

Golden Ticket to Reward or Punishment: Moral Construction in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the construction of children's morality through character formation in the children's story Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. It applies the concept of binary opposition to examine how characters are represented as "good" and "bad" through the methods of giving rewards and punishments within the story. This study uses qualitative textual analysis to analyze dialogues, character actions, and narrative elements. The findings show that "good" and "bad" characters are constructed through the contrast between obedience and deviance. In addition, it is found that reward and punishment serve as key mechanisms in shaping these moral categories, with obedient characters rewarded and deviant ones punished. Furthermore, the analysis shows that "bad" characters are reinforced through the representation of permissive parenting, which contributes to deviant behavior. This study concludes that Charlie and the Chocolate Factory constructs morality by emphasizing obedience as goodness and presenting deviance as something to be rectified through punishment, while also reflecting the role of parenting in shaping children's moral identity.

Keywords: moral construction, character, reward and punishment, parenting

Introduction

Children's literature plays an important role in shaping children's understanding of moral values and social behavior. Stories written for children often introduce ideas about what is considered right or wrong within society. According to Gasser et al. (2022), narrative fiction often carries implicit messages that guide readers in understanding acceptable behavior and social norms. In this sense, literary texts function as a medium through which moral values are communicated and supported. This is in line with the opinion of Robinson (2003), who argued that children's literature frequently constructs clear moral distinctions by presenting characters in simplified categories such as "good" and "bad" to make ethical lessons easier to understand.

One of the key aspects in children's literature is characterization. As stated by M. H. Abrams (2013), characterization refers to the way authors present and develop characters in a narrative, including their traits, actions, and roles within the story. Characters in children's stories are often designed to represent particular traits, through which readers can also identify and learn from them (Gasser et al., 2022). Through characterization, authors can shape readers' perceptions of values or morality by associating certain behaviors with positive or negative outcomes. In many children's stories, "good" characters are often rewarded while "bad" characters are punished. These outcomes create a structured moral that leads to interpretation.

This sequence is particularly evident in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* by Roald Dahl (1964), a popular children's novel that presents contrasting characters with distinct moral qualities. The story follows a humble and obedient boy named Charlie Bucket, alongside other children who present uncontrollable or undesirable behaviors, such as greed, pride, and lack of self-control. Throughout the story, these traits are underlined through exaggerated

characterization, and each child faces consequences that reflect their behavior. Moreover, as noted by Hissan (2012), Dahl's works often employ humor and exaggeration to reinforce moral lessons to the children. This indicates that the novel constructs a moral system in which certain traits are valued and others are condemned.

In addition to individual behavior, children's literature also reflects broader social elements such as family and parenting. Byerly (2020) added that the representation of parental roles in stories can influence how children's characters are interpreted. Norozi and Moen (2016) also provided further insight into how childhood is socially constructed, meaning that ideas about children's behavior are shaped by social practices and cultural expectations. Therefore, in the context of literary texts, this construction can be seen through the depiction of family dynamics and parenting styles. In *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, several characters are portrayed alongside parents who exhibit permissive behavior. These indulgent manners contribute to how the children in the story act. As a result, the construction of "bad" children in the story is also reinforced through the representation of parenting within the narrative.

To analyze how these moral constructions are formed, this research applies the concept of binary opposition proposed by Claude Lévi-Strauss (1963). Binary opposition refers to the way meaning is structured through contrasting pairs, such as good versus bad or obedience versus deviance. According to him, human understanding often relies on these oppositional structures to sort out meaning and interpret the world. In the course of literary analysis, the theory can be used to explore how narratives construct meaning by positioning characters, conceptions, or values in contrast to one another.

Particularly in children's literature, binary opposition is relevant because moral lessons are frequently simplified into clear contrasts. Consequently, texts create a framework that is easy for children to understand, merely relying on categorizing characters as "good" or "bad." However, this simplification also raises questions about how morality is constructed and whether these categories speculate complex human behavior or solely reinforce specific social expectations. Thus, analyzing *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* through the lens of binary opposition allows this research to examine how moral values are structured, how characters are positioned within these two categories, and how reward and punishment function as tools that strengthen these differences.

