



# MORAL MESSAGES ANALYSIS ON ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPÉRY'S *THE LITTLE PRINCE* AND ITS POTENTIAL IN SHAPING YOUNG READERS' CHARACTER

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## ABSTRAK

Pesan moral dalam sastra anak memainkan peran kritis dalam membentuk fondasi etika dan pengembangan karakter pembaca muda. Artikel ini melakukan pemeriksaan mendalam terhadap novela abadi Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, "Sang Pangeran Cilik," untuk menilai pengaruh potensialnya terhadap pembaca anak. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, studi ini menganalisis teks novel untuk mengidentifikasi dan mengeksplorasi pesan moral yang signifikan dari novela tersebut. Temuan dari analisis ini mengungkapkan bahwa "Sang Pangeran Cilik" memberikan pelajaran mendalam tentang imajinasi, empati, persahabatan, kesetiaan, dan tanggung jawab, yang membentuk pemahaman dan penghargaan pembaca anak terhadap kebajikan-kebajikan tersebut secara mendalam. Melalui karakter Sang Pangeran Cilik dan perjalanannya

melintasi planet, novel ini menunjukkan bagaimana rasa keheranan dan kepolosan anak-anak memupuk persepsi yang lebih dalam tentang keindahan dan makna dalam kehidupan. Selain itu, novela ini menekankan pentingnya hubungan yang peduli dan tanggung jawab yang menyertainya. Dengan menyediakan pelajaran berharga ini kepada pembaca muda, "Sang Pangeran Cilik" menjadi alat pendidikan yang ampuh dan sumber inspirasi moral bagi anak-anak. Melalui analisis ini, artikel tersebut menekankan peran penting sastra anak dalam pendidikan moral dan pengembangan karakter generasi muda.

## ABSTRACT

Moral messages in children's literature play a critical role in shaping the ethical foundations and character development of young readers. This article undertakes an in-depth examination of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's timeless novella "The Little Prince" to assess its potential influence on child readers. Employing a qualitative approach, the study analyzes the novel's text to identify and explore the novel's significant moral messages. The findings of the analysis reveal that "The Little Prince" imparts profound lessons in imagination, empathy, friendship, loyalty, and responsibility, which deeply shape child readers' understanding and appreciation of these virtues. Through the character of the Little Prince and his journey across planets, the novel demonstrates how a childlike sense of wonder and innocence fosters a deeper perception of beauty and meaning in life. Moreover, the novel emphasizes the importance of caring relationships and the responsibilities that come with them. By providing young readers with these valuable lessons, "The Little Prince" becomes a potent educational tool and a source of moral inspiration for children. Through this analysis, the article underscores the crucial role of children's literature in moral education and the character development of young generations.

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## INTRODUCTION

Literature is a work that gives pleasure and understanding to the reader. Literature is an art because of the artistic perspective, the artist's alteration of ideas and thoughts (Junaid, 2020.). Reading literature will directly help children to build attitudes towards the environment and themselves. Children's reading material or children's literature is a genre that plays a crucial role in shaping the character and moral development of children. It offers a variety of perspectives that are relatively new for children (Rahman et al., 2021). Literature form can be a novel, novella, poem, short story, drama, and others.

A novella is a literary work produced in written form that contains stories, events, or the author's imagination (Syahputra Waruwu & Bu, 2023). In novella, the reader can take meanings that need to be applied in everyday life. Morality is frequently demonstrated by the characters' experiences in their roles, referring to the goodness or badness of an attitude and deeds as a message sent by the author to his readers. Character values are essential for actively influencing young readers with positive character traits (Swandari & Markhamah, 2023).

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's *The Little Prince* is one of the world's most beloved children's literature, a classic that has been translated into various languages and has inspired millions of readers across generations. In addition to its engaging storyline, *The Little Prince* contains profound moral messages and essential values that can shape the character and morals of young readers. The beauty and depth of the moral messages in *The Little Prince* lie in the way the novel portrays the world through the eyes of a child, the Little Prince, who embarks on a journey across different planets to seek an understanding of life and humanity. Each planet he visits presents unique characters and teaches lessons about human nature, such as selfishness, power, and pride. Through interactions with other characters, the Little Prince learns about the importance of friendship, responsibility, and love. These messages have the potential to greatly impact readers' perspectives by inspiring them to re-evaluate their priorities and outlook on life.

Furthermore, various studies on moral values analysis in novels have been undertaken by Syahputra Waruwu (2023), Swandari F, Markhamah (2023), and L.D Putri (2020). In contrast to this research, those investigations use distinct methods and data sources. This study uses qualitative analysis method to explore and interpret the moral messages. The quotes on *The Little Prince* novella are used as the data sources.

In addition, the author will analyze the moral messages in the novella *The Little Prince*. Using a qualitative approach to the text of the novel, the author will explore how the moral messages in *The Little Prince* potentially shaping young readers' character, shaping their understanding of important values in life and providing them with valuable moral guidance for character development. The findings of this study are likely to shed fresh light on the function of children's literature in moral instruction for children, as well as the novella's contribution to constructing a better future generation.

