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Visual Cartoon "De Romon" as an Awareness Effort for the Importance of a Clean Environment

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Abstract

Indonesia is the largest archipelago country in the world consisting of 17,504 islands with 1,340 ethnic groups and 652 regional languages. Bali as one of the islands in Indonesia with a population of 3,890,757 inhabitants in 2010 has a long history. According to its history, Bali is divided into prehistoric period, ancient Bali, Bali in the middle of the XIV-XVIII century, the colonial period and the revolutionary period. Besides having a long history, Bali also has its local language. Balinese language is an Austronesian language from the Sundik branch and is more specific than the Bali-Sasak subsidiary. This language is mainly spoken on the island of Bali, the western island of Lombok, and a little at the eastern end Java island. The Balinese language in its usage has several levels, namely Bali alus, Bali madya, and Bali kasar. Bali is also known to have unique arts and culture. One of the famous forms of arts is cartoons. Cartoons in Bali have been developing since 1977. Bali Post as the oldest printed media born in Bali has published cartoons in its opinion page since 1977. Since then a number of cartoonists emerged such as Wied N., Tu Suarya, Gus Martin, Toni Tantra, Armin Jaya, IB. Loleck, and others. This research uses ethnomethodology. The analysis used is semiotics by observing the cultural signs that exist in the cartoon. The interviewee is Kadek Jango Paramartha, a cartoonist and also is the maker of the desk calendar cartoon of the municipality of Denpasar. Based on the semiotic analysis of the visual cartoon "DE ROMON" there is an expansion of the meaning "not polluting" to "not polluting the air, water and soil on earth". The expansion of the meaning is the result of contemplation by the cartoonist in interpreting "DE ROMON" from his perspective. Cartoonists have the power to interpret various meanings. When creating works, artists have absolute power in interpreting various phenomena around them through the visuals they create.

Keywords : cartoon, Balinese cartoon, cartoon visualization

I. Foreword

Indonesia is the largest archipelago country in the world, consisting of 17,504 islands. The islands in Indonesia are inhabited by ethnic groups who have a variety of languages and customs. According to the Central Statistics Agency, in 2010 the number of ethnic groups in Indonesia was 1,340 (RI, 2019), while the number of regional languages in Indonesia according to the Head of the Language Development and Coaching Board of the Ministry of Education and Culture, Prof. Dadang Sunendar in Banda Aceh, is 652 regional languages (Ige, Mutiah, & Nurdiansih, 2018). These results are based on data from surveys conducted in 2017 and are updated annually in the month of

October. Prof. Dadang Sunendar said that hundreds of regional languages had been recorded since 1991.

Bali as one of the islands in Indonesia with a population of 3,890,757 inhabitants in 2010 based on the results of a population census conducted by the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) (Statistics, 2018). The Balinese have a long history. Based on its history, Bali is divided into prehistoric period, ancient Bali, Bali in the middle of the XIV-XVIII century, the colonial period, and the revolutionary period. In prehistoric period, according to the Gilimanuk site is a modern human with mongoloid race characteristics, with a life expectancy of 33-34 years (Ardika, Parimartha, & Wirawan, 2013: 10). In ancient Bali,

Saka 804 to Saka 836 (882 - 995 AD) formed a government institution or kingdom centered at Panglapan in Singhamandawa so it was called the Singhamandawa period (Ardika, Parimarta, & Wirawan, 2013: 107). In the middle of the XIV-XVIII Century, Bali was ruled by the Majapahit kingdom and Bali entered a new era, namely the influx of Hindu influence. At this time, the Hindu kingdom is present in Bali and the influence of Hindu culture is present in the Balinese society. During the colonial period, the Dutch came and wanted to rule Bali. The arrival of the Dutch to Bali was met with resistance from the Balinese people. Wars against the Dutch were everywhere. The Buleleng War of 1864 was the beginning of the Balinese resistance against Dutch colonialism. It was then continued with the Jagaraga war from 1848 to 1849 and several other puputan wars that occurred in various regions in Bali.

