

Myths in How to Train your Dragon (2025) Film: Barthesian Semiotic Reading

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Abstract

Purpose: This study discusses how myths are represented in the film How to Train Your Dragon (2025) based on Barthes' Semiotic Analysis Model and how the myths affect the characters in the film.

Methodology: This research is qualitative descriptive study with subject is the live-action film How to Train Your Dragon and the object is scenes related to myths in the film, with the data collected through intensive scene documentation and purposively selected based on thematic, narrative, and symbolic relevance, then analyzed using Barthes' Semiotics Analysis Model at the levels of denotation, connotation, and myth.

Results: The result of the study shows that this film constructs interrelated myths about responsibility-based leadership, the importance of empathy in human relationships with other creatures, and a shift in values from conflict to cooperation. In addition, these myths also affect character development, as seen in Hiccup's increasingly empathetic moral changes, the trusting relationship between him and Toothless, and Stoick's efforts to balance traditional values with new values.

Applications/Originality/Value: Future researchers can examine the same film with a more specific focus on educational values such as empathy, moral courage, and cooperation, or explore the representation of myths in other films and learn how these myths can be used as a medium for teaching moral values in a community.

Keywords: Barthes Semiotic Analysis, Film Analysis, Myth, Semiotics

Introduction Section

Literature is a form of human expression that describes life experiences, ideas, and values through beautiful and imaginative language. Wellek and Warren (1956, as cited in Nurgiyantoro, 2015) explain that literature is a creative work that uses language as the medium to convey aesthetic meaning. Abrams (1999) adds that literary work not only represents reality but also interprets it through symbols and narrative structures, which reflect the author's worldview. Therefore, literature not only functions as entertainment but also as a means to understand, interpret, and critique the social and cultural realities that surround it. Along with the development of media and art forms, the value and function of literature are now also present in other mediums such as film. In its evolution, film has come to be regarded as a form of modern literature because it has a narrative and symbolic structure similar to the written literature. Film uses visual and auditory language to tell stories, describe characters, and convey cultural and ideological messages to the audience. Eagleton (2008) asserts that literary works and films are both vehicles for the ideologies that exist in society. Therefore, film can be considered a modern literary text because both serve as mirrors of culture that shape social consciousness. This function raises the need to comprehend how literary research can reveal the meaning behind literary work such films, because films themselves are Semiotic fields constructed by many signs (Riza & Amalia, 2022).

Literary research plays an important role in revealing the cultural, social, and ideological meanings contained in texts, including films. As explained by Sousa Correa and Owens (2009), literature is a systematic process that involves the identification, analysis, and interpretation of texts using theoretical and methodological frameworks to reveal the hidden meanings within them. Noor (2019) adds that literary works have a sociocultural function in the formation of civilization and the transmission of moral values from one generation to the next. In this context, the study of film as a literary work allows researchers to explore deeper meanings behind visual signs and narrative elements, especially when these signs contain myths that reflect cultural ideologies. Knowing that symbols in films often contain certain cultural and ideological values, it is necessary to know in advance how myths are understood in this study.

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The term myth can be defined as a cultural meaning or narrative that develops within a society's worldview and serves to explain values, beliefs, and perspectives on social reality. Ahimsa-Putra (2025), summarizing Levi-Strauss's ideas, explains that myths are a form of collective thinking that help societies organize their experiences through symbols that are considered meaningful. Therefore, myths in this context are understood as patterns of cultural meaning represented in films and naturalized so that they appear normal to viewers. Understanding this concept of myth is the basis for analyzing how these meanings are constructed in film representations. To that end, this study requires an appropriate analytical framework, such as a Semiotic Analysis Model, which generally describes how signs function and shape meaning in a culture.

