

Proceedings  
THE 4<sup>th</sup> COLALITE  
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

# ***SUPERHERO*** *in the Age of* ***TRANSNATIONALISM***

Thursday-Friday, 12-13 November 2020



Thursday-Friday  
12-13 November 2020

Proceedings  
THE 4<sup>th</sup> COLALITE  
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

# ***SUPERHERO*** *in the Age of* ***TRANSNATIONALISM***



UNIVERSITAS JENDERAL SOEDIRMAN  
Gd. UNSOED Press  
Jalan Prof. Dr. H.R. Boenyamin 708 Purwokerto  
Kode Pos 53122 Kotak Pos 115  
Telepon (0281) 626070  
Email: [unsoedpress@unsoed.ac.id](mailto:unsoedpress@unsoed.ac.id)



**THE 4<sup>th</sup> COLALITE  
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**  
*“SUPERHERO IN THE AGE OF TRANSNATIONALISM”*

**PROCEEDINGS**

**THURSDAY-FRIDAY, 12-13 NOVEMBER 2020**



Publisher  
Universitas Jenderal Soedirman  
2020

## **THE 4<sup>th</sup> COLALITE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**

### ***Superhero in The Age of Transnasionalism***

#### **Proceedings**

Thursday-Friday, 12-13 November 2020

#### **Organizing Committee**

**Chair** : Ririn Kurnia Trisnawati, M.A  
**Secretary** : Tri Wahyu SP, S.S, M.Hum  
Shofi Mahmudah BU, S.S, M.A

**Streering Committee** : Dra. Roch Widjatini, M.Si  
Dr. Ely Triasih Rahayu, S.S., M.Hum

**Editor** : Septi Mariasari, S.Pd, M.Hum  
Rosyid Dodianto, S.S, M.Hum  
Hanifa Pascarina, S.S, M.Hum  
Rindha Widyaningsih, S.Fil, M.A

**Reviewer** : Ririn Kurnia Trisnawati, MA  
Tri Murniati, Ph.D  
Dian Bayu Firmansyah, S.Pd., M.Pd  
Kristianto Setiawan, S.S., M.A  
Prayogo Hadi Sulistio, M.Pd  
Ambhita Dhyaningrum, S.S., M.Hum  
Mia Fitria Agustina, S.S., M.Hum

**Layout and Cover Design:** R. Pujo Handoyo, S.S, M.Hum

#### **Publisher:**

UNIVERSITAS JENDERAL SOEDIRMAN

Gd. BPU Percetakan dan Penerbitan (UNSOED Press)

Telp. (0281) 626070

Email: [unsoedpress@unsoed.ac.id](mailto:unsoedpress@unsoed.ac.id)

vi + 192 hal., 21 x 29.7 cm

ISBN: 978-623-6783-26-9

Hak cipta dilindungi Undang-Undang. Dilarang memperbanyak tanpa ijin tertulis dari penerbit, sebagian atau seluruhnya dalam bentuk apapun, baik cetak, *photoprint*, maupun *microfilm*.

## ***FOREWORDS***

Greeting from the editors of COLALITE Proceeding,

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ

We managed to organize and finally publish the collection of presented papers at **the 4<sup>th</sup> COLALITE** or Conference on Language, Linguistics, and Literature 2020. COLALITE is a biyearly conference conducted by English Language and Literature Department of FIB-Universitas Jenderal Soedirman in Purwokerto-Banyumas, Central Java. In 2020, we made it special as we successfully upgraded as an online International Conference due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

For the success of this publication, we sincerely extend our gratitude to the keynote speakers of COLALITE who have worked hard and been willing to share their precious paper at our proceeding. Also, we congratulate all the presenters of COLALITE 2020 who have managed to revise and eventually publish their works after the conference.

May this proceeding of COLALITE 2020 bring fruitful contributions to the scholarly discussion of "Superhero in the Age of Transnationalism". Thank you.

Chair of Reviewers and Editorial Board,

Ririn Kurnia Trisnawati, MA



## **ORGANIZING COMMITTEE**

OF

CONFERENCE ON LANGUAGE, LINGUISTICS AND LITERATURE (COLALITE) 2020  
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES UNIVERSITAS JENDERAL SOEDIRMAN

Director	: Dra. Roch Widjatini, M.Si Dean of Faculty of Humanities Universitas Jenderal Soedirman
Person in Charge	: Dr. Ely Triasih Rahayu, S.S., M.Hum
Chairperson	: Ririn Kurnia Trisnawati, S.S., M.A.
Vice Chair	: Dyah Raina Purwaningsih, S.S., M.Hum.
Secretary	: Tri Wahyu SP, S.S., M.Hum Shofi Mahmudah BU, S.S., M.A.
Treasurer	: Ika Maratus, S.S., M.A. Eni Nur Aeni, S.S., M.A. Hervalinda Yunitasari, S.E
Secretariat	: Mia Fitria Agustina, S.S., M.A. Tri Murniati, S.S., M.Hum, Ph.D Gigih Ariastuti Purwandari, S.S., M.Hum Rosdiana Puspita Sari, S.S., M.Hum Prayogo Hadi Sulistio, S.Pd., M.Pd Indah Puspitasari, S.S., M.Hum Indriyati Hadiningrum, S.S., M.Pd Septi Mariasari, S.Pd., M.Hum. Rindha Widyaningsih, S.Fil., M.A. Ismetianti Nofia, S.P Aska Putri Tiaranisya, S.E
Events	: Lynda Susana Widya Ayu F, S.S., M.Hum Muhammad Taufiqurrohman, S.S., M.Hum Nadia Gitya Yulianita, S.Pd., M.Li. Asrofin Nur Kholifah, S.S., M.Hum
Public Relation	: Raden Pujo Handoyo, S.S., M.Hum Usep Muttaqin, S.Hum., M.A. Hanifa Pascarina, S.S., M.Hum Dra. Mimien Aminah Sudja'ie, M.A. Rosyid Dodianto, S.S., M.Hum.
Prosiding dan Website	: Dian Bayu Firmansyah, S.Pd., M.Pd Ambhita Dhyaningrum, S.S., M.Hum Kristianto Setiawan, S.S., M.A. Moh. Imam Subuhi, S.S., M.Hum.



## ***TABLE OF CONTENTS***

Cover Page.....	i
Forewords .....	iii
Organizing Comittee .....	iv
Table of Contents.....	v
Indonesian Female Superheroes: Forging the Feminine in the Masculine World (Aquarini Priyatna) .....	1
The Global 'Pandemic' of Maistranslations: Call for Superheroes! (Mohamed Zain Sulaiman).....	9
Navigating National Identity: How Cultural Nationalisme Can Challenge Comid Book SuperHeroes (A/Prof Liam Burke).....	14
Ethnic Cultural and Modernitu Extension of Chinese Characters (Prof. Su Xin Chun) .....	23
Superheroes Across Borders: Indonesian Domestic Workers (IDWs) as Transnational Mothers (Tri Murniati).....	28
Highly Educated Blacks as the Alternate Educational Opportunities in Marver Movies (Irma Febriyanti).....	36
Cape, Mask, and New York as the Basic Identities in the American Comics and the Hollywood Movies: the Semiotics Analysis in a Subliminal Massage of Americanization as the Modern Popular Culture (Deswandito Dwi Saptanto).....	46
The Use of WhatsApp in Teaching and Learning Process: Is It a Hero During the COVID-19 Pandemic? (Indriyati Hadiningrum and Indah Puspitasari) .....	57
Intertextuality of the Hero Traits of Robin Hood and Pitung (Mardliya Pratiwi Zamruddin, Eka Pratiwi Sudirman).....	67
Reception of Tokusatsu Film in Japanese Culinary World (Santi Andayani).....	89
Supermans's Value to Human Existence in Zack Snyder's Movies Entitled Man of Steel and Justice League (Rr. Arielia Yustisiana).....	100
English Language Priority Used in Manufacture Industries (Fikri Asih Wigati) .....	108
The Pathfinder in American Culture: How White People Survive in the Frontier (Riyatno) .....	111
The Covid-19 Times: Malaysian Society's Unsung Heroes (Kavitha Subaramaniam, Swagata Sinha Roy) .....	119

The Depiction of Superhero in Japanese Fairy Tales (Momo Tarou, Tsuru No Ongasehi, Kaguya Hime, Hana Saka Jisan and Isshunboushi (Retno Dewi Ambarastuti).....	123
Representation of Chinese Characters and Culture in Comic Books (Xuc Lin, Mariana).....	131
The Language of Love: Crafting Care in "A Folded Wish (Swagata Sinha Roy, Kavitha Subaramaniam) .....	142
Superheroes in the Development of Indonesian Prurilingualism Culture on Industry 4.0 (Tri Asiati, Riski Utami, Monika Herliana) .....	147
Formation and Meaning of Suffixes at Profession Jukugo Kanji (Benardia Sucisakti Mardianingsih, Haryono).....	157
"The Heroic Action of The Humanist Futuristic Robot Doraemonin Spreading Bushido's Value to the World (Nalti Novianti) .....	165
Characterization of Rusdi As a Superhero As Potrayed in "Rusdi Djeung Misnem" By A.C. Deenik & R. Djajadiredja (Nani Sunarni, Idah Hamidah) .....	174
"Educative Traits Found in Kian Santang on TV Sinetron <i>Raden Kiang Santang</i> As Prospective Indonesian Superhero" (Dian Adiarti) .....	184

# Indonesian Female Superheroes: Forging the Feminine in the Masculine World

**Aquarini Priyatna**

Department of Literature and Cultural Studies  
Universitas Padjadjaran  
[aquarini@unpad.ac.id](mailto:aquarini@unpad.ac.id)

## ABSTRACT

Female characters in the superhero genre are often portrayed to be subordinate and objects, even victims. This article argues that while the emergence of female superheroes may potentially contribute to the more empowered portrayal of women, these superheroes are often depicted to amplify the masculine attributes, resorting to exclusion, elimination, and violence. This article looks into several more well-known Indonesian female superheroes and finds that Indonesian female superheroes such as Sri Asih, Putri Bintang, and Nina Gadis Rimbawhile seemingly attempt to integrate Indonesian culture into their portrayal, often enough manifest not only masculine traits but also the American values and culture. However, unlike other female Indonesian superheroes, Luh Ayu Manik Mas embrace femininities and integrate local Balinese cultures in her appearance and portrayal. In this way, not only Luh Ay Manik Mas offers a potential Indonesian female "superhero", she is offering a model for Indonesian superheroine.

