



Visualizing *Ukhuwah*: A Semiotic Analysis Of Children's Friendship Values In The Animated Film *Jumbo*

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Abstract

This study examines the visualization of *ukhuwah* through children's friendship values in the animated film *Jumbo* (2025) using Roland Barthes' semiotic theory. The study aims to analyze how friendship values are represented through visual, verbal, and narrative signs and how they reflect Islamic values. A qualitative descriptive approach was employed, with data collected through observation and documentation of ten selected scenes. The data were analyzed through Barthes' levels of denotation, connotation, and myth. The findings show that friendship is represented through empathy, social acceptance, responsibility, cooperation, solidarity, loyalty, sacrifice, and mutual support. At the denotative level, these values appear through helping, encouraging, cooperating, and resolving conflicts; at the connotative level, they reflect care, solidarity, and emotional support; while at the mythological level, they construct friendship as a relationship based on compassion, acceptance, togetherness, and collective responsibility. From an Islamic perspective, these representations reflect *ukhuwah*, *ta'awun*, and *itsar*. The study concludes that *Jumbo* not only provides entertainment but also communicates Islamic-oriented moral values that can support children's character development.

Keyword: Visualizing of *Ukhuwah*, Friendship Values, Roland Barthes' Semiotics, Animated Film *Jumbo*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji representasi ukhuwah melalui nilai-nilai persahabatan anak dalam film animasi Jumbo (2025) menggunakan teori semiotika Roland Barthes. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis bagaimana nilai-nilai persahabatan direpresentasikan melalui tanda-tanda visual, verbal, dan naratif serta bagaimana representasi tersebut mencerminkan nilai-nilai Islam. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi dan dokumentasi terhadap sepuluh adegan terpilih. Data kemudian dianalisis menggunakan tiga tingkatan pemaknaan dalam teori semiotika Barthes, yaitu denotasi, konotasi, dan mitos. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa persahabatan direpresentasikan melalui nilai empati, penerimaan sosial, tanggung jawab, kerja sama, solidaritas, kesetiaan, pengorbanan, dan saling mendukung. Pada tingkat denotasi, nilai-nilai tersebut ditampilkan melalui tindakan membantu, memberikan semangat, bekerja sama, dan menyelesaikan konflik. Pada tingkat konotasi, nilai-nilai tersebut mencerminkan kepedulian, solidaritas, dan dukungan emosional. Sementara itu, pada tingkat mitos, persahabatan dikonstruksi sebagai hubungan yang berlandaskan kasih sayang, penerimaan, kebersamaan, dan tanggung jawab kolektif. Dalam perspektif Islam, representasi tersebut mencerminkan nilai ukhuwah, ta'awun, dan itsar. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa film Jumbo tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai media hiburan, tetapi juga sebagai media penyampaian nilai-nilai moral yang berorientasi pada ajaran Islam dan dapat mendukung pembentukan karakter anak.

Kata Kunci: Representasi *Ukhuwah*, Nilai Persahabatan, Semiotika Roland Barthes, Film Animasi *Jumbo*

A. INTRODUCTION

Animated films are no longer viewed solely as entertainment media but also as educational tools that promote moral and social values among children. Through visual narratives, character interactions, and engaging storylines, animated films can influence children's understanding of social relationships and character development. Agustin et al. (2022) found that the animated series *Nussa dan Rara* contains various moral values that contribute to children's character formation. Similarly, Rahmayanti et al. (2021) reported that *Riko The Series* supports character education by promoting positive attitudes and behaviors. Furthermore, Nurhayati et al. (2023) revealed that *Nussa dan Rara* contributes to the cultivation of religious character values among young children. Likewise, Usdawati et al. (2025) demonstrated that animated films can represent character values, including empathy, responsibility, and cooperation, through engaging narratives.

Among various social values presented in animated films, friendship plays a crucial role in children's social development. Friendship helps children develop empathy, cooperation, trust, acceptance, and emotional support. Liu and Winduwati (2023) found that friendship in *One Piece Episode of Merry* is represented through loyalty, solidarity, and sacrifice. These findings indicate that friendship values can be effectively communicated through visual and narrative elements in animated media. From an Islamic perspective, these interpersonal values can also be understood through the concept of *ukhuwah*, which emphasizes brotherhood, mutual respect, care, and harmonious social relationships. The principles of *ta'awun*, or mutual assistance in goodness, and *itsar*, or

prioritizing others over oneself, further provide an Islamic ethical framework for understanding cooperation, solidarity, and selflessness in children's relationships.

