

Representation of Social Criticism of Indonesian People's Life Phenomena through Comic Strip: A Semiotic Approach

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ABSTRACT. This research specifically investigates social criticism that occurs in the Indonesian people's lives, conveyed by comic artists through comic stories. Understanding related to social criticism contained in a comic cannot be understood directly but it can be understood through a semiotic study, namely, through the signs contained in the comic. In describing their criticism, a comic artist uses a sign, color, word balloon, image form, or caption as evidence of the argument. This descriptive qualitative research design seeks to dismantle the social criticism conveyed by comic artists using a semiotic approach from Roland Barthes. This study uses data from a comic strip titled "Si Nopal" by Naufal Faridurrazak, published in 2018. The results showed that there were several social criticisms shown by comics, namely the representation of social criticism about (1) selfishness; (2) not being careless in doing something; (3) the adverse effects of ridicule; (4) the importance of hard work to achieve goals; (5) the importance of the role of parents in dealing with the times; (6) the influence of the development of foreign culture; (7) not excessive in liking something; (8) is not arbitrary towards others; (9) respect for others; and (10) crime occurs because of the opportunity. The results of the study prove that the representation of social criticism of phenomena in Indonesia especially in the "Si Nopal" comic strip is a form of contribution from comic artists to convey criticism through arguments conveyed through comics

Keywords: Representation, Social Criticism, Semiotic's Roland Barthes, and Comic Strip

1. INTRODUCTION

In semiotic theory, various communication problems often occur. It is the result of a misunderstanding or difference in meaning which is influenced by the nature of the semiotic codes and the way of using the signs. As a communication theory, semiotic theory can be used to virtually analyze various things that are part of the field of communication. That includes interaction, media, popular culture or pop culture, and so on. As a qualitative research method, semiotics can be applied to various communication contexts by researchers, such as media studies.

This study narrows down the problems in the field of language by using comic as an object of study. Comics can tell a variety of phenomena that occur in society, such as social and political problems that occur in the comic artist's environment. Many things can happen in images such as satire, criticism, rejection and even attacking certain things that often happen in society. Comics usually use interesting and unique stories. Moreover, it is often depicted with a distinctive humorous idea.

Comic artists usually pour social criticism into the comics of their drawings. Social criticism is understood as a form of communication that is expressed both in written and oral form related to interpersonal problems and aims to control the running of the social system. Social criticism in comics is used

to find out how much and how deep the meaning is contained in the comic. Comics can be used as a medium of representation through pictures and words. Representation is the use of "signs" (images, sounds, and so on) to display something that is absorbed, sensed, imagined or felt in physical form [1]. One of the newest adorable local comics, which revolves around unique, funny things that happen in everyday life and raises social issues that occur in Indonesia is the comic strip "Si Nopal".

Several previous studies related to social criticism representation have been conducted by previous researchers. First, Mufti and Hamdani with the title "Representation of Social Criticism in Si Juki's Comic Strip on Instagram Against Social Phenomena that Occur in Indonesia"[2]. The problems examined in this study include the form of denotation, connotation and myth reading in the comic strip Si Juki. That is to find out the representation of social criticism of social phenomena occurring in Indonesia in these comics. The results showed that denotatively, comic artists used symbols, colors, word balloons, figure of speech and captions in describing signs. In addition, in a connotative way, this symbol can be translated into a conclusion containing comic critics of social phenomena occurring in Indonesia. Second, Pasorong with the title "Representation of Social Criticism Against Jokowi's Policy in the Instagram Comic Strip (Polyclitik)" [3]. Third, Gumilang with the title "Comic Semiotic Analysis as a Media for Social

Criticism". This study describes and analyzes social criticism of the comic "Mice"[4]. Fourth, Marlina with the title "The Application of Roland Barthes' Semiology to the Sukribo Cartoons in Kompas Weekly Newspaper"[5]. Fifth Abubakar with the title "Semiotic Analysis of Leadership Values in Comics 99 Messages of the Prophet by VBI_Djenggotten" [6]. This study is conducted in order to analyze the representation of social life in comic strip "Si Nopal". It is very interesting because there are so many representation of social life trough that comic can be analyzed so we can see the social life of Indonesian people. This study will use Barthes semiology theory in order to understand the phenomena of social life in Indonesia through comic.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The method used is descriptive analysis method. Qualitative descriptive research is research that is used to reveal facts based on findings or observations made in accordance with actual conditions [7]. Qualitative descriptive research method, namely research that describes all the symptoms or conditions that exist. The conditions according to what it was at the time the research were carried out. In this research, the writer observes the meaning of denotation, connotation meaning, and myth and is then linked to the social criticism representation

found in the comic strip "Si Nopal". The data in this study are in the form of lingual units in the form of words and sentences and there are symbols, colors, words, figures of speech, and captions in describing signs and connotatively these symbols of social phenomena that occur in Indonesia. There are two sources of data in this study, namely primary data sources and secondary data sources. The primary data source in this study is the comic strip "Si Nopal" which has a thickness of 130 pages, and the eighth print, and published by PT. Bukune Kreatif Cipta in collaboration with PT. Indonesian Cipta Pioneers. For secondary sources got from the reality of social life in Indonesia. Data will be analyzed by using semiotic approach from Rolland Barthes.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Representation of Social Criticism in the Comic Strip "Si Nopal" by Naufal Faridurrazak