**Keywords:** Female Superheroes, Superheroines, Femininity, Masculinity, Local-Global Nexus

## INTRODUCTION

Let me start with a confession. I am not much of a fan of the superhero genre. Superheroes comics were not even my childhood reading staple, though I vaguely remember having some in my childhood bookshelves. My encounter, or in this case, my memory with superheroes were mostly through movies. As a child, I watched Superman, but I focused more on Lois Lane than Superman. Later I watched Batman, but I was in love with Cat Woman. As I had become a mother, I was dragged into the movies watching Spiderman with my sons. Again, I failed to focus on Spiderman. I found my attention was drawn to the girl characters.

Perhaps, the only superhero I can relate to is Bionic Woman, which I watched years ago. I am not into costumes, and I do not get the idea of clothes-changing superheroes. There are too many questions that I cannot find the answers of. So, what I like about Bionic woman is that she does not have to change her clothes to become a superhero with a superpower. She seems like a down-to-earth woman, and her "power does not mean muscle." Here I am echoing Adrienne Mishler – a yoga guru that I have been following for years. She campaigns that physical strength manifests in myriad different forms. Bionic woman, while strong, is lean and feminine, and to some extent, radiates vulnerability. Strangely, I am drawn to her because she is both strong and vulnerable. There is something peculiarly interesting about the combination, something that I can relate to.

Of course, there is a problem in associating women with vulnerability, but culturally women are associated with vulnerability, and media and literature contribute significantly to the perpetuation of such a notion. The media has insistently represented women as vulnerable, even as victims or lesser beings compared to men. As a whole, we are led to believe in women's vulnerability in a way that we have the "inability to imagine women as anything but vulnerable and in need of protection" which eventually leads to the rampant occurrence and justification of violence against women at different levels (Stabile, 2009, p. 89).



My memory about superheroes is filled with women characters who are not necessarily described as triumphant or even categorically aspiring. I wondered why Lois Lane, as smart as she was portrayed, failed to recognize Superman as Clark Kent. I was happy to see the portrayal of Cat Woman by Michelle Pfeiffer. The scene when she destroyed all the statues with her whip and exited the room with a very powerful and kittenish "Meow" lifted me up. Girl Power! But then, of course, Gwen Stacy was killed in a horrific accident. I began to feel devastated. Why are these girl characters pacified and victimized?

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The marginalized position of women in comic books has been widely identified. As Palmer (2008, p. 2) contends, "comic books have demonstrated a great capacity to reflect and interrelate with larger social and ideological questions over their entire history." Despite the demand for gender equality across different aspects of life, including in popular culture (Palmer, 2008). Such ideology engenders the signification of male characters and masculinity as superior to femininity (Fleming, 2015; Owton & Barker, 2016). Implied in this perspective is the binary idea of gender construction that the female is the opposite of the male, and the feminine is the natural construction of what it means to be a woman. The masculine is the opposite of the feminine, and that what it means to be a man is to be whatever that is not feminine.

In many cases, this means the perpetuity of hegemonic masculinities that normalize and naturalize men's aggression and violence. In turn, it "celebrates the domination of weaker individuals through power and violence" (Fleming, 2015, p. 1). As Connell argues, hegemonic masculinity marginalizes women and any masculinities that do not entirely conform to the ideal normative masculinity. In other words, hegemonic masculinity defines what it means to be a man in society, and it is also an idea that a man must aspire to be.

Scholars studying superheroes have identified the tendency for portraying women as victims in the superhero genre, known as "fridging" (Curtis & Cardo, 2018). This term alludes to the killing of Alexandra DeWitt, the girlfriend of Green Lantern, by Major Force. Kyle Rayner/Green Lantern found DeWitt's remains stuffed in the refrigerator. The term "women in refrigerator" is coined by Simone Gail to refer to violence and disempowerment of women in the comic and superhero genre. Gail's website bearing the same name "women in refrigerator" documents depiction of female characters being inflicted with violence or depowerment and disempowerment to make way to portray men's superiority. In other words, women have generally been taken for granted, marginalized, sidelined, and ousted.

On a more positive note, Palmer also argues that there has been a rise in female superheroes and a decline in the passive portrayal of women (2008). We have witnessed how Wonder Woman takes the center stage. Both the film and Gal Gadot, the actress who plays Wonder Woman, enjoyed the popularity and even euphoria of women's empowerment. However, female superheroes are not depicted in the same way as males. Female superheroes are often described as physically disturbed and do not necessarily embrace their superpower (Stabile, 2009).

## METHODS

As in many different genres, the issue in gender representation concerns largely the portrayal of normative gender and sexual construction, the hierarchical and binary opposition of female and male, feminine and masculine, as well as the critical absence of alternative portrayal of gender and sexuality. Also crucial is that the superhero genre is still predominantly white-centered (Brown, 2005; Foster, 2005; Prabasmoro, Budhyono, & Muhtadin, 2019). Therefore, non-male, non-white, and non-normative gender/sexuality representations of superheroes are practically pushed aside. The hard questions raised by Cocca (2016) help structure this paper as well. She writes,

[W]hy the proportion of female superheroes as compared to male ones hasn't really changed, why they tend to be super-sexualized along with being superstrong, and why most of them are white and heterosexual and upper-middle class and able-bodied (Cocca, 2016, p. 1)

This suggests that feminist discussion on superheroes should substantially consider the intertwining of gender, sexuality, embodiment, race, and even colonialization. Regarding those mentioned above, the question remains, how women characters can or should be depicted to contribute to the emerging social-cultural change that crucially embodies feminist aspiration within the specific context of Indonesian landscape of the superhero genre. It is also important to note what Owton and Barker write that the transformation of normative gender relations requires "the inclusion of characters who question the assumption of a fixed gender binary" (Owton & Barker, 2016, p. 4).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

When Indonesian superhero comics came into being, they unavoidably looked at the Americans as a form of archetype while at the same time disrupt its Americanness by accommodating and highlighting the local attributes. This is further illustrated by the emergence of nationalist comics contextualized in Indonesian politics. Among the most important heroes in the comics in post-independence comics were women, such as Melati, Srikandi (Srikandi Tanah Minah, Srikandi Kemerdekaan), Tuti (Tuti Pahlawan Puteri) (Bonneff, 2008, p. 37). The comics showed the significant role women play in Indonesian history, which can be considered a promising start for women's portrayal as subjects, something that even American comics were still lagging behind. However, Indonesian comics portraying female superheroes also offer a more complex look into the intertwining of race, culture, ethnicities, and gender as I am going to elaborate on the following.

### Superhero Hybridity: Reconstructing Cultural and Gender Identity

The history of Indonesian comics testified the nature of the development of comics. Comic characters and superheroes come and go, but it is essential to note that even the old[er] superheroes do not simply fade away or disappear. They may be reborn and given new attributes, making superheroes constantly hybrid in nature (2014).

Cocca writes that people of color, both female and male, only make one to three percent of the main characters in children's and adults' books in the 2010s (2016). This shows that there is a great imbalance of cultural representation in the superhero genre. On the other hand, it also means there is a potential for the emerging diverse and even local superhero characters.

Indonesia has seen the flourishing local comic after its independence in 1945. The emergence of local comics had somehow denied the American "dream-sellers" opportunity to take advantage of the vast Indonesian market (Bonneff, 2008, p. 10). As Boneff notes, Indonesian comics can be traced back to Indonesian prehistory period. Thus, even when American comics expanded worldwide, Indonesian comic writers had often delved into the local culture and narratives to explore the themes and elaborate the myriad dramatization and imaging convention (Bonneff, 2008, p. 19).

According to Boneff, this process of marrying the more predominant comic, mainly those from the US, featuring white male protagonists, to the more local[ized] representation of superheroes who are not only males but also females has contributed to the birth of Indonesian comics. Comic writers translated the English text directly into the panels. They also started to simply imitate American comics in the Indonesian context. Thus, among others, Sri Asih, Puteri Bintang, and Superman (Bonneff, 2008). Other American comic archetypes also got translated into Indonesian contexts, such as Flash Gordon into Siti Gahara, or Tarzan into Sri Rimba or Nina. Bonneff calls these characters as "the imitation of American products."

The blending of the west and the east brings forth superheroes that carry varied cultural and social weight or what Boneff labels as "national culture." Therefore, even when Sri Asih and the likes comics can be perceived as "imitation," it does not imitate in a way that accepts the centrality of American comics. It mimics the American comics in a way that Ahmed (1999) argues as a project that questions the origin and the originality of American comics. As Ahmed (1999, p. 97) contends:

In copying and hybridizing the colonizer, the colonized subject demonstrates the inauthenticity of the original as originary; the original itself is a copy which is open to reiteration and hence displacement. Hybridization here traverses absolute distinction between identities – between the self and other – precisely by affirming a difference that undoes the binarism.

After all, Indonesian has a long history of pictorial narratives as displayed in the many stone temples scattered around Indonesia. Indonesian comics as pictorial narratives mimic and, at the same time, threatens the origin and the originality of American comics. Comics are both local and not-local. It manifests both the self and the other. The identity of Indonesian comics and the characters' identity portrayed in the comics can be perceived as hybrids as well. As Ahmed further elaborates, by "miming the identity of an-other, identity itself becomes an object of exchange that resists the realms of the proper and property" (Ahmed, 1999, p. 98).

In thinking of superheroes, hybridity must not be thought of strictly in terms of how the cultural is seen more as racial or national realms, but must also consider how gender provides a cultural context and how it gets translated into comics. As I have discussed, the hybrid forms of superheroes are also manifested in Indonesian female characters such as Sri Asih, Nina, Puteri Bintang, and even the recent Luh Ayu Manik Mas. All female superheroes show the attempt to break away from American superheroes, but at the same time, the reference to the mainstream American comics means its limitation in fully engendering truly local characters. As Ahmed writes, "[t]he danger of the hybrid – of the loss of clearly demarcated identities – may be read, in the terms of policing and surveillance. While hybridity in its travels undermines authorization and property, it nevertheless can become the condition of its possibility" (Ahmed, 1999, p. 97). This is what I will dwell further by looking into Indonesian comics and focusing on female superheroes. I will look at how these characters display hybridity that transgresses the border of local and global, the west and the east, but at the same time still display the established attributes and references to American superhero comics.

