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ADJECTIVES PERTAINING TO GOOD AND EVIL IN THE TALES OF THE BROTHERS GRIMM AND THEIR UNIVERSAL VALUES

Julia Wulandari

Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Indonesia, j.wulandari@ui.ac.id

Setiawati Darmojuwono

Fakultas Ilmu Pengetahuan Budaya, Universitas Indonesia, setiawati.darmojuwono@ui.ac.id

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**ADJECTIVES PERTAINING TO GOOD AND EVIL IN THE TALES OF
THE BROTHERS GRIMM AND THEIR UNIVERSAL VALUES**

Julia Wulandari

Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Indonesia
j.wulandari@ui.ac.id

Setiawati Darmojuwono

Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Indonesia
setiawati.darmojuwono@ui.ac.id

ABSTRACT

The values of good and evil in the tales recounted by the Brothers Grimm are so universal that they have become an integral part of world literature. The research data for this paper was compiled from three tales, *Aschenputtel* (*Cinderella*), *Rapunzel*, and *Schneewittchen* (*Snow White*). This research project analyzed the language used in the stories to assess the values of virtue and evil that prevailed in reality in German society at the time the stories were compiled, and that are still valid today. This paper intends to describe the 19th century German concepts of good and bad, the pan-German values embedded in the folktales, and their universal moral appeal to diverse cultures of global human civilization. Qualitative literature study and descriptive data analysis are the methods employed in this investigation. The results indicate that the concept of virtue refers to beauty and generosity, but being good causes the protagonists to suffer. On the other hand, the concept of evil, as described in the three Grimm brothers stories that have been analyzed, refers to heartlessness and wickedness. The antagonists keep endangering the protagonists but eventually, the good characters live happily ever after. The conflict between good and evil is presented through the daily activities of human life that apply to people of varied cultural backgrounds.

KEYWORDS: fairy tales, the Brothers Grimm, good, evil, universal values

INTRODUCTION

A discussion of the values of virtue and evil is still relevant. The evolution and development of values through time is topic of interest in the domain of humanity studies. The values expressed in the Brothers Grimm tales are universal and they still prevail in human societies across the world. Thus, the stories attract attention for further study from a linguistics perspective. This paper examines the manner in which the tales verbally display the qualities of virtue and evil through

adjectives. In addition, this investigation discusses the relations between the adjectives as they reflected the values held by German society at that time and the universality of these values as they remain relevant in many cultures.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Brothers Grimm fairy tale collection is one of the world's literary masterpieces. These fairy tales were written about 200 years ago they and have been translated into various languages, including Indonesian. Both children and adults are captivated by these fairy tales. The battle between good and evil in these stories is so universal that people from diverse cultural backgrounds enjoy them. This wide-ranging appeal makes the Brothers Grimm fairy tales popular and accepted in Indonesia.

Jakob Ludwig Karl Grimm and Wilhelm Karl Grimm were siblings from Hanau, Germany. They began collecting fairy tales from around Germany between 1812 and 1815 (Thode, 2017). On the 20th December 1812, they published *Gebrüder Grimm: Kinder- und Hausmärchen, große Ausgabe, Band 1* (*Grimm Brothers: Children's and Domestic Tales, First Collection*). This collection is so popular throughout the world that it has been reprinted millions of times and translated into 160 languages (Ackner and Fischbach, 2017).

Some studies have been conducted on the Brothers Grimm's fairy tales. Theresia Puspayanti (Puspayanti, 1987) effected a symbolic analysis on five German fairy tales taken from the Brothers Grimm's collection to examine the process of developing into adulthood from the perspective of the psychological sciences. Taking the cultural studies standpoint, another study assessed the factors that constructed the beauty myths in the female protagonists in five stories from the collection. Maria Widiastuti's (Widiastuti, year unknown) examination analyzed the function of folktales and modern fairy tales as a pedagogical tool through a preliminary study based on modern fables and the fairy tales collected by the Grimm brothers.