In general, Semiotics is the study of signs and how those signs build meaning in communication systems. This is in line with the fact that film is one of the objects of Semiotics, as it is constructed by various signs that work together to produce the desired effect or meaning (Riza & Amalia, 2022). The term Semiotics itself came from the Greek word *semeion*, which means sign. Saussure (1916, as cited in Chandler, 2007) defines Semiotics as the science that studies signs in society. Many experts have developed their own Semiotics Analysis Model, including Saussure (1916, as cited in Chandler, 2007), who divides signs into two main components, namely: the signifier (the form of the sign) and the signified (the meaning or concept it represents). On the other hand, Peirce (1931, as cited in Noth, 2019) developed a triadic model consisting of a representamen (sign), an object (reference), and an interpretant (interpretation). Another was Barthes (1972), who developed a concept of Semiotics that focused on how signs function in social and cultural contexts. Barthes (1972) introduced a two-level sign system consisting of first-level signification, which comprises three layers of meaning: denotation, connotation, and myth. At denotative level, signs convey only literal and factual meanings that can be observed directly. At connotative level, signs acquire additional meanings derived from cultural associations, emotions, and social contexts. At the mythical level, these connotative meanings transformed into ideological messages that are considered normal, natural, and unquestionable in their truth. Through this approach, Barthes bridges linguistic criticism and cultural criticism, and enables the reading of literary works such as films as sign systems that produce and disseminate ideology.

Barthes Semiotic Analysis Model has been used in research in various fields such as communication and literary studies. Semiotics is used because it can help researchers understand how visual and verbal signs work together to create complex meanings, as in these studies. In communicative studies, Agustia et al. (2024) showed that smartphone advertisements create myths about technological progress and modern lifestyles, while Boye and Fayyaz (2024) emphasized the function of myths as guardians of moral and cultural values in society. Aqeel and Ali (2024) found that mass media constructs myths about success and consumerist lifestyles, while Zhang et al. (2021) observed a shift from classical myths to aesthetic commodities due to consumerism. Meanwhile, Gandzare and Pikalov (2019) also highlighted that the process of mythologization in film helps reconstruct history into symbolic narratives that reinforce social identity. This is in line with this research because this research explained how myths are created from the Semiotics process and construction of ideology in films. One film that is interesting to study in terms of its mythological content is *How to Train Your Dragon*.

The film *How to Train Your Dragon* is an animated film that was first released in 2010 by DreamWorks Animation directed by Cris Sanders and Dean DeBlois. The film is adapted from a children's novel by Cressida Cowell with the same title (IMDb, 2020). Following the success of the first animated film, two sequels were released, *How to Train Your Dragon 2* in 2014 and *How to Train Your Dragon: The Hidden World* in 2019, forming an epic trilogy about the journey of Hiccup and his beloved dragon, Toothless. This animated trilogy is known for its rich narrative, which emphasizes moral values, leadership, and the harmonious relationship between humans and nature. These films received positive responses from the audiences, with a rating of 99% on Rotten Tomatoes and 8.1/10 on IMDb (Rotten Tomatoes, 2023; IMDb, 2023). Having become one of the most influential animated franchises of the 21st century, this success prompted Universal Pictures to produce a live-action version of the film, directed again by Dean DeBlois under the same title, *How to Train Your Dragon* in 2025. This live-action version is presented as a new interpretation of a story previously visualized in animated form.

Based on IMDb (2025), the live-action film *How to Train Your Dragon* focused on Hiccup, a Viking teenager who lived in the village of Berk, where dragons were considered enemies. Hiccup, a young man who was often ridiculed by his friends for his physical appearance and personality, a typical difference from other Vikings, managed to capture the Night Fury dragon with his invention and eventually formed a friendship with the dragon. His father, Stoick, the leader of Berk, opposed this, and eventually captured the dragon to use it to find the dragon's nest and the queen. A battle took place between the dragon Toothless and the dragon queen, and the battle was won by Toothless and Hiccup. Finally, they decided to live together in the village of Berk. This story contained very strong layers of myth, such as the myth of leadership and humanity's relationship with nature, which are reflected in Hiccup's journey as a symbol of ideological change within Viking culture. Thus, this film not only presented a fantasy story, but also served as a cultural text filled with modern mythic representations. This is what interested literary and cultural researchers, leading them to study the film *How to Train Your Dragon*, both the animated version and its adaptation.