To examine how friendship values and their ideological meanings are represented in media texts, this study employs Roland Barthes' semiotic theory. Barthesian semiotics is particularly appropriate for this study because it does not limit analysis to the literal identification of signs but examines how signs produce connotative meanings and develop into myths that naturalize particular cultural values and social ideologies. This multilayered framework is therefore useful for analyzing children's animated films, in which meanings are constructed not only through dialogue but also through gestures, facial expressions, visual composition, character relationships, and narrative situations. Hakimi and Prathisara (2026) explain that Barthes' semiotics examines meaning through denotation, connotation, and myth. Similarly, Maulidiyah (2021) demonstrates the application of Barthesian semiotics to animated film by examining denotative and connotative meanings. Vidiyah (2022) and Putri et al. (2025) further show that visual signs in animated films can convey broader cultural and ideological meanings.

Compared with Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which primarily examines discourse, language, power relations, and ideological structures, Barthesian semiotics offers a more direct analytical framework for examining how visual and narrative signs generate layered meanings in film. Meanwhile, Christian Metz's cinematic semiotics provides a specifically film-oriented framework for examining cinematic codes and the organization of filmic meaning. Luthfiyyah et al. (2026), for example, applied Metz's approach to *Jumbo* to examine social collectivism through cinematic signs, shared activities, cooperation, and social connectedness. However, the present study requires an analytical framework that can move from observable signs to their connotative and mythological meanings and subsequently interpret the moral values embedded within those representations. Therefore, Barthes' framework is considered more suitable for identifying how friendship-related signs in *Jumbo* construct broader cultural and ethical meanings.

One of the Indonesian animated films that prominently depicts children's friendship is *Jumbo* (2025). The film portrays the experiences of Don, Mae, Nurman, and Meri, whose interactions reflect values such as empathy, solidarity, cooperation, sacrifice, social acceptance, and mutual support. Previous studies have already examined friendship and related social values in *Jumbo*. Fitri and Pratiwi (2025) analyzed friendship values in *Jumbo* using Ferdinand de Saussure's semiotics and found that friendship is constructed through visual, verbal, and gestural signs. Sabrina and Ahmadi (2026) subsequently examined *Jumbo* using Roland Barthes' semiotics, focusing on three categories of values: friendship, courage, and self-confidence. Their findings identified friendship through mutual support and solidarity, while courage and self-confidence were examined as additional value categories. In addition, Luthfiyyah et al. (2026) examined *Jumbo* through Christian Metz's cinematic semiotics, focusing on social collectivism and the construction of togetherness, solidarity, and social connectedness.

These previous studies demonstrate that *Jumbo* has already received semiotic attention; therefore, the novelty of the present study does not lie simply in analyzing friendship values or in applying Roland Barthes' theory to the film. Instead, this study offers a distinct Islamic interpretive perspective by examining children's friendship values as a visualization of *ukhuwah* and by relating the findings to the principles of

ta'awun and itsar. In contrast to Fitri and Pratiwi (2025), who employed Saussurean semiotics to identify friendship values, the present study uses Barthes' three levels of meaning to examine how friendship signs acquire denotative, connotative, and mythological meanings. Unlike Sabrina and Ahmadi (2026), who examined friendship alongside courage and self-confidence, this study focuses specifically on friendship as an ethical and Islamic social relationship and interprets its representations through the concepts of *ukhuwah*, *ta'awun*, and *itsar*. Furthermore, unlike Luthfiyyah et al. (2026), whose Metzian analysis focuses on social collectivism, this study examines the moral and ideological meanings of friendship through Barthesian denotation, connotation, and myth. Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the representation of children's friendship values in the animated film *Jumbo* (2025) using Roland Barthes' semiotic framework and to examine how these representations reflect the Islamic values of *ukhuwah*, *ta'awun*, and *itsar*. By integrating Barthesian semiotics with an Islamic ethical perspective, this study seeks to contribute to the study of contemporary Islamic media and character education by demonstrating how children's friendship can be represented as a form of moral and religious value in animated film.

B. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative interpretive approach to examine the representation of children's friendship values in the animated film *Jumbo* (2025). A qualitative approach was used to interpret meanings embedded in visual, verbal, and narrative signs (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The analysis employed Roland Barthes' semiotic framework, which examines signs through denotation, connotation, and myth (Grange & Lian, 2022).