The aforementioned studies scrutinized the Brothers Grimm fairy tales from the viewpoints of different disciplines, i.e., psychology, humanities, and education. The diversity of perspectives further confirms that these fairy tales can indeed be applied to numerous areas and purposes. This paper will study the fairy tales collected by the Grimm brothers from a linguistic point of view. Using the corpus linguistic approach in her research entitled "*Violence in the Brothers Grimm's Fairy Tales: A Corpus-Based Approach*," Maria Alcantud Diaz (Alcantud-Diaz, 2017) of the University of Venezuela examined the frequency of occurrence of three words: "cut," "dead," and "blood." These words are related to violence in eight Brothers Grimm fairy tales. The research, conducted in 2010, demonstrated that the frequency of occurrence of violence-related words is considerably high. Another corpus linguistic study, "*Fairy Tales and Moral Values: A Corpus-based Approach*," was effected in 2012 by Rafael Silveira Silva (Silva, 2017).

International Review of Humanities Studies
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Vol. 6, No.1, January 2021, pp. 157-172

He inspected the use of three words related to character: “love,” “little,” and “girl.” The research showed a high rate of use of the selected vocabularies, and evidenced that their incidence is empirically related to moral values in the Grimm corpora. Silva explained that the social behavior of children was influenced by the words they read in fairy tales compiled by the Brothers Grimm.

Those previous studies further exhibit that the Brothers Grimm fairy tales have captivated researchers from various disciplines to probe the values hidden in them. Nevertheless, the author of the present paper has not discovered any studies on the opposition of good and evil in the Brothers Grimm fairy tales, nor is there any research on the significance of the vocabulary used by the brothers when they were first collected and published. Therefore, the current study could fill a gap in the body of knowledge by analyzing the meaning of the words used in the fairy tales using two German dictionaries from the mid-19th century when the fairy tales were first published.

The language employed in the Brothers Grimm fairy tales is distinctive in the characteristics and it renders a captivating quality to the narrative. Language plays a pivotal role in making stories accepted, and fairy tales utilize virtuous characters and villains to disseminate moral lessons that establish the manners in which good characters are contrasted to the evil. Therefore, it was intriguing to discover how the Brothers Grimm fairy tales could be acceptable to people from discrete cultural backgrounds, and the linguistic perspective was preferred to specifically study words that relate to virtue and wickedness.

Three stories from Brothers Grimm fairy tales—*Aschenputtel* (*Cinderella*), *Rapunzel*, and *Schneewittchen* (*Snow White*)—were selected for analysis in this paper. These three narratives are similar in the manner in which the virtuous characters are contrasted to the villains. To specify, the virtuous characters are the protagonists in these selected tales, and the evil characters are the antagonists who treat the protagonists with cruelty.

This study focuses on the verbal aspect of the fairy tales (i.e., the words used in recounting the stories). These words are further narrowed down to the adjectives that describe virtue and evil as they are applied in the descriptions of the protagonists and the antagonists. To observe how the two contrasting characters are presented in the stories, the lexical meaning of the adjectives are then analyzed. The lexical meaning is the sense of a word in isolation, and this meaning can be found in a dictionary (Patada, 2001, p.119). Since language is dynamic, the denotation of a word changes from time to time. Thus, the lexical meanings, described in the section 4 of this paper, are taken from a dictionary belonging to the *Neuhochdeutsch* era (Grimm, 1971) in the second half of the 18th century, the time when the Brothers Grimm fairy tales were collected and published.

The meaning of the adjectives is subsequently related to the content of the story in order to obtain the textual implication. Textual significance is the meaning obtained by the reader after perusing the text fully (*Ibid.*, p.130). In this manner, the adjectives from the selected Brothers Grimm fairy tales may be understood comprehensively, not merely from the isolated meaning of each word, but also from the context of the whole story.

Lyons (1977, p.570) stated that every verbal and written expression is affected by some underlying factors. These factors are called context. Context connects the temporal and spatial aspects that become the time and location context of the utterance. Oral stories prevalent in Germany and its environs were compiled and published by the Grimm brothers between 1812 and 1815. Hence, we must understand the context of the Brothers Grimm fairy tales.

Comprehending context implies understanding meaning. Firth (1957a, cited in Lyons 1977, p.609) emphasized that the key term of the theory of meaning is context. An utterance is a series of contextual facts, context within context, and context as part of a bigger context, which is the context of culture. It shows an intimate relation between language and culture. The words used in the Brothers Grimm fairy tales represent the utterance in a certain context of culture, which is the culture within the era of the Brothers Grimm. Consequently, the meaning of the words employed for and by the virtuous and villainous characters in the Brothers Grimm fairy tales are scrutinized here to grasp the implied context of culture, the perspective of German society toward virtue and evil at that time, and the relevance of those values to the present.