The Balinese people have their own local language called Balinese language. Balinese language is an Austronesian language from the Sundik branch and is more specific than the Bali-Sasak subsidiary. This language is mainly spoken on the island of Bali, the western island of Lombok, and a little at the eastern end of Java island. The Balinese language in its usage has several levels, namely Bali alus, Bali madya, and Bali kasar. This happened because of the influence of the Javanese language that spread to Bali since the days of the Majapahit kingdom. In its use, the Bali alus language is usually used to communicate formally, for example in meetings in the Bale Banjar, to propose to women, or as a language of communication between low-caste people to high-caste people. For Bali madya, it is used by people at the middle level such as between officials and their

subordinates, while for Bali kasar language is usually used by people from low caste communities.

In addition to local languages, Bali is also known for its art and culture. One of the famous arts is cartoons. Based on its history, cartoons in Bali have been developing since 1977. Bali Post as the oldest printed media born in Bali on August 16, 1948, has published cartoons in its opinion pages since 1977. Since then a number of cartoonist emerged like Wied N., Tu Suarya, Gus Martin, Toni Tantra, Armin Jaya, IB. Loleck, and others. Further said by Gus Martin, the cartoon theme adopted by the young cartoonists at that time to enliven Bali Post was humor, as well as social criticism, or editorial cartoons. The development of cartoons in Bali increased even more when the Department of Fine Arts which was under the Faculty of Engineering, Udayana University, Denpasar was transformed into the Fine Arts and Design Study Program of Udayana University on May 10, 1983 based on the Decree of the Rector of Udayana University

No.483/SK/PT.17/R.VIII/1983 and then strengthened by the Decree of the Director General of Higher Education Ministry of Education and Culture No.5/Dikti/Kep/1984 in its function of carrying out Higher Education Tri Dharma.

The glory of cartoons in Bali occurred around the 1980s when newspapers in Bali and in Indonesia made room for cartoons on a weekly basis. At that time more young cartoonists in Bali began to emerge, mostly alumnus from the Fine Arts and Design Study Program Udayana University such as Wied N., Jango Paramartha, Doplank, Kesuma Tirta, Made Ada, Cece Riberu, and others. Then on February 12, 1988, Balinese

cartoonists founded Pakarti (Persatuan Kartunis Indonesia)/ Indonesian Cartoonists Association Bali branch, chaired by Gus Martin. This organization was founded by Wied N., Gus Martin, Jango Paramartha, Tu Suaria, Chywan, Made Ada, Cece Riberu, and others. This organization aims to facilitate the activities of Balinese cartoonists towards the development of Balinese arts, especially in the field of cartoons. Through this organization, Balinese cartoonists hold joint exhibition activities in Bali, Indonesia and abroad.

II. Methodology

The methodology used is ethnomethodology. This is done because the visual cartoons used have a relationship with the Balinese culture so a comprehensive study of Balinese culture is needed. The analysis used is semiotics by observing the cultural signs that exist in cartoons. The interviewee is Kadek Jango Paramartha, a cartoonist and is also the maker of the desk calendar cartoon of the municipality of Denpasar.



Picture 1. Kadek Jango Paramartha

III. Result and Discussion

Based on its etymology, cartoons come from the English word "cartoon" and the Italian word "cartone" which means thick paper. In the beginning, cartoons was the name of stout paper, as designs for canvas or wall paintings. Currently, cartoons are pictures that are intended as humor or satire. For this reason, cartoons are not only statements of artistic taste for the sake of art, but also having the purpose of comedy, even insinuating and criticizing (Wijana, 2004: 5). Cartoons also means drawings or paintings that cover from the upper left hand corner to the bottom right corner of a thick paper that tells about the problem felt by the painter as an overflow of emotions (Sobur, 2016: 139). According to The Random House of Dictionary of the English Language, cartoons are sketches or pictures, usually humor, as in newspapers or magazines, as a satire symbol or describing actions, subjects, or people who have a unique interest (Berger, 2015: 182). So it can be concluded that the cartoon is a picture or sketch that contains humor, satire, criticism as an expression of emotional overflow towards the subject's actions.

Several types of cartoons known today are editorial cartoons, gag cartoons, and comic strips. Editorial cartoons or political cartoons are usually intended to express political or social views by insinuating. Gag cartoon is meant to be funny without being sarcastic. Comic strips are cartoon images in the form of short comics (Setiawan, Yulianti, & Nasution, 2017). In simple a cartoon can be divided into two types, namely verbal cartoons and non-verbal cartoons (Wijana, 2004: 8). Verbal cartoons are cartoons that utilize verbal elements and humorous images. Non-Verbal cartoons are cartoons that merely utilize humorous images/ visualizations to carry out the task. The pictures presented in this type

of cartoon are the pictures that distort logic.