### **Superheroines or Female Superheroes: Rethinking Femininity in Indonesian Comics**

In his groundbreaking work, Bonneff writes how Indonesian comics, especially in its early development, relied heavily on American comics, including in its portrayal of female superheroes. Sri Asih, Putri Bintang and Santini, for example, clearly resemble and refers to Wonder Woman. Nina Gadis Rimba is a local and female variation of Tarzan. This paper will not thoroughly discuss the body of Indonesian comics. I will merely discuss selected issues of *Sri Asih*, *Putri Bintang*, *Santini*, and *Nina Gadis Rimba* to point out my argument that these characters are hybrids in terms of its cultural as well as gender attributes. After all, should we consider superhero genre to be a global culture, as Tomlinson argues, following Pieterse and Canclini, "the ultimate implication is that whatever globalised culture is emerging, it will not bear the stamp of any particular cultural-geographical or national identity, but will *essentially* a hybrid, *mestizaje*, 'cut and mix' culture" (1999, pp. 24, original emphasis). This hybridity can also be seen in the context of gender construction.

I am using "female superheroes" in this article as a neutral term to refer to superheroes that are female. However, in relation to these female superheroes' attributes, it is necessary to consider the term "superheroine." According to Coogan (2018), superheroine is a different genre altogether from the "superhero" genre. Coogan writes that superheroine can be traced to feminist utopian novels whose heroines integrates "the rites of integration" rather than the "the rites of order" displayed by the superhero genre. In that superheroines resort to "love, collaboration, companionship, and mentorship" to solve problems, rather than diminishing the characters that create disorder (2018).

The main attribute of superheroes is their power, and in general, power is attributed to men. No wonder why superheroes are predominantly male that show masculine traits. American superheroes, after all, are predominantly white, male, and middle-class. Indonesian female superheroes pose an intriguing site for the discussion regarding the traversing of culture and gender. For example, Sri Asih has been defined as the copycat of wonder woman (Bonneff, 2008),



but to say that Sri Asih is a mere copycat would disregard the facts that Sri Asih has a cultural weight of her own. Within the specific context of Indonesian culture, to have a female superhero is to re-examine our conception of the hero itself.

I have not been able to research on the comprehensive body of Indonesian comics thoroughly. This article is a mere introduction to what can be further elaborated pertaining to Indonesian female superheroes and whether these characters offer what Coogan argues as "superheroines".

Perhaps, the oldest Indonesian female superhero is Sri Asih (1954). She has a superpower that is comparable to any male superheroes, most notably Superman. She can fly across the globe, she can fight and has no hesitation to resort to violence when fighting the criminals, she has "soul eyes" that work as an x-ray machine, she is even bulletproof, and she is so strong she can break free from moving walls that trap her or even stop a moving steel tank. Sri Asih embodies all the superpower that superheroes are required to have. Her being a woman is not only manifest in her being a "biological woman," and the only marker of her cultural identity lies in her costume. In other words, Sri Asih, is just like most male superheroes, she follows the rites of order (Coogan, 2018), and her embodiment refers to that of male. All she aims for is the restoration of order. It seeks to diminish, not integrate.



Fig 1: Sri Asih in action



Fig 2: Putri Bintang in action

The same approach is taken in the portrayal of Putri Bintang, written by John Lo, aka Djoni Lukman, in 1954. Putri Bintang is written later by Djoni Andrean, appearing in better images. Putri Bintang still reduplicates the normative depiction of superheroes. She has a superpower; she is physically strong and uses it in her fights with enemies. Unlike Sri Asih, however, Putri Bintang appears in a more Wonder Woman look, with the signature American color of red and blue. "Bintang" or stars unmistakably allude to the Stars in Wonder Woman's costume as well. In other words, Putri Bintang bears more American look and mainstream superhero attributes. The act of mimicking the original shows the loss of "demarcated identity" of American superheroes, but at the same time, it continues to be the point of reference of its mimics.

However, what I find most strikingly American [male] superhero traits embodied by the two Indonesian female superheroes are the fact that these comics follow what Coogan's coin as men's genre where "physical conflict in genre results in the restoration of order, typically through the elimination of the antagonist from the physical setting of the story" (Coogan, 2018, p. 2). Thus, both Indonesian female superheroes, Sri Asih and Putri Bintang, are mimics of American superheroes. They are genuinely mimicking "male" superheroes. In fact, as in the normative male superheroes genre, these two characters also end up "rid[ing] off into the sunset alone" (Coogan, 2018, p. 13), having eliminated the villains and put everything back to order selflessly, unanimously, and heroically.



Fig 3: Sri Asih/Nani Wijaya ends up alone in her hotel room in New York



Fig 4: Putri Bintang/Yati Suryanegara walking away from the scene alone.

While there is a need to portray the more inclusive portrayal of femininity and masculinity as a form of continuum rather than fixed binary and opposite categorization as argued by Owton and Barker (2016), what happens in Sri Asih and Putri Bintang may be considered problematic. In the depiction of both characters, there is an explicit celebration of masculine strength and ability to diminish the feminine traits altogether. Femininity is merely presented as a costume, which ironically sets the mode for their [masculine] superhero power. While Sri Asih's costume seems to resort to the "spiritual" like Devi Sri, which explains her wayang-like costume, Putri Bintang seems to resort to the future and the modern, defined as America. Both superheroes' appearance highlights their feminine attributes while displaying their "masculinized elements of heroism" (Baker, 2019, p. 71). This tendency to marry the "hyperfeminized aesthetics" with the "masculinized heroism", according to Baker (2019), has been clearly shown by DCSHG franchise.

The newest comer of Indonesian female superheroes is Luh Ayu Manik Mas; the superhero alter ego of Luh Ayu Manik. This comic is created and published by BASAbali Wiki in 2019 and funded by Asia Foundation. The grant is to create a Balinese girl superhero and to tell about her adventures. Luh Ayu Manik Mas is clearly intended to carry the Balinese cultural weight on her shoulders. Another aspect injected to the comic is the environmental issues. Luh Ayu Manik Mas is supposedly an environmental superhero. In two of the comics, the environmental message is quite clear. The other focuses on literacy and reading habits, which is seemingly an attempt to address the low percentage of Indonesians' reading habits.





Fig. 5: Luh Ayu Manik and  
Luh Ayu Manik Mas

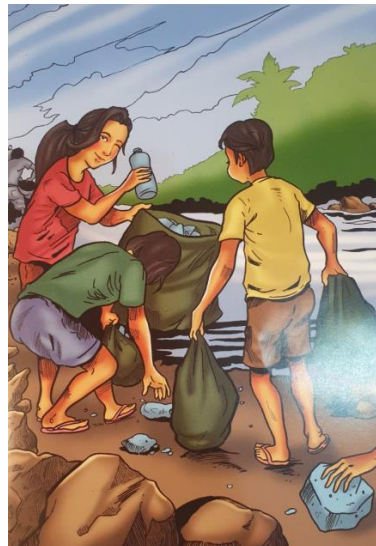


Fig. 6: Luh Ayu Manik  
working with others to  
solve problems



Fig. 7: Luh Ayu Manik  
working with others to  
solve problems

While the costume worn by Luh Ayu Manik Mas is a striking reminder of Sri Asih, in that her costume bears local aesthetics, unlike Sri Asih, Manik Mas is not portrayed as a lone superhero. Manik Mas works with friends and integrates others into her missions. Thus, the striking difference between Sri Asih and Putri Bintang compared to Luh Ayu Manik Mas is arguably that the latter can be considered to fall into the category of what Coogan defines as “superheroine” and not “female superhero”.

## CONCLUSION

Gender is still a prevalent issue in the superhero genre. Women's position in the genre has long been relegated to the position of victims and objects. The birth of female superheroes contributes to a promising beginning of equality in men and women's portrayal. However, not all female superheroes contribute significantly to the re-evaluation of the perceived gender traits and attributions. In Sri Asih, Putri Bintang, Nina Gadis Rimba, for example, the superheroes are described to exert to the masculine power and masculine approach to problem-solving: exclusion, elimination, and violence. In Coogan's perspective, the three characters fall into the category of female superheroes, namely superheroes that are female.

Alternatively, Luh Ayu Manik Mas provides a role of a strong girl who can contribute significantly to solve problems, not merely by diminishing the people who create it but also embracing people to solve the problems collectively. Luh Ayu Manik Mas offers feminine values as strength no less important than the physical strength that she is also capable of. In Coogan's term, Luh Ayu Manik Mas is not just a female superhero. She is a superheroine. Superheroines are the future of feminine superheroes, who help disrupt the notion of what it means to be a superhero and what it means to be feminine.

## REFERENCES

- Ahmed, S. (1999). 'She'll Wake Up One of These Days and Find She's Turned into a Nigger': Passing through Hybridity. In V. Bell (Ed.), *Performativity and Belonging*. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: SAGE Publications.
- Baker, L. I. (2019). I'm no princess super hero girls together. *Girlhood Stud. Girlhood Studies*, 12(1), 66-81.
- Bonneff, M. (2008). *Komik Indonesia*. Jakarta: KPG.

- Brown, J. A. (2005). *Black superheroes, Milestone comics, and their fans*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.
- Cocca, C. (2016). *Superwomen : gender, power, and representation*.
- Coogan, P. (2018). Wonder Woman: superheroine, not superhero. *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics*, 9(6), 566-580.
- Curtis, N., & Cardo, V. (2018). Superheroes and third-wave feminism. *Feminist Media Studies*, 18(3), 381-396.
- Fingerroth, D. (2014). *Superman on the couch : what superheroes really tell us about ourselves and our society*.
- Fleming, M. J. (2015). *The Avengers Disassembled: Deconstructing Gender & Hegemonic Masculinity in Superhero Culture*. (Master of Arts). Wilfrid Laurier University,
- Foster, W. H. (2005). *Looking for a face like mine : the history of African Americans in comics*. Waterbury, CT: Fine Tooth Press.
- Owton, H., & Barker, M. J. (2016). Superqueeros: Gender and superheroes. Retrieved from <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/history-the-arts/culture/media-studies/superqueeroes-gender-and-superheroes>
- Palmer, E. (2008). *Superheroes and Gender Roles, 1961-2004*. Paper presented at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.
- Prabasmoro, T., Budhyono, R., & Muhtadin, T. (2019). Black Panther: Identity, afrofuturism, and representation of superheroes. *Pertanika J. Soc. Sci. Humanit. Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 27(4), 2671-2685.
- Stabile, C. (2009). "Sweetheart, This Ain't Gender Studies": Sexism and Superheroes. *COMMUNICATION AND CRITICAL CULTURAL STUDIES*, 6(1), 86-92.
- Tomlinson, J. (1999). Globalised Culture: The Triumph of the West? In T. Skelton & T. Allen (Eds.), *Culture and Global Change* (pp. 23-31). London and New York: Routledge.