This study focuses on two aspects: First, this study observes the verbal expression of good and evil in the three selected Brothers Grimm fairy tales, specifically through the adjectives that are used. Second, this project analyzes the relations between the adjectives used to represent the virtuous characters and those employed for the villains in the stories. Next, these adjectives are considered in the light of the values held by German society at that time and to display the universality of the notions of good and evil that are still relevant in many cultures. The objectives of this research initiative are to present the meaning of the adjectives used to describe the virtuous and villain characters in the selected tales and to unveil the era-specific cultural values reflected in the adjectives employed by the three Brothers Grimm in their fairy tale collection.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research project takes a descriptive analytic approach and utilizes the qualitative methods of literary research and data analysis. Linguistic data were collected from the tales, and the adjectives were described and analyzed qualitatively to unveil their implied meaning from which the underlying cultural values of the tales could be assessed.

The lexical denotation of the adjectives describing the goodness of the virtuous characters and the immorality of the villains was obtained with the help of two dictionaries, *Adelung - Grammatisch-kritisches Wörterbuch der Hochdeutschen Mundart* (Adelung, 1793) from the 19th century, and *Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob Grimm und Wilhelm Grimm* (Grimm, 1971) from 1838. Both dictionaries are found online. The *Adelung* dictionary was compiled by Johann Christoph Adelung. *Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob Grimm und Wilhelm Grimm* dictionary, a German Dictionary from the *Neuhochdeutsch* era, was used in addition to the *Adelung* dictionary.

It began to be compiled in 1838 by the philologists Moriz Haupt and Karl Reimer, together with the writers of Brothers Grimm fairy tales, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm.

The next step was to analyze the text to acquire the textual meaning of the adjectives. Both meanings were exploited to examine the cultural values related to goodness and badness in the tales that are relevant even to present day human societies.

VIRTUOUS CHARACTERS

Virtues are verbally presented in three characters of the selected fairy tales, namely Aschenputtel (Cinderella), Rapunzel, and Schneewittchen (Snow White). The adjectives employed to describe these protagonists in the tales are listed in the following table.

Table 1.
Adjectives used to describe the virtuous characters

Aschenputtel	Rapunzel	Schneewittchen
fromm “obedient” gut “good” arm “pitiful” staubig “dusty” schmutzig “messy” schön “beautiful” klein “petite” verbuttet “neglected”	schön “beautiful” fein (Haar) “fine (hair)” süß (Stimme) “sweet (voice)” arm “pitiful”	so weiß wie Schnee “as white as snow” so rot wie Blut “as red as blood” so schwarz wie das Holz an dem Rahmen “as black as ebony” schön “beautiful” unschuldig “innocent” arm “pitiful” lieb “sweet”

Aschenputtel is the virtuous character in the eponymous story. She is depicted through the use of adjectives with the following lexical meaning:

Table 2.
The lexical meaning of the adjectives employed in describing Aschenputtel

Words	Lexical meaning
fromm	tapfer, herzhaft, Rechtschaffen, fertig seine Pflichten gegen andere willig zu erfüllen, unschuldig, gottesfürchtig, der alle seine Handlungen zur Ehre des von ihm erkannten Gottes einrichtet (Adelung Online Dictionary). “resilient, strong, responsible for fulfilling her duties, innocent, obedient to God’s

International Review of Humanities Studies
www.irhs.ui.ac.id, e-ISSN: 2477-6866, p-ISSN: 2527-9416
Vol. 6, No.1, January 2021, pp. 157-172

