

Semiotics Study of Kendra Paramita's Illustration in Tempo Magazine Media

Anak Agung Ngurah Gede Marhendra

ngurahhendra25@gmail.com

Master's Program of Product Design, Faculty of Fine Arts and Design
Trisakti University, Jakarta

ABSTRACT

This study was designed to describe the meaning of the Kendra Paramita illustration works. Qualitative descriptive research with material objects in the form of colors, illustrations, layout, and typography as well as formal objects that have meaning in Kendra Paramita's work that can be studied using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory using icons, indexes, and symbols. The results showed that: (1) Analysis of Kendra Paramita's illustrated works seen from the study of semiotics. From the analysis that has been done, Kendra's illustrative works always show a relationship or relation between signs. Icons, indexes, and symbols both in color, shape and context always explain the meaning contained in each work. With the intention, describing it can be presented implied content in each work following the information sent will be more easily captured and digested by each reader. (2) Most of the issues raised through Kendra's illustrative work include issues: social, political, and economic that occur in Indonesia.

Keywords: semiotics, Kendra Paramita's work, illustration

INTRODUCTION

The definition of illustration is a word derived from the Dutch language illustrate which means a decoration with pictures. In terminology, illustration is an image which function as a medium to describe an event. According to Soedarso (1990), he states that an illustration is a picture which depict a specific purpose as for instance in a short story.

According to other experts who also argue that illustration is an image related to fine art. This illustration can describe the meaning of a text so that it helps the reader to understand the meaning of that text (Rohidi, 1984). Illustration can also be defined as a visual form of text, therefore it enables people who see it can understand the content of the message or the information in it even if the person cannot read the text. Using the illustrations, the reader also becomes more interested in reading the entire contents of the information or stories being delivered.

The art of illustration in Indonesia has been known for a long time, but it did not as popular as today. These can be proved with the existence of pictures on the lontar leaf sheets which also function as decoration, for example is wayang beber. When Balai Pustaka was proven on 22 September 1917, many illustrators are appearing from

Indonesia who working in the Panji magazine published by Balai Pustaka. For instance, Ardisoma, Abdul Salam, Kasidi, Nasroen, and many other.

During the Japanese colonialization, the advancement of Indonesian youth in the field of writing and publishing has made the Japanese government worried and suspicious about the occurrence of rebellion, thus the censorship department was formed. Its purpose is to make sure that the youths work produced were according to the Japanese want. Indonesia has started to make their own banknotes during the old order. Whereas during the new order, Indonesian illustrators were growing rapidly, especially illustrative books and knowledge books from various publications.

One of Indonesia's designers and illustrators who adapted illustration techniques as a media for creating works is Kendra Paramita. A senior designer and illustrator of Tempo magazine since 2004. He has been working since completed his study at the Institut Kesenian Jakarta. A year later he was at once entrusted to handle the front cover of Tempo magazine. His illustrations for Tempo, on "Sengkarut Jembatan Selat Sunda" edition, released in August 2012 and "Investigasi Sindikat Manusia Perahu" released in June 2012, succeeded to achieve an award of the best magazine cover in Asia version of World Association of Newspaper and News Publisher (WAN-IFRA) in 2013. Kendra's work for Tempo Magazine always implies the depth of meaning and perspective. He was able to make the audience guess the purpose of the illustrations he made. Kendra Paramita, through each illustration was able to satirize certain person and even government and at the same time tickling the newspaper or Tempo magazine readers. Sometimes, with just a simple picture, a strong message can be embedded in the cover illustration. Such execution makes his work known to many people although the approach he chooses can often vary.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research on the illustrated works of Kendra Paramita is a qualitative research. The subject of this research is the illustration of Kendra Paramita namely, Janji Tinggal Janji, Thohir Story, and Kolaborasi Dua Partai edition.

Research objects involve material objects namely, illustrations, typography, colors, and layouts while the formal objects are the meaning contained within the work. Data obtained from the results of collecting references, books, and pictures. As well as the results of interviews with speakers viewed through the conversations on the website. This research used the semiotic analysis of Charles Sanders Peirce with a sign classification namely, icons, indexes, and symbols.