Previous studies in relation to *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* have analyzed the construction of children characters through evaluative perspective. Khoirida (2025) has analyzed characterization using appraisal theory and demonstrates how evaluative language is used to create contrasting images of children within the story. This contrast reflects a clear distinction between "good" and "bad" characters, through which moral meaning is structured in the narrative. The findings further reveal that translation plays a significant role in shaping these portrayals, as evaluative expressions in the original text are often softened in the translated version, resulting in reduced moral contrast between characters. However, this study primarily focuses on linguistic evaluation and translation shifts; it does not specifically examine how moral meaning is structurally constructed through narrative research such as binary opposition.

From a theoretical perspective, the concept of binary opposition has been widely used in literary studies to explain how meaning is constructed through contrasting pairs. A research by Auliana (2021) applies binary opposition to analyze character construction and finds that characters are defined through opposing traits, such as positive versus negative characteristics, which shape their roles and identities within the narrative. Similarly, research by Nurhamidah et al. (2024) explores binary opposition using a deconstruction approach and identifies various oppositional categories and shows how the contrasts structure meaning within the text while also revealing their instability.

Studies on binary opposition have demonstrated how meaning in literary texts is produced through contrasting pairs and relational differences between characters. However, these studies are applied to different literary works and remain limited to identifying oppositional categories, without specifically examining how these structures contribute to the construction of children's morality in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. The role of parenting in shaping moral distinctions within the narrative has not been adequately addressed. In particular, the relationship between parenting behavior, reward and punishment, and the formation of "good" and "bad" characters remains underexplored. Based on these gaps, the research questions of this study are: (1) How is the characterization of each child developed? (2) How is the binary opposition examined from the characterization of each child?

Method

This study uses a qualitative approach of content analysis that is stated in Shedlock (2024) to examine the moral construction within Roald Dahl's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. By applying Claude Lévi-Strauss's theory of Binary Opposition, this research aims to reveal how the text constructs its meaning through moral building within each child's characters. Specifically, the analysis focuses on how the "good" and "bad" character traits function as a mechanism for "reward" and "punishment" consequences. Furthermore, this study also uses narrative research that is also stated in Shedlock (2024) to understand how the story was structured to examine the role of parenting as a primary factor influencing the moral construction within the children's characterization. Therefore, by analyzing both the literary text and its film adaptation, this study reveals how these binary structures function to reinforce the story's overall moral framework.

The data source for this study is Roald Dahl's novel *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. The data sources that we use for this study are the dialogues of Willy Wonka and the children, the narrative texts of each child's characters, and the Oompa-Loompa song lyrics that function as an interpretation of each child's incident in the factory.

The data sources are collected through textual literary methods. The first step is to do a close reading of the story by reading the text and understanding the story to determine the relevant scenes within the "good" and "bad" character traits. The next step is coding, which is dividing the "good" and "bad" character traits into two types of moral framework through the "reward" and "punishment" consequences. The last but not least step of data collection is the interpretation, which associates findings surrounding character traits to the moral construction and parenting roles.

Data analysis in this study is linking the text with the universal moral and ethical norm in today's life. According to Rezkia (2020), there are three steps that are required in analyzing the data with a qualitative approach: data reduction, data display, and drawing a conclusion. By doing data reduction, several segments of the text in the story are classified into the "good" and "bad" character traits by using cause-and-effect patterns within each child's character before dividing them into the "reward" or "punishment" consequences. Then, the data of our findings on how moral constructions are built and the role of parents as a main factor in influencing the character of each child in the story are displayed in a structured and easy-to-understand narrative. In the end, this study concludes how character traits serve as a tool to convey a deep message about the importance of morals and values in building a child's character through the mechanism in which obedience gets a "reward" and deviance gets a "punishment."

Results and Discussion

A. Characterization of Each Child in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*

1. Charlie Bucket

Charlie Bucket is the protagonist of the story. Growing up in a poor family forced Charlie to act like an adult despite his young age. In the story, Charlie lives with his family in an old and shabby house. His family is poor since Charlie Bucket's father, Mr. Bucket, only works as a bottle cap installer in a toothpaste factory with a small salary and is the only breadwinner to support a family of seven. Their financial problems lead them to live poorly, and they could barely eat a proper meal. However, both of Charlie's parents still tend to make Charlie happy by buying him a bar of Willy Wonka's chocolate once a year on his birthday.

Fortunately, Charlie's family condition and situation shape his character in a positive way. Charlie grows up being an obedient and patient child. Aware of his parents' poverty, Charlie never demands them for luxuries, even when it comes to his greatest passion. Rather than pressuring his parents for treats they cannot afford, he silently endures his cravings even if it feels like torture: "Many times a day, he would see other children taking bars of creamy chocolate out of their pockets and munching them greedily, and that, of course, was pure torture" (Dahl, 1964, p. 21).