The live-action version of the film *How to Train Your Dragon* is a recent adaptation of the previous animated films, and no previous research specifically addressing the film has been found to date. However, the animated versions have been widely studied from various topics and perspectives. Most previous studies focused on the 2010 animated version of *How to Train Your Dragon*. Kobiałka (2013) viewed it as an ideological text about civilization, Silos (2020) explored ecological myths in the film's narrative, Finnegan (2020) examined John Powell's music that reinforces the theme of

friendship, and Assa et al. (2021) examined liberating masculinity that challenges patriarchal norms. Meanwhile, some researchers discussed all versions of the film. Sumiatun et al. (2017) identified Islamic moral values such as courage and responsibility, Dewinta (2019) interpreted the father son conflict using Psychoanalysis, and Gunawan (2023) analyzed the transformation of masculine values in Viking Culture, these studies focus on morality, Viking violence, character, or music.

Beyond these studies, other researchers investigated myths in different films. Tahir and Anuar (2020) found the myth of fame in the film Birdman, while Monix (2023) highlighted the myth of self-acceptance in the film Luca. Wedhowerti (2024) examined the myth of resistance to capitalism in the film Pom Poko and Safavi (2025) discussed the transformation of the Vlad Dracula myth in the film Dracula (1931) as a symbol of modern power. These studies only discuss mythological characters from different films, not the live-action film of How to Train Your Dragon. Those studies show that Barthes' Semiotic Analysis Model has been widely used to uncover ideology in visual media. However, these studies are still limited to animated versions and have not examined the construction of myths in live-action adaptations, which have different visual representations. Although previous studies have discussed the animated version with a focus on morality, ideology, ecology, music, and masculinity, none of them have examined how myths are constructed in the live-action version, which presents a different visual representation. This difference shows that previous findings have not been able to explain the formation of myths in the latest adaptation, so this study is needed to expand and complement existing studies. Therefore, this research aims to fill this gap by analyzing how myths function in the live-action version of How to Train Your Dragon through Roland Barthes' Semiotic Analysis Model.

Based on aforementioned reasons regarding Barthes Semiotic Analysis Model and relevant previous research, the researchers are interested in conducting research entitled "Myths in How to Train Your Dragon (2025) Film: A Barthesian Semiotic Reading". The study focuses on two main research objectives, namely: (a) How myths are represented in the film How to Train Your Dragon (2025) based on Barthes' Semiotic Analysis Model and (b) How the myths represented in the film affect the characters based on Barthes Semiotic Analysis Model. Therefore, this study is expected to contribute to the understanding of myths found in popular culture. In addition, this study is also relevant in the field of character education, as it shows how one of the main characters learns to understand other people's perspectives and empathize with them. This study is expected to help students understand moral, social, and cultural values through an analysis of the meanings represented in the film.

Research Method

This research used a descriptive qualitative approach to describe the myths in the live-action version of the film How to Train Your Dragon based on Barthes' Semiotics Analysis Model. The subject of this research is the live-action film How to Train Your Dragon (2025) as a popular cultural text, while the object of research is the myths represented through characters, settings, symbols, and plotlines. Primary data consisted of film scenes containing myths such as leadership, human and dragons' relationship, and symbolic elements that were taken from the official and complete version of the film. While secondary data were obtained from journals, books, and scientific articles relevant to the film, and the study of Semiotics and myths. Data collection was done through documentation, by watching the film intensively, noting scenes that included meaningful signs, and selecting data based on several criteria, namely thematic relevance like the presence of mythical representations such as dragons, sacred spaces, or heroic transformations; secondly, narrative importance like scenes that play a structurally important role in the film's plot; and finally, visual symbolic clarity, namely scenes that display strong symbolic elements such as fire, images of islands, or markers of Viking culture. These criteria help ensure that selected scenes are truly relevant to the focus of the research. The data were analyzed using Roland Barthes' Semiotic Analysis Model based on three levels of meaning: denotation, connotation, and myth, as well as using Miles and Huberman's (1994) interactive analysis model, which includes data reduction, representation, and conclusion. Data validity was evaluated based on Lincoln and Guba (1985) reliability criteria, which include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, to confirm the reliability and scientific responsibility of the research results.

