novel into the film, this study also examined the function of the film as educative media for the community. (Berkowitz and Bier, 2004; Miles and Huberman, 1984) A film was an entertaining narrative about the characters that contains artistic documents of time and place.

A film is basically a construction of reality delivered through language as its basic tool. In a film, language is not only a
tool to present reality but also a tool to determine a form that a producer wants to create. Therefore, the role of a film as an educational media has a great opportunity to influence meaning and an image which come from a constructed reality. Of course, a film as one form of educational media cannot be considered neutral in providing information and entertainment services to the society. In this case, the Laskar Pelangi film has taken on its role as an educational media, to deliver a moral message that is meaningful and corresponding with the horizon of its audience’s expectations.

In fact, how the audience’s reception is so important considering the main purpose of film making is business and society as its consumers. Correspondingly, the phenomenon of successful ecranisation novel at the market is certainly influenced by the positive reception of its audience, so its products are widely consumed. Moreover, there’s even a trend, those well-known and box office films were films that were adapted from best-seller novels. Perhaps the beauty of a story in a novel has been a guarantee of the beauty of a film adaptation. Though they are two different things.

RESEARCH METHOD

A qualitative descriptive method using synchronize literature reception approach, by surveying society’s reception to a literary work in a certain period. The object is Laskar Pelangi novel and its adaptation film. Laskar Pelangi film is chosen as the sample of this study by purposive sampling because it is very monumental and has many audiences. Therefore, it is interesting to research.

The source of this research data is a document consisting of Laskar Pelangi novel text, Laskar Pelangi film, and other related documents, such as books, journals, and magazines. The other source of data is the informant consisting of the readers of the Laskar Pelangi novel as well as film audience at XXI Cinema in Solo Square Surakarta. From all audience, it was selected 20 people who have read the novel to be given questioner. Then, it was chosen four key informants who have criteria of a certain age and education level to conduct in-depth interviews to obtain comprehensive and varied information about the society’s receptions of Laskar Pelangi film. Other key informants were four literature experts and cinematographers who were interviewed about the Laskar Pelangi’s novel ecranisation process, with its adaptation, and its function as educative media.

Data collection was done by a questioner, content analysis, in-depth interview, and textual comparative. Validity and reliability data were attempted through source triangulation, and informant reviews, and based data. (Fiorino et al., 2018; Whelehah, 2010), Fiorino, Victor Martin, and Amparo Holguín, 2018) Data analysis is performed by synchronic analysis techniques to find out the society’s reception of Laskar Pelangi film, and comparative textual analysis to know the difference between the text in the novel and that of in the film. Furthermore, along with the whole data were performed by inductive analysis through interactive analysis model, which the components include data collection, data display, data reduction, and conclusions, drawing/ verifying to obtain the general conclusion from this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Society’s Reception to LP Novel Ecranisation

Laskar Pelangi novel tells the story of the lives of ten children from poor families who attend the Muhammadiyah Belitong elementary school which does not have proper facilities as an educational institution. In this limited condition, these ten children who are called by their teacher, as “Laskar Pelangi” - due to their fondness for the rainbow - have dreams of success in the future.

The story in this novel begins with a Muhammadiyah Elementary School in a village that is about to be dismissed by the Ministry of Education because its students are only 9 students, not even achieved 10 students as the minimum number. However, as Mr. Harfan, the headmaster would close this school, Harun and his mother came to enter the class as the 10th student. Therefore, the school did not close with very few students. Furthermore, it was told about the enthusiastic the life of the student’s going at Muhammadiyah Belitong Elementary School learning under the guidance of a good and patient teacher named Mrs. Muslimah. Because of her sincerity and passion is their teacher, the students were motivated to learn and got the achievement that could bring the name of the school through various events. For example, in a smartness and quickness quiz contest, and carnival on 17th August to commemorate the Independence Day of the Republic of Indonesia. The students of “Laskar Pelangi”, always worked and played together in the days of hard, relaxed, laughed and cried together, although they lived in poverty and deprivation.

As in general, the popularity of literary works in the form of novels and short stories will be a special attraction for people to see the results of their adaptation in the form of a film. In a history of the creative industry in Indonesia, it seems that there
is indeed a close relationship between literary works and production of adaptation film. As if it had become a necessity that the best-selling and popular literary works in the community so that they have many fans, it is required to be adapted into a film. This trend seems not only in Indonesia but also in other countries.

The phenomenon of the successful film adaptation has happened since it was held Academy Award in 1927. Three-quarter of the best film of Oscar winners at the Academy Award is mostly achieved by films that produced under the adaptation of literary works. (Malden, 2004) While in Indonesia, the trends began in the 1920s until now.