The following is an explanation related to the representation of social criticism in the comic strip "Si Nopal" by Naufal Faridurrazak. One by one will be described in the following paragraphs:

3.1 Social Criticism Representation of Selfishness



FIGURE 1. Diet (Selfie, P. 11)

Based on this picture, it can be associated with the representation of social criticism that often occurs in everyday life. Someone wants a good photo, but two of his friends seem upset because the photo they think is good, it must be repeated. From this, comic artist wants to describe a phenomenon that often occurs in

society that selfishness can arise from the smallest things.

3.2 Social Criticism Representation So as Not To Be Careless in Doing Something



FIGURE 2. In the School (Fish, P. 15)

Based on the picture, it can be related to the representation of social criticism that a student tries to practice the material taught by his teacher, without first asking the meaning of the material. From this, comic artists want to describe the phenomenon that occurs in society that something starts from the smallest thing. If you don't know the source of the truth, you can harm yourself and others. The comic artist also wanted to give his satire to the people in

Indonesia. In doing anything, you should think about it beforehand so as not to be careless. In their delivery, comic artist provides humorous stories, interesting stories so that their readers don't get bored.

3.3 Social Criticism Representation about The Ill Effects of Taunts



FIGURE 3. In the School (Mother, P. 16)

Based on this picture, it can be associated with the representation of social criticism that often

occurs in everyday life. Everyone has experienced ridicule or bullying from their surroundings. The

role of parents is also very necessary and has a big influence on the development of their children so that the child has a mental adaptation in any environment. From this, comic artists want to illustrate that in society not everyone likes or hates, and teaches people to remain humble even though they are often ridiculed. The comic artist also wants to give his insinuation to the people in Indonesia that the continuous mocking can have a bad impact, for example, affecting the mental development of

the person. In their delivery, comic artist always provides interesting stories, funny pictures, so that readers don't get bored and understand the associated meaning of the comic.

3.4 Social Criticism Representation of The Importance of Hard Work to Achieve Goals



FIGURE 5. In the School (Plan, P. 19)

Based on this picture, it can be associated with the representation of social criticism that often occurs in everyday life. Everyone must have a plan for a better life. However, the situation did not take sides immediately. Many tests have come to serve as a guide for his life. From this, comic artists want to illustrate that not all plans can be realized immediately. Therefore, it takes effort, hard work and sincerity in achieving its goals. The comic artist also wants to give his satire or advice to the people

in Indonesia. If there is a goal to be achieved or goals that have not been realized, keep trying and think positively. In his delivery, comic artist also provides funny pictures.

3.5 Social Criticism Representation of The Importance of The Role of Parents in Facing the Progress of the Times

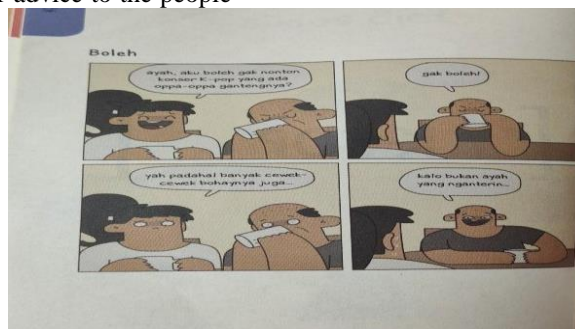


FIGURE 6. K-Pop (May Be P. 24)

The picture above can be related to the representation of social criticism that often occurs in everyday life. A father wants to look after his child for fear of wrong associations. The daughter also tried to seduce her father to be allowed to go to the concert, suddenly her father's heart melted. But his father also gave them the choice that he should accompany his daughter. From this, the comic artist

wants to describe that as a parent who wants his child to choose the wrong relationship. Therefore, parents severely limit the child who wants to watch concerts without being accompanied by one of their family members. The comic artist also wants to give his satire or advice to the people in Indonesia regarding the role of parents. That is very important and don't be too busy with the business. Because

children's growth is easily influenced by the surrounding environment. It can also have positive and negative impacts.