# The Global 'Pandemic' of Mistranslations: Call for Superheroes!

**Mohamed Zain Sulaiman**

Centre for Research in Language and Linguistics  
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia  
[zain@ukm.edu.my](mailto:zain@ukm.edu.my)

## ABSTRACT

The role of translation in the 21st century has become more significant than ever before. With the increasing forces of globalization and heightened mobility, translation has become an indispensable tool in many facets of life particularly business, tourism, international relations, technology transfer and international peace. However, this tool is increasingly being misused and abused in meeting the overwhelming demand for cross-lingual communication. This in turn has resulted in a global 'pandemic' of mistranslations, thus calling for the intervention of 'superheroes' to save this valuable tool from further misuse and abuse and the translation industry and profession from further disgrace and embarrassment.

**Keywords:** Mistranslation, Translator Accreditation, Translator Credentialing, Translation Profession, Translation Industry, Translation Superheroes

## INTRODUCTION

In the world of information explosion we live in today, there is an overwhelming demand for rapid mass communication across languages and cultures. Volume and time have now become the essence of such communication: the delivery of information in the shortest time and to as many people as possible. This has resulted in a sudden increase in demand for translation services. Despite the growing demand, the supply of qualified professional translators is on a relatively low increase. As a result, the problem of supply and demand has become increasingly serious in the translation market. In addition, the pressure on translation service providers to deliver in record-time is just as much as the pressure on the translation service procurer to procure these services at minimal cost. The combination of these two forces has resulted in the eruption of what I term as a 'global pandemic of mistranslations'. The translation market now is one of chaos, disorder and confusion. What was once a prestigious profession particularly during the Translation Movement of the House of Wisdom in the 8<sup>th</sup> century is now being ridiculed by translation fails and blunders sweeping across the globe. A search on google search engine with keywords such as 'translation blunders', 'translation fails', 'mistranslations', 'hilarious translations', and 'funny translations' would yield tens of thousands of results, making the translation industry as well as the profession a laughing stock. From billboards to public signs and film subtitles, mistranslations abound and are everywhere to be found.

## THE CORE PROBLEM

The root cause behind the pandemic of mistranslations is one related to the way the translation and interpreting (T&I) industry is regulated or rather not regulated. Given the chaotic scenario today, the T&I sector is in dire need of regulatory standards in the same way that service providers in other sectors are. Two of the most leading countries in the field of professional T&I with well-established accreditation systems in place are Australia and the United Kingdom (Hlavac, 2013; Pym et al., 2013). In Australia, professional certification of T&I practitioners begun almost half a

century ago in 1977 with the establishment of the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI). NAATI is an independent government-owned company responsible for 'setting, maintaining and promoting high professional standards for the translation and interpreting professions' (NAATI, 2018, p. iv). Today, Australia is considered as having one of the most complex and evolved system of T&I accreditation in the world (Pym et al., 2013).

In the United Kingdom, the interests of T&I practitioners are represented by two independent professional membership bodies, i.e. the Chartered Institute of Linguists (CIOL), and the Institute of Translation & Interpreting (ITI). CIOL, which was founded in 1910, is an independent professional membership body for language practitioners and provides 'nationally-accredited, professional qualifications and set standards for language practitioners through its awarding organisation the IoL Educational Trust (IoLET)' ([www.ciol.org.uk](http://www.ciol.org.uk)). ITI was founded in 1986 as a breakaway from CIOL and provides professional membership for practising translators, interpreters and language services businesses ([www.iti.org.uk](http://www.iti.org.uk)).

In addition to Australia and United Kingdom, several other countries have also established credentialing mechanisms to regulate the T&I industry. The ways in which the T&I profession is regulated in these countries and the credentialing procedures in place are discussed by a number of studies including Stejskal(2005) who conducted a 'state-of-the-affairs' survey on translation certification from 2001 to 2005 eliciting information from 63 organisations from 40 countries; Pym et al. (2013) who conducted a study on the T&I profession in the European Union; and Hlavac(2013) who provided a detailed account of the T&I certification procedure in 21 countries. While some of these countries have moved towards the regulation of the T&I sector, in many other parts of the world anyone can still claim to be a 'professional' translator as the industry remains unregulated with no professional bodies or credentialing mechanisms to regulate and oversee translation practices.

### **The unregulated T&I sector in Malaysia**

In Malaysia, the T&I sector remains unregulated and continues to grapple with issues related to quality and efficiency. This is despite the fact that the translation industry has long established its presence in the country with the establishment of the first Translation Bureau in 1924 to produce school texts which were crucial for the development of the education sector, followed by Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (Institute of Language and Literature) in 1956, Persatuan Penterjemah Malaysia (Malaysian Translators Association) in 1978 and more recently Institut Terjemahan Negara Malaysia (Malaysian National Institute of Translation) in 1993.

Issues pertaining to the quality and efficiency of the industry have, from the early days of the industry, been the topic of criticism. For example, the process of translating English scientific and technical texts into Malay has been described as 'inefficient, time-consuming and unstructured' (Kaur, 2012, p. 107), so much so that in 1993, the then Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tun Mahathir Mohamed, announced the government's decision to allow science and technology courses to be taught in English at all higher education institutes. The reason being was that science textbooks in Malay are very limited and those which were translated were sometimes not translated well (Kaur, 2012).

The inefficiency of translation is attributed to the slow production of texts translated into Malay, which in turn is due to the poor quality of translation works which often require heavy editing or even re-writing, making the entire process very time consuming. In 1984 Azizah Mokhzani described the main factor contributing to the poor quality of translation as the lack of professional, government and societal recognition. One would expect that forty years later there would have been a significant improvement in the local T&I scene but the contrary is even more obviously true. Translation blunders are becoming more prevalent especially that many are now relying on technology for translation solutions. A case in point is the Ministry of Defence's reliance on the free online Google Translate for its English version of its official website. As a result, many parts of the website were mistranslated, often humorously, much to the embarrassment of the ministry. The mistranslations included the translation of the Malay phrase *pakaian yang menjolok mata*, which means revealing clothes in Malay, to 'clothes that poke eye' (Aruna, 2012). The blunder became a



widespread online joke and is even cited as an example of a translation pitfall that must be avoided (Phillips, 2014).

The status of the T&I sector in Malaysia is discussed by a number of scholars. Zubaidah Ibrahim (2004) describes the situation of the T&I sector in Malaysia as follows:

Unfortunately, language service providers here (in Malaysia) operate in a chaotic and unregulated market, in which anyone who claims to be an interpreter/translator can set up as one. Unlike the medical and legal fields, where entry, continued membership and behaviour of members are governed, language service providers lack such regulation. There is a gnawing concern that translators and interpreters can, and may, distort meaning, whether deliberately or inadvertently. Thus the crucial requirement for a code of ethics.

Noraini Ibrahim (2007, 2009) investigated the scenario of parliamentary interpreting in Malaysia and found that the interpreting profession in general faces many problems including 'lack of regulation, inadequate training, easy admission into the profession, no professional association, no professional code of ethics and lack of public education on what interpreting and interpreters really are' (N. Ibrahim, 2009). These findings are echoed by Leelany Ayob (2009), and more recently by Kang and Shunmugam (2014) and Kang (2015), all of whom reiterated the dire need to develop a credentialing mechanism that meets the demand of the local translation industry. The issue of developing an accreditation model was also highlighted recently in an exclusive report published by the Bernama which quoted the deputy president of the Malaysian Translators Association as saying 'various models are being applied by translation associations around the world and a model that is very appropriate in the Malaysian context ought to be developed' (Abdullah, 2019).

Despite evidence from the translation and interpreting (T&I) industries across the world stressing the importance of professionalizing T&I practices and despite the calls from the Malaysian T&I community over the past decade for the professionalization of the T&I industry in Malaysia through the establishment of a credentialing system which regulates the industry (Abdullah, 2019; Ayob, 2009; Kang, 2015), no mechanism has been developed so far in this regard.

### **Call for superheroes**

Being stuck in a desperate cross-lingual crisis, it seems that Malaysia and other countries experiencing the same problem will need the help of superheroes who can save the translation industry from further deterioration and help the translation profession regain its dignity and pride. This is a 'real-world' translation problem faced by the society, industry and profession and requires 'real', practical, research-driven solutions.

This is a call for outstanding individuals from within the T&I research community, particularly postgraduate students of language and translation studies, to engage in T&I research projects which would eventually lead to the development of a regulatory system for their local T&I industry, thus bringing the chaos and disorder to a halt. What we need now are research projects with direct impact on the profession, industry and the society as a whole. We need superheroes who can, through language and translation, make the world a better place to live in.

For the case of Malaysia, the government has, very recently, awarded a research grant for such a research project in which postgraduate scholars are key researchers.

### **The nature of the research project(s)**

The introduction of a regulatory system, whether in the form of an accreditation or credentialing mechanism, should be based on sound research. The system developed must be relevant to the society. A good starting point would be to look at what others have done in this regard. We can definitely learn and benefit from other countries which have successfully developed and implemented T&I accreditation mechanisms such as Australia and the United Kingdom.

Nevertheless, the models adopted in these countries must be adapted to meet the specific needs, demands and challenges of the local T&I industry. Data on these specific needs, demands



and challenges can be gathered through various research methods from the main stakeholders in the T&I industry such as:

- T&I associations;
- T&I agencies;
- T&I clients and commissioners;
- T&I training providers;
- T&I practitioners; and
- relevant government agencies.

Based on such data, we would be in a better position to develop a regulatory system that would be able to serve the national interests of the T&I industry.

### **Impact on society**

The foreseeable impact of the research is the development of a regulatory system for the local T&I industry in question. This system would play a vital role in establishing professional standards, elevating the credibility of T&I practitioners and quality of T&I services, protecting the public from malpractices and unqualified T&I service providers, extending the 'shelf life' of academic degrees through continuous professional development, enhancing the prestige of the profession, providing a reliable mechanism for the market to choose a T&I practitioner or service provider confidently and to trust its work.