Moreover, when his parents finally buy him his birthday chocolate, he would patiently eat the chocolate slowly until it is finished after more than a month. This shows that he truly appreciates and is grateful for what his parents have given him and has a really good self-control of himself: "And each time he received it, on those marvellous birthday mornings, he would place it carefully in a small wooden box that he owned, and treasure it as though it were a bar of solid gold..." (Dahl, 1964, p. 21)

Charlie is not only obedient and patient, but also a filial and virtuous child. This is shown in the story when Charlie decides to share his only small bar of chocolate with his family instead of eating it alone: "Here, Mother, have a bit. We'll share it. I want everybody to taste it" (Dahl, 1964, p. 40).

Charlie bonds with his grandparents over his passion for Wonka's Chocolate Factory. By balancing his enthusiasm with genuine politeness and respect, he makes sure their time spent together is a source of joy for everyone.

Unlike the other children, Charlie remains humble and obedient throughout the visiting time, following every instruction without having any selfish ambition for his own benefit. This humility rewards Charlie with something unexpected, which is becoming the heir to the chocolate factory.

Regardless of their poor life, Charlie grows up to be a good child and develops good traits because he is raised with love and affection by his family. Charlie learns to be patient, obedient, virtuous, kind, humble, and also filial from how his mother takes care of his grandparents, how his father works hard to provide for their family, and how his grandparents teach him with stories.

2. Veruca Salt

Veruca Salt is the daughter of a rich family that lives in a great city far away. She is the second person who gets the Golden Ticket to Wonka's Chocolate Factory. In the story, her character is a representative of greed, being spoiled, aggressiveness, and arrogance.

Veruca is a spoiled child. This can be seen in the story where she asks her dad to get her the Golden Ticket by throwing a tantrum and making him buy hundreds of thousands of chocolate bars to find it: "Where's my Golden Ticket! I want my Golden Ticket!" And she would lie for hours on the floor, kicking and yelling in the most disturbing way (Dahl, 1964, p. 37).

During the factory tour, Veruca's aggressive arrogance peaks in the nut room where she demands a trained squirrel. Despite her father's failed attempt to buy one, Veruca refuses to take no for an answer and rushes to the animals herself. Her greed backfires instantly as the squirrels start attacking her, sending her tumbling down the rubbish chute.

Her greedy and arrogant demeanor is also shown in the story when she demands her mother to give her one of the trained squirrels despite the fact that she already has a lot of pets at home:

‘I don't care about that!’ shouted Veruca. ‘I want one. All I've got at home is two dogs and four cats and six bunny rabbits and two parakeets and three canaries and a green parrot and a turtle and a bowl of goldfish and a cage of white mice and a silly old hamster! I want a squirrel!’ (Dahl, 1964, p.108)

At the end of the story, Veruca and her parents are all covered in rubbish. The ending of their story demonstrates that her bad traits of being spoiled, greedy, aggressive, and arrogant are the same as “trash” and need to be thrown away: “Good gracious!” cried Charlie. “Look at poor Veruca Salt and Mr Salt and Mrs Salt! They're simply covered with rubbish!” (Dahl, 1964, p. 140)

Nevertheless, it is not entirely Veruca's fault. The habit of always giving in to whatever she wants is Mr. and Mrs. Salt's biggest mistake. By yielding to every tantrum, Mr. and Mrs. Salt teach her that aggression guarantees results. Therefore, Veruca's greed is a result of her parents' failure to distinguish love from indulgence and the example of how an over-parenting style characterized by spoiling the child (constantly giving them whatever they want) can ruin a child's character.

3. Augustus Gloop

Augustus Gloop is the first finder of a Golden Ticket. He is a fat, nine-year-old boy who loves chocolate. Augustus Gloop is a character that represents gluttony and disgust. His mother is very proud of him even though he has those traits. It is shown in the story where his mother supports him in consuming massive amounts of chocolate to get the Golden Ticket, solidifying his role as a symbol of gluttony: “He eats so many bars of chocolate a day that it was almost impossible for him not to find one. Eating is his hobby, you know. That's all he's interested in” (Dahl, 1964, p. 34).