Data Analysis

The analysis used is a semiotic analysis that refers to signs and meanings, markers, and signs. The semiotic analysis in this research will use the theory of Charles Sanders Peirce namely icons, indexes, and symbols. The analysis aims to describe the meanings through a semiotic study.

Semiotics Theory

Semiotics is the study of signs. These signs convey information to make it communicative. Its existence can replace something else, can be thought or imagined. This branch of science was originally developed in the scope of language, then the development reach also in the scope of design and Fine Arts.

The term semiotics is a study of thing related to signs (L: semio / sign). In this case the signs are all things which created and designed as a form of conveying information that has a certain meaning (Soedjono, 2007:35).

As a scientific discipline, namely the science of sign, semiotics has scientific principles, systems, rules, and procedures which specific and standard. Semiotic is not a science that has certain properties, singleness, and objectivity, it was built by the knowledge that is more open to various interpretations (Tinarbuko, 2009).

Semiotics or semiology is terminology that refers to the same science. The term "semiology" is more widely used in Europe while American scientists commonly use semiotics. This term derived from the Greek word "semeion" means a sign which is a science that learns the signs system namely: Language, code, signals and so on. In general, semiotics is defined as general philosophical theories that about the production of signs and symbols as part of a code system used to communicate information. (Susanto, 2011)

Semiotics is etymologically derived from Greek (semion) which means "sign". Etymologically, semiotics can be defined as the science of signs. This science considers that social phenomena or society and culture are forms of signs. Semiotics also studies systems, rules, conventions, which allow these signs to have meaning. Sign is the basis of all communication. Humans with the help of signs can communicate with each other. (Sobur, 2009)

One of the semiotic world figures is Charles Sanders Peirce. Charles Sanders Peirce is the most original and multidimensional American philosopher. He is an argumentative thinker, and was famous for his sign theory. In a semiotic environment, Peirce often repeats himself that in general, sign stands for something for someone. (Sobur, 2009) Peirce classifies the sign as follows:

1. **ICONS:** Icons are signs that can describe the main characteristic of something, although something commonly referred to as the object is absent. An icon is a physical object (two or three dimensions) that resembles what it is presenting (Sobur, 2009:158).
2. **INDEX:** Index is a sign that is present associatively due to the existence of a relationship of constant reference characteristics. The word 'cigarette' for example, cigarettes have a smoke index. The indexical relationship between smoking and smoke occurs because there is a constant characteristic relationship between smoking and smoke. Words that have an indexical relationship have their own main characteristics respectively (Sobur, 2009: 159).
3. **SYMBOLS:** Symbols are signs based on conventions, regulations, or agreements that are mutually agreed upon. Symbols are common terms called words, name, and label (Sobur, 2009: 159).

Semiotic Basic Element

The basic elements in semiotics are sign, sign axis (syntagmatic / system), sign level (denotation / connotation), and sign relation (metaphor / metonym).

Sign Components

Saussure describes a sign as a unit that cannot be separated from two fields - like a sheet of paper - that is, a signifier field to explain a form or expression; and signified fields to explain concepts or meanings. Regarding Saussure's sign pyramid (sign / marker), Saussure stressed the need for a social convention among the language community, which regulates the meaning of a sign. One word has a certain meaning due to a social agreement among the language user community.

However, in the present, there is a fundamental change in how signs and objects as signs are seen and used due to the flow of sign exchanges that no longer centered within a closed community but involving contact between various communities, cultures, and ideologies.

Action Sign

Sign analysis in language structuralism involves a combination of rules consisting of two axes, namely:

1. Paradigmatic axis, which is the vocabulary of signs or words and
2. The syntagmatic axis, which is the method of selecting and combining signs, based on certain rules or codes, thus can produce a meaningful expression.

The method to combine signs is usually based on certain codes that apply in a language community. A code is a set of rules or conventions in which signs can be combined, allowing messages to be communicated from one person to another.

The code, according to Umberto Eco, in a Theory of Semiotics, is "... a rule that produces signs as a concrete appearance in a communication relationship." Implicit in the definition of the code above is the existence of a social agreement among members of the language community about the combination of a set of signs and their meanings. Language is a structure that is controlled by certain rules. According to Saussure, the first main rule is the difference principle. For example, the word cap and coffee has meaning because it has a difference in meaning. In addition, differences in the linguistic are possible due to the existence of a paradigm and syntaxes.