	commandments
gut	gut, passend, schmuck, hübsch (Grimm Online Dictionary) “good, appropriate, neat, lovely”
arm	der Mangel am Überflusse leidet, im Gegensatze des Reichen, unglücklich, beklagenswerth (Adelung Online Dictionary). “lacking of wealth, antonym of rich, unhappy, full of dissatisfaction”
staubig	Staub enthaltend (Adelung Online Dictionary). “covered in dust”
schmutzig	Schmutz enthaltend (Adelung Online Dictionary). “messy”
klein	zierlich, fein, niedlich (Grimm Online Dictionary) “petite, skinny, cute”
schön	glänzend, hell, und in weiterer Bedeutung rein, sauber. Ein schönes Gesicht. Eine schöne Gestalt. Eine schöne Person. Ein schöner Körper. Bildschön, so schön wie ein gemahltes Bild. Schön von Gesicht, von Gestalt (Adelung Online Dictionary). “glittering, bright, pure, clean, having a beautiful face and body.” mit der beziehung des worts auf menschen, die durch eine weisze, glatte haut und strahlende augen ausgezeichnet sind (Grimm Online Dictionary). “When it is applied to a person, it would mean having fair, soft skin. and radiant eyes”
verbuttet	butt, d. i. klein und unansehnlich werden und bleiben. Bäume, Gewächse, Thiere, Kinder verbutten, wenn sie nicht gehörig wachsen. Ein verbuttetes Kind. (Adelung Online Dictionary). “small and unattractive, neglected child”

The lexical denotation of all the eight adjectives can be related to the textual meaning of the narrative of Aschenputtel as follows.

The adjectives that describe Aschenputtel emphasize her “good” characteristics. She is depicted as physically attractive (schön), with a petite (klein) body. Aschenputtel is depicted to possess virtuous traits (gut) and is obedient, resilient, and strong (fromm). These attributes prevail even though she is pitiful (arm) as her stepmother abuses her and forces her to perform chores that make her body and face dusty (staubig) and messy (schmutzig). Even worse, her father does not acknowledge her as his own daughter (verbuttet).

Rapunzel is the virtuous heroine of the second eponymous story. She is portrayed through adjectives that imply the following lexical meanings.

International Review of Humanities Studies
www.irhs.ui.ac.id, e-ISSN: 2477-6866, p-ISSN: 2527-9416
 Vol. 6, No.1, January 2021, pp. 157-172

Table 3.

The lexical meaning of the adjectives used to describe Rapunzel

Words	Lexical meaning
schön	See Table 2
fein	hübsch, artig, zumal von frauen (Grimm Online Dictionary). “beautiful, courageous”
süß	in Ansehung des Gehöres, dem Gehöre im hohen Grade angenehm (Adelung Online Dictionary). “pleasing to the ear”
arm	See Table 2

The lexical meaning of all the four adjectives can be related to the textual meaning in the tale of Rapunzel as follows:

Rapunzel is a physically attractive (schön) girl with long and fine (fein) dark hair. She loves to sing and has a beautiful (süß) voice. However, she is ill-fated (arm) because she is locked up in a high tower and then stranded in a desert.

Schneewittchen is the third good protagonist of the selected stories. The adjectives chosen to describe her carry the following lexical significance:

Table 4.

The lexical meaning of the adjectives used to describe Schneewittchen

Words	Lexical meaning
weiß	diejenige Farbe habend, welche unter allen die hellste ist, aus dem völligen Lichte, und dem noch nicht zertheilten Lichtstrahl bestehet. Eigentlich. Die weiße Farbe. Ein weißes Kleid. Weiß wie Schnee, schneeweiß (Adelung Online Dictionary). “having the brightest color, the color of bright light, white, as white as snow.”
rot	bedeutung der roten farbe. rot im gesicht, zeichen der gesundheit: Mausolus treues weib ist noch gesund und roht. besonders rote wangen, roter mund, ein zeichen der frische, jugend, schönheit. rot im gesicht, ein zeichen eines seelischen zustandes; so zeichen von liebe und freude: man siht mich vil vrœlich lachen (Grimm Online Dictionary). “red color, reddish in the face in a healthy way, fresh, young, beautiful, full of love, and peaceful.”
schwarz	mit bezug auf natürliche leibesbeschaffenheit im weiteren sinne von menschen mit schwarzem haar, schwarzen augen, dunkler hautfarbe

	(Grimm Online Dictionary). “dark hair, dark eyes, and dark complexion.”
schön	See Table 2
unschuldig	stark gefühlsbetont “treuherzig, geliebt, lieb, arm, bedauernswert,” kosend, bedauernd und spottend, harmlos, unschädlich, sanft, naiv (Grimm Online Dictionary). “innocent, cute, pleasant, sympathetic, gentle, harmless, friendly, naive.”
lieb	Angenehm, was mit einem merklichen Gerade des Vergnügens empfunden wird (Adelung Online Dictionary). “feeling secured”
arm	See Table 2