During the chocolate factory visiting time, Augustus is being a brat due to his gluttony after seeing the chocolate river. He ignores his mother's and Mr. Wonka's warning not to continue scooping hot melted chocolate into his big mouth. His greed and gluttony then lead him to a disaster when he is sucked into the pipe and sent to Mr. Wonka's fudge room.

At the end of the story, his body becomes thin after getting sucked into the pipe earlier. Augustus' gluttony make him look disgusting, and it is emphasized by the Oompa Loompa's song on Augustus' nature that sounds:

He left a most disgusting taste
Inside our mouths, and so in haste
We chose a thing that, come what may,
Would take the nasty taste away (Dahl, 1964, p. 80)

Augustus' gluttony is the consequence of his parents' overindulgence. Rather than teaching him restraint and self-control, Mrs. Gloop encourages his excessive eating, mistakenly viewing his gluttony as a point of pride. This failure to prioritize his health over his cravings shapes Augustus into a greedy, impulsive child who is unable to manage his own desires.

4. Violet Beauregarde

Violet Beauregarde is the third child that finds the Golden Ticket. She is described as a young girl who never stops chewing gum even during her visit to the Chocolate Factory. She has a

world record for chewing the same gum for three months. Her habit of chewing gum reveals her competitive nature. Initially, the record belonged to her best friend. When she finds out that her best friend earned a world record for chewing the same gum for months, she becomes determined to surpass her. This action shows that Violet is really committed to beat and dominate others. Violet has a very strong sense of pride; she constantly needs to prove to everyone that she is the best of them all. She is also very stubborn and never listens when someone tries to warn her:

‘Stop!’ said Mr Wonka. ‘The gum isn’t ready yet! It’s not right!’

‘Of course it’s right!’ said Violet. ‘It’s working beautifully! Oh my, what lovely soup this is!’ (Dahl, 1964, p. 94)

As seen from the text above, she intentionally ignores Mr. Wonka’s warning about the dangers of the three-course dinner gum. Mr. Wonka has already said that the gum is not ready yet and still has a side effect. However, Violet ignores it and eats the gum anyway. This scene highlights her disobedience as she wants to be the first person to experience eating a three-course dinner gum. Eventually, Violet becomes the second kid who gets into an accident as her whole body turns into blueberry as a side effect of the gum.

Violet’s parents are responsible for her bad behaviour. Mr and Mrs. Beauregarde consistently support and praise Violet’s gum chewing accomplishments, treating them as something to be proud of rather than questioning them. Instead of setting limits, they support Violet’s bad traits:

‘But how in-teresting, Violet,’ said Mrs Beauregarde. ‘You are a clever girl.’

‘Keep chewing, baby!’ said Mr Beauregarde. ‘Keep right on chewing! This is a great day for the Beauregardes! Our little girl is the first person in the world to have a chewing-gum meal!’ (Dahl, 1964, p. 94)

This text is an example of how Violet’s parents have always spoiled her. Even after Mr. Wonka says that it is dangerous to eat the three-course dinner gum, it does not stop her from chewing it; rather, it encourages her. Because of this lack of boundaries, Violet thinks that she can get away with anything without any consequences, and it shapes her into who she is now.

5. Mike Teavee

In the scene where he is being interviewed by reporters, Mike Teavee is shown as someone who is very obsessed with television, especially a show with a lot of violence and guns. He carries no less than eighteen toy pistols of various sizes in his belt. What he watches from the television shapes the way he speaks, thinks, and behaves. From the interview, he seems to be irritated by the reporters because he thinks that they are interrupting his watching session and that the interview is useless.

Mike is a very arrogant kid, and he believes himself to be highly intelligent. When they are doing a tour around the factory, Mike is the one with the most questions to ask. As seen from the text, he is often dissatisfied with Mr. Wonka’s answer and keeps correcting his answer, revealing his arrogance. Mr. Wonka is doing a tour and showing them his new invention, Television Chocolate. Mike is very mesmerized with this invention, and he wants to try it himself. Mr. Wonka already warns him that the machine is dangerous and untested for humans, but Mike ignores him. As a result, he teleports into the television and becomes tiny. His decision reflects his obsession with television, as he does not regret it even when he becomes tiny.

‘That isn’t exactly how it works,’ Mike Teavee said.

‘I am a little deaf in my left ear,’ Mr Wonka said. ‘You must forgive me if I don’t hear everything you say.’