### **REFERENCES**

- Abdullah, N. H. (2019, 4 October 2019). Industri Penterjemahan dan Interpretasi: Di Mana Kedudukan Malaysia? [Laporan Eksklusif]. Bernama.com. Retrieved from <http://www.bernama.com/bm/news.php?id=1774744>
- Aruna, P. (2012, 10 January). Mindef Blames Google Translate for 'Poke-Eye' Blunder. The Star. Retrieved from <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2012/01/10/mindef-blames-google-translate-for-pokeeye-blunder/>
- Ayob, L. (2009). The Visibility of Translators and Interpreters in Malaysia. Paper presented at the The 12th International Conference on Translation, Penang.
- Hlavac, J. (2013). A Cross-National Overview of Translator and Interpreter Certification Procedures. *Translation & Interpreting*, 15(1), 32-65.
- Ibrahim, N. (2007). Interpreting in Malaysia: An Overview. *Puentes*, 7, 89-96.
- Ibrahim, N. (2009). Parliamentary Interpreting in Malaysia: A Case Study. *Meta*, 54(2), 357-369.
- Ibrahim, Z. (2004, 31 October 2004). Say You, Say Me. *Focus*, New Sunday Times.
- Javadi, Y. and Khezrab, T. (2020). A Model of Certification Programs for Certified Translators and Interpreters. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 10(1), 123-139.
- Kang, M. S. (2015). A Comparative Study of the Translation Profession in Malaysia and Korea. (PhD), University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur.
- Kang, M. S., & Shunmugam, K. (2014). The Translation Profession in Malaysia: The Translator's Status and Self-Perception. *Gema Online Journal of Language Studies*, 14(3), 191-205.
- Kaur, K. (2012). A Study of the Problems Faced by Translators of Scientific and Technical Texts from English to Malay and Implications for Teaching. In Z. M. Don (Ed.), *English in Multicultural Malaysia* (pp. 107-120). Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press.
- Mokhzani, A. (1984). The Translation Needs of a Developing Country: The Malaysian Case. Paper presented at the International Conference on Translation - The Role of Translation in National Development, Kuala Lumpur.
- NAATI. (2018). National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters Annual Report 2017/18. Retrieved from [https://www.naati.com.au/media/2195/naati\\_annual\\_report\\_2018-web.pdf](https://www.naati.com.au/media/2195/naati_annual_report_2018-web.pdf)
- Phillips, A. (2014). *Turning the Page: The Evolution of the Book*. London: Routledge.
- Pym, A., Grin, F., Sfreddo, C., & Chan, A. L. J. (2013). *The Status of the Translation Profession in the European Union*. London: Anthem Press.

- Ruokonen, M. (2018). To Protect or Not to Protect: Finnish Translators' Perceptions on Translator Status and Authorisation. *Hermes – Journal of Language and Communication in Business*, 58, 65-82
- Stejskal, J. (2005). Survey of the FIT Committee for Information on the Status of the Translation & Interpretation Profession. USA: FIT.

# Navigating National Identity: How Cultural Nationalism Can Challenge Comic book Superheroes

**A/Prof Liam Burke**  
 Swinburne University of Technology  
 wburke@swin.edu.au

## ABSTRACT

Scottish comic book writer Grant Morrison argues that, “Like jazz and rock ‘n’ roll” the superhero is also a “uniquely American creation” (Morrison, 2011 29). Such US origins were part of the superhero’s long-standing appeal around the world. However, the image of star-spangled spandex also provoked wider concerns regarding cultural imperialism, with international comic creators traditionally avoiding the superhero genre. However, in recent years the superhero has been reimagined across the globe to respond to local cultures, politics, and traditions. However, the internationalization of superheroes has not happened in a single bound. In many regions cultural nationalist traditions have resisted the conventions of the superhero genre. Focusing on examples from Ireland and Australia, this paper will consider how the tensions between cultural nationalism and the superhero are slowly being reconciled. Drawing on creator and fan interviews, this paper will also examine how the growing number of international creators working for US publishers like Marvel and DC Comics are providing a corrective to the outdated cultural stereotypes that once populated the superhero genre. This paper will ultimately chart how the careful integration of superhero conventions with local traditions, mythology, and culture, is transforming the American superhero into a global icon.

### **A/Prof Liam Burke Bio**

Associate Professor Liam Burke is the discipline leader in Cinema and Screen Studies at Swinburne University of Technology, Australia, where he is also a member of the Centre for Transformative Media Technologies. Liam has published widely on comic books and adaptation. His books include *The Comic Book Film Adaptation: Exploring Modern Hollywood’s Leading Genre*, *Superhero Movies*, and the edited collection *Fan Phenomena Batman*. His most recent book, the edited collection *The Superhero Symbol* (with Ian Gordon and Angela Ndaliansis), was published by Rutgers University Press in 2019. Liam is a chief investigator of the Australian Research Council funded project *Superheroes & Me*.

### **Navigating National Identity: How Cultural Nationalism can challenge comic book superheroes**

Scottish comic book writer Grant Morrison argues that, “Like jazz and rock ‘n’ roll” the superhero is also a “uniquely American creation” (Morrison, 2011 29). Created in the depths of the Depression as a response to the challenges of the Machine Age, superheroes were a modern update of the Western gunfighter. Superman demonstrated this Machine Age resilience on his first cover by effortlessly smashing a car against a rock face, a feat he bettered on the story’s first page in which he hurdles a twenty-story building and outpaced an express train. Such US origins were part of the superhero’s long-standing appeal internationally, but it also provoked wider concerns regarding cultural imperialism. For instance, one article published in *The Sydney Morning Herald* on December 28, 1948, “Are ‘Comic’ Books Harmful to the Minds of Young Readers?”, warned

Australians that "The language used in many of the comics on sale in Sydney shows an unmistakable United States origin" (1948 2).

International comic creators have traditionally avoided the superhero genre. When local superheroes were created they tended to be satiric such as the Japanese manga *One-Punch Man*, anti-heroic like the Italian fumettineri *Diabolik*, or, as was the case with Grant Morrison's British superhero *Zenith*, both. These international superheroes implicitly commented, and often critiqued, perceived American cultural imperialism. However, with increased globalization, the superhero has been reimagined in a range of contexts to respond to local cultures, politics, and traditions. Nonetheless, the internationalization of superheroes has not happened in a single bound. In many regions cultural nationalist traditions have resisted the conventions of the superhero genre.

Focusing on examples from Ireland and Australia, this paper will consider how the tensions between cultural nationalism and the star-spangled superhero are slowly being reconciled. Drawing on creator and industry interviews I have carried out, this paper will examine how the growing number of international creators working for US publishers like Marvel and DC Comics are providing a corrective to outdated depictions in the superhero genre. This paper will ultimately chart how the careful integration of superhero conventions with local traditions, mythology, and culture, is transforming the American superhero into a global icon.

Although there are enough heroes clad in the stars and stripes, Union Jack, and maple leaf for political geographer Jason Dittmer to recognize nationalist superheroes as a "subgenre", there have been comparatively few Irish and Australian-themed heroes (Dittmer, 2013). When I interviewed Stan Lee I asked him whether he had ever thought about creating an Irish superhero, to which the one-time Captain America writer responded, "I don't know how to make a superhero specifically Irish".<sup>1</sup> Similarly, when asked to name Australian superheroes, many of my fan respondents struggled to identify any and those that did tended to point to international examples like the DC Comics villain Captain Boomerang, who had recently been reworked as an antihero in the superhero movie *Suicide Squad* (Ayer, 2016). Despite the comparative dearth of Irish and Australian, superhero comics do occasionally include Irish and Australian character or set adventures in those regions. However, as traditionally, "all of American comics were created by a couple hundred people in the New York metro area" (Duncan and Smith, 2009 ix), these comics tended to rely on outdated, often atavistic, conventions for depicting Ireland and Australia.

In *Making Comics* Scott McCloud warns that "some prejudices can creep in" when using seemingly innocuous character types, explaining that "every stereotype comes from somewhere, and that place may not always be obvious" (McCloud, 2006 124). Indeed, the conventions for depicting Irish and Australian people used by comic book creators is rarely politically charged, but rather designed to create authentic characters. Nonetheless, they often perpetuate colonial representations of these regions and their people. To chart this, we will first look at how Victorian Era depictions of the Irish can still be found in contemporary superhero comics.

During the late 1800s Irish efforts to gain Home Rule were gathering pace. Nonetheless, many British people feared that an independent Ireland would lead to the dissolution of the empire. Analyzing Victorian Era cartoons, the American historian L. P. Curtis observed that the Irish tended to fall into two categories: Neanderthal-like beasts who cannot be reasoned with, or demure ladies who needed protection from Irish nationalists. As the media scholar Michael de Nie notes, "these images ultimately reinforced long-standing prejudices about the people of Ireland and undercut their claims for self-government" (de Nie, 2005 43).

Curtis also describes how this "apes and angels" dichotomy crossed the Atlantic, where it became an "ethnic fixture in cartoons about Irish-Americans". Curtis goes on to describe how in the satirical magazine *Puck* the artist Frederick Burr Opper "excelled at simianizing Irish-Americans" (Curtis, 1997 64). Opper would later become one of the pioneers of the newspaper comic strip with

<sup>1</sup>The interviews cited in this paper have been conducted by the author at various points over many years. The earliest interview was with Stan Lee over the telephone in 2007. The interviews with Australian creators and fans were carried out as part of the *Superheroes & Me* research project funded by the Australian Research Council. Unless otherwise indicated, all quoted interviews are from this earlier research.



his popular character, Happy Hooligan, an imbecilic Irish itinerant. Much of the humor in *Happy Hooligan* was derived from the Irish stereotypes Opper had spent years cultivating in satirical magazines, and which he now helped embed into the grammar of the fledgling comic strip, where its impact can still be seen today.

### Angels

Film scholar Martin McLoone observed that the “most positive (or at least less negative) face of Irish primitivism” is the depiction of Ireland as a “Garden of Eden, populated by a simple, musically gifted, loquacious and happy (if quarrelsome) peasantry” (McLoone, 2000 36). While these “Stage Irish” stereotypes might be dismissed as benign, even affectionate, they were employed in Victorian cartoons to suggest the Irish were unable to rule themselves. One example of this convention was the Irish X-Man Sean Cassidy, better known as Banshee, who joined the superhero team in 1975. In the comics Banshee is rarely seen without his clay pipe, which Curtis notes was a signifier of Irish ethnicity in late 1800s US cartoons. Banshee often completes the look with a flat cap and green jumper. Cassidy even wears these signifiers to a formal dinner he hosts for the X-Men at his home, prompting Wolverine to suggest Banshee looks “like a stablehand” to which Cassidy counters, “Since I happen t’ be Lord o’ this manor, I get t’ come t’ dinner dressed however I please”. As that near incompressible dialogue suggests, accent is another means of signifying Banshee’s Irish identity. As part of wider research on representations of Irish speech, sociolinguist Shane Walshe argues that such “elision, reduction, and weak forms” are “meant to reflect the common perception of Irish people speaking quickly and unclearly” (Walshe, 2012 281).