A paradigm is a set of signs that enable choices to be made, and only a unit of the choice can be chosen. Syntax is a combination of signs with other signs from that are based on certain rules, to produce meaningful expressions. Syntax is a combination of signs with other signs from existing set based on certain rules, thus produce meaningful expressions. Based on the axis, Roland Barthes develops a model of relation between the systems, which is the vocabulary and syntactic, which is a way of combining marks based on certain main rules.

Level Of Sign

Roland Barthes developed two levels of sign namely denotation and connotation. Denotation is the level of signification that produces explicit, direct, and certain meaning.

Whereas connotation is a level of sign that produces implicit and hidden meanings. In addition, Barthes also sees the meaning related to myth, which is the coding of meanings and social values as something that is considered natural.

Relationship between Signs

There are two main forms of interaction, namely:

1. Metaphor is a model interaction of signs, in which a sign of a system is used to explain meaning to another system.
2. Metonymy is a sign interaction, in which a sign is associated with another sign, in which there is a relationship between the part and the whole.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study were obtained through in-depth observation techniques, and documentation as a form of data retrieval which then analyzed by the researcher. The analysis selects 3 pieces of work that are being discussed by the Indonesian people from Kendra Paramita in Tempo magazine media. These works are namely, Janji Tinggal Janji, Thohir Story, dan Kolaborasi Dua Partai, which are then associated with the focus of the problem.

When discussing the work of Kendra Paramita which raised themes of social, political, and economic realism issues and was supported by signs and signals in it, it was truly clear that Kendra Paramita tried to include his messages into each of his works. In this discussion uses Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotics theory which classifies sign into icon, index, and symbol. Kendra Paramita's work can help convey an information or message through visual. Icon, index, and symbol in Kendra's works will be reviewed in terms of illustration, color, and typography. The following is a classification of Kendra Paramita's work seen from the following semiotic studies.

1. Janji Tinggal Janji



Figure 1. Janji Tinggal Janji
Source: Documentation of Kendra Paramita & Tempo

a. Icon

1. Icon color is not visible
2. An illustration icon of a man using a neat shirt. Positions tend to be facing sideways. With the expression of a man who was closing his eyes adding with a shadow on the lengthened nose.

b. Symbol

The color symbol is the pastel color of the male figure with a black shadow, while the white in the text shows a firm characteristic on the writing.

The symbol on the illustration of a man uses a plain white shirt, symbolizing a simple person. With the eyes closed and a flat facial expression depicting an atmosphere that is not fine. Coupled with a black shadow with a nose shape like the cartoon character Pinocchio which become the symbol of the cartoon character when lying, his nose will be longer.

The symbol of typography usage is found in the "Janji Tinggal Janji" text as a symbol of questions and anger, and the use of capital letters in each writing as a form of emphasis.

c. Index

1. Color index is not visible
2. The index in the illustration is a national leader, the shape of his face and clothes shows an index of male gender, while the look on his face shows an index for his age. With added black shadows such as Pinocchio is an index that he is hiding something or a lie.
3. Typographic index is not visible.

When viewed from the layout of the illustrated work "Janji Tinggal Janji," it can be analyzed that the work uses dynamic composition. Dynamic compositions can be seen on the headline icon, text, and illustrations that are not aligned. Based on the analysis of "Janji Tinggal Janji", it can be concluded that the signs on the work are referred as a form of public protest related to political issues that were uttered during the campaign. Kendra Paramita with Tempo magazine as an illustrator and media wanted to bring the issue into the work and convey it to the wider community.

2. Thohir Story

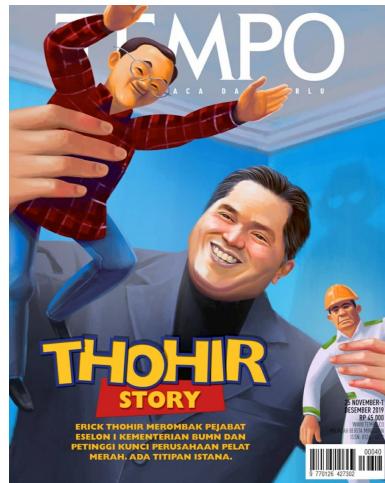


Figure 2. Thohir Story

Source: Documentation of Kendra Paramita & Tempo

a. Icon

1. Color icons are not visible
2. The illustration icon is a man wearing a neat shirt. With a position holding a toy. With the expression of the man who was smiling happily coupled with a black shadow on the back of the character.
3. The icon for typography in the magazine has the words "Thohir Story" which resembles a font in the Toy Story cartoon series with a font that uses capital letters.

b. Symbol

The color symbol used is the blue background of the male figure with a black color shadow. The symbol in the illustration section of a man wearing neat suits, symbolizes a person with upper middle-class social status. Smiling face expresses a happy atmosphere. Give a sign that control is in his hands.

