

LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE
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On behalf of the Editorial Board of Interference Journal, we are proud to inform you that the article with the following title:

Revealing Story Messages Through Symbols in William Golding's Lord of the Flies

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If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us

Kindly regards,



Muh. Anwar
Editorial in Chief



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Revealing Story Messages Through Symbols in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*

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Abstrak. Literary works, such as novels, are a means used to express human experiences, thoughts, and feelings. William Golding's novel *Lord of the Flies* is one of the works frequently discussed for its use of symbolism in conveying meanings. Understanding symbolism in literature can enhance readers' ability to interpret the deeper messages embedded in a story. Often, these messages are not explicitly stated, but must be uncovered as the story unfolds. This study aims to answer two research questions: (1) "What symbols are found in the novel *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding?" and (2) "What do they symbolize?" This qualitative study employs a formalist critical approach, focusing on the form and structure of the story itself, without reference to external aspects. Close textual analysis method is used, supported by Stanton's (1965) theory of symbols for classification and Nurgiyantoro's (2015) theory of meaning to interpret implicit messages. The study identifies nineteen symbols in the novel, namely palm trees, the conch shell, Piggy's glasses, the fire, the beast, the mask, Lord of the Flies, Jack's knife, the scar, Ralph, Jack, the littluns, Roger, Piggy's death, the breaking of the conch, the spear, the pig hunting, the darkness, and the daylight. These symbols are associated with five interrelated meanings, namely (1) outward looks can be deceiving; (2) the evil or dark side of human nature; (3) human behaviors, as manifestation of either the good or the dark side of human nature, such as self-control and savagery; (4) the tension between a stable community and the collapse of civilization; and (5) hope for a better life. The findings contribute to the global literary studies that themes of human nature and social conflict can be intricately conveyed using symbolism. This underlines the significance of *Lord of the Flies* as an important resource in literature-based English language learning, as well as in fostering critical thinking.

Keywords: *Lord of the Flies*, novel, symbols, interpretation

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INTRODUCTION

Literary works have a significant impact on our lives in various ways. First, they expand our knowledge by introducing us to new ideas, perspectives, and insights. Second, they build our empathy, as readers encounter characters in the works who experience diverse emotions and situations, empathy that is often transferred into real-life interactions. Third, literature shapes our culture and values by reflecting and influencing the beliefs, ideals, and aspirations of individuals and societies in its works. Fourth, it promotes critical thinking by encouraging readers to question, analyze, and reflect on the themes, conflicts, and messages in the text. Literature also fosters connection by bringing people to form communities such as book clubs or literary circles (Ali, 2023).

Literary works represent the complexity of one's identity through individual experiences, cultural origins, and personal development. Revealing individual experiences from various perspectives helps readers gain deeper knowledge and understanding of each individual (Altun, 2023, p.2). In literature, there are symbols to convey complex ideas and give a powerful emotion. Symbols are useful for the readers to enrich their experience and uncover the hidden message from the literary work, such as a novel (Cooke, 2025).

According to Glatch (2025), a symbol is an image whose figurative meaning is much deeper than its literal one. It can be in the form of pictures, colors, and also objects that convey unwritten messages in the story (Glatch, 2025). To find out the meaning and significance of the symbols in the story, the reader must explore deeper so that they get the unwritten meaning. Some writers use symbolism in their stories to communicate deeper messages by using everyday objects, events, or characters to represent larger ideas, themes, or moral thrusts (Perrine, 1974).

This study looks into a novel by William Golding entitled *Lord of the Flies*. Published in 1954, this novel talks about the darkness of human nature and the importance of intelligence as a tool for dealing with the chaos of life. This novel drew the researcher's interest as it contains symbols that convey ideas about society, power, and human nature.

A symbol is a word, phrase, or image that represents something literal and a complex set of abstract values and ideas that are usually interpreted according to the surrounding context but may mean a number of things depending upon who interprets the symbol (Myers & Simms, 1989, p. 297). A symbol can have multiple meanings, and the interpretation is often shaped by cultural, historical, or personal perspectives. For example, a rose can

symbolize love, while in another way it might symbolize secrecy. So, it depends on the background of the researcher or who interprets the symbol.

According to Myers & Simms (1989), there are three generic forms of symbols. The first generic symbol is an *archetypal symbol*; it is a natural object that refers to cultural barriers, like the sun as a symbol of energy, a source of life, and the male active principle. The second generic symbol is a *general symbol*; it contains more associative meanings that appeal to a smaller audience, for example, the Christian and the Nazi swastika. The third generic symbol is called a *private symbol*; it is a symbol created by the author's imagination and conveys any number of meanings in the guiding context, for example, as in Yeats' "holy city of Byzantium" (Myers & Simms, 1989, p. 298).