The primary data source was the animated film *Jumbo* (2025), with ten selected scenes coded D1–D10 as the units of analysis. The scenes were purposively selected because they contained signs representing friendship values such as empathy, responsibility, cooperation, solidarity, loyalty, sacrifice, and social acceptance. Similar scene-based analysis has been applied in previous studies of animated films (Rahmayanti et al., 2021; Rositawati et al., 2025).

Data were collected through repeated observation and documentation by recording relevant dialogues and capturing screenshots of selected scenes. The data were classified into visual, verbal, and narrative signs. Supporting sources included scholarly literature on semiotics, animated films, friendship values, Islamic ethics, and character education.

Data analysis followed Barthes' semiotic model. Denotation was used to identify literal meanings, connotation to interpret social, cultural, and emotional meanings, and myth to reveal broader ideological meanings (Grange & Lian, 2022). This analytical approach has also been applied in film and media studies to examine the construction of meaning and representation (Pawestri, 2025; Azwar & Auliana, 2024). These studies similarly demonstrate the use of semiotic analysis to interpret meanings constructed through media representations. The findings were subsequently interpreted in relation to the Islamic values of *ukhuwah*, *ta'awun*, and *itsar*. To ensure credibility, theoretical triangulation was conducted by comparing the findings with relevant literature on friendship, character education, Islamic ethics, and media representation.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Description of Research Object

Jumbo (2025) is an Indonesian animated film directed by Ryan Adriandhy. The film tells the story of Don, a young boy who experiences social challenges related to self-confidence, acceptance, and friendship. Throughout the narrative, Don interacts with Mae, Nurman, and Meri, whose relationships contribute to the development of friendship values portrayed in the film.

The story focuses on children's social relationships and the ways friendship is established, maintained, and strengthened through everyday interactions and shared experiences. Various situations involving misunderstanding, cooperation, emotional support, collective problem-solving, and reconciliation provide representations of empathy, solidarity, responsibility, loyalty, sacrifice, and social acceptance.

The film communicates these values through visual, verbal, and narrative signs. Facial expressions, gestures, physical proximity, dialogue, character interactions, and narrative events function as signs that construct meanings related to children's social relationships. These characteristics make *Jumbo* relevant for semiotic analysis because its meanings are conveyed not only through dialogue but also through visual representation and narrative development.

The selection of *Jumbo* as the research object is based on its strong representation of children's interpersonal relationships. The interactions among Don, Mae, Nurman, and Meri provide material for examining how friendship is constructed at the levels of denotation, connotation, and myth. The findings are subsequently interpreted from an Islamic ethical perspective, particularly through the concepts of *ukhuwah*, *ta'awun*, and *itsar*.



Figure 1. Poster of *Jumbo* (2025)

Figure 1 presents the poster of *Jumbo* (2025), which introduces the main characters and provides a visual representation of the film. The poster serves as contextual information for the research object, while the primary analysis focuses on selected scenes from the film.

Data Presentation

The analysis identified ten selected scenes coded D1–D10. The scenes were purposively selected because they contain visual, verbal, and narrative signs representing children's friendship values.

Table 1. Selected Scenes Representing Children's Friendship Values in *Jumbo* (2025)

Kode Data	Waktu/Scene	Description of Scene	Friendship Value
D1	00:09:40–00:11:15	Don experiences negative treatment from peers.	Social acceptance
D2	00:11:27–00:11:57	Nurman accompanies Don during a difficult situation.	Empathy
D3	00:20:00–00:21:02	Mae encourages Don.	Emotional support
D4	00:24:40–00:25:20	The characters discuss helping Meri.	Responsibility
D5	00:57:40–00:58:17	The friends agree to work together.	Reciprocity
D6	00:59:59–01:01:30	The characters cooperate to solve a problem.	Cooperation
D7	01:07:45–01:09:10	The characters help one another.	Solidarity
D8	01:10:48–01:12:05	The characters face challenges together.	Togetherness
D9	01:20:42–01:21:30	The characters prioritize group interests.	Loyalty
D10	01:23:42–01:25:25	The characters resolve an interpersonal conflict.	Sacrifice and acceptance

Table 1 presents the ten selected scenes (D1–D10), their timestamps, and the friendship values identified in each scene. These scenes were subsequently analyzed using Roland Barthes' semiotic framework, focusing on denotation, connotation, and mythological meaning.