In discussing the film adaptation product through novel ecranisation, it is necessary to see how the theory of adaptation is used as a basis for transforming the text form (in novel or short story) into visual form in the film. Some of the adaptation models can be differed by the experts, in two ways, the first of which is the adaptation of literary works (novels or short stories) into film which is performed by focusing on the fidelity to the source of adaptation (original text); and secondly, is the adaptation of literary works (novels or short stories) into film by regarding the contextuality of the intertextuality of the source of adaptation. (Marbán and Mulenga, 2019; Uricchio, 2014)

The observation result showed that: (1) From the comparative analysis it is found that there are differences in the novel plot and the film. The difference is the transformation marked by the addition of scenes in the film that shows Mr. Harfan died. In addition, it was not shown some of the novel stories in the film, the story of Trapani and his mother undergoing treatment at Zaal Batu. The differences plot also shown in the additional variations of the display in the film, which does not actually exist in the original novel. Here is the data cutting.

**Data 1.**

(While touching Mahar, Mr. Harfan left the classroom, and entered his room). (Mrs. Muslimah): "Sir, sir ..., sir ..., let’s go home, Sir". (While opening the door of Mr. Harfan’s room, Mrs. Muslimah asked him to go home, but apparently, Mr. Harfan had died sitting in a chair, and his head is on the table). (Dialog at the minute of 70.24)

(2) om the comparative analysis, it is found that there is a difference between the novel and the film. The transformation of the novel’s character into the film that led to some changes, seen from the storyline that does not feature the Zulfikar character in the film, and instead displays of a new character, namely, Mr. Zulkarnaen, Mr. Mahmud and Mr. Bakri who actually does not exist in the original novel. Here is the data cutting.

**Data 2.**

(Mr. Harfan): "Zul, you’ve helped, do not worry. Bahri, Muslimah and I still can survive with the ten students by God’s grace. (Zulkarnaen): " But they are already 5th grade, next year they are 6th grade and below it no longer exists. I do not understand how you defend this school. The fee, the salary (Dialog at the minute of 19.49)

**Data 3.**

(Teacher Mr. Bahri): "I have been offered to teach at Bangka Elementary School". (Teacher Mrs. Muslimah): "So you have the heart to leave Muhammadiyah. Our job is heavy, our students are just a few but we have to give children those who cannot afford". (Teacher Mr. Bahri): "Mus, no one wants to send their children here. Mus, they think his son will be better to be a coolie to support his family ". (Dialog at the minute of 38.24)

(3) From in-depth interviews with key informants, on how their reception of *Laskar Pelangi* films, and the process of ecranisation novels, it was found that generally society had a positive reception to the *Laskar Pelangi* film, as well as their reception to the novel they read. The informants argued that the beauty of the story and the moral message through his novel can be delivered well to the audience through a film. Here, the data cutting.

**Data 4.**

(Key Informant): (1) *Laskar Pelangi* film is very good, the story is not much different from the original novel. This film is good to watch for everyone of all ages. It gives some inspiration to always be passionate about achieving goals. (2) *Laskar Pelangi* is the best educational film in Indonesia. Children should watch this film in order to learn about life values. (3) The process of novel ecranisation is so successful that it does not diminish its meaning, although we find a little change, this is understandable because to pursue the duration.

Theoretically, it can be explained that one of the reasons why there is a difference between the *Laskar Pelangi* novel and the mechanized film is because in the process of making the film it is necessary to change the text language into moving images in a certain period of time. This process is essentially language punctuation that follows the sound, atmosphere,
character, background, and duration. Therefore, this process requires teamwork, consisting of directors, lighting stylist, picture stylist, artist, makeup artist, sound effects, editor and background selection. (Ardianto and ke Film, 2014) In the making of films, the ability to determine the choice of scene, duration, background, atmosphere, and various matters relating to the displacement of the language code in the display code or images. Because of the many and complicated things which involved, that’s why the film of ecranisation often looks slightly different from the original novel. (Redvall, 2012)

Another novel explanation of why the Laskar Pelangi novel and the film of ecranisation is different because novels that may need to be read within a few days should be served to be enjoyed for a relatively short duration of time (90 minutes). It is certainly natural that the logical consequences are being made on a small part of the original work. In addition, there are some basic elements of film making, for example, in the film required the existence of teamwork. The film is referred to total artwork, or collective art, which its success depends on many people (the whole team). Because of this, it would be understandable if the story in the film of ecranisation is slightly different from the original novel, which quality is determined by one person, who is the author only.

From the overall findings of Laskar Pelangi film in analysis as an adaptation product of the novel, it can be concluded that in the process of film production they chose the first adaptation model, the adaptation with a focus on fidelity to the original source or text. While the additional or minor changes that existed in the Laskar Pelangi film, overall do not change the storyline and the main theme of the original work as a source of that film.

B. Laskar Pelangi Film as an Education Media

Film as a propaganda tool is closely related to efforts to achieve national and social goals. It is concerned with the judgment that films have range, realism, emotional influence, and popularity.

The film is one of the communication media which has a very big influence on society. A film is also a form of a message that consists of various signs and symbols that form a system of meaning so that it can be interpreted by people differently, depending on the reference and thinking the ability of the person.