The symbol of typographical use can be found in the text "Thohir Story" to become symbol of playful font characters, and is made to resemble the font used in the Toy Story cartoon series.

c. Index

1. Blue color Index on the magazine cover shows a joyful atmosphere
2. The index on the illustration is a man, the shape of his face and clothes shows an index of a state official, while the look on his face and body pose shows the index that he is playing or arranging strategies in his positions. The black shadow behind the character shows the index that there is still someone watching him from behind.
3. Typographic index is not visible.

When viewed from the layout of the illustrated work "Thohir Story" above, it can be analyzed that the work uses a dynamic composition. Dynamic compositions are visible on the Headline, text, and illustration icons that are found unaligned. Based on the analysis of Thohir Story above, it can be concluded that the signs of this work mean as a form as a form of a high state official who is remodeling or organizing strategies in his department. Kendra Paramita with Tempo Magazine as an illustrator and media wanted to raise the issue into the work with a creative visualization approach.

3. Kolaborasi Dua Partai



Figure 3. Kolaborasi Dua Partai

Source: Documentation of Kendra Paramita & Tempo

a. Icon

1. The icon color is visible in two colors, red and yellow
2. The illustration icon there are two big men who are trying to demolish a building using a large-sized chainsaw. Both men use neat shirt shirts. With a flat facial expression
3. The typography icon in the magazine had a "Kolaborasi Dua Partai" in red color

b. Symbol

1. The symbol colors used are red and yellow symbolizes the two major parties who have common interests.
2. The symbol in the illustration section shows two large-bodied men in red and yellow suits who want to demolish a building, symbolizing two major parties which work together weakening the KPK law. Flat facial expressions depict the atmosphere of full mystery.
3. Symbols of typographical use are not visible

c. Index

1. The indexes of red and yellow color on the magazine cover show the party's identity.
2. The index in the illustration, there are two men, with the shape of the face and clothes showing an index standing for the interests of the party to weaken KPK law, while the facial expression and body pose show the index that they are working together to bring down the building.
3. Typographic index is not visible.

When viewed from the layout of the illustrated work edition "Kolaborasi Dua Partai" above, it can be analyzed that the work uses a static composition. The static composition can be seen on the Headline icon and the illustrations which placed parallel.

Based on the analysis of the "kolaborasi dua partai" work above it can be concluded that the signs in the work meant that they wanted to secure their political interests, PDIP and Golkar party are working together to pass the revision of the KPK Law.

CONCLUSION

From the discussion on the study of semiotics, the conclusions of the works of illustration by Kendra Paramita that with the study of semiotics we can study further to get a visually expressed meaning in each of the illustrated works. Kendra Paramita's works situated in the way Kendra develops ideas into a piece of illustration. The design mechanism for the appearance of the cover of Tempo magazine began with a light discussion of the design editor and Kendra himself and then several cover designs were appear in the form of sketches to be sent to the editor-in-chief, after being selected, then the execution started. Kendra explained that he did not have a specific method for working on illustrations in Tempo, the depth of the story and point of view helped him in the development of visual ideas. The works of Kendra Paramita is based on Charles Sanders Pierce's theory, an icon in the form of an illustration. Index in the form of gender, age, body shape, type of clothing and social status. The symbols include a high-rank state official, the flat facial expression as a depiction of expression that are not okay.

The issues raised through the message include social, economic, and political issues. The messages contained in the work include, social issues namely "berjibaku menggantang asap" edition, economic issues namely "morat marit paket ekonomi" edition and political issues namely "kolaborasi dua partai", securing political interests, PDIP and Golkar work together respectively to pass revisions to KPK law.

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