The lexical sense of all the seven adjectives can be related to the textual meaning in the tale of *Schneewittchen* as follows:

The adjectives used for Schneewittchen illustrate her as a physically attractive (*schön*) girl with skin as white as snow (*weiß*), red (*rot*) cheeks, and dark eyes (*schwarz*). Schneewittchen’s beauty is complemented by her innocent, sweet, and pleasant (*unschuldig*) traits that endear (*lieb*) her to everyone around her. However, her life is pitiful (*arm*) as her stepmother envies her beauty and tries to get her killed.

THE VILLAINS

The villains in Aschenputtel are Aschenputtel’s stepmother and her stepsisters, who treat her like a slave. The “bad” character in Rapunzel is the witch who locks the “good” protagonist up in the high tower. Schneewittchen’s antagonist is the queen who is also the virtuous heroine’s stepmother, a woman so envious of Schneewittchen’s beauty that she intends to kill her. These characters are considered villains as they treat the virtuous characters (Aschenputtel, Rapunzel, and Schneewittchen) so viciously that they have to face much danger and adversity in their lives.

Table 5.

Adjectives used to describe the villains of the three fairy tales

Aschenputtel’s stepsisters	The witch in Rapunzel	Schneewittchen’s stepmother
schön (von Angesicht) “beautiful (face)” weiß (von Angesicht) “fair (face)” garstig (von Herzen)	zornig “furious” unbarmherzig “unmerciful” böse (Blicken) “wicked (gaze)” böse (Blicken) “wicked (gaze)”	schön “beautiful” stolz “snobbish” übmütig “arrogant” gottlos “godless” böse “wicked”

International Review of Humanities Studies
www.irhs.ui.ac.id, e-ISSN: 2477-6866, p-ISSN: 2527-9416
 Vol. 6, No.1, January 2021, pp. 157-172

“horrible (heart)” schwarz (von Herzen) “malevolent (heart)” stolz “snobbish”		boshaft “vicious” grausig (Blicken) “gruesome (stare)” neidisch (Herz) “envious (heart)” angst “fearful”
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The heroine’s stepsisters are two of the villains in the tale of *Aschenputtel*. The following adjectives are used to describe them:

Table 6.

The lexical meaning of the adjectives utilized to depict the villains in *Aschenputtel*

Words	Lexical meaning
schön	See Table 1
weiß	See Table 5
garstig	Ungestaltet, häßlich, von widriger Bildung (Adelung Online Dictionary). “bad, horrible”
schwarz	vom handeln und seinen inneren ursachen, unheilvoll, böse, hinsichtlich der wirkung auf andere (Grimm Online Dictionary). “malevolent, causing or intended to cause harm or misfortune”
stolz	arrogant, überhebungsvoll (Grimm Online Dictionary). “arrogant, overconfident”

The lexical sense of all the five adjectives can be related to the textual meaning of the tale of *Aschenputtel* as follows:

The stepsisters are two girls with pretty faces (schön) and fair facial complexion (weiß), but they have horrible (garstig) and dark (schwarz) hearts. They are also arrogant (stolz) when they forbid *Aschenputtel* from going to the ball as they believe *Aschenputtel*’s unattractive looks will embarrass them.

The witch in *Rapunzel* personifies evil. The adjectives used to describe her and their lexical meanings are as listed in Table 7:

Table 7.