Result and Discussion

This chapter describes the results of data analysis and discussion based on Barthes Semiotic Analysis Model. This analysis focused on three levels of meaning to uncover the hidden ideology in the live-action film How to Train Your Dragon. The results of the study are organized according to the two research questions and presented in the form of a Semiotic analysis table along with a discussion.

How Myths are Represented in The Film How to Train Your Dragon based on Barthes' Semiotics Analysis Model

This section explained how myths were semiotically represented in the film How to Train Your Dragon based on Barthes' Semiotic Analysis Model. The analysis focused on three levels of meanings, denotation, connotation, and myth to reveal

the ideological meanings that were naturalized through the film’s scenes, and visual narratives. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Semiotic Representation of Myths in the Film How to Train Your Dragon	
1. Datum 1	 Scene 00:13:48 Denotation Stoick stands straight, leading a meeting with the Berk community, strategizing for war with the dragons. Connotation This symbolizes a Viking leader who has authority, wisdom, and responsibility. His upright and sturdy posture shows that Stoick is worthy of being the protector of the tribe. Myth The scene depicts the myth of the Viking leader or Jarl, the ideal leader in Viking tradition, who is not only strong but also wise, fair, and protector of the tribe. Through the character of Stoick, the film illustrates that a true leader is a symbol of moral strength and responsibility. (Legendary Leader: Jarl)
2. Datum 2	 Scene 00:30:33 Denotation Hiccup sits on a cliff while drawing Toothless, who is below the cliff at the water’s edge. Connotation This symbolizes dragons as calm, intelligent, and sacred creatures. Here, dragons are not only considered enemies, but ancient creatures that have symbolic and spiritual values. Myth The scene represents the myth that dragons in Nordic tradition are not just monsters, but mythological creatures believed to be part of Viking Culture. (Cultural Sacred Creature: Nordic Dragon)
3. Datum 3	 Scene 00:44:55 Denotation Hiccup’s gesture of touching Toothless causes Toothless to close his eyes, and Hiccup appears to turn away slightly. Connotation Toothless’s expression of closing his eyes symbolizes complete trust, while Hiccup’s posture of turning away shows humility and sincerity. The combination of the two shows a relationship built on empathy, not domination. Myth This scene mythologizes that a strong bond between humans and other creatures is formed not through power, but through trust, empathy, and courage to move forward. (Sacred Bond Myth: Human Mythic Creature Harmony)

4. Datum 4



Scene 01:23:15

- Denotation This dragon breathes fire from its mouth to attack and protect itself during battle.
- Connotation Fire is not only useful as a weapon, but also as a symbol of energy, life force, and spiritual protection. The use of fire shows that dragons have sacred and majestic natural powers.
- Myth The scene depicts the myth of fire as a sacred element that represents power and life, in line with the mythological belief that fire is a symbol of spiritual power.
(Sacred Element Myth: Fire as Spiritual Power)

5. Datum 5



Scene 01:36:13

- Denotation The villagers of Berk prepare for battle. Men and woman carry weapons, led by their leader Stoick
- Connotation This image shows courage, honor, and fighting spirit in battle, and also conveys the idea that women are not to be looked down upon.
- Myth This scene brings to life the myth that the Vikings were a brave warrior people, not only the men but also the women. (Warrior Ethos Myth: Brave Viking People)

6. Datum 6



Scene 01:45:18

- Denotation The dragon's eyes appear narrowed and display a tense expression when receiving control signals from Red Death as queen.
- Connotation The narrowed eyes symbolized fear and pressure, indicating that the dragon was not acting of its own free will.
- Myth Here, Red Death is depicted as a devouring mother, a figure who oppresses and controls other creatures for her own interests until they lose their freedom. (Devouring Mother Archetype: Consuming Tyrant)
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7. Datum 7



Scene 01:46:39

- Denotation Hiccup rides to fight Red Death, the dragon queen who attacks and controls other dragons.
- Connotation This battle is not just against a monster, but a symbol of courage, sacrifice, and liberation for oppressed creatures. Hiccup not only defeats the monster, but also frees the other dragons from domination.
- Myth This scene represents the classic myth of Slaying the Dragon, in which the hero defeats a figure symbolizing greed and absolute power. (Heroic Confrontation: Dragon Slayer)

