



# Visual Analysis of the Character Nana in The Mobile Legend Bang Bang Game

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## ABSTRACT

**Keywords:**  
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Mobile Legend: bang bang is a game that is still favored by the public and is a fairly successful game and is still in the top rate category on mobile device platforms. Mobile legend itself has many characters and interesting hero visual illustrations. In this study, researchers will analyze the visual character of one of the mobile legends heroes, Nana. This study uses a type of qualitative research with the semiotics model of Roland Barthes by analyzing the meaning of connotation, denotation and myth in the character Nana. The data collection technique used is primary data which is in-game documentation and secondary data in the form of literature studies from books and previous research. Data processing techniques in this research are data reduction and identification. This analysis will be carried out following the design review approach with 4 steps, namely descriptive, formal analysis, interpretation, and evaluation. The results of this study reveal that the hero Nana, described as a leonin (little fairy) of the cat race with a pink costume, Nana is a little boy who tries to protect the forest from treasure hunters and create peace. The visual physical characteristics and messages conveyed through the character Nana, reflect the influence of cats on the design found in the character Nana in the mobile game legend bang bang.

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## 1. Introduction

The game Mobile Legends: Bang Bang (MLBB) was released by publisher Moonton in 2016 and was quite successful in the market; it reached one hundred million installs in 2021. The visual appeal of hero characters, which are created with very mature concepts and graphic design, is a major factor in the success of MLBB games. As a developer and publisher, Moonton clearly sees the skin feature in MLBB games as a visual potential that can generate financial benefits. Furthermore, this statement is in line with the findings of research conducted by Each character has a unique ability to fight opponents, which is quite interesting among the players of this game is Nana, the character is a girl character who resembles a cat. This character is not only favored by many women but is favored by men too because Nana herself is a hero who is quite popular and easy to play (Valentina & Sari, 2018).

Nowadays, there are various types of online games, from the simplest to the most complex. MOBA (multiplayer online battle arena) is one of the most popular types of online games that combines two types of games: real-time strategy (RTS) and role-playing (RPG). The game is played with players running one character from two different teams. The goal is to destroy the opponent's base and win (Putra et al., 2023).

**Definition of Character:** Character is a set of invariably valued traits that indicate a person's goodness, virtue, and moral maturity. The term "character" comes from Latin, meaning "character", "disposition", psychological traits, ethics, personality, and morals. A character is a representation of

the player participating in the game. The player usually plays a character that is considered to be a representation of his or her identity (Khamadi & Senoprabowo, 2016).

Mobile Legends Bang Bang is one of the six games at the 30th Asian Games due to its immense popularity (Oktarini & Rachmanta, 2019). One of the factors that makes this game appealing is its unique character (hero) design, rich visual details, and in-depth background story. Character visuals in a game not only serve as an aesthetic appeal, but also play an important role in establishing the player's emotional involvement with the character. One character that stands out in terms of design and popularity is Nana, Nana is depicted as a leonin (a small elf of the cat race) with her predominantly pink costume color and adorable appearance. Nana is a cat-inspired hero with a cute look and magic powers.

This research uses a type of qualitative research with the semiotics model of Roland Barthes by analyzing the meaning of connotation, denotation and myth in the character Nana. The data collection technique used is primary data which is documentation in the game and secondary data in the form of literature studies from books and previous research. Data processing techniques in this study are data reduction and identification. This analysis will be carried out following the design review approach with 4 steps, namely descriptive, formal analysis, interpretation, and evaluation (Inzaghi & Patria, 2021).

Therefore, the author wants to study Nana's character further by looking at her physical characteristics and the visual meaning of the messages conveyed by her. Based on this background, in Mobile Legends Bang Bang, there is a problem with the visual characteristics of Nana's character and her visual meaning.

## 2. Method

This research applies a descriptive qualitative approach research method. According to Bogdan and Biklen (1997) Descriptive qualitative research collects data in the form of words or pictures without emphasizing numbers. (Sugiyono, 2020). The data that has been collected is then analyzed and then described so that it is easily understood by many people. By using Roland Barthes' semiotic model, this research will concentrate on the visual analysis of Nana's character. Roland Barthes said that semiotics is a field or technique of analysis that is used in understanding signs through the assumption that objects do not only carry data but produce sign structures. (Kevinia et al., 2022). The researcher will apply the table of signifiers, signs, and myths to categorize the object using Roland Barthes' semiotic model.