The lexical meaning of the adjectives used to describe the villainous witch in *Rapunzel*

Words	Lexical meaning
zornig	Zum Zorne geneigt (Adelung Online Dictionary). “get mad”
unbarmherzig	ohne mitgeföhl, mitleid, erbarmung, mehr hart, streng, rücksichtslos,

International Review of Humanities Studies
www.irhs.ui.ac.id, e-ISSN: 2477-6866, p-ISSN: 2527-9416
Vol. 6, No.1, January 2021, pp. 157-172

	grob, roh, grausam (Grimm Online Dictionary). “unmerciful, intolerant, gruesome, vicious”
böse	zum Zorne geneigt, wirklich zornig (Adelung Online Dictionary). “furious”
giftig	Figürlich, im hohen Grade zornig, mit Begierde zu schaden, im gemeinen Leben (Adelung Online Dictionary). “angry and potentially destructive”

The lexical meaning of the four adjectives can be related to the textual meaning in the tale of Rapunzel as follows:

The four adjectives used to describe the villain in Rapunzel’s evil character, the witch, is angry (zornig) when she discovers a man stealing a rapunzel plant from her garden. In return, the man has to give his daughter to the witch. The witch then names the little girl Rapunzel. Afterwards, Rapunzel is locked up in a high tower. When she tells the witch that she wants to leave the tower with a prince, the witch is furious and she unmercifully (unbarmherzig) banishes Rapunzel to a barren desert. When the prince comes to the tower to take Rapunzel with him, he has to face the furious (böse) and harmful (giftig) witch. The prince then falls off the tower and becomes blind because thorns poke into his eyes.

Schneewittchen’s stepmother, the evil queen, is described using adjectives whose lexical meanings are listed below:

Table 8.

The lexical meaning of the adjectives used for the evil antagonist in *Schneewittchen*

Words	Lexical meaning
schön	See Table 1
stolz	See Table 7
übermütig	übermütiger, hochmütiger, starkmütiger; gar stolz und übermütig oder künmütig, arroganter, zügellos, muthwillig (Grimm Online Dictionary). “proud, arrogant, malicious”
gottlos	Von der Verbindlichkeit gegen Gott befreiet, oder doch bemühet, sich von der Verbindlichkeit gegen Gott los zu machen, ein Gottesläugner, ein Atheist (Adelung Online Dictionary). “not acknowledging God’s law, not believing in God, atheist”
böse	See Table 8
boshaft	Zu einem hohen Grade des Zornes und der Rachgier geneigt, im gemeinen Leben (Adelung Online Dictionary). “furious”
grausig	schrecklich, schaurig, einen schauder der furcht oder des entsetzens erregend, geeignet, eine furchtempfindung auszulösen (Grimm Online Dictionary).

International Review of Humanities Studies
www.irhs.ui.ac.id, e-ISSN: 2477-6866, p-ISSN: 2527-9416
 Vol. 6, No.1, January 2021, pp. 157-172

	“surprised, horrified, fearful”
neidisch	Neid empfindend, und darin gegründet, und in engerer Bedeutung, Fertigkeit besitzend, andere wegen ihres Wohlstandes und wegen ihrer Vorzüge zu beneiden (Adelung Online Dictionary). “envious of what others possess”
angst	die Beklemmung der Brust, als eine Wirkung der dunkeln Empfindung eines hohen Grades von Furcht und Traurigkeit (Adelung Online Dictionary). “suffocated by fear or sadness”

The lexical meaning of all nine adjectives can be related to the textual meaning in the tale of *Schneewittchen* in the following manner:

Schneewittchen's evil stepmother is beautiful (*schön*) but also snobbish (*stolz*) and arrogant (*übermütig*). She proclaims herself as the most beautiful woman of the realm. Nevertheless, her magic mirror says that *Schneewittchen* is a hundred times more beautiful than her. It makes her furious (*böse*) and wrathful (*boshaft*). She then asks a huntsman to kill *Schneewittchen* and bring her heart and liver to be cooked and eaten, but the huntsman takes pity on the little girl. The huntsman kills a boar and cuts out its heart and liver to be taken back to *Schneewittchen*'s stepmother. The stepmother discovers from the magic mirror that *Schneewittchen* is still alive. She hatches three evil schemes to kill *Schneewittchen*. The first plan involves a tied rope; the second one is to use a poisoned comb; and the third is a poisoned apple. The third method successfully kills *Schneewittchen*. She eats the apple and immediately dies. The stepmother looks at her with a gruesome (*grausig*) stare and laughs loudly. Her envious (*neidisch*) heart is at rest after witnessing *Schneewittchen*'s death. The seven dwarves, knowing how evil the stepmother is, call her an atheist (*gottlos*). *Schneewittchen* returns to life with the help of a prince. Knowing that *Schneewittchen* is alive again and married to the prince, the stepmother is frightened (*angst*). She lives in fear and as punishment, she has to wear iron shoes that are burning hot until she eventually dies.