In the 2012 desk calendar published by the Civil Service Cooperative (Koperasi Pegawai Negeri) Dharma Wiguna of the Denpasar City Government, the visuals displayed were in the form of cartoons as shown in the picture below.



Picture 2. "DE ROMON" cartoon in the desk calendar 2012 (Source: Koperasi Pegawai Negeri Dharma Wiguna, 2019)

In the cartoon above, the cartoons displayed are included in verbal cartoons where there are verbal elements and humorous drawings. Verbal elements in the form of text such as the text "DE ROMON", "Jagalah tanaman dan jangan bakar sampah sembarangan"/ "Take care of the plants and do not burn trash carelessly", "Jangan buang sampah sembarangan"/ "Do not litter", and "Pisahkan sampah organik dan non organik, dan lain-lain"/ "Separate organic and non-organic waste, and others". These texts are forms of invitation to the community to protect the environment and maintain cleanliness.

According to the online Balinese Dictionary "de" comes from the word "eda" which means "no" or "don't"

(<https://dictionary.basabali.org/Eda>, accessed 31 December 2019), while "romon" means "dirty", "polluter". So that "De Romon" can be interpreted as a whole "not to be dirty" or "not to be a polluter". This is in accordance with the Hinduism philosophy of Tri Hita Karana or the three causes of happiness/ well-being. The three causes of happiness are a harmonious relationship between humans and God Almighty (Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa), a harmonious relationship between humans, a harmonious relationship between humans and their environment (Dalem, 2012).

The implementation of a harmonious relationship between humans and God is by practicing all the teachings contained in the holy books and stay away from all of its prohibitions. For the Balinese Hindu community, the implementation of this harmonious relationship is carried out by conducting various religious offerings (upakara) and ceremonies (upacara). Upakara comes from the word "upa" which means related to, and "kara" which means deeds/ works (hands) (Yogagiri, 2013). So that upakara is a form of service that is realized from work activities in the form of material offerings or sacrifice in a religious ceremony. In every religious ceremony performed by the Balinese Hindu community, upakara is always used as a form of getting closer to God/ Ida Sang Hyang Widhi; made from various types of materials, then arranged in such a way that resembles an offering which are beautiful to see and also having symbolic and religious philosophical meanings.

The definition of upacara in the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI)/ The Great Indonesian Language Dictionary is a series of activities or actions that are bound to certain rules according to custom or religion. The series of religious activities in Bali require various facilities

and infrastructure. Implementation of harmonious relations between humans by way of mutual respect, mutual tolerance, not hurting each other and so on. The implementation of a harmonious relationship between humans and the environment is to maintain cleanliness, not cutting down trees, and throwing trash in its place and so on.

"De Romon" is one form of implementing a harmonious relationship between humans and the environment. The formation of meaning through verbal and visual signs in cartoons has shown the existence of clarity and firmness of the meaning of the word "DE ROMON". In the words "take care of the plants and do not burn trash carelessly" has the same meaning as "DE ROMON" which means do not get dirty. "Take care of the plants" has the meaning of preserving the beauty of the environment so as to provide comfort to its inhabitants.

"Don't burn trash carelessly" has the meaning of polluting the environment. The results of burning garbage will cause new waste due to the remains of combustion. Surely this will lead to dirtiness in the surrounding environment. "Do not litter" means "not polluting the environment" so that it becomes clean and not polluted. "Separate organic and non-organic waste" has the meaning to "sort waste that can and can't be recycled" so that the environment can be maintained. So it can be said that "DE ROMON" in the cartoonist's view is an action or treatment as above.

In visual signs, visual cartoon that is seen is an implementation of watering plants and burning trash. As revealed by C.S. Pierce, the sign as a guide of someone due to the relationship with the response or capacity (Berger, 2015: 1). In Pierce's trichotomy, representation is something that is sensory (perceptible) or material that serves as a sign. Its presence evokes

the interpretant, which is another sign that is equivalent to it, in someone's mind (interpreter). The object referred to by a sign is "reality" or whatever is (assumed) to exist. That is, the object does not have to be concrete, it does not have to be invisible (observable) or exist as an empirical reality, but can also be other abstract, even imaginary and fictitious entities (Budiman, 2011: 74).