Banshee’s primitivism is also illustrated through the depiction of Ireland as a pre-modern paradise. During the intergalactic conflict of “The Phoenix Saga” the X-Men were sent on vacation by Professor X, with Banshee offering his childhood home, located “in a remote part o’ County Mayo [...] Few conveniences, fewer people”. The X-Men reach this ancient location by increasingly archaic modes of transport, before it is ultimately revealed that Bansheegrew up in a castle infested with leprechauns. Similar depictions of Ireland as a pre-industrial utopia can be found across a range of comics. However, as McLoone notes this “ideological construction” of Ireland as a Garden of Eden owes “more to the culture of the centre than to the realities of life on the periphery” (McLoone, 2000 34), and is in keeping with infantilizing tendencies that many scholars have identified in colonial representations of Ireland.

### Apes

While the good-natured peasants living in an untouched Garden of Eden is one set of conventions associated with the Irish, much like Bruce Banner, these images often transform into a violent shade of green. McLoone notes that Ireland is often “presented as a society torn asunder by violence... where a proclivity to violence was seen as a tragic flaw of the Irish themselves. This again was often presented as the result of ignorance and a lack of progress” (McLoone, 2000 34). These conventions are evident in comics that engage with Irish conflicts, particularly those centered on the sectarian violence or “Troubles” that dogged Northern Ireland from the late 1960s to the 1990s.<sup>2</sup> Curtis notes how the conflict prompted some British newspaper cartoonists to “revive the gorilla guerrilla image” (Curtis, 1997 174). While superhero books stopped short at such extreme character types they did widely participate in the “myth of atavism”, which Ruth Barton describes as a “‘two tribes’ interpretation of Loyalist-Republican sectarianism” with violence “seen as endemic to the human condition” and in particular Irish nature (Barton, 2005 158), with McLoone noting this tradition “ends up denying the historical, social and political roots of such violence” (McLoone, 2000 4).

<sup>2</sup>“The Troubles” was the term used locally to describe the often violent conflict in Northern Ireland from the late 1960s until the Good Friday Agreement of 1998. Key participants included the paramilitary groups the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) and Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF). Much of the conflict was fuelled by Northern Ireland’s status as part of the United Kingdom, and the tensions between those who wanted Northern Ireland to remain as part of the UK (loyalist) and those who wished to see the six counties return to a united Ireland (nationalist).



For instance, the 1982 Captain Britain story "Friends and Neighbours" was intended by writer Dave Thorpe to engage directly with the Troubles, but artist, Alan Davis, felt that "it was inappropriate to have a guy dressed in the Union Jack flying over to Ireland and sorting out the entire Northern Ireland situation" (Davis, 2006 33). Following editorial pressure Thorpe left the book with the story changed to an anonymous gang conflict. Nonetheless, the original concept is clear. Captain Britain lands in a city center street to save a teenager, Jeff, from a gang attack. Jeff's friend explains, "We met on holiday, but he's not from around here and there's a war going on". The gang do not understand why Captain Britain is not on their side (loyalists), while Jeff's neighborhood (nationalist) greet his savior with suspicion. Conflict erupts only for Captain Britain's sidekick Jackdaw to use his telepathic powers to bring about a peace brokered over a shared love of tea. Even under the thin veneer of metaphor this story perpetuates the myth of atavism that pervades many media by reducing the Troubles to a localized conflict, forgetting the colonial history and complicated political landscape underlying the violence. Barton describes how such simplifications have allowed the British Government "to be represented as honest broker in a battle between two sides of warring fanatics. Why those fanatics should have arrived at that point is considered to be a matter in the so far distant past as to be unworthy of consideration" (Barton, 2005 169).

This apes and angels dichotomy is so embedded in the DNA of comic books that even those superheroes identified as Irish-American continue the theme. When Irish-American writer-artist Frank Miller began his celebrated run on *Daredevil* he relied on familiar stereotypes to emphasize the character's Irish-American roots. For instance, Daredevil's boxer father became a hard-drinking wreck who was physically abusive to the young Matt Murdoch, while the hero's previously deceased mother was revealed to be alive and living as a nun. If Miller's apes and angels contrast was not obvious enough the first appearance of Murdoch's mother recreates the Pietà with Margret Murdoch as the Virgin Mary in full habit.

More recently, Captain America's background was revisited in a storyline that detailed Steve Roger's childhood as the son of Irish immigrants growing up in a New York tenement. Conforming to type Steve's father is an abusive drunk who believes that his inability to find work is because "the foreman hates Irish", while his mother is a paragon of virtue. Similarly, when Miguel O'Hara, the Spider-Man of 2099, was introduced in 1992 he also had an abusive Irish father suggesting that Marvel had anticipated that the Irish would continue to be apes and angels well into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Stereotypes were also regularly enlisted by US creators in creating Australian superheroes or setting adventures in the region. For instance, Australian superhero creator Ryan Griffen highlighted the little-known Avenger Manifold as an example of an Indigenous Australian hero, but cautioned, "these are superheroes that were created by people outside of Australia and they're just using either stereotypes or what they can quickly Google to help fuel the creation of the characters". Traditionally, Australian characters in international comics were rare. For example, while the "Batmen of All Nations" team-up from *Detective Comics #215* (Jan, 1955) included Ranger from "Faraway Australia" he only received two lines of dialogue in the issue and was not included when the team reappeared in *World's Finest Comics #89* (July, 1957). This apathy vanished in the 1980s, which Geographer Alyson L Greiner identifies as the "decade of the 'Australian Invasion'" (Greiner, 2001). Pointing to Outback heroes such as Mad Max and Crocodile Dundee, Greiner describes how "Representations of Australia in American cinema and broadcast media became much more commonplace" (Greiner, 2001 186). Comic book publishers in the United States and United Kingdom also attempted to take advantage of the unprecedented interest in Australia. For example, in 1988: Batman fought the boomerang-wielding "Aborigine"; the UK's alternative comic book character Tank Girl roamed a post-apocalyptic Australia with her kangaroo boyfriend; and even the X-Men moved their headquarters to the Outback. These comics tended to perpetuate depictions of Australia as a frontier free from the stifling conformity of progress. For example, presaging the casting of Australian actor Hugh Jackman as Canadian character Wolverine in cinema, in *Uncanny X-Men #230* (June, 1988) X-Man Rogue comments on her teammate's seeming suitability to the Australian Outback, "Wolvie loves this wilderness. It's as

elemental as he is... country where you work to nature's schedule and rules not some arbitrary man-made timepiece".

It must be acknowledged that some of the responsibility for perpetuating these outdated conventions rests with cultural nationalist policies in Ireland and Australia. As tourism scholar Sue Beeton notes, since Federation in 1901 Australian culture has often sought to forge a distinct identity by positioning the Australian bush and bushman as a "symbol of nationalism" (Beeton, 2004 126). This tactic served to differentiate Australia from European idylls and urban centers by depicting Australia as a distant and often unforgiving rural landscape thinly populated by a hard-working and humble people. However, in an attempt to forge a distinct national identity, such cultural nationalism has implicitly endorsed colonialist images of Australia. This tradition has continued with many scholars pointing out how despite Australia being one of the most urbanised countries in the world today, local arts and culture often depict the nation as a "blank canvas" free from the restrictions of the modern world (Greiner, 2001 186).

With the proven success of Outback-set Australian stories, there has often been little appetite among local or international creators to move comic book adventures to the urban environments where superheroes traditionally operate – with no buildings to leap in a single bound, how can a Superman test his mettle in the Outback? This mythologized terrain does produce heroes with many of my respondents pointing to bushman descendants Crocodile Dundee when identifying local heroes, but noted that these heroes did not fully align with the classical superhero, with typical responses including, "Could you imagine someone like Crocodile Dundee being a superhero with a cape?" Part of the incompatibility between the superhero and the rural "battler" is the bushman's inability to accommodate what Grant Morrison identifies as the "the transcendent element in the Superman equation": The secret identity (Morrison, 2011 9). Sociologist Karina J. Butera notes of the "toughness, independence and resilience" of Australian masculinity and mateship that "overt displays of vulnerability or emotion are to be avoided" (Butera, 2008 269). The superhero's transformation from a mild-mannered civilian identity to a paragon of masculinity is widely considered a key convention of the genre and central to the superhero's appeal. While the urban centres of US superhero stories allow these characters to hide out as reporters and playboy billionaires, the unrelenting rural experience of the bushman and his descendants does not permit such moments of vulnerability. Indeed, Rose Lucas describes Mad Max as "a superman who refuses to resume the costume of the ordinary" (Lucas, 1998 143) – Clark Kent wouldn't last five minutes in this mythic Outback.

Although traditional Australian heroic types are at odds with the superhero's vulnerable civilian identity, they also tend to resist the garishness of the costume-clad alter-ego. In his article "An Australian Superman" philosopher Damon Young imagines what might have happened if the infant Superman had landed in the Australian Outback rather than the cornfields of Kansas. Noting the centrality of the image of "tough, simple, hard-working diggers" to Australian national identity, Young concludes that his Australian Superman "is more likely to become a cautious provincial survivor than a messianic hero" (Young, 2014 29-30). This democratic spirit still resonates in Australian cultural life and is often demonstrated through "Tall Poppy Syndrome", which journalist Peter Hartcher identifies as an "unspoken national ethos" that "no Australian is permitted to assume that he or she is better than any other Australian. How is this enforced? By the prompt corrective of levelling derision" (Booker 2018). It is hard to imagine a taller poppy than the spandex-wearing popinjays who leap from the covers of US comics. As Australian Wonder Woman artist Nicola Scott summarized, "Our superheroes are like Mad Max. When I think of an Australian superhero I don't think of someone wearing spandex – that's a really American image".

Fans and creators that I have interviewed in my research have consistently pointed to the tenets of Australian national identity, including the Outback, bushman, and egalitarianism when describing local heroes, with many suggesting that these characteristics were at odds with the urban, optimistic, and individualistic superhero. While these qualities were used to forge a distinct Australian national identity, these foundational myths do not align with the experience of many Australians who today live in one of the world's most urbanized countries. That Australian superhero fans struggled to imagine superheroes existing in a local context testifies to the hegemonic dominance of this particular brand of national identity.

As Australia was seeking to distinguish itself from Britain in the late 1800s, a similar cultural nationalist movement emerged in Ireland to augment political efforts. To emphasize a distinct Irish national identity this cultural movement defined itself in opposition to the modern, urban Britain by focusing on rural life, Catholicism, and an imagined heroic past. However, as McLoone notes, "In accepting and promoting a romantic rural sense of Irish identity, therefore, cultural nationalism ironically accepted one of the great stereotypes of Ireland produced by imperialism" (McLoone, 2000 37). The influence of the cultural nationalist movement is still evident in Ireland today with promotional materials, films, and other aspects of culture making use of widely recognised, but antiquated conventions. So, it would be unfair to criticise international comic creators for using the stereotypes that Ireland and Australia often employ for economic benefit.