GOOD AND EVIL AS CONCEPTS

The analysis of the significance of the adjectives related to the virtuous characters in the selected tales revealed that *Aschenputtel* is an obedient, good, beautiful, and petite girl who is pitiful, dusty, messy, and neglected. *Rapunzel*, a beautiful girl with fine hair and sweet voice, but she is ill-fated as she is locked up in a high tower and banished to a barren land by the witch. *Schneewittchen* is beautiful with a fair complexion, red cheeks, dark eyes and hair, sweet, pleasant, but ill-fated as her stepmother envies her beauty and attempts to kill her.

Therefore, it can be concluded, thus, that the concept of goodness as applied to the protagonists of the three tales during the time of the Grimm brothers refer to both physical and inner beauty. On the other hand, this “goodness” does not correspond to their fates, which are full

of misfortune. In *Aschenputtel* and *Schneewittchen*, it is in fact their beauty that leads their lives through a series of calamities, as the villains are so envious of the beauty of the “good” characters that they treat them viciously. At the end, however, their “goodness” is rewarded. The virtuous characters live happily in palaces with their princes. The context of “good” culture in that era shows that “being good” does not mean being free from troubles in life, but a virtuous person should remain good and should not resist the villain, because ultimately she/he will prevail and live happily ever after.

The analysis of the meanings of the adjectives employed to describe the villains in the selected fairy tales provides us with the description of villains. The two beautiful stepsisters in *Aschenputtel* are cruel and snobbish. They sneer at and enslave *Aschenputtel*. Further, they do not allow her to go to the ball. *Rapunzel’s* evil witch is grumpy and scurrilous. She takes care of *Rapunzel* because she needs her to remain alive. However, she banishes her to the desert and wounds the prince so that he falls into the thorns that prick his eyes and cause his blindness. The worst evil is depicted by *Schneewittchen’s* evil queen, who is also the heroine’s stepmother. Because *Schneewittchen* is far more beautiful than her, she plots to kill the girl, but she fails. She is so consumed by envy that she eats the heart and the liver of a boar, believing them to be *Schneewittchen’s*.

The evil concept as applied to the society of the Grimm brothers refers to physical beauty that is corrupted by a vicious heart. The antagonists have wicked and harmful intentions. Their evil traits make the lives of the virtuous characters miserable. However, at the end of the stories, these villains are punished and the evil they have wrought comes to naught. For example, in *Aschenputtel*, the eyes of the stepsisters are pecked by birds, and they become blind. In *Schneewittchen*, the evil queen dies after she is punished and forced to wear shoes of burning iron. The cultural context of “evil” at that time shows that even though the villain can make the life of good people miserable for a while, they are ultimately gravely punished.

VIRTUOUS CHARACTERS AND “GOOD” CULTURE

In the selected fairy tales, virtuous characters are presented as bearing cultural values related to goodness. The analysis of the combined lexical and textual meaning reveals the following descriptions of virtue.

Table 9.

The description of the virtuous characters from the lexical and textual meaning of the adjectives

Fairy tales	The description of the virtuous characters from the lexical and textual meaning of the adjectives.
Aschenputtel	Aschenputtel is a beautiful (schön) girl with the petite (klein) body.

International Review of Humanities Studies
www.irhs.ui.ac.id, e-ISSN: 2477-6866, p-ISSN: 2527-9416
 Vol. 6, No.1, January 2021, pp. 157-172

	Aschenputtel's virtuous traits are that she is good (gut), obedient, resilient, and strong (fromm). These traits prevail, even though she is pitiful (arm) as her stepmother abuses her and forces her to perform chores that make her body and face dirty (staubig) and messy (schmutzig). Even worse, her father does not acknowledge her as his own daughter (verbuttet).
Rapunzel	Rapunzel is a beautiful (schön) girl with long and fine (fein) dark hair. She loves to sing and has a sweet (süß) voice. However, she is ill-fated (arm) because the witch locks her up in a high tower and then banishes her to a desert.
Schneewittchen	Schneewittchen is a beautiful (schön) girl who has skin as white as snow (weiß), red cheeks (rot), and dark eyes (schwarz). Her beauty is complemented by her innocent, sweet, and pleasant (unschuldig) traits, that endear (lieb) her to everyone. However, her life is pitiful (arm) as her stepmother envies her beauty and tries to kill her.