8. Datum 8



Scene 01:54:43

- Denotation Dragons and humans live side by side in Berk village. The dragons and the people of Berk trust each other and live in peace.
- Connotation This shows the harmony, mutualism, and balance between humans and nature, but also cooperation.
- Myth the scene depicts the myth that human and living creatures coexist peacefully because they are part of the same universal system. (Harmony Myth: Human Nature Coexistence)

9. Datum 9



Scene 01:56:16

- Denotation The village of Berk is depicted as being located on a remote island, surrounded by the sea and high cliffs. Many dragons live in this region.
- Connotation The remote island seems magical and sacred, with many unknown things. Nature and mystical creatures coexist, depicting a mythological place where legends are created.
- Myth This scene illustrates the myth that remote places such as mountains and islands are often considered sacred locations, spaces for interaction between humans and supernatural beings. Berk village becomes a "mythical land" in the collective imagination. (Sacred Space Myth: Mythical Island)

Based on the data in Table 1, the representation of myths in the live-actions film *How to Train Your Dragon* shows how films naturalize certain ideologies through a mechanism described by Barthes as the process of "myth turns history into nature" (Barthes, 1972). At 00:13:48, Stoick portrayed as a strict and respected Jarl figure, in line with archaeological findings that early Nordic societies had aristocratic leaders who were responsible for governing and protecting their communities (Felding et al., 2020). However, the film not only shows Stoick as a leader but also naturalizes his power as described by Barthes, namely making Stoick's authority appear to be an innate trait, rather than a cultural or social

construct. With this, Stoick's leadership looks natural and unquestionable to the people of Berk village, so that its social function is transformed into a myth that is simply accepted. The transformation of meaning begins at scene 00:30:33, when Toothless is seen as a calm and intelligent creature, different from the image of dragons as bringers of chaos in Norse mythology (National Geographic, n.d.' Arkhatoria, n.d.). This shift is reinforced through scene 00:44:55, when Hiccup and Toothless build trust, in line with the pattern of alternative heroes in Campbell (2004) and the concept of chosen ones (TVTropes, n.d.). Through Barthes' perspective, these two scenes show the process of resignification, that is, how the old meaning of dragons as threats is removed from its historical context and refilled with the value of empathy. The dragon myth and the hero myth do not run separately; they shape each other because Hiccup's development as a hero exists because of his new relationship with Toothless, while the meaning of the dragon is changed based on Hiccup's interpretation.

In the middle of the story, the film begins to show how Berk's cultural values are formed through collective symbols. Scene 01:23:15 depicts fire as a dragon's power that has sacred properties, consistent with mythological literature that interprets fire as spiritual energy (MythologyWorldwide, n.d.; Sudibya et al., 2018). This meaning then intersects with scene 01:36:13, when the Berk village community is depicted as a community of warriors who uphold courage, as popularized in historical narratives about Viking culture (Kumparan, 2021; Thpanorama. n.d.). However, these two representations are at odds with the values of non-violence that Hiccup brings. In Barthes' framework, this tension is lightened through depoliticized speech, because the film presents it as if it were only a conflict between father and son, making it seem like a normal family problem.

The representation of space is an important stage in the development of meaning in the films. Scene 01:54:43 shows the harmony between humans and dragons in a peaceful space, while 01:56:16 depicts Berk village as an island that acquires symbolic meaning as a sacred space. Cultural space studies explain that a space is called a sacred place when the community assigns collective values to it through experience and symbols (Olivadese, 2025). Berk's transformation from a battlefield to safe place reflects a shift in values built on the new relationship between humans and dragons, as well as Hiccup's heroism. This space undergoes naturalization, as a complex transformation of values from conflict to coexistence is presented as if it were a natural condition in the life of Berk village.

The climatic conflict occurs at scene 01:45:18, which presents Red Death as a devouring mother figure, a creature that symbolizes power that consumes and dominates. At 01:46:39, it becomes a depiction of the dragon slayer myth and the story of Fafnir (Smith, 2013). These two mythical systems are contradictory, but they produce new meaning when Hiccup wins the battle through his cooperation with Toothless. As per Barthes' theory, the film presents ideological change through depoliticized speech so that the shift in values from violence to empathy appears as a simple moral victory. Ultimately, all myths about leadership heroism, creatures, social actions, and space are naturalized as common truths within the film's world.