Nevertheless, Stanton (1965) argues that symbols may be anything from the core of a story's setting: a single object, a repeated type of object, a shape, a physical substance, a gesture, a color, a sound, or a fragrance. The elements mentioned may represent a side of a human personality, human responsibility, and the romanticism of youth (Stanton, 1965). The elements mentioned in the story can be symbols, and the meaning of the symbols can reveal deeper information about the characters and the message of the story.

Symbolism has three usual effects (Stanton, 1965). First, a symbol that appears during an important moment in the story underlines the significance of that moment. The symbol appears in the climax of the story. Second, a symbol repeated several times reminds us of some constant element in the story's world. For example, the symbol appears to remind us of something that the character hates in the novel. Third, a symbol that reappears in varying contexts helps to define or clarify the theme (Stanton, 1965, pp. 31-32). It means that the researcher must learn what meaning the previous symbols can have in common.

The theory of meaning by Jerome Beaty & J. Paul Hunter (1994) stated that sometimes it is difficult to differentiate between the message and the theme. It is the most inclusive and probably helps us get closer to the work in trying to frame its theme as precisely as possible, rather than by exploring any other single element (Beaty & Hunter, 1994, p. 901). The message in literary works seeks to inform or convince, while the theme seeks to have us comprehend and empathize so that the information or the ideas are less directly articulated (Beaty & Hunter, 1994, p. 899). The theme and message in a story are different. The theme is more general, and the message is more specific about the point of view or arguments of the writer. Even though the theme and message are different, they are also related because the theme of the story will help the researcher to reveal the message of the story.

However, Nurgiyantoro (2015) argues that morals and themes have similarities. A theme is more complex than a moral, and a moral is a simple form of theme, but not all themes contain a moral (Nurgiyantoro, 2015, p. 429). There are two forms of conveying moral messages. The first one is the direct delivery of the moral message, where the writer puts the moral message and describes the personality of each character directly or explicitly in the story (Nurgiyantoro, 2015, p. 461). So, the reader easily gets the meaning and the moral message from the story, but critical readers will reject outright the message conveyed directly by the author in the story because they consider it to fool the reader. Thus, the direct delivery of the message is considered too forced and will reduce the literary value of a work (Nurgiyantoro, 2015, p. 461).

The second form is the indirect delivery of a moral message, where the author conveys the message indirectly, using events, conflicts, and the characters' attitudes in confronting the conflict. The reader then interprets the moral lesson through these elements (Nurgiyantoro, 2015, p. 467). The method of conveying moral messages indirectly makes literary works seem to have advantages in terms of the number of interpretations from readers and from time to time. The number of interpretations from readers from different periods makes literary works not outdated in the sense that they are able to transcend time and national boundaries (Nurgiyantoro, 2015, p. 468).

Studies have been done on the Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, including a study by Mohammad Nasif Jasim Mohammed (2021) on the novel as an allegorical and symbolic work. Using Perrine's theory of symbols and Abram's theory of allegory, the study found that the characters of Ralph and Jack symbolize democracy and dictatorship, respectively, and represent goodness and evil (Mohammed, 2021). Even though the current study also looks into symbolism in Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, it uses different theories in identifying and interpreting the meanings of the symbols.

The current study focuses on two research questions, namely: 1) What symbols are found in the novel *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding? and 2) What meanings and messages are conveyed through the use of symbolism in William Golding's novel *Lord of the Flies*? While symbols can be studied from the perspectives of Semiotics, as in the study by Aji & Rahayu (2024), this study applies the theory of symbols by Myers & Simms (1989) and Stanton (1965) to answer the first question. The theories of meaning by Beaty & Hunter (1994) and Nurgiyantoro (2015) are employed to answer the second question. The primary aim of this study is to provide a thorough formalist analysis that does not only identify a range of symbols in *Lord of the Flies*, but also interprets their significance in delivering the work's underlying messages and concerns, including the less-explored symbols. In addition to its contribution to literary criticism, this research also offers

insights to language education by integrating literature in language learning and enhancing critical thinking.

RESEARCH METHOD

This qualitative study employs a formalist critical approach to address the research questions. Formalist literary criticism considers the text as the central object of analysis, independent of external contexts such as the author's biography or historical background (Guggenheim, 2019). This approach emphasizes the examination of a literary work's intrinsic elements, including structure, language, style, symbolism, and narrative technique. Close reading is essential in formalist analysis, as it enables the researcher to uncover how these elements work together to construct meaning (Fiveable, 2024).