Data processing techniques were data reduction and identification. The analysis was carried out in four steps: descriptive, formal analysis, interpretation, and evaluation. **Descriptive**, in this step, the researcher observed and described the elements of the work without assessing them. The researcher described the aspects of the character Nana, who was inspired by the cat breed. Starting from the body, hands, and to the clothes used by Nana. **Formal analysis**, Pene At this point, we examined how the layout can be the main component of a work. We looked at Nana's posture and body shape, how she looks when playing the game, and her body movements. **Interpretation**, in this step, the researcher understands the design work. It looks at how meaning is expressed by the designer in the work. This study investigates the character Nana from Mobile Legends Bang Bang using Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis. **Evaluation**, At this time, the researcher conducted an evaluation aimed at describing the visual physical features of Nana's character in Mobile Legends Bang Bang and analyzing the visual message. In the next step, drawing conclusions is the researcher's attempt to find or understand meanings, regularities, patterns, explanations, and causal flows.

## 3. Result and Discussion

This discussion about Nana's character discusses how visual analysis is used to describe Nana's character in Mobile Legends Bang Bang. Visual analysis is the elaboration of steps, analysis, and organization of thoughts to explain something and the ability to think through observation, attention, and description (Dewi & Zaini, 2016).

The character study of Nana in the game Mobile Legend: Bang-bang shows the visual character analysis phase. Researchers must go through four stages of analysis in analyzing design products: descriptive, formal, interpretation, and evaluation (Inzaghi & Patria, 2021).

### 3.1. Descriptive Stage



**Figure 1.** Character Nana  
(Source: Mobile Legends Bang Bang Game)

Basically, a character is a visual entity that shows identity and individuality in a story (Fauzi, 2022). The character Nana in Mobile legend bang bang is a girl character similar to a cat with a Role Mage who plays in the mid lane Nana herself is one of the strongest mid lane heroes at this time Nana has a magic defense reduction skill that makes her damage even greater. Each skin in the Nana Legend mobile game has a different appearance.

Nana uses pink clothes. Nana poses with a very sturdy position with her legs open but looks funny where the left leg is slightly tiptoed, Nana uses purple pants and brown knee-length shoes, with her left hand on her side and her right hand holding a crescent-shaped brown weapon, the weapon is called a magic boomerang, with a pink hand guard and a little white on her arm. A tail that is like a cat's tail that is quite large with the color of an easy and dark brown belaster, a golden brown belt and behind in the form of a pitah and in front in the form of a pink cat paw (palm). Nana's hair is pink and there is hair that rises slightly upwards (tuft), Nana's ears are shaped like large cat ears and are brown and hairy. Nana has pale white skin typical of the elves, because Nana herself is a leonin (small elf of the cat race) shaped like a cat.

Nana is a hero with an appearance inspired by cats and fairies, known as leonin. Her appearance incorporates feline elements seen in her facial features, ears, and tail, reflecting the leonin's nature as a race of cat fairies. Nana has a small, child-like body, with a round face, large eyes, and pointed ears that reinforce the character's cute and lively impression. Nana wears a striking pink costume, consisting of a short top and skirt with white details and fur accessories. The pink color gives off a soft, cheerful, and feminine vibe, which suits the character of a child who is full of energy and enthusiasm. She also has a furry tail that moves in time with her movements, adding to the impression of a lively and playful character.

Overall, Nana's physical design blends elements of children, cats, and fairies with the use of bright colors and cute features to highlight her character's playful, warm, and protective spirit.

### 3.2. Formal Analysis Stage



**Figure 2.** Character Nana  
(Source: Mobile Legends Bang Bang Game)

In the main screen at the posing spot after the hero arrives at the hero altar, also known as Mobile Legend bang bang, Nana stands with her left foot slightly on tiptoe with her right hand holding a magic boomerang shaped like a crescent moon. in terms of shape and proportion, Nana's body is small and slender, creating the impression of a lively and agile character. elements such as the ears, tail, and fur seen on the costume reinforce the inspiration from cats. Nana's character visuals are shown in three dimensions and are colored pink, brown, purple, and a little gold to add an elegant feel.

Nana's character is rendered in three dimensions and has a visual style that looks realistic. Not too many colors are used, so the focus is on pink and brown. The illustrations used on her body are not too exaggerated according to the image of a leonine in general.


In the game, Nana's character has the main power, namely with her passive that can turn opponents into Molina, Nana's pet. Although Nana looks small and tiny but Nana is one of the heroes who is quite agile as well as a cat, Nana can also hit her opponent with her magic boomerang as seen in the picture held by Nana using her right hand.


### 3.3. Interpretation Stage

#### 1. Denotation The first stage

Denotation is the first stage of closed meaning, which makes the meaning clear and obvious. (Rahayunengtiyas & Raharjo, 2022).