Overall, all the data show that this film contracts interrelated meanings about leadership based on responsibility, the importance of empathy in building relationships, and a shift in values from conflict to cooperation. Based on the whole findings, the nine data points lead to four categories of meaning, namely myths about Viking leadership, the relationship between humans and mythological creatures, symbols of nature and sacred spaces, and moral conflicts between tyranny and heroism. The representation of myths in this film not only reinforces the fantasy narrative, but also rearranges the values that lead the characters to a new perspective on the world.

Effects of the Myths Represented in the Film on the Characters Based on Barthes' Semiotics Analysis Model

This part explained how the myths in live-action film *How to Train Your Dragon* influence characters based on Barthes' Semiotics Analysis Model. The analysis showed how each myth in the film affects the characters' emotion, decisions, and interactions. The result of this analysis is presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Effects of Myths on the Characters in the Film *How to Train Your Dragon* (2025)

No	Scene	Myth Representation	Effect on Characters
1.	00:13:48	Stoick is portrayed as a firm and authoritative leader, reinforcing the myth of the strong Viking leader and protector of his tribe.	This myth causes Stoick to maintain a harsh, authoritative, and physically-based leadership style. For Hiccup, this is both stressful and educational.
2.	00:30:33	Hiccup draws Toothless from a distance, portraying the dragon as a creature of Nordic culture and symbolism.	As a result, Hiccup begins to see dragons as creatures that deserve to be understood, not hated, and his thinking about dragons' changes.
3.	00:44:55	Hiccup and Toothless's touch shows trust, presenting the myth of the relationship between humans and mythical creatures built through empathy.	Because of this, their emotional bond grows stronger, becoming the basis for Hiccup's transformation into a character different from other Vikings
4.	01:23:15	Dragon fire is considered a symbol of unique power that represents sacred elements and important energy in dragon mythology.	This mythical scene reinforces the identity of dragons as creatures with vital and Controlled power, not aggressive ones. Dragons are portrayed as characters who actively protect themselves and their community.

5.	01:36:13	Stoick led the preparations for war in Berk, presenting the Viking myth as a nation of courageous warriors.	This myth made Stoick even more determined to defend his villagers using aggressive methods.
6.	01:45:18	Red Death oppresses the dragons, presenting the myth of a devouring mother.	The dragons become passive and submissive to Red Death because of the pressure exerted on them, showing that their aggression is only a response to the queen's domination.
7.	01:46:39	Hiccup rides Toothless to fight Red Death, showing the myth of a hero who fights tyranny.	Hiccup forms his identity as a new hero who acts not based on tradition, but on the values, he chooses for himself.
8.	01:54:43	Humans and dragons live peacefully side by side creating a myth of harmony between humans and mythical creatures.	This changes the mindset of the villagers of Berk, who accept dragons as part of life and abandon their culture of hostility.
9.	01:56:16	The village of Berk is depicted as an island of legend, a sacred space in Nordic culture.	The myth of Berk as an island of legend makes Stoick, as leader, feel obliged to find a way to protect the village.

Based on the data in Table 2, the film shows how the depiction of myths influences character development through a process of meaning change. The representation of myths in the film shapes Hiccup's character development through the process of second-order signification as formulated by Barthes (1972), namely cultural signs being transformed into moral truths that appear natural in the subject's thinking. The scene at 00:30:33 makes Hiccup see Toothless not as a threat but as a mythological creature worthy of understanding, in line with the perspective that the representation of non-human creatures in fictional narratives can influence empathy and dismantle anthropocentrism (Sujinah, et al., 2024). Then, at 00:44:55, the physical interaction between Hiccup and Toothless reinforces the myth of harmony between humans and mystical creatures, forming an emotional bond that becomes the basis for Hiccup's identity transformation. This is consistent with the function of myths in modern works that shape social and moral norms, as well as convey the values of pluralism and respect for other creatures (Maulaya & Fauzi, 2024). Finally, at 01:46:39, the myth of the chosen hero (Campbell, 2004) provides the foundation for Hiccup to choose personal values over tradition, so that empathy, collaboration, and rejection of violence do not appear as options, but as a natural moral identity. This cumulative effect shows that myths in films become ideological tools that shape individual character ethics, not merely aesthetic or fantasy within the framework of modern Semiotics.