This irony is deftly satirised in Garth Ennis' 1991 Judge Dredd story arc "Emerald Isle". As an Irish creator Ennis was well positioned to subvert the misconceptions held about Ireland, while also highlighting the role that the Irish play in promoting them. In the story, Dredd investigates the death of an ambassador killed with a roast potato. Dredd's search brings him to the Emerald Isle (formerly Ireland), which was developed as a "theme park" littered with stereotypes from Ireland's past including leprechauns, thatched cottages, and potatoes. In the end, the assassins are revealed to be the terrorist group The Sons of Erin whose aim is, "no more patronising our entire nation for the stereotyped garbage in a tourist brochure". "Emerald Isle" raises oft-ignored questions about the disconnect between the stereotypes of Ireland and the reality, as well as the complicity of the Irish in fostering the outdated images they so often condemn.

In the past Irish comic creators have been rare. Originally from County Down in Northern Ireland, *Preacher* creator Garth Ennis was arguably the first Irish comic creator to gain an international reputation. His breakout book was *Troubled Souls*, which first appeared in the short-lived British comics anthology *Crisis*. The Belfast-set drama tells the story of a young man caught up in sectarian violence. When I interviewed Ennis about his intentions for the 1989 story he explained,

Certainly, I wanted to avoid the usual comic book treatment of Northern Ireland, although even at that point there was precious little. I think it did crop up now and again in Batman and Spider-Man. I remember someone showing me this, it might even have been [*Troubled Souls* artist] John McCrea, and thinking 'Well we won't do it like this'.

*Troubled Souls* challenged representations of Ireland, providing a story where Eden is an illusion, revolutionaries are rarely romantic, and modern conflicts defy ahistorical simplifications.

This example demonstrates the need for local creators to redress the imbalances in comic books including superhero stories. In recent years both Ireland and Australia have seen an increase in comic book creators working on local books, with some going on to write and draw superheroes for international publishers. Irish comic book creator Will Sliney attributes Ireland's unprecedented production to the web's ability to narrow boundaries,

"I think it basically boiled down to people realising here that you could do those kind of jobs; I would imagine there was plenty of generations of artists before us that would have had the same interest, but they wouldn't have had the same reach because they weren't able to show their work online".

As a comparatively new nation, the US lacked an obvious folkloric tradition, a vacuum superhero helped fill. However, as Grant Morrison notes with British heroes "local legend could always be relied upon to produce superheroes from whole cloth" (Morrison, 2011 51). Similarly, Irish creators have frequently drawn on local myth to develop their heroes. For instance, the Irish legendary warrior CúChulainn not only gets a Kirby-esque biography in *Celtic Warrior*, but is evoked in comics such as *The Wren*, *Hound*, and *Big Bastard*.

In the final pages of *Celtic Warrior* creator Sliney links the mythological CúChulainn with Irish revolutionary leader Michael Collins, over a montage of heroes "Who fought for us so that



every generation of the Irish people can assert their right to freedom and sovereignty". In *On the Origin of Superheroes* Chris Gavalier demonstrates the close proximity of the superhero to the revolutionary, explaining "oppression is radiation. It's the original cosmic gamma ray bomb [or] spider-bite mutation that births the superhero" later adding, "superheroes love oppression. It justifies their revolutionary instincts" (Gavalier, 2015 52-5). The boundary between the superhero and revolutionary collapses completely in Irish comics, with real life Republican figures such as Michael Collins, Wolfe Tone, and Countess Markievicz reimagined as superheroes in books like *The League of Volunteers*, *Celtic Clan*, and *The Crimson Blade*.

Although Irish comics rework the revolutionary as a superhero, they also highlight the political and historical issues omitted or glossed over by international titles. For example, the first issue of *The Crimson Blade* focuses on the influence of the American and French Revolutions on the Irish Rebellion of 1798. There is also a sustained effort to unpack the dichotomies that pervade depictions of Ireland. *Glimmer Man* and *The League of Volunteers* acknowledge that Irish people served on both sides of the Spanish Civil War. Further dispelling lazy contrasts, Protestant characters in *The Crimson Blade* are amongst the staunchest supporters of an Irish Free State.

However, it must be acknowledged that these books have comparatively small readerships. Thus, their capacity to challenge long-standing stereotypes is limited. As Will Sliney who transitioned from his early Irish comics to drawing Spider-Man for Marvel explained, "as the industry here is growing, and people's reputations are growing, [international publishers] are coming here to find our stories" with the artist suggesting that "per capita, we probably have more people working in Marvel than anyone else". Indeed, Sliney joins a host of Irish creators such as Stephen Byrne, Declan Shalvey, and Maura McHugh, who began their careers working for Irish publishers before moving on to US superhero titles like *Justice League*, *Deadpool*, and *Hellboy*.

These creators are now in a position to redress outdated conventions in international publications. For instance, Shalvey recently published the Limerick-set graphic novel *Savage Town* with US publisher Image Comics. Shalvey described how he wanted, "to show how Ireland is a great place but not the diddly-eye, not the picturesque tourist postcard image that everybody has gotten used to seeing" (Leogue 2017). Shalvey, like his contemporaries, has never been better positioned to dismantle outdated conventions and allow a more balanced depiction of Ireland to flourish on the page.

In recent years the ever-shrinking digital world has also enabled Australian creators to shape these US icons, with many Australian writers and artists working on high-profile US comics. As Tom Taylor who writes Spider-Man and Suicide Squad argues, "there aren't enough Australian superheroes and there definitely should be more". Taylor has based some of his US comics in Australia. For instance, in one Melbourne-set *Injustice* story a local superhero attempts to assert Australian sovereignty in the face of a now villainous Superman, but his powers are revealed to be a dull imitation of the Man of Steel and he is quickly overpowered. This could be read as a metaphor for how US superhero comics dominate Australia, but it also points to the subtle influence Australian creators are now able to cast over an increasingly global comic book industry. Taylor's Superman does not touch down in some mythologized Outback, but an accurate depiction of urban Australia, with details specific to the writer's Melbourne. The success of these Australian creators helps to dismantle the stereotypes of an outdated national identity. Nonetheless, these are still US comics, but in 2016 local creators offered a significant contribution to the superhero pantheon that was unambiguously Australian: *Cleverman*.

At the center of the Australian superhero TV show and comic *Cleverman* is Koen West, a reluctant superhero who has recently become the Cleverman, a conduit for Australia's First Nations people to the Dreaming. In his essay "The Cultural Cringe" Arthur Phillips identifies a lack of distinct cultural traditions in Australia for prompting unfavorable comparisons between local artistic works and those produced overseas (Phillips 1950). However, *Cleverman* makes use of Indigenous Australian culture to serve as a point of differentiation, with creator Ryan Griffen explaining "These are 60,000-year-old stories that have never been told in this sort of realm and that is what makes us unique, and that is what broadcasters around the world are looking for, something new, something different". Through a deft mix of Indigenous mythology and superhero

conventions *Cleverman* demonstrates it is possible to reconcile those tensions that once kept Australia and the superhero apart.

Superheroes were born in the glass and steel of 1930s American cities, and, in updating the Western gunfighter, they came to exemplify what Robert Jewett and John Shelton Lawrence described as the American monomyth (Jewett and Lawrence 2002). For much of their comic book history these characters tended to be written and illustrated by New York-based artists whose efforts to create international characters often relied heavily on stereotypes. In the past international comic book creators have been cautious about contributing to a genre synonymous with US cultural imperialism. However, with the growing global popularity of superheroes across multiple media platforms there have been more concerted efforts to rework the superhero in a number of countries and regions. As the Irish and Australian examples discussed in this paper illustrate, these efforts to extend the superhero globally can sometimes meet resistance with the conventions of the distinctly US genre chafing with the tenets of cultural nationalism. However, as Joseph Dittmer notes, "Even if the superhero genre is primarily associated with the United States and carries the trace of its origins, it is nevertheless a resolutely transnational phenomenon whose appeal exceeds national borders" (Dittmer, 2012 5). Indeed, emboldened by the web, local international book communities have blossomed in recent years with these creators better placed to adapt the superhero to a local setting. Some of these creators have gone on to shape the superhero internationally challenging outdated stereotypes. The successful examples from Ireland and Australia in this paper are joined by other international contributions such as the *Burka Avenger* from Pakistan, the *Austrian Superheroes*, *Tabi Po* from the Philippines that also balance local interests with high-flying adventures. Collectively these international superheroes (and their creators and fans) are helping to turn an American archetype into a global icon.

## REFERENCES

- Are 'Comic' Books Harmful to Minds of Young Readers? (1948, December 28). *Sydney Morning Herald*.
- Barton, R. (2005). *Irish national cinema*. Routledge.
- Beeton, S. (2004). Rural tourism in Australia — has the gaze altered? Tracking rural images through film and tourism promotion. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 6(3), 125–135. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.479>
- Booker, N. (2018, August 18). *Our Colonial Columnist continues to deliver his own views and opinions*. Riddle Magazine. <https://riddlemagazine.com/antipodean-adventures/>.
- Butera, K. J. (2008). 'Neo-mateship' in the 21st century: changes in the performance of Australian masculinity. *Journal of Sociology*, 44(3), 265–281.
- Curtis, L. P. (1997). *Apes and angels: the Irishman in Victorian caricature* (Revised). Smithsonian Institution Press.
- Davis, A. (2006). *Alan Davis*. (E. Nolen-Weathington, Ed.). TwoMorrows.
- de Nie, M. (2005). Pigs, Paddies, Prams and Petticoats: Irish Home Rule and the British Comic Press, 1886-93. *History Ireland*, 13(1), 42–47.
- Dittmer, J. (2013). *Captain America and the nationalist superhero: metaphors, narratives, and geopolitics*. Temple University Press.
- Duncan, R., & Smith, M. J. (2009). *The power of comics: history, form, and culture*. Continuum.
- Gavaler, C. (2015). *On the origin of superheroes: from the big bang to Action Comics no. 1*. University of Iowa Press.
- Greiner, A. L. (2001). Popular Culture, Place Images, and Myths: The Promotion of Australia on American Television. *The Journal of Popular Culture*, 35(1), 185–193. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0022-3840.2001.3501.185.x>
- Haltorf, M. (1993). In Quest of Self-Identity: Gallipoli, Mateship, and the Construction of Australian National Identity. *Journal of Popular Film and Television*, 21(1), 27–36. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01956051.1993.9943973>
- Jewett, R., & Lawrence, J. S. (2002). *The myth of the American superhero*. W.B. Eerdmans.