Semiotic Analysis of Children's Friendship Values

The selected scenes were subsequently analyzed using Roland Barthes' semiotic framework, focusing on denotation, connotation, and mythological meaning.

Table 2. Summary of Semiotic Analysis

Scene	Denotation	Connotation	Myth
D1	Don is excluded by his peers.	Social rejection and lack of acceptance.	The ideal child is constructed as one who accepts others and avoids exclusion.
D2	Nurman accompanies Don in a difficult situation.	Empathy, care, and emotional support.	Mutual care is constructed as a natural characteristic of an ideal friendship.
D3	Mae encourages Don.	Support, solidarity, and emotional strengthening.	Children's confidence is constructed as something

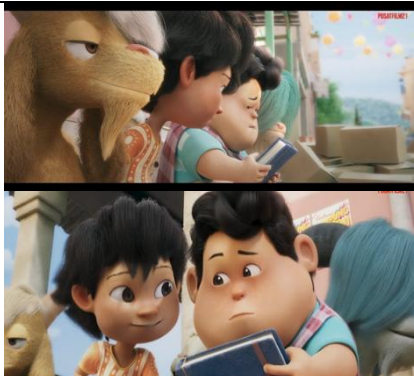
			strengthened through supportive peer relationships.
D4	The characters discuss helping Meri.	Responsibility and concern for others.	Helping others is constructed as an expected form of responsible childhood behavior.
D5	The friends agree to work together.	Reciprocity and commitment.	Cooperation is naturalized as a desirable way for children to achieve common goals.
D6	The characters cooperate to solve a problem.	Teamwork and collective action.	Collective problem-solving is constructed as an ideal form of children's social behavior.
D7	The characters help one another.	Solidarity and mutual assistance.	Mutual assistance is naturalized as an essential part of harmonious friendship.
D8	The characters face challenges together.	Togetherness and collective resilience.	Facing difficulties collectively is constructed as a desirable model of childhood relationships.
D9	The characters prioritize group interests.	Loyalty and selflessness.	Putting collective interests above personal interests is constructed as an ideal form of friendship.
D10	The characters resolve an interpersonal conflict.	Acceptance, reconciliation, and sacrifice.	Harmony and reconciliation are naturalized as desirable ways of resolving children's conflicts.

Table 2 shows that the selected scenes construct friendship through empathy, cooperation, solidarity, acceptance, and mutual support. At the mythological level, these values are presented as natural and desirable forms of children's social relationships.

Islamic Interpretation of Children's Friendship Values

The friendship values identified in the selected scenes were further interpreted from an Islamic ethical perspective, particularly through the concepts of *ukhuwah*, *ta'awun*, and *itsar*.

Table 3. Selected Scenes Representing Children's Friendship Values in *Jumbo* (2025)

Friendship Value	Scene	Islamic Value	Visual Evidence
Empathy	D2 (00:11:27–00:11:57)	<i>Ukhuwah</i>	

Cooperation	D6 (00:59:59–01:01:30)	<i>Ta'awun</i>	 
Solidarity	D7 (01:07:45–01:09:10)	<i>Ukhuwah / Ta'awun</i>	 
Loyalty and Sacrifice	D9 (01:20:42–01:21:30)	<i>Ukhuwah / Itsar</i>	 

Table 3 highlights four representative scenes that demonstrate the main friendship values and their relevance to Islamic ethical concepts. The selected scenes visually illustrate empathy, cooperation, solidarity, loyalty, and sacrifice as expressions of positive social relationships.

Discussion

1. Denotative, Connotative, and Mythological Meanings of Children's Friendship Values in *Jumbo* (2025)

The semiotic analysis reveals that the representation of children's friendship values in *Jumbo* (2025) operates through three levels of meaning: denotation, connotation, and myth. At the denotative level, friendship is represented through observable actions such as helping, accompanying, encouraging, cooperating, and resolving conflicts. These actions are communicated through visual signs, dialogues, gestures, and interactions among the characters.