3.6 Social Criticism Representation of Selfishness

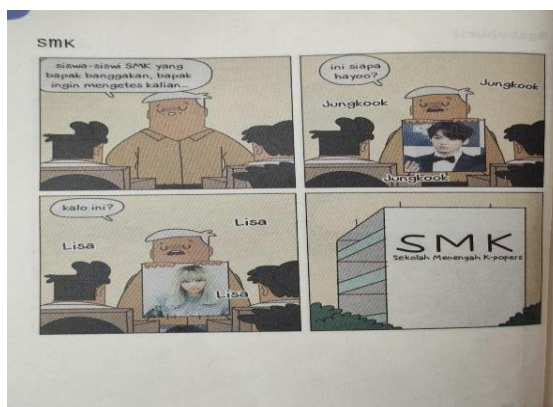


FIGURE 7. K-Pop (Vocational High School (SMK), P. 26)

The picture above can be related to the representation of social criticism that occurs in everyday life. The comic artist wants to give his satire on the times that are increasingly influencing the development of culture in Indonesia. The appearance of an outside artist with such a beautiful

face. It makes Indonesian people idolize them so that most of Indonesian people tend to follow their style.

3.7 Social Criticism Representation so As Not to Overly Like Something

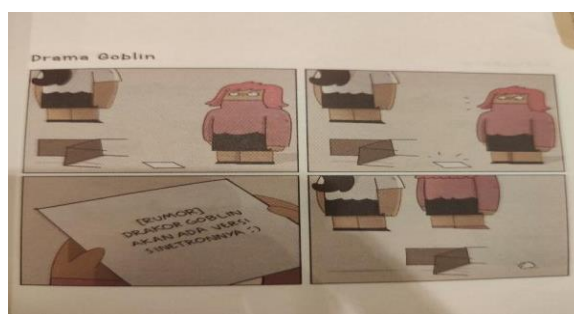


FIGURE 7. Spectacle (Goblin Drama, P. 39)

The picture above can be related to the representation of social criticism. Someone who likes Korean dramas excessively can have a bad impact because it can interfere with her mental soul. In this case, a comic artist wants to give his insinuation to the people in Indonesia about someone who likes something too much in any form. It is better if it is adjusted to the limits because this can harm yourself and others.

3.8 Social criticism representation so as not to be arbitrary towards others

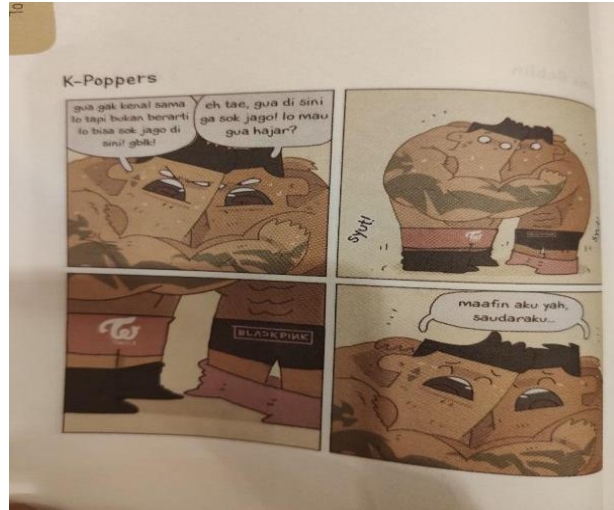


FIGURE 8: Spectacle (K-Poppers, P. 40)

The picture above can be related to the representation of social criticism that occurs in everyday life. From the story, a comic artist wanted to give his insinuation not to act arbitrarily to other people. Moreover, the person he had just met. In

life, it is not only about equality that needs to be respected, but must respect each other's differences.

3.9 Social Criticism Representation Of Respect For Others



FIGURE 9. Spectacle (Indian movie, P. 42)

The picture above can be related to the representation of social criticism that occurs in everyday life. In married life, if there is an argument, it is very natural, from the smallest things to exaggerations. The comic artist also wants to give his satire or advice to the people in Indonesia, to respect others more. Because little things can ruin a relationship.

3.10 Social Criticism Representation That Crime Occurs Because of Opportunity



FIGURE 10. Internet (Tethering, P. 46)

The picture above can be related to the representation of social criticism that occurs in everyday life. The comic artist also wanted to give his insinuation to the people in Indonesia that crime could happen because of opportunity. So you have to be careful anywhere and anytime.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research using Roland Barthes' semiotic study of the denotation meaning, connotation meaning, and myths and having a comic artist's criticism of each comic image contained in the comic strip "Si Nopal" as the object of research. The representation of social criticism of phenomena in Indonesia in the comic strip "Si Nopal" is a form of representation of the form of contribution efforts that a comic artist wants to convey, especially in terms of criticism. Social in comics is in line with the theory of social criticism according to Habermas, which contains social criticism which is built from acts of mutual understanding (communication), which describes. That a communicative society does not criticize through revolution and violence but through argumentation. At this stage, in describing his criticism, a comic artist uses signs, colors, word balloons, picture forms, or captions as evidence of the argument.

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