Given that this study aims to explore the messages conveyed in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* through its use of symbolism, the formalist approach is considered the most suitable analytical framework. It allows for a focused interpretation of the novel's internal features and how they contribute to the overall thematic message.

The close textual analysis in this study follows five general phases adapted from Leavy (2022, p.164). The first is data preparation, in which recurring symbols are identified by reading the novel closely and repeatedly. Symbols are collected by highlighting key passages, phrases, and objects in the novel that carry symbolic meanings. Second, the initial immersion phase is done by reading and rereading the text to have a deep and comprehensive understanding. The third phase is coding, which is done by labelling recurring symbols in the novel. The next phase is categorizing and theming, in which coded data are grouped into categories related to symbolism and message. The last phase is interpretation, in which the researcher analyzes the identified symbols to construct meanings.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study found nineteen (19) symbols in the forms of settings, characters, and some objects that appear in the novel. The following discusses each symbol and its meaning.

Palm Trees

Palm trees represent changes in the atmosphere or condition of the story. Palm trees are identified as a symbol because they appear during significant moments in the story. Palm trees appear at the story's beginning when the writer describes the island where the boys are stranded: "The shore was fledged with palm trees" (Golding, 1959, p. 7). Palm trees also

appear at the beginning of the story when the boys start to face the problem in the group.

“Do you see? All day, I’ve been working with Simon. No one else. They’re off bathing, or eating, or playing.” Simon poked his head out carefully. “You’re chief. You tell ‘em off.” Ralph lay flat and looked up at the palm trees and the sky (Golding, 1959, p. 45).

When the author describes the shore as fledged with palm trees, it means that the condition of the island at the beginning of the story is peaceful. At the beginning of the story, the group is still united, and all the boys consider Ralph their chief. They tell their problems to Ralph and ask for his response to what happened because they all still consider their chief to be Ralph. This can be seen from how Jack expressed his annoyance because while the others were working, some other boys were just playing, eating, and bathing. Jack complained to Ralph, who, as the chief, should have rebuked them.

As the story progresses, the palm trees reinforce the change in the story’s atmosphere from peaceful to tense. From the middle of the story until the end of the story, the situation begins to be chaotic when Jack and his followers separate themselves from Ralph’s leadership group. They act brutally and kill each other. The narrator in the story said, “The island was getting worse and worse” (Golding, 1959, p. 128). The worst tragedy is when Simon was killed by Jack’s followers when Simon wanted to tell the truth that the beast they saw on top of the mountain was not a beast but a pilot’s dead body: “... Simon’s dead body moved out toward the open sea” (Golding, 1959, p. 142). The second worst tragedy is Piggy’s death when Piggy and Ralph have an argument with Jack because Jack and his followers stole Piggy’s glasses.

Piggy fell forty feet and landed on his back across the square red rock in the sea. His head opened, and stuff came out and turned red. Piggy’s arms and legs twitched a bit, like a pig’s after it has been killed. Then the sea breathed again in a long, slow sigh, the water boiled white and pink over the rock; and when it went, sucking back again, the body of Piggy was gone (Golding, 1959, p. 167).

The palm tree symbol delivers the message that outward beauty does not guarantee inner peace in every human being, because humans can always bring chaos. The palm trees in the novel appear when the writer describes the island’s atmosphere as peaceful at the beginning, but then it changes into chaos from the middle to the end of the story.

Mohammed’s study (2021) does not discuss the palm trees as a symbol, yet this object is identified as a symbol in this study because palm

trees are mentioned several times in the story, including at the beginning of the story.

Conch Shell

The conch shell signifies a counterbalance to the conflict in the story. The conch shell is identified as a symbol because it appears during an important moment of the story and is repeated several times from the beginning until the end of the story. The conch shell is used as a tool to gather boys for meetings and as a tool to regulate who can speak. According to Sulaiman (2016), the past society went from hunting and planting for collecting food, from villages to cities, and from simple to advanced technology. Only human beings have civilizations because a civilization gives humans many basic needs and wants. For example, it provides humans with shelter, food, intellectual needs, technological needs, companionship, and interrelationships between people.

Based on the explanation from Sulaiman (2016), the conch shell can be a symbol of counterbalance to the conflict because the boys use the conch shell to call the other boys when they want to have a meeting; it is the representation of technological needs, companionship, and interrelationship between people. "We can use this to call the others. Have a meeting. They will come when they hear us" (Golding, 1959, p. 14). The conch shell is also useful for their rituals when they want to speak up. "I got the conch," said Piggy, in a hurt voice. "I got a right to speak" (Golding, 1959, p. 40). They take turns holding the shell to speak because the rule is that whoever holds the shell can speak.