**Table 1.** First Level Analysis of Nana's Character

visual	Bookmark	A sign
	Short shoulder-length pink hair with cat-like ears but quite large, smiling face.	Nana has pink and shoulder-length hair with a little bit of hair that rises up (tuft) as well as ears that are quite large and hairy in dark and light brown with a small nose, lips that smile thinly and beautiful blue eyes.

	Has a petite body, wears a pink shoulder-length shirt and a tie and a cat paw-shaped waist decoration, as well as a pink hand protector-shaped hisan worn on the wrist.	Nana has a small body, which is wrapped in pink shoulder-length clothes and furry lace at the end of her white clothes, as well as brown waist ornaments and pins and cat paw-shaped front and ribbon-shaped back, the wrists of Nana are decorated with pink protectors and white furry lace matching the clothes Nana uses.
	Has small feet, but wears purple balloon-shaped pants and brown shoes.	Nana has small feet but she uses balloon-shaped pants so that it has more volume, the pants used are purple, and the boots are brown so that they match the clothes used by Nana.
	It has brown weapons and a golden crescent-shaped center.	Nana has a crescent-shaped weapon, the weapon is brown and in the middle there is a gold decoration and is shaped like a star and there is a circle pattern, the weapon is called Magic boomerang.
	It has a dark brown and lightly tapered tail	Nana has a U-shaped tail that is quite large, Nana's tail is dark brown and easy, the tail rises upwards where the center is quite voluminous.

Based on the analysis table above, it can be seen that the Visual Character on hero Nana has pink shoulder-length hair, and large enough ears shaped like cat ears and hairy. Nana has a small body wrapped in pink clothes and decorated with white lace at the end, Nana's tiny feet wear purple pants and brown boots that match Nana's tiny feet. As well as Nana's crescent-shaped weapon, which is golden brown and Nana's tail is dark brown and easily makes Nana look even cuter.

Nana is a cat fairy who comes from the Leonin race. In her backstory, she is a creature full of spirit and has a pure soul. Nana meets Miya, who helps her control her magical powers. Her cheerfulness and loving nature make Nana more than just an ordinary hero; she also represents the gentle yet strong side of someone who wants to protect and help her friends.

## 2. Second Stage Conetation

Conetation is published to reveal further meanings of open denotation after denotation. Connotations have meanings that suggest certain values or feelings, resulting in new meanings (Andini et al., 2021).



Visual	A Sign
Head Nana	Nana's pink-colored hair and pointed ears and quite large and hairy make Nana look like a cat, large enough eyeballs, lips and a small nose make Nana close to the physical characteristics of cats. Similar to Nana's origin, namely moonlit forest, Nana is a Leonin race that resembles a cat, leonin itself is an elf (fairy) but the Leonins are strangely shaped, namely menyerupai a cat but their body is human-shaped Nana's pink-colored hair and pointed ears and quite large and hairy make Nana look like a cat, large enough eyeballs, lips and a small nose make Nana close to the physical characteristics of cats. Similar to Nana's origin, namely moonlit forest, Nana is a Leonin race that resembles a cat, leonin itself is an elf (fairy) but the Leonins are strangely shaped, namely menyerupai a cat but their body is human-shaped.
Nana's body	Nana has a small body like a cat fairy, as shown by her small body, plus the decoration on the belt in the shape of a cat's paw indicates that Nana is a cat fairy with a white female gender common in the fairy country.
nana's clothes	Nana's outfit is basically pink, showing the feminine character of women. Often, pink is considered a representation of warmth, gentleness and Nana is known to be a helpful character in her stories.
Nana's feet	Small feet and boots belong to someone who is adventurous. This indicates that Nana is an adventurous cat fairy.
Nana's weapon	Weapons are a representation of courage and struggle. Nana's weapon is in the shape of a crescent moon, and Nana was born on a moonlit night with spiritual power, just as the fairies are identical to their kukatans.
Nana's tail	A tail curled in a U shape is usually the sign of a relaxed cat. Nana herself is known as a cheerful cat fairy even though she doesn't have many friends.

Based on the table above, it can be seen that Nana is a leonine (cat fairy) from mythology seen from the shape of the pointed ears tipped like a cat's ears. Nana is a petite white woman. This character brings a sense of tenderness and protection. The pink of her costume adds to the symbolism of femininity and innocence, while the cat element points to agility and independence.

Nana is a hero full of charm and uniqueness, both in terms of story and abilities. Discussions about her role in the game and how she adapts to the changing meta can provide interesting insights for players who want to understand more about strategy and character development in Mobile Legends: Bang Bang. Nana is often portrayed as a cute and cuddly character, which may make her appealing to players who like characters with cute designs. However, some players prefer characters that look more “serious” or “powerful” in design. This opens up a discussion on how character design affects player choice. In the formal analysis of the character Nana from Mobile Legends: Bang Bang, the focus is on the visual and design elements that make up the character. The following is a breakdown of the formal analysis based on the design elements of Nana's character:

**Shape and Proportion:** Nana has a small body and child-like proportions, with a head that is larger than her body. These proportions emphasize her cute and youthful nature, which makes her look more like a fantasy creature than an ordinary human. The round and small body shape creates an impression of a non-threatening and friendly character, which appeals to the player.