‘I said, that isn’t exactly how it works!’ shouted Mike Teavee. (Dahl, 1964, p. 121)

Mike's parents are also responsible for Mike's arrogant behaviour. Unlike Violet, whose parents actively encourage her behaviour, Mike's parents are more passive. They do not limit his screen time and let him do whatever he wants. They also do not encourage Mike to do something else other than watching television. This parenting style directly contributes to Mike's personality. Because his behavior is not corrected, he becomes increasingly rude. However, in the Television Room right when Mike becomes tiny, his father is scolding him and threatening him that he would throw away his television, causing Mike to throw a tantrum:

'He won't be able to do anything!' cried Mrs Teavee.

'Oh, yes I will!' squeaked the tiny voice of Mike Teavee. 'I'll still be able to watch television!'

'Never again!' shouted Mr Teavee. 'I'm throwing the television set right out the window the moment we get home. I've had enough of television!'

When he heard this, Mike Teavee flew into a terrible tantrum. He started jumping up and down on the palm of his mother's hand, screaming and yelling and trying to bite her fingers. 'I want to watch television!' he squeaked. 'I want to watch television! I want to watch television! I want to watch television!' (Dahl, 1964, p. 129)

B. Binary Opposition in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*

Through the binary opposition between Charlie and the other four kids, the novel builds children's morality by placing generosity, restraint, humbleness, and obedience as morally good traits. Meanwhile, traits like greed, gluttony, pride, and disobedience are labelled as deviant.

Like the others, Charlie himself desires chocolate and the factory, yet he does not allow his desire to control his actions. That is how Charlie's characterization becomes the pillar of positive morals, in contrast with Augustus, Veruca, Violet, and Mike, who are each dominated by a particular uncontrolled desire that leads them to disobedience and eventually punishment.

1. Charlie's Generosity vs Veruca's Greed

Charlie's generosity has been seen several times in the story. One of the pieces of evidence is when he successfully obtains the Golden Ticket. Coming from a poor family who barely even has enough to meet their basic needs, Charlie learns to appreciate everything he has. Although he really desires to win the Golden Ticket, he remains aware of his family's financial situation. When he gets his birthday chocolate and fails to obtain the Golden Ticket, he remains grateful. He even tries to give it to his family so that they can also enjoy the deliciousness of the chocolate, as seen from this passage below:

'Here, Mother, have a bit. We'll share it. I want everybody to taste it.'

'Certainly not!' his mother said. And the others all cried, 'No, no! We wouldn't dream of it! It's all yours!'

'Please,' begged Charlie, turning round and offering it to Grandpa Joe. (Dahl, 1964, p. 40)

In contrast, Veruca Salt, since the beginning, is already introduced as a greedy child. Veruca does not obtain the Golden Ticket by herself, but she demands her father to get it for her. Veruca comes from a rich family and everything that she wants, she has to get it. Her father buys thousands of chocolates and hires his workers to open them just to get the Golden Ticket.

'Hey, Mummy!' shouted Veruca Salt suddenly, 'I've decided I want a squirrel! Get me one of those squirrels!'

'Don't be silly, sweetheart,' said Mrs Salt. 'These all belong to Mr Wonka.' (Dahl, 1964, p. 108)

As seen from the passage above, Veruca's greed is also seen throughout the factory tour. Everytime she sees something cool, she demands that her father give it to her, saying that she

wants it now, with no exceptions. She faces the consequences of her behaviour when she gets attacked by squirrels and gets thrown down the rubbish chute.

Through these contrasts, the novel constructs a clear example of binary opposition between generosity and greed, in which Charlie's kindness is rewarded while Veruca's entitlement ultimately leads to her punishment.

2. Charlie's Restraint vs Augustus' Gluttony

The contrast between Charlie and Augustus is constructed through their different responses to the same physical desire. Both boys long for chocolate and experience temptation; however, the narrative distinguishes them based on how they regulate their desire and appetite. Throughout the novel, Charlie is not just a child without desires. In fact, the story repeatedly highlights how hungry he is with his deep craving for chocolate. Yet, it is his ability to restrain it that shows Charlie's moral goodness:

And for the next few days, he would allow himself only to look at it, but never touch it. Then at last, when he could stand it no longer, he would peel back a tiny bit of the paper wrapping at one corner to expose a tiny bit of chocolate, and then he would take a tiny nibble — just enough to allow the lovely sweet taste to spread out slowly over his tongue. The next day, he would take another tiny nibble, and so on, and so on. (Dahl, 1964, p. 21)

The repeated description of Charlie taking only a tiny nibble in the passage above underlines moderation. Although he is hungry, he refuses to satisfy his appetite exceedingly and instead prolongs the enjoyment of the chocolate through self-restraint. His moral value, therefore, is not constructed by the absence of desire but by his ability to control it. The novel then presents Charlie's self-control as a virtuous quality and suggests that moral goodness lies in resisting excess.