The conch shell symbol conveys the message that respecting the existing rules is essential for maintaining the unity of society. The researcher concludes that the conch shell is a counterbalance to conflicts because the conch shell is used to call the assembly and to determine those who are allowed to speak when gathered are those holding the conch shell. They used the conch shell as a tool or technology at that time to communicate with others and as a tool to connect with each other. So, with the presence of conch shells and with self-awareness to comply with existing regulations, the condition of society will always be united.

In the previous study by Mohammed (2021), the conch shell is identified as a symbol of authority and discipline because Ralph, as a chief, established a rule that everyone must hold the conch if the person wants to speak (Mohammed, 2021, p. 7). The current study confirms the interpretation of the conch shell's meaning, viewing it as a symbol that counterbalances the conflict in the story. With the conch shell, the characters can conduct meetings in an orderly manner, avoiding uncontrolled debates during discussions.

Piggy's Glasses

Piggy's glasses represent a conflict trigger. Piggy's glasses can be recognized as a symbol because they are shown several times in the story and appear during important moments of the story. "What'll we use for lighting the fire?", "We shall take fire from the others. Listen, tomorrow we'll hunt and get meat. Tonight, I'll go along with hunters-who'll come?" (Golding, 1959, p. 149). Jack and his followers want to light the fire, but they don't have something that can make the fire light. Jack has a plan to take fire from others, which means he plans something bad by stealing Piggy's glasses. "The chief led then, trotting steadily, exulting in his achievement. He was a chief now in truth, and he made stabbing motions with his spear. From his left hand dangled Piggy's broken glasses" (Golding, 1959, p. 155).

Piggy fell forty feet and landed on his back across the square red rock in the sea. His head opened, and stuff came out and turned red. Piggy's arms and legs twitched a bit, like a pig's after it has been killed. Then the sea breathed again in a long, slow sigh, the water boiled white and pink over the rock; and when it went, sucking back again, the body of Piggy was gone (Golding, 1959, p. 167).

The theft of Piggy's glasses sparked a fight between Jack and Ralph. When they were about to take back Piggy's glasses, Ralph and Piggy came to Jack and his followers. Ralph, who was already very emotional, then brought up another thing about their release of responsibility to continue lighting the fire. During the fight was taking place, Piggy tragically died from falling off a cliff. The Piggy's glasses, hence, are identified as a symbol of a conflict trigger, whereas in Mohammed's study (2021), they are seen as a symbol of intelligence. The message conveyed by the researchers, based on the interpretation of Piggy's glasses as a symbol, is that greed and arrogance bring disaster. Jack feels satisfied with his achievement as the chief in carrying out the action of stealing Piggy's glasses. However, such an action actually brings disaster to others.

A Fire

A fire appears in the storyline from hope to chaos. A fire is identified as a symbol because it appears during an important moment in the story and is mentioned repeatedly throughout the story. The important moment is when the boys try several times to be rescued by the ship that is passing near the island, and a fire also breaks out several times from the beginning of the story, when the boys, for the first time, make some efforts to be rescued, until the situation turns into chaos.

A fire that they made can produce smoke, so they hope that somebody can see their smoke and help them get off the island.

There's another thing. We can help them to find us. If a ship comes near the island, they may not notice us. So, we must make smoke on top of the mountain. We must make a fire. (Golding, 1959, p. 33).

That is the first moment when Ralph, as a chief, explains his opinion to the other boys about the strategy to get off the island. He has an opinion about making a fire to make smoke. At the beginning of the story, their purpose is the same: to get off the island by searching for help. Their effort to be rescued is by making a fire to make smoke, but in the middle of the story, Ralph and Jack have different opinions and purposes. Jack is arrogant and selfish; his purpose is just about hunting for food and forgetting about their purpose to get off the island. However, Ralph, as a chief, is still on the first purpose, to be rescued by making a fire. Ralph said, "They will see our smoke" (Golding, 1959, p. 61), and at that moment, when the smoke was already thick, Ralph was sure and hoped that the people in the ship would see their smoke because there was a ship approaching the island. Suddenly, the fire was gone, making the smoke less and dead: "The fire was dead. They saw that straight away, saw what they had known down the beach when the smoke of home had beckoned. The fire was out, smokeless and dead; the watchers were gone. A pile of unused fuel lay ready" (Golding, 1959, p. 62). Until the end of the story, where the fire starts to burn the shelter and the island, "The fire reached the coconut palms by the beach and swallowed them noisily. A flame, seemingly detached, swung like an acrobat and licked up the palm heads on the platform. The sky was black" (Golding, 1959, p. 185).