Stoick demonstrates how the myth of naturalizing traditional power structures through mechanized depoliticization is explained by Barthes (1972). At 00:13:48, he appears as a Viking leader who combines moral authority and physical strength, following Raffield et al. (2025) findings that Viking military institutions shaped strength-based leadership as a social norm rather than an individual choice. At 01:36:13, his belief that aggression is the most appropriate response reflects how violence is legitimized in social dynamics, as described by Baten et al. (2021). Furthermore, at 01:56:16, his claim that Berk village is a sacred space can be understood through the ideas of space, ritual, and authority in Viking society discussed by Raffield (2019). The combined effect makes Stoick view harsh leadership, aggression, and protection as something natural, when in fact they are cultural constructs that have been naturalized through the mythical system.

Changes in the dragons and the villagers of Berk occur when the myths in the film reframe the relationship between humans and mythological creatures. At 01:23:15, dragon fire is depicted as a controlled symbolic force, so the villagers of Berk begin to see dragons as creatures with spiritual capacity, not threats. This shift in values aligns with Eslit (2023), which shows that mythological creatures in folklore play a role in shaping social values and respect for non-human entities. At 01:45:18, the dominance of the Red Death presents a devouring mother pattern, which makes the passivity of other dragons a result of structural pressure. This transformation culminates at 01:54:43 when the residents of Berk accept the coexistence of dragons, supporting Eslit (2023) finding that mythical creatures can be a medium for coexistence ethics. Viewed through Barthes (1972), this entire process demonstrates how the film's narrative naturalizes new values from hostility to harmony through a mythical system that shapes character perception.

Overall, myths in film shape character development by naturalizing certain values through the mechanism described by Barthes (1972). In Hiccup, myths about mythological creatures, harmony, and heroism encourages him to see empathy and cooperation as his moral identity. For Stoick, the myths of Viking leadership and warlike courage lead him to interpret violence and harsh protection as natural obligations. Meanwhile, for the dragons and the people of Berk, myths transform their view from hostility to acceptance, particularly through the symbol of dragon fire and the suppression of the Red Death, which reframes the relationship between humans and mythical creatures. Thus, myths function not only as elements of the story, but as a system of meaning that shapes how the characters understand their actions and relationship.

From the whole results, it can be seen that the representation of myths in this film shapes character development through changes in meaning that occur in the story. As when Hiccup and Toothless build trust, the old myth about dragons as enemies begins to be broken and transformed into a new meaning that emphasizes empathy, in line with the concept of moral feeling (Lickona, as cited in Yanuardianto, 2021). Conversely, when the residents of Berk face battle alongside Stoick, it shows a reproduction of the myths of courage and solidarity that are strengthened, which are related to social and emotional dynamics within the group (Sulistyowati et al., 2023). These two scenes show how myths function as a framework that shapes the way characters understand moral choices and social values.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis and discussion that has been carried out, it can be concluded that the live-action film *How to Train Your Dragon* (2025) constructs interrelated meanings about responsibility-based leadership, the importance of empathy in building relationships, and the shift in values from conflict to cooperation through the semiotic process described by Barthes (1972). At this level, myths function to shape characters by internalizing collective values born from the traditions and social practices of the Berk community. The construction of these myths also influences character development, as seen in the transformation of Hiccup, who affirms empathy and collaboration as his moral identity, Stoick, who upholds naturalized traditional authority, and the change in perspective of the Berk community and the dragons from hostility to coexistence. In the context of education, the representation of these values provides opportunities to strengthen character education through learning empathy, moral courage, social responsibility, communication, and cooperation, so that this film can be used as a relevant learning medium for the development of social and ethical values in the educational environment.

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