**Colors:** Nana's main color palette is dominated by pink, light purple, and white. The pink color on her costume gives a soft, cheerful, and feminine impression. The use of mauve in her hair gives a unique touch that reinforces her identity as a fantasy character. The white color on the accessories and fur adds a clean and holy impression, which is in line with her role as a protector of the forest.

**Lines and Details:** The design lines on Nana's costume and hair tend to be smooth and curved, reinforcing the impression of softness and flexibility. Not many sharp angles or bold shapes are used,

which supports the character's friendly and non-aggressive nature. Small details such as tail feathers and accessories enrich the visuals, giving the character a sense of life.

**Texture and Material:** Nana's costume appears to have a smooth and soft texture, such as fabric or fur, which enhances the adorable feel of the character. The thick and slightly wavy texture of her hair adds a fantasy feel and reinforces her identity as a leonin, a half-cat creature. The magic wand Nana carries has a wood and crystal texture, adding a magical element to her design.

**Composition and Pose:** Nana's poses in official illustrations often show lively movements or jumping positions, which show her agility as a character with feline elements. The cheerful and excited facial expressions are consistent in various poses, reflecting the character's positive and energetic nature. This formal analysis shows that each visual element of Nana's character was designed with the aim of creating the impression of a gentle, friendly, and energetic character, in line with the narrative as a protector of the forest who wants to create peace.

### 3. Evaluation

Nana's visual design in Mobile Legends not only creates a character that is fun to play, but also conveys a deeper message of protection, justice and harmony with nature. Her character as a small warrior trying to keep the forest from being destroyed reflects the myth of nature's protectors who are often depicted in the form of small and weak creatures, but possess great power.

Nana's character visuals effectively bring together elements from the animal world, particularly cats, with the protection narrative, making Nana a character with a significant story and compelling visuals. In light of the explanations given in the descriptive, formal analysis, and interpretation stages, it is clear that Nana's physical characteristics, qualities, and story in Mobile Legend are almost identical to those of Cats, starting from the clothing and visual form pressing on the character of a cat.

### 3.4. Discussion

Nana's visual design is heavily influenced by the theme of cats, which can be seen in physical attributes such as her ears, tail, and agile movements. Cats in many cultures symbolize agility, independence, and ingenuity, all of which are reflected in Nana's character. Nana's predominantly pink costume not only makes the character stand out visually but also emphasizes her feminine, playful, and cute nature.

Pink is often associated with tenderness, affection and protection. This suits Nana's role in the story as a forest guardian who seeks to protect nature from destruction. The color pink also creates a contrast with other characters who may be darker or more serious, reinforcing Nana's identity as a light and positive figure. In addition to the costume and color, Nana's physical features such as cat ears and tail reinforce the association with animals that are known to be agile and attentive. It also gives the impression that Nana is a protective yet agile character, always ready to act when needed.

In skill 1 Nana throws a magic boomerang at the target, dealing damage to enemies hit on the way out and back. With skill 2, namely with a passive that can turn the opponent into Molina, Nana's pet. And in skill 3 or her ultimate Molina Blitz is Nana's last ability which is used when summoning Molina to use giant footprint magic to the intended area to deal Burst Damage and Stun effects to her opponent.

## 4. Conclusion

Based on the explanation in the descriptive, formal analysis, and interpretation stages, and the evaluation of Nana's character in Mobile Legends: Bang Bang has a strong design both in terms of aesthetics and symbolism. Her design as a leonin (a small fairy of the cat race) with a pink costume conveys a deep message of tenderness, innocence, and protection, reflecting the feminine traits often associated with cute characters. Nana not only appears as an adorable character, but also has a role as a protector of the forest, which reinforces the narrative of the importance of maintaining the balance of nature. Through Roland Barthes' semiotic approach, Nana's character is analyzed through three levels of meaning: denotation, connotation, and myth. At the mythical level, Nana symbolizes a small figure who plays a big role in maintaining justice and balance, in line with her role as a protector.

With the combination of the visual elements of a cat and the theme of a protector, Nana is a character that is easily recognizable and liked by a wide range of players. Her unique design attracts attention and gives her a strong visual identity in the game, making her one of the most popular characters. In conclusion, Nana's visual design not only conveys a strong, but also visually appealing message of protection, kindness, and courage.

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