The adjectives and their meanings depict the hallmark of the “good” culture of the virtuous characters from the three selected tales as they were relevant in the society of the time of the Grimm brothers. These characteristics refer to both physical and inner beauty. Despite their pitiful life, they maintain their good deeds and character. They show their “goodness” when they have to face the villains, by being patient, obedient, unresisting, not vengeful, not thinking negatively, and showing good faith. At the end of the story, “goodness” receives reciprocal goodness. The context of “good” culture in that era shows that “being good” may lead initially to negative consequences, but by remaining good, a person will prevail and will live happily ever after.

VILLAINS AND “EVIL” CULTURE

In the three fairy tales, the villains exist to represent cultural values related to the evil that opposes “goodness.” The analysis of the lexical and textual meaning revealed the description of the evil characters in the fairy tales are as follows.

Table 10.

The description of the villains from the combined lexical and textual meaning of the adjectives

Fairy tales	The description of the villains from the lexical and textual meaning of the adjectives.
Two stepsisters (Aschenputtel)	Two girls with pretty faces (schön) and bright facial complexion (weiß), but they have a horrible (garstig) and dark (schwarz) hearts. They are also arrogant (stolz).

International Review of Humanities Studies
www.irhs.ui.ac.id, e-ISSN: 2477-6866, p-ISSN: 2527-9416
Vol. 6, No.1, January 2021, pp. 157-172

The witch (Rapunzel)	An angry (zornig) witch who discovers a man stealing a rapunzel plant from her garden and demands that he surrender his daughter to her. The witch names her Rapunzel and locks her up in a high tower, and she is so unmerciful that she strands Rapunzel to a barren desert. The witch looks at the prince furiously (böse) and tries to harm (giftig) him.
Stepmother (Schneewittchen)	A beautiful (schön) lady who is snobbish (stolz) and arrogant (übermütig), the evil queen proclaims herself to be the most beautiful woman of the land. Nevertheless, her magic mirror asserts that Schneewittchen is a hundred times more beautiful than her. The statement makes her furious (böse) and wrathful (boshaft). After successfully killing Schneewittchen, she looks at her with a gruesome (grausig) stare and laughs loudly. Her envious (neidisch) heart is at rest after watching Schneewittchen die. The seven dwarves, knowing how evil the stepmother is, call her an atheist (gottlos). Schneewittchen returns to life with the help of a prince. Knowing that Schneewittchen is alive again and that she is married to the prince, the stepmother is frightened (angst).

The adjectives and their contextual significance depict the characteristics of “evil” culture applied to the society in which the Grimm brothers lived. These characteristics refer to physical beauty with a vicious heart. The antagonists have wicked and damaging intentions. Their “badness” makes the lives of the virtuous characters miserable. They curse at, enslave, lock up, bridle the freedom of, harm, poison, kill, and cannibalize the virtuous characters. However, at the end of the tales, “badness” is always punished tragically, with bodily harm, damage to organs, and death. The villainous acts performed in the tales are narrated in such a forceful manner that the villains are memorable as personifying heinousness and inhumanity. The traits that represent good and evil in 19th century German society are still relevant today.

CONCLUSION

This research paper has examined the lexical and textual implications of the adjectives used to describe the virtuous characters and the villains in three Brothers Grimm fairy tales, *Aschenputtel*, *Rapunzel*, and *Schneewittchen*. It is necessary to understand the lexical and textual meaning of the adjectives in the fairy tales so that we may grasp their context, and the factors that form the ambience of the stories. Context binds time and space together to become the setting in the fairy tales. The findings of this study reveal the reflection of the values of virtue and evil in mid-19th century German society within the context of which the timeless tales were compiled. The fairy tales reflect the virtues of that time in beauty, adversity, endurance, obedience, patience, and innocence. On the other hand, evil is represented by atrocity, vanity, deceit, arrogance, envy,

fury, and anger. Goodness and badness, as they are represented in the Brothers Grimm fairy tales are still applicable to our times in diverse societies and cultures. Hence, they may be termed universal.

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