Augustus Gloop, in contrast, is characterized by overconsumption wherein eating chocolate becomes the defining feature of his identity, as even his mother proudly describes it as his favourite activity. His characterization extends beyond physical appearance. Throughout the narrative, Augustus is repeatedly associated with over-eating and an inability to control his appetite. His overindulgence even continues throughout the factory tour. For instance, in situations where everyone else follows the rules, Augustus chooses to immoderately consume the chocolate there.

The picture showed a nine-year-old boy who was so enormously fat he looked as though he had been blown up with a powerful pump. Great flabby folds of fat bulged out from every part of his body, and his face was like a monstrous ball of dough with two small greedy curranty eyes peering out upon the world. (Dahl, 1964, p. 34)

.....
Automatically, everybody bent down and picked one blade of grass — everybody, that is, except Augustus Gloop, who took a big handful. (p. 69)

His inability to control his appetite becomes apparent in the Chocolate Room, where he ignores Mr. Wonka's warning and his mother's. Eventually, his greed becomes deviance as he breaks the rules and refuses to listen. Additionally, the Oompa-Loompa songs act as a moral commentary, as they explain in the song that Augustus' accident in the pipe is actually a punishment meant to clean his voracious nature. Thus, a bad character here is defined by their bad behavior and the punishment they receive.

Their contrasting behavior is even more powerful because both boys want chocolate, yet the difference here lies in how they manage that desire. Charlie regulates his appetite and consumes with moderation despite his hunger, whereas Augustus allows his appetite to dominate his behavior through excessive consumption. Using the ideas of Claude Levi-Strauss, Charlie's moderation acquires good values and becomes the positive pillar solely because it is

positioned against Augustus' gluttony. Through this opposition, morality has been constructed as self-control wherein Charlie's restrained desire is rewarded while Augustus' uncontrolled appetite is a moral failing that deserves punishment.

3. Charlie's Humbleness vs Violet's Pride

In Charlie and Violet's case, although both children experience extraordinary moments during the story, both of them react to these events differently. For instance, Charlie consistently accepts good fortune with modesty whereas Violet constantly seeks recognition by proving herself superior to others. This opposition then constructs humility as a virtue while presenting pride as a vice.

Charlie, from the narratives, is never explicitly called humble, but this quality can be seen through his actions and words. Although he is one of the lucky five to find the Golden Ticket, he never once seeks praise and acts like he is better than anyone else.

'Yes,' Charlie said. 'I'm ready.'

'All right. You tear off the first bit.'

'No,' Charlie said, 'you paid for it. You do it all.' (Dahl, 1964, p. 46)

.....
'You mean you're the only one left?' Mr Wonka said, pretending to be surprised.

'Why, yes,' whispered Charlie. 'Yes.' (p. 135)

Charlie's humbleness can be clearly seen in the way he treats his family. Throughout the novel, he never once acts entitled. It appears that his own desires are always balanced by his respect for others. Moreover, even when he is the only child left and wins at the end, he does not brag about it.

On the other hand, Violet represents a character with an overwhelming desire to distinguish herself from everyone else. Her identity is then built upon competition, achievement, and the constant need to prove that she is superior.

And the famous girl was standing on a chair in the living room waving the Golden Ticket madly at arm's length as though she were flagging a taxi. She was talking very fast and very loudly to everyone, ... (Dahl, 1964, p. 41)

.....
'... And who's she to criticize, anyway, ...' (p. 42)

.....
'That's a record, that is. It's beaten the record held by my best friend, Miss Cornelia Prinzmetel. And was she furious!...' (p. 42)

It is evident that she always wants to be seen and recognized. In the narrative as well, she always proudly presents herself as a record-breaking gum-chewer, dismisses her mother's criticism, and refuses to listen to warnings. The mindset of hers becomes most apparent in the Inventing Room, where she ignores Mr. Wonka's warnings and immediately chews the experimental three-course dinner gum. She assumes that her own desire to become the first person to experience the invention is more important than following instructions. This determination transforms her pride into disobedience as she prioritizes personal achievement over caution.