## METHOD

In this article, we employ a qualitative analysis method to explore and interpret the moral messages conveyed in Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's "*The Little Prince*". This approach is particularly suitable for literary studies as it allows for an in-depth

examination of the text, focusing on themes, character development, and narrative structure to understand the underlying moral lessons.

We conduct a close textual analysis, a technique often used in the humanities to dissect various layers of meaning within a literary work (McKee, 2001). By identifying and interpreting themes such as imagination, empathy, friendship, loyalty, and responsibility, we aim to reveal how these virtues impact the character development of young readers. This method not only aids in understanding the explicit and implicit messages of "The Little Prince" but also evaluates its effectiveness as a potential tool for moral education, aligning with scholarly discussions on the influence of children's literature in shaping moral and ethical consciousness (Arya, 2020).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the novel *The Little Prince* reveals several moral messages conveyed to child readers. One of the main moral messages found is the importance of having imagination and sensitivity to the beauty around us. The character of the Little Prince encourages readers to see the world with a sense of wonder and to understand the uniqueness and beauty in everything. Quotes such as "It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye" illustrate the importance of perceiving the world with emotional and moral sensitivity (de Saint-Exupéry, 1943.). Empathy emerges as another potent moral message. The Little Prince's heartbreak over his abandoned rose and his genuine connection with isolated figures like the king and the lamplighter poignantly illustrate this concept. The novella further emphasizes the importance of authentic relationships. The fox, through the metaphor of taming, becomes a symbol of the value of friendship and loyalty. Responsibility becomes intricately linked with the concept of love. By caring for his rose, The Prince learns the importance of commitment. Furthermore, the futility of repetitive actions is highlighted through his encounters with self-absorbed adults on different planets.

### **The Importance of Imagination and Sensitivity to Beauty**

One of the main moral messages in *The Little Prince* is the importance of having imagination and sensitivity to the beauty around us. The character of the Little Prince encourages readers to see the world with a sense of wonder and to understand the uniqueness and beauty in everything. Quotes such as "It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye" illustrate the importance of perceiving the world with emotional and moral sensitivity (Saint-Exupéry, p. 22). Aligned with the previous research, children's literature can encourage children to approach the world with a sense of curiosity and openness, fostering a deeper appreciation for the complexities of life (Bhagwanji & Born, 2018).

### **The significance of friendship, loyalty, and responsibility**

The novel also emphasizes the importance of friendship, loyalty, and responsibility. When the Little Prince meets characters on different planets, readers are invited to understand the importance of interpersonal relationships and how friendship can bring happiness and meaning to life. Quotes such as "If you truly want, you can see that your rose is unique in the world" illustrate the importance of appreciating the uniqueness of each individual in friendships. The quote as "What

makes the desert beautiful is that somewhere it hides a well..."(p.80) demonstrate friendship and loyalty.

In addition, the novel teaches readers about sacrifice and responsibility toward what is tamed. When the Little Prince meets the fox, readers are invited to understand that having meaningful relationships requires sacrifice and responsibility. Quotes such as "You are responsible for what you have tamed" and "You are responsible for the flowers" teach child readers the importance of nurturing relationships and taking responsibility for the people they love (Saint-Exupéry, p. 62, 64).

### **Potential in Shaping Young Readers' Character**

This novel has a number of moral teachings that serve as human standards for how to behave and act in society. These moral messages can be taught to kids, particularly at a young age, as a foundation of knowledge for them to conduct well and avoid undesirable attitudes in the community. The moral principles presented in the novella can potentially used and put into practice starting from end year elementary school or junior high school. This evolving perspective on the inclusion of national character education in schools is due to the fact that junior high school students are transitioning from adolescent to adulthood.

Previous scholars like Marysa (2014), Buchory (2014), and Revita (2020) have looked into the implementation of character education at the junior high school level. Then, the integration of character education is implemented in phases that include planning, carrying out, assessing, and monitoring. Material development is done during the design phase to modify how character education is integrated. The Little Prince by Antoine de Saint-Exupery can be used as a lesson material for fictional works. Additionally, using moral values as teaching tools can be linked to students' real-world application of values in their daily lives, as well as their ability to recognize values cognitively and appreciate them effectively. During the implementation phase, students can use language activities (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) to apply the typical values found in the novel. After learning about the good and harmful norms contained in books, students are better able to uphold the good and avoid the bad actions in their environment. One strategy to improve character education in schools is to incorporate a variety of activities. (Ramawati et al., 2021) investigated the use of 5S culture to improve character education for pupils. Students can enhance their character education by adopting the 5S culture, which encompasses smiling, greeting, politeness, and greetings. This will help them learn moral principles through the novel.

According to (Rohman, 2019), Character development takes three stages: knowledge (knowing), application (doing), and habits. In this study, character education is implemented in a way that integrates learning by introducing values, raising students' awareness of their significance, and helping them internalize values into their daily behavior in line with what they are learning – all while using fiction book material.

### **CONCLUSSION**

The moral messages in the novel *The Little Prince* have a significant impact on the character and morality of young readers. Through the character of the Little Prince and his adventures, readers are not only invited to understand the world with a sense of wonder, but also to internalize values such as honesty, friendship, loyalty, and

responsibility. This novella can be potentially used as character education supporting tools toward young readers.

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