Fire symbolizes hope. Ralph and his followers always try to light the fire, hoping that there are people on a ship who see their fire and help them to get off the island. By lighting the fire, they hope to be rescued. Different from Jack and his followers, who instead created chaos by separating themselves from the group and not taking responsibility for keeping the fire alive, until finally their arrogant attitude caused the plan to become a disaster.

In Mohammed's study (2021), the fire is seen as a representation of rescue, comfort, and destruction. Mohammed (2021) stated that the smoke from the fire was used as a signal for the sailors and as a symbol of comfort because when the fire was brought down from the top of the mountain, the littluns didn't fear, and the fire also represented destruction because the spreading fire burnt the little boy with a birthmark on his cheek (Mohammed, 2021, p. 7). The current study emphasizes the meaning of the fire as a symbol of hope. **Beast**

The beast symbolizes the evil or dark side of human beings. The beast can be categorized as a symbol because it is repeated in several chapters and appears in significant moments in the story. The beast appears first in

chapter two and reappears in chapters five, six, and eight. "Now he says it was a bestie," "A snake-thing. Ever so big. He saw it." (Golding, 1959, p. 31). Piggy tries to help the little boy speak up about what he wants to say, and the little boy says that he saw a beast in the woods. The older boy tries to explain that there is no beast on an island that size. But the little boy still insisted that he saw a beast: "He still says he saw the beast. It came and went away again and' came back and wanted to eat him." (Golding, 1959, p. 32).

The boys said that they saw a beast, and the beast wanted to eat him, which means that the beast that the boy saw is not real; there is no beast on the island. The older boys also said that there is no beast on the small island where they got stranded. The beast that the boy saw appeared because the little boy was facing fear and chaotic situations, which only created hallucinations in the little boy's mind, who thought that a beast appeared in front of him and wanted to eat him.

Meanwhile, one of the boys named Simon understands the situation, and he expresses his opinion to the other boys.

"Maybe," he said hesitantly, "Maybe there is a beast."

The assembly cried out savagely, and Ralph stood up in amazement.

"You, Simon? You believe in this?"

"I don't know," said Simon. His heartbeats were choking him.

"But..."

"What I mean is ... maybe it's only us." (Golding, 1959, p. 82).

Simon said that he believed that there is a beast, but what he meant was not the animals; he said that the beast is only them. So, the beast that the boys see is only themselves; the beast exists in their selves. When the boy faces the chaotic situation and becomes fearful, it makes their mind confused to the point of creating hallucinations about beasts.

The message revealed, based on the interpretation of the beast as a symbol, is that fear can push someone to be powerful, but fear also leads people to behave irrationally. The little boys said that they saw a beast, even though the older boys said that there was no beast on the island. They still say that he saw the beast, and then Simon said that the beast is them (Golding, 1959, p. 82). In a situation that makes boys isolated from society because they are stranded on an island, it makes them, especially little boys, feel scared to the point of hallucinating.

The Mask

The mask represents character transformations that are mainly seen in Jack and his followers. The boys, or the hunters under Jack's leadership, are wearing masks made from clay and a stick of charcoal from the fire. The mask is painted on their face, and this can be classified as a symbol because

the mask appears when the boys start to lose their humanity and start to act violently. It means that the mask appears during an important moment of the story to underline the significance of the moment when the boys start to lose their humanity.

“For hunting. Like in the war. You know, dazzle paint. Like things trying to look like something else.” He twisted in the urgency of telling. “Like moths on a tree trunk.” (Golding, 1959, p. 57). Jack, as a leader for the hunters, said that they use the mask for camouflage to become something, so it will be easier for them to catch a pig and get the meat. The mask is not only a clay that is painted on their faces, but it also symbolizes the transformation of the character Jack and his followers. In chapter four, when the boys are wearing the mask, it is the beginning of their violence and brutality. They start to do sinister dances and sing a song, “Kill the pig. Cut her throat. Spill the blood.” (Golding, 1959, p. 63). The sinister dance and the song are like a procession to kill a pig, but in chapter nine, the boys of hunters under Jack’s leadership use this song and become brutal and violent, like they are losing humanity and becoming possessed, and then they kill the innocent Simon.

The message found based on the interpretation of the mask as a symbol is that anonymity can lead people to become cruel and abandon personal responsibility. Jack and his followers use charcoal to paint their faces or to camouflage when they are hunting a pig in the forest. Yet, after they successfully hunt a pig, they start to do a sinister dance and sing a terrifying song. They become brutal and violent, like losing control of themselves while continuing to dance and sing a song.