Violet's punishment then reflects the very vice that defines her character. Ironically, after chewing the experimental gum, she indeed becomes the most extraordinary in the room, yet only in a humiliating way. Her transformation into a giant blueberry functions as a form of justice, in a way that turns her desire for admiration into embarrassment. Her punishment accordingly mirrors her pridefulness, which then reinforces a moral lesson that the pursuit of superiority may lead to humiliation instead of recognition.

Within the concept of binary opposition, Charlie's humbleness is placed against Violet's pride. Charlie does not need to show himself as better than others, while Violet constantly

wants attention and recognition. Therefore, the novel then constructs humbleness as a moral goodness and pride as a negative trait that leads to punishment.

4. Charlie's Obedience vs Mike's Disobedience

The contrast between Charlie's trait and Mike's trait in this scenario lies in their different responses to authority. Despite both children being curious about the extraordinary inventions inside Wonka's factory, they express that curiosity differently. In a way, Charlie is written as someone who respects rules and boundaries while Mike frequently disregards authority and acts according to his own judgment.

Charlie's obedience is shown through his calmness and his ability to follow instructions. Although the novel has shown several times that he is curious and fascinated by Wonka's inventions like the other children, he still keeps his curiosity within the boundaries.

All the children, except Charlie, had both their mothers and fathers with them, and it was a good thing that they had, otherwise the whole party might have got out of hand. They were so eager to get going that their parents were having to hold them back by force... (Dahl, 1964, p. 59)

The passage distinguishes Charlie from the other children even before the tour begins. While the others struggle to restrain their excitement, Charlie patiently waits and respects the situation without needing to be controlled by adults. This already separates Charlie from the other kids. Moreover, when Mr. Wonka tells the children to follow him, Charlie follows these rules and does not wander off by himself. His curiosity is therefore expressed through obedience, and this suggests that genuine curiosity should be accompanied by respect for authority and self-discipline.

In contrast, Mike Teavee is characterized mostly through his repeated acts of disobedience. From his first appearance, he dismisses others' opinions and assumes that his own understanding is more superior. His interactions with Mr. Wonka also constantly reveals his unwillingness to accept instructions or acknowledge authority. Mike always thinks that he is smarter than the expert, Mr. Wonka, and that is shown in the way he always interrupts and challenges Mr. Wonka's explanations.

Mike's impulsiveness peaks in the Television-Chocolate room. Even though Mr. Wonka warns him that the machines are dangerous, Mike runs straight for the camera the moment he hears he could be sent through the air. These actions prove that he does not ask for permission or even think about the risks. That means his impulsiveness acts as the mechanism that drives his disobedience, as he moves without considering either the risks or the instruction given to him. Because of this, Mike's punishments also fit his character. He wants to enter television, and he gets what he wants by ignoring authority, although he has to pay it off by becoming tiny. The consequence highlights that disregarding rules does not prevent one's desire from being fulfilled; instead, it changes that fulfillment into a source of suffering.

The opposition hence lies in how they respond to authority regarding their own curiosity. Following Lévi-Strauss' concept, Charlie represents obedient curiosity, as he remains curious but still respects rules and boundaries. Mike, on the other hand, allows his own desire to overrule instructions and rejects commands. Through this contrast, the novel shapes obedience as morality and presents disobedience as a destructive behavior that is eventually corrected through punishment.

Conclusion

This study concludes that *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* shapes children's morality through the contrast between "good" and "bad" characters. By applying Claude Lévi-Strauss' concept of binary opposition, this study finds that Charlie Bucket is positioned as the morally positive character through his generosity, restraint, humbleness, and obedience. In contrast, the

other children are represented through negative traits such as greed, gluttony, pride, and arrogance. These differences show that morality in the story is built through the opposition between obedience and deviance. The novel also strengthens this moral construction through reward and punishment, where Charlie is rewarded by becoming the heir of the factory while the other children receive punishment that mirrors their bad behavior. Furthermore, this study shows that prenatal roles also influence the children's characterization. Charlie's good character is shaped by love, care, and values from his family. Meanwhile, the bad trait of the other kids is supported by neglectful parenting.

The implication of this study is that children's literature can be seen as a medium that teaches moral values by showing the consequences of children's actions. However, this study is limited because it only focuses on selected child characters and the moral construction in one literary work. Therefore, further studies can analyze other children's stories to see how morality, parenting, and characterization are constructed in different forms of media.

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