Based on this understanding, the representative is represented by a cartoon depicting someone watering plants and burning rubbish whose presence replaces the object of someone watering plants and burning rubbish in reality.



Picture 3. Burning garbage



Picture 4. Watering plants

When viewed from the meaning of "DE ROMON" based on the Balinese dictionary which is translated as "do not pollute" or "make dirty", a cartoonist provides the interpretation that "DE ROMON" also means not polluting the

air and providing comfort for nearby residents.

To note that burning trash creates problems in the environment. There are three negative impacts due to burning trash (Fitria, 2019). First, smoke from the combustion can produce hazardous materials such as carbon monoxide, formaldehyde, arsenic, dioxins and furans. Someone who breathes in the smoke of burning trash, has the highest risk of experiencing health problems due to these materials. Disorders can start from simple ones such as coughing, red or watery eyes, sore nose and headaches. Exposure to dioxin can cause several types of cancer, liver disorders, disorders of the immune system, and disorders of the reproductive system. Second, ash and smoke contamination from combustion as a result of burning trash can be absorbed by vegetables or fruit plants that grow around it. These foods if consumed in the long run can affect the health. Third, in addition to air and hazardous chemicals produced by burning trash, the ashes can also endanger children who play around the area. So that the meaning of "DE ROMON" in the cartoonist's view increases, that is not littering and providing cool air.

The visual cartoon representation at the bottom is seen as someone who tries to separate organic and non-organic waste. This representation represents the object of separation of waste that is actually carried out. Separation of waste is important to do given the different processes of decomposition of waste. Organic waste is very easy to decompose while non-organic waste is very difficult. This is because organic waste is waste produced by living things such as food scraps, fruit skins, and leaves. While non-organic waste is waste that contains substances that are difficult to decompose such as plastic. As a result it can cause

contamination and damage to the soil in a long time. So the interpretation of the meaning of "DE ROMON" in the view of cartoonists is not polluting and ruining the soil.

Based on the above discussion, the meaning of "DE ROMON" in the dictionary which is not to pollute or make dirty, receives an extension of its meaning from the cartoonists. The expansion of meaning is not to pollute the air, water and soil on earth. The expansion of the meaning is the result of contemplation by the cartoonist in interpreting "DE ROMON" from his perspective. Cartoonists have the power to interpret various meanings. As stated by Kadek Jango Paramartha (interview on December 25, 2019), when working, artists have absolute power in interpreting various phenomena around them. So that the communication of the phenomena that occur is conveyed through the visuals created. Whatever arises in the visual is the result of the cartoonist's self-reflection without interference from other parties.

IV. Conclusion

Indonesia is the largest archipelago in the world consisting of 17,504 islands with 1,340 ethnic groups and 652 regional languages. Bali as one of the islands in Indonesia had a population of 3,890,757 inhabitants in 2010. Besides having a fairly long history, Bali also has its local language. Balinese language is an Austronesian language from the Sundik branch and is more specific than the Bali-Sasak subsidiary. This language is mainly spoken on the island of Bali, the western island of Lombok, and a little at the eastern end of the island of Java. The Balinese language in its usage has several levels, namely Bali alus, Bali madya, and Bali kasar. Bali is also known to have arts and culture, one of them is cartoons.

In a simple cartoon can be ² divided into two types, namely verbal cartoons and non-verbal cartoons. In the visual cartoon "DE ROMON", the cartoons presented are considered verbal cartoons where there are verbal elements and humorous pictures. Verbal elements in the form of text such as the text "DE ROMON", "take care of the plants and do not burn trash carelessly", "do not litter", "separate organic and non-organic waste", and others. These texts are forms of invitation to the community to protect the environment and maintain cleanliness. The definition of "DE ROMON" according to the Balinese dictionary has the meaning of not polluting or making it dirty. Based on the semiotic analysis of the cartoon visual "DE ROMON" the meaning received an expansion to not pollute the air, water and soil on earth. The expansion of the meaning is the result of contemplation by the cartoonist in interpreting "DE ROMON" from his perspective. Cartoonists have the power to interpret various meanings. As stated by Kadek Jango Paramartha, when creating works, artists have absolute power in interpreting various phenomena around them. So that the communication of the phenomena that occur is conveyed through the visuals created. Whatever arises in the visual is the result of cartoonist self-reflection without interference from other parties.

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