The mask, therefore, is interpreted as character transformation, as seen in Jack and his followers. They painted their faces to camouflage themselves, performing sinister dances and singing terrible songs. The mask is not merely a disguise to blend with animals; it represents a transformation of character. When they dance and sing, they lose self-control and become wild, as if they are not themselves. In the previous study by Mohammed (2021), the mask is identified as a symbol of primitivism and savagery. The painted face, or the mask, imitated that of primitive people, and Jack, along with his followers, keeps his face painted all the times, marking them as members of his tribe (Mohammed, 2021, p. 8).

Lord of the Flies

The Lord of the Flies is a translation of one of the evil names, *Beelzebub*, in Greek. *Beelzebub* is described as an evil who expresses destruction, demoralization, hysteria, and panic (Golding, 1959, p. 190). *Lord of the Flies* symbolizes the darkness inside the human being and opens up the theme of human evil in this novel. In the novel *Lord of the Flies*, it is described as a pig’s head on a stick: “Jack held up the head and jammed the

soft throat down on the pointed end of the stick, which pierced through into the mouth. He stood back, and the head hung there, a little blood dribbling down the stick” (Golding, 1959, p. 126). The pig causes a lot of flies to gather around it and make a lot of noise, and finally, the flies find Simon, an innocent boy. “The pile of guts was a black blob of flies that buzzed like a saw. After a while, these flies found Simon” (Golding, 1959, p. 128).

Lord of the Flies can be recognized as a symbol because it appears during an important moment of the story, where the title of the novel is mentioned in the part of the story. That symbol is the main key of the whole story and concludes why the title of the novel is called *Lord of the Flies*. “You knew, didn’t you? I’m part of you? Close, close, close! I’m the reason why it’s a no-go? Why are things what they are?” (Golding, 1959, p. 133). *Lord of the Flies* said that he is part of Simon; it indirectly depicts that there is always this devil or dark side within every human being, even in seemingly innocent ones.

This finding confirms Mohammed’s study (2021) that *Lord of the Flies* is a symbol of evil. The current study also underlines the meaning of this symbols as a representation of the darkness within human beings, reflecting the theme of human evil in the story.

Jack’s Knife

Jack’s knife represents violence and control. We needed meat. Jack stood up as he said this, the bloodied knife in his hand. The two boys faced each other. There was the brilliant world of hunting, tactics, fierce exhilaration, and skill; and there was the world of longing and baffled common sense. Jack transferred the knife to his left hand and smudged blood over his forehead as he pushed down the plastered hair (Golding, 1959, p. 65).

Jack and his followers just think about how to get a pig and collect the meat for their meal. Jack is not a chief in their group, but because Jack is greedy, he does not want to follow the rules. The knife is used for hunting, and the description of how Jack grabs his knife that is full of blood symbolizes that the knife is used for something violent. Jack’s rebellious attitude to continue hunting is a form of Jack’s control over his followers. The message revealed, based on the interpretation of Jack’s knife as a symbol, is that violence destroys leadership. Jack’s rude attitude makes the leadership chaotic and messy.

The Scar

The scar symbolizes human destruction of nature. The scar appears at the beginning of the story. The scar in this context is the path of destruction through the jungle where the plane crashed. At the beginning of the story, the plane they were on crashed, and the impact of the plane left

scars along the path in the forest. "All around him, the long scar smashed into the jungle was a bath of heat. The undergrowth at the side of the scar was shaken, and a multitude of raindrops fell pattering" (Golding, 1959, p. 5). The forest and nature on the island were previously untouched by humans, so they were still very natural. However, their arrival left a scar that damaged the environment around where their plane crashed. In addition, as the story progressed, the island became chaotic, and there was a lot of violence. The scar mentioned at the beginning of the story symbolizes the arrival of humans who will bring destruction to nature. The message revealed, based on the interpretation of the scar as a symbol, is that human actions can damage nature; therefore, humans must be responsible for protecting it.

Ralph

Ralph symbolizes leadership and civilization. Ralph can be classified as a symbol because Ralph is one of the main characters in the novel, so he always repeated several times during the story and appears during an important moment of the story. "We need an assembly. Not for fun. Not for laughing and falling off the log. Not for making jokes, or for cleverness. Not for these things. But to put things straight" (Golding, 1959, p. 73). Ralph plays the role of a chief who always obeys the rules they have agreed upon together. Ralph is also firm in leading, as in the quote, Ralph held the gathering not for fun, but to straighten out something that had become messy because of the rules that began to be ignored by some people.