At the connotative level, these signs convey deeper social and emotional meanings, including empathy, responsibility, solidarity, loyalty, acceptance, and sacrifice. At the

mythological level, however, friendship is not understood merely as a moral message. Rather, the film constructs particular assumptions about the ideal child and ideal children's social relationships. Acceptance, cooperation, mutual assistance, and reconciliation are repeatedly presented as natural and desirable forms of childhood behavior. Thus, the film constructs an image of the ideal child as someone who accepts others, supports friends, cooperates with peers, and seeks harmony in social relationships.

These findings are consistent with Sabrina and Ahmadi (2026), who identified denotative, connotative, and mythological meanings in *Jumbo* related to friendship, courage, and self-confidence. Similarly, Fitri and Pratiwi (2025) demonstrated that visual and verbal signs in *Jumbo* contribute to the construction of social meanings among characters. Luthfiyyah et al. (2026) also found that collectivist values in *Jumbo* are represented through cooperation, shared activities, and collective problem-solving.

However, the present study differs from these previous studies by interpreting the mythological level as a construction of ideology concerning ideal childhood social behavior, rather than treating myth simply as a moral message. Furthermore, this study specifically connects the representation of friendship with Islamic ethical values, particularly *ukhuwah*, *ta'awun*, and *itsar*. This perspective provides a more specific interpretation of how children's friendship is constructed in contemporary Indonesian animated media.

2. Forms of Children's Friendship Value Representation in *Jumbo* (2025)

The analysis identified several forms of friendship value representation in *Jumbo* (2025), including empathy, responsibility, cooperation, solidarity, loyalty, sacrifice, and social acceptance. These values emerge through interactions among the main characters and contribute to the development of the narrative. Empathy is represented through emotional support and concern among friends, while responsibility appears when characters respond to the needs of others. Cooperation and solidarity are represented through collective efforts to overcome shared challenges. Meanwhile, loyalty and sacrifice are reflected in actions that prioritize friends and group interests.

From an Islamic perspective, these friendship values can be interpreted through the concepts of *ukhuwah*, *ta'awun*, and *itsar*. The acceptance and support represented among the characters reflect *ukhuwah*, which emphasizes positive and respectful interpersonal relationships. The cooperative actions among the characters are consistent with *ta'awun*, or mutual assistance in positive actions, as expressed in the Qur'an:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرْ قَوْمٌ مِنْ قَوْمٍ عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِنْهُمْ
("O you who believe, let not one group ridicule another group; it may be that the latter are better than the former") (QS. Al-Hujurat: 11).

The cooperative actions among the characters represent *ta'awun*, which encourages collaboration in goodness, as expressed in

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ
("And cooperate in righteousness and piety") (QS. Al-Ma'idah: 2).

Meanwhile, acts of sacrifice and prioritizing the interests of friends illustrate the value of *itsar*, which is praised in the verse

وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ

("They give preference to others over themselves, even though they are in need") (QS. Al-Hasyr: 9).

These findings indicate that the friendship values portrayed in *Jumbo* are not only social values but also align with Islamic teachings on harmonious interpersonal relationships.

The findings are consistent with Srimayanti and Widyastuti (2023), who found that friendship in animated films is represented through trust, acceptance, and mutual support. Likewise, Oktaviani and Nugroho (2025) reported that friendship values in animated narratives include cooperation, loyalty, sacrifice, and togetherness. Hanif and 'Aini (2025) similarly identified empathy, solidarity, and sacrifice as important friendship values in film narratives.

Compared with these studies, the present research offers a more specific contribution by combining Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis with an Islamic ethical interpretation. Rather than merely identifying friendship values, this study examines how those values are constructed through visual, verbal, and narrative signs and how they can be understood through the concepts of *ukhuwah*, *ta'awun*, and *itsar*.

D. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that *Jumbo* (2025) represents children's friendship through empathy, social acceptance, emotional support, responsibility, cooperation, solidarity, loyalty, and sacrifice. Through Roland Barthes' semiotic framework, these values are identified at the levels of denotation, connotation, and myth. At the mythological level, the film constructs an image of ideal childhood relationships based on acceptance, mutual assistance, cooperation, and social harmony. From an Islamic ethical perspective, these representations can be interpreted through the concepts of *ukhuwah*, *ta'awun*, and *itsar*. However, this study is limited to textual and semiotic interpretation of selected scenes and does not examine how children as audiences actually perceive or understand the meanings represented in the film. Future research should therefore consider audience reception studies involving children to empirically examine whether the friendship and Islamic ethical messages identified through semiotic analysis are perceived and understood by young viewers as intended.

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