The film’s story illustrates the difficulties rural communities living around the prosperous PT Timah Belitong. The contrast was shown in the scene when the children of Muhammadiyah elementary school take exams in PN Timah elementary school. PN Timah elementary school children look neat, clean, and cool, while children of poor Muhammadiyah elementary school looked dirty, without uniforms and footwear. (Carr, 2008; Dean, 2006; Martin, 2006)

Laskar Pelangi is a very interesting film, so the Indonesian Consulate General in New York invited the author to the discussion entitled 'The Opportunities of Creative Industries to Penetrate the US Market’ along with the film screenings. US public showed a great interest in Indonesia through film festival screenings at the Asian American Film Festival in New York, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles. As the very popular Laskar Pelangi novel has many readers so that when this novel is adapted into a film, the readers were also interested to watch. Therefore, it is not surprising if Laskar Pelangi film became a box office film at that time. In that position, the Laskar Pelangi film indirectly has spread the message of moral values to the audience. Although according to Jazz’ theories, that the meaning of the message will be interpreted by the audience in accordance with the horizon of hope.

In addition to potentially become creative industries, Laskar Pelangi film is also good as a medium of socialization of educational values. (Battistich (2005) The results of this study indicate that educative aspects of the Laskar Pelangi film are an exemplary teacher, loyalty, morale, the importance of ideal formal education, and inclusive education. Social and cultural criticism in the Laskar Pelangi film are:

(1) A critique of social discrimination, that is the bureaucracy system of education which is not in accordance with the law. This is the following data cutting.

Data 5.

(Mrs. Muslimah): "Sir, I forgot to separate the test paper. (Supervisor): "Look at this, he drew it (while showing Aaron’s exam results). (Mrs. Muslimah): "I do not like it, Sir, they underestimate Aaron" (Mrs. Muslimah showed her disappointment to Mr. Harfan Headmaster). (Mr. Harfan): "Do not worry too much about it, Mus, just prepare the students’ rapports and let them take a vacation. You need a vacation, too. (Dialog at the minute of 30.48)

(2) A critique of public awareness of the importance of education, and discrimination of the lower class. This is the following data cutting.
Data 6.

(Mr. Harfan): "Zul, this school is a school where religious education, education is good, not just as a complement to the curriculum. (Dialog at minute 20.01)

(3) A critique of the doer of government policy and morality. This is the following data cutting.

Data 7.

(Mr. Harfan): "it’s over than 11:00, Mus, we have to tell the parents and the children". (Mrs. Muslimah): "What is the meaning 9, 10 students, Sir. Will, we teach them, Sir? ". (Mr. Harfan): "But, you know what this means". (While showing a warning letter, that the school will be closed if the student is less than 10 students). They are anxiously awaiting the arrival of the tenth student so that the school is not being closed. (Dialog at the minute of 6.45).

The analysis of film function as educative media is found that the moral value in Laskar Pelangi film:

(1) Value of human relationship with themselves: the importance of work ethic, learning, working, responsibility, honesty, despaired, and humbleness. The moral message appears at the minute of 105 scenes, which showed Lintang self-confidence, at the smart competition, though the judges and other participants underestimate him. Finally, Lintang, that poor child was able to show his achievements as a champion.

(2) Value of human relationships with others and environment: sincerity, filial to parents, trust, love to others, be a good example, and fairness. This moral message appears at the minute of 38.24 scene which illustrates the concerns of Mrs. Muslimah about the education and the future of her poor students.

(3) Value of human relationship with God: faith, piety, and trust. This moral value appears at the minute of 38.24 scenes, at the dialogue between Mr. Bahri and Mrs. Muslimah about the offer to teach at another better school. But Mrs. Muslimah dislikes Mr. Bahri’s plan to accept the offer because the school in the village needed more of their dedication. In addition, it also appears in a scene that illustrates the anxiety of the LP children in facing the exam, so they take the initiative to seek the wizard’s help. But eventually, they realize that it is an act that violates their religion. (Korsgaard, 2011)

Given the values contained in the novel, it is worth if the Laskar Pelangi film serves as an educative media for the community. Moreover, having proved that the Laskar Pelangi film has a high number of fans.

CONCLUSION

Laskar Pelangi film is an ecramisation is very famous for the beauty of the story in the novel can be visualized well through the pictures and dialogues of the character casts. Therefore, it can have established its aesthetic in the whole meaning. Laskar Pelangi films have a strategic function as an educative media for the community. In this case, indirectly the Laskar Pelangi film educates its audience to criticize the educational, social, and cultural gaps issues in Belitung, one of the islands in Indonesia. The moral message, that development, education, and welfare cannot be spread evenly by all of the people in Indonesia. In addition, this film also contains messages about moral values such as (1) value of human relationships with themselves: (2) value of human relationships with others and environment; (3) the value of a human relationship with God. Through educational film Laskar Pelangi media about the moral message is effective because it is delivered through a beautiful story, interesting, educating, and touching the heart.

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