"So remember. The rocks for a lavatory. Keep the fire going and smoke showing as a signal. Don't take fire from the mountain. Take your food up there" (Golding, 1959, p. 75). Ralph emphasizes to the other children to always be orderly in doing things, such as where they should use a place as a lavatory, where to light a fire as a rescue signal, and other things that they have agreed on but have begun to ignore. While in the previous study by Mohammed (2021) Ralph is identified as a symbol of democracy, the current study identifies Ralph and his attitude as a symbol of leadership and civilization with the applicable rules. The message revealed, based on the interpretation of Ralph as a symbol, is that civilization must be upheld so that it is not destroyed

Jack

Jack symbolizes savagery and chaos. Jack can be categorized as a symbol because Jack is one of the characters in the story, so Jack always appears in important moments of the story and appears as the story progresses. "He took a step, and able at last to hit someone, stuck his fist into Piggy's stomach. Ralph made a step forward, and Jack smacked Piggy's head." (Golding, 1959, p. 65). Jack starts to get violent, starting with an

argument with Ralph and Piggy. Jack insists on taking his followers to hunt pigs so they can get meat to eat. On the other hand, Ralph, as a chief, says that it is better to finish the shelter first because the job requires a lot of people. "The job was too much. We needed everyone. You could have had everyone when the shelters were finished. But you had to hunt" (Golding, 1959, p. 65). However, Jack instead commits violence against Piggy, one of Ralph's followers.

The message revealed, based on the interpretation of Jack as a symbol, is that power without ethics will lead to the destruction of society. The difference between the current study and the previous study is in the interpretation of the symbol. The previous study by Mohammed (2021) mentioned Jack as a symbol of barbarism, but in the current study, the researcher symbolized Jack as a symbol of savagery and chaos.

The Littluns

The littluns or little boys can symbolize human behavior. The littluns, or little boys, can be recognized as a symbol because the little boys are the main characters in the novel and appear in every chapter in the novel. "They had built castles in the sand at the bar of the little river. These castles were about one foot high and were decorated with shells, withered flowers, and interesting stones. Round the castles was a complex of marks, tracks, walls, and railway lines that were of significance only if inspected with the eye at beach-level" (Golding, 1959, p. 54). The littluns symbolize human behavior, where usually humans just want to do fun things and forget about the important tasks. "We decide things. But they don't get done. We were going to have water brought from the stream and left in those coconut shells under fresh leaves. So it was, for a few days. Now there's no water. The shells are dry. People drink from the river" (Golding, 1959, p. 73). The littluns started to forget the mandatory tasks they had to do, including keeping the fire signal burning, building shelters, and separating bath water from lavatory water. "There's another thing. We chose those rocks right along beyond the bathing pool as a lavatory. That was sensible too. The tide cleans the place up. You littluns know about that" (Golding, 1959, p. 74). The message revealed, based on the interpretation of the littluns as a symbol, is that self-control is important.

Roger

Roger serves as a symbol of cruelty and sadism. Roger is one of Jack's followers, who is described in the novel as a sadistic and cruel person. "Roger and Maurice came out of the forest. They were relieved from duty at the fire and had come down for a swim. Roger led the way straight through the castles, kicking them over, burying the flowers, and scattering the

chosen stones” (Golding, 1959, p. 55). Roger destroys the sandcastle that the boys have made on the beach. Roger feels satisfied and does not feel guilty when destroying the sandcastle. Roger’s attitude, like that, symbolizes cruelty and sadism. The message revealed, based on the interpretation of Roger as a symbol, is that crime will continue to emerge when the boundaries in society are also lost.

Piggy’s Death

Piggy’s death symbolizes the collapse of civilization. Piggy’s death is classified as a symbol because it appears in a significant moment of the story, and when Piggy died, the conch shell that they used as a means of communication and to regulate how to speak also fell along with Piggy and broke into pieces. “The rock struck Piggy a glancing blow from chin to knee; the conch exploded into a thousand white fragments and ceased to exist” (Golding, 1959, p. 167).

The message revealed, based on the interpretation of Piggy’s death as a symbol, is that when logic and morality are silenced, brutality wins. Piggy wanted to remind Ralph that their arrival to meet Jack and his followers was not to argue but to take Piggy’s glasses, but instead it triggered a commotion between Jack and Ralph until Piggy slipped into a ravine. So, logic and morals are important in dealing with a problem.

The Broken Conch

The breaking of the conch signifies the complete collapse of civilization on the island. The breaking of the conch can be recognized as a symbol because it appears in a significant moment of the story, where the important tool is broken. The conch shell is used as a tool of communication and the rules of speaking. So, the breaking of the conch signifies that the civilization had collapsed. “The rock struck Piggy a glancing blow from chin to knee; the conch exploded into a thousand white fragments and ceased to exist” (Golding, 1959, p. 167). The message revealed, based on the interpretation of the breaking of the conch as a symbol, is that when the rules are broken, society is also destroyed.

The Spear

The spear signifies aggression. Jack and his followers used a spear to hunt a pig. Yet, there was a time when Jack and his followers played a game. One of the boys will be a pig, and they hunt the pig using their spear.

“Jack shouted. “Make a ring!” The circle moved in and around. Robert squealed in mock terror, then in real pain. “Ow! Stop it! You’re hurting!” The butt end of a spear fell on his back as he blundered

among them. “Hold him!” They got his arms and legs. Ralph, carried away by a sudden thick excitement, grabbed Eric’s spear and jabbed at Robert with it” (Golding, 1959, p. 106).

The hunting game hurt Robert, yet Jack and his followers didn’t care and continued the game. This symbol conveys a message that survival tools can turn into tools of oppression when morality is lost.

The Pig Hunting

The activity of hunting pigs represents an obsession with violence. “Listen, all of you. Me and my hunters, we’re living along the beach by a flat rock. We hunt and feast and have fun. If you want to join my tribe, come and see us. Perhaps I’ll let you join. Perhaps not” (Golding, 1959, p. 130). Jack and his hunter followers began to become obsessed with hunting; they felt happy when they succeeded in hunting a pig. “*Kill the pig! Cut his throat! Kill the pig! Bash him in*” (Golding, 1959, p. 106). Jack and his followers really enjoy the violence when hunting or killing pigs. They become uncontrollable and dance a terrible dance while chanting the lyrics. This action of hunting pigs, hence, also sends the message that unrestrained aggression can grow into cruelty, which may then lead to inhumanity.

Darkness

Darkness signifies uncertainty, which may create fear. “Then the wind roared in the forest, there was confusion in the darkness, and the creature lifted its head, holding toward them the ruin of a face” (Golding, 1959, p. 114). In the darkness, the boys saw a figure on the mountain. They thought the figure was a beast, and they were scared. “Piggy looked up miserably from the dawn-pale beach to the dark mountain. “Are you sure? Really sure, I mean?” I told you a dozen times now,” said Ralph, “we saw it.” “D’you think we’re safe down here?” (Golding, 1959, p. 115). In this quote, the darkness makes them confused in seeing what the figure actually is, so in the darkness, they are afraid. Therefore, the message conveyed is that when people cannot see clearly, they cannot control their fear.

Daylight

Daylight symbolizes the hope of rescue.

“Ralph moaned faintly. Tired though he was, he could not relax and fall into a well of sleep for fear of the tribe. Might it not be possible to walk boldly into the fort, say-- “I’ve got pax,” laugh lightly, and sleep among the others? Pretend they were still boys, schoolboys who had said, “Sir, yes, Sir”--and worn caps? Daylight might have

answered yes; but darkness and the horrors of death said no” (Golding, 1959, p. 171).

In the quotation above, Ralph is trying to hide and escape from Jack and his followers. Ralph tries hard to survive; even though he is tired and in hiding, he feels afraid of Jack and his followers. Ralph said that daylight might say yes, meaning that there is still hope for him to survive from Jack and his followers. The message revealed, based on the interpretation of the daylight as a symbol, is that there is still hope even in the most difficult situations.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This study found nineteen symbols in the *Lord of the Flies* novel, namely the palm trees, the conch shell, Piggy’s glasses, the fire, the beast, the mask, Lord of the Flies, Jack’s knife, the scar, Ralph, Jack, the littluns, Roger, Piggy’s death, the breaking of the conch, the spear, the pig hunting, the darkness, and the daylight.

The meanings and messages of these symbols can be clustered into five major meanings. First, the palm trees show that outward looks can be deceiving; what seems to be good and beautiful might have darkness inside. Second, the beast, the mask, and the lord of the flies signify the evil or the dark side in every human being. Third, Jack’s knife, Piggy’s glasses, the scar, Ralph, Jack, the littluns, Roger, the spear, and pig hunting demonstrate human behaviors. Ralph and the littluns symbolize behaviors driven by noble human nature, including leadership, civilization, and self-control. While the rest demonstrate evil deeds, including greed, arrogance, controlling behaviors, violence, cruelty, sadism, aggression, and destructive behaviors. Fourth, the conch shell, Piggy’s death, the broken conch, and the darkness represent the tension between efforts made to create a stable community (civilization) by enacting rules versus actions that break the rules, creating uncertainties that lead to fear and chaos (the collapse of civilization). The last meaning is hope for a better life, symbolized by the fire and the daylight.

This research contributes to the literary study field by offering a comprehensive formalist analysis that identifies and interprets a range of symbols in *Lord of the Flies*, including the less commonly discussed symbols, including the scar and the daylight. The novelty of this study lies in the clustering of the symbolic meanings into five interrelated thematic categories that portray the human experiences, social conflicts, and dynamics.

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