- Leogue, J. (2017, March 8). New crime comic book from Irish artist to be set in Limerick. *The Examiner*. <http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/new-crime-comic-book-from-irish-artist-to-be-set-in-limerick-444618.html>.
- Lucas, R. (1998). Dragging it out: Tales of masculinity in Australian cinema, from Crocodile Dundee to Priscilla, queen of the desert. *Journal of Australian Studies*, 22(56), 138–146. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14443059809387368>
- McCloud, S. (2006). *Making comics: storytelling secrets of comics, manga and graphic novels*. Harper.
- McLoone, M. (2000). *Irish film: the emergence of a contemporary cinema*. British Film Institute.
- Morrison, G. (2011). *Supergods: our world in the age of the superhero*. Jonathan Cape Ltd.
- Phillips, A. (1950). The Cultural Cringe. *Meanjin*, 9(4), 299–302.
- Walshe, S. (2012). 'Ah, laddie, did ye really think I'd let a foine broth of a boy such as yerself get splattered...?' Representations of Irish English Speech in the Marvel Universe. In F. Bramlett (Ed.), *Linguistics and the study of comics* (pp. 264–290). essay, Palgrave Macmillan.
- Young, D. (2014). An Australian Superman. *Island*, (137), 27–30.

# Ethnic Cultural and Modernity Extension of Chinese Characters

**Prof. Su Xin Chun**

Tan Kah Kee College Xiamen University

The Center of the National Language Monitoring and Research for Education and Teaching Material Xiamen University

## ABSTRACT

Chinese character contains rich national culture, it's can be concrete, either representational. The pictographic characters of Han nationality have the cultural spirit of "instant surrounding-distant prediction", which takes images from (anomalous change in) own body and surrounding", although the pictographic in the history of Chinese character had been abraded, but the ideographic value is stable. The structure of Chinese characters has balance and integrity with national psychology. Chinese character and Chinese language have a mutual relation, complementary each other, and has a close relation. People are using ancient Chinese characters directly to show "bored" in 困 (jiong) and "continuously, many times" in 又双叒叕 (you shuang ruo zhuo), directly perceived through the sense and interesting, these characters show the cultural spirit of Chinese characters in modern development.

**Keywords:** Chinese Character, National Culture, Pictograph, Representational

### 一、Chinese Characters that Contain the Rich National Culture of the Han Nationality

The culture of Han nationality that is contained, carried, and showed in Chinese characters is very rich. Furthermore the appearance of the culture of Han nationality in Chinese characters is very concrete. There are proverbs stating that "one Chinese character has one cultural story" and "one Chinese character is one cultural picture". The national culture of a Chinese character also can be representational. The reason why is "representational", because it still shows spirit aspects in abstract, general, and universal, under the concrete external form. There are differences between representational and concrete. "Concrete" means that the object can be seen, can be felt, while "representational" refers to the things that are shown in spirit aspects of general abstract behind the concrete form, e.g. aesthetics of symmetry, thinking of awareness, the form, sound (phonetic), and meaning in language have a very close relation.

The square form of word pattern and monosyllabic sound, are the cultural factors that play roles at a deep level. Many western scholars have used highly generalized and admiring words to express the rich Han national culture in Chinese characters. For example, the founder of structural linguistics in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Ferdinand de Saussure, said that "ideograph and speaking language words are the symbols of the idea for Han nationality (Chinese)." As translated by Gao Mingkai in 'Course in General Linguistic', Commercial Press, 1999, pg. 51, in his study in the relation between the writing (Chinese characters) and language, he (Ferdinand) stated that their study just limited on the system of phonetic, especially just limited on today used (pg.51). The famous Swedish sinologist, Klas Bernhard Johannes Karlgren stated "*the day Chinese abandon Chinese characters are the day they abandon their cultural foundation*" (Sound and Symbol in Chinese, Oxford, 1923). British linguist, Palmer, in 'An Introduction to Modern Linguistic', translated by Lirong, et .al. , Commercial Press, 1983, pg.99, said that "in China, as in Egypt, writing (words/characters) is nothing but a system of stylized and simplified pictures. This means that the written language is independent of the various changes in spoken language (Palmer, an Introduction to Modern Linguistic, Chinese translation version, pg.99)

## 二、Three levels of national cultural connotation of Chinese characters

Many scholars have analyzed the strong and rich national cultural connotation of Chinese characters from different angles. I would like to divide then into three different levels.

### (一) The pictographic level of Chinese characters

The pictographic level of Chinese characters refers to concrete word (Chinese characters) that show the direct, concrete characteristics that are related to the things that look like or nearly look like other things. This is the characteristic of "instant surrounding-distant prediction", which takes images from (anomalous changes in) own body and surrounding". "Afterword" in 'Shuowen Jiezi'[①] has an in-depth discourse on this. For example "looks up to observe the phenomenon of the sky, bow to observe the laws of the earth, see the word symbols of birds and beasts, instant surrounding-distant prediction" take images from (anomalous changes in) own body and surrounding, hence the beginning of 《易》yí[②], 八卦 *bagua* (the eight trigrams), to show a fundamental pattern on how things were changing. " The words (Chinese characters) below are examples related to “禽” *qin* (birds) :



“鸟” *niao* (birds):

At the note of 'Shuowen Jiezi', the original description about the Chinese character which describes the characteristics of pictograph “鸟”*niao* (birds) is stated: Long tail bird is called 𪇐, pictographic word. Bird leg looks like 匕, therefore the word form is using 匕 as radical. Besides, short tail bird is called 隹“*zhuī*”, long tail bird is called 鸟“*niao*”, these are the difference of the kind of birds in detail, but there is not any different in general.

“乌” *wu* (dark): This note in 'Shuowen Jiezi' also describes about the word of “乌” *wu*, stated “乌” *wu* is the filial birds, this bird feeds his parent. 'Xiao Er Ya'<sup>3</sup> stated that this pictograph symbolized a kind of bird is called crow (乌鸦 *wuya*). The difference between these two Chinese character is “鸟” *niao* has “eye” (refer to the dot in this word), otherwise “乌” *wu* does not have. The pure dark of crow makes the eye get invisible.



“羽”*yu* (feather):

In 'Shuowen Jiezi' the pictograph of “羽”*yu* symbolizes a pair of bird wings when it stands. Upside looks like broad shoulders, below looks like long feathers, refers to feathers in bird wings that make bird flies.

“燕”*yan* (swallow) in 'Shuowen Jiezi' is a pictograph that symbolizes “mouth with things, opened wings, forked tail.”

Although there are only a few hundred pictographs in Chinese characters, these Chinese characters build the core of the Chinese character construction system, which affects all the Chinese characters formed on their basis.

<sup>3</sup> Ancient dictionary in China

The pictographs of Chinese character have evolved for thousands of years, and some of the changes are quite obvious and serious. For example, some appear as "half glyph-half phonetic", such as, ideographs, pictographs; Some even appear as "symbol characters", such as “又” ( 又 ) (again)、“邓”*deng* (鄧)、“鸡”*ji* (雞)、“观”*guan* (觀)、“发”*fa* (發) (髮)、“对”*dui* (對)、“戏”*xi* (戲)、“欢”*huan* (歡)、“艰”*jian* (艱)、“难”*nan* (難)、“叠”*die* (疊)、“劝”*quan* (勸). The Chinese character of “又 *you*” in the following compound words That is, the "and" glyph in the following compounded Chinese characters has been completely unable to see its function as ideographic.

Some of the methods and processes are multiplication and simplification. Some change from the configuration foundation. All can lead to the function of ideographic decline. However, although these Chinese characters mentioned above have varieties in their transformation, the basic function of “expressing the meaning by its form” is retained. The form of ideogram Chinese characters——“The whole meaning in Chinese character that composed by the partial meaning (which is called as “会意”) is ideographical: the “形(form)” of “形声(pictograph-phonetic)” in a word is ideographical. Phoneme in Picto-phonetic words usually also “meaning inside phoneme (sound)” “phoneme (sound) sustain meaning” “phoneme (sound) and meaning are close”. The basic characteristic of Chinese characters is changing from “hieroglyphs” to “ideogram” but this basic function of ideogram is restrained.

(二) The national psychology expressed in the configuration of Chinese characters.

National psychology is an abstract content. It belongs to the psychological, spiritual content. Integrity, balance, and aesthetics, are some common requirements in psychology. These are shown through the configuration and assignment, and also the configuration and combination of Chinese characters. The national culture in this respect is not as intuitive as the above “showing meaning by form”, but it is still analytical, understandable, perceptible and comprehensible.



For example, “窃” *qie* and “寇” *kou*, in ‘Shuowen Jiezi’ pictographs of “寇” *kou*, showed somebody enter the room beat and kill somebody, is clearly shown on the glyph. . “窃” *qie* is minor(crime) ,“寇” *kou* is a major crime,

Another examples are “宗”*zong* and “庙”*miao*. These two characters means temple, both came from one ancestor. Nothing shows more respect for our ancestors that to worship them in an ancestral temple.

(三) The close relation between Chinese characters and Chinese language

The close relationship between Chinese characters and the Chinese language is mainly manifested in two aspects: adaptability, and complementary.

“Adaptability” means suitable and appropriate. For example, there is independence and no relation between square form in Chinese character and monosyllable in Chinese language, glyph and syllable, syllable and syllable.

“Complementary” means both sides can adapt and complement each other. An example is the complementary between the small number of syllables and a huge number of glyphs in the Chinese language; the combination of the glyphs in Chinese characters with syllables and rhymes in the Chinese language.

三、 The modernity extension of cultural spirit in Chinese characters

Below are two examples :

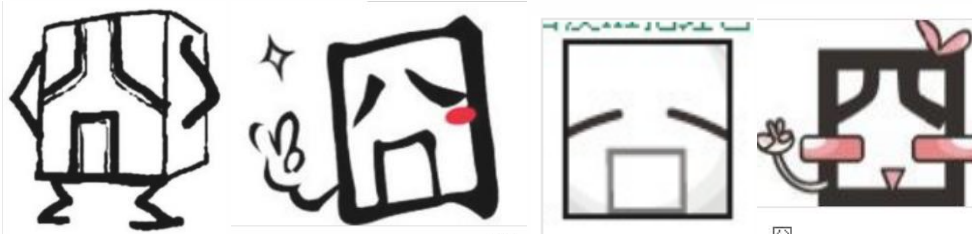
(一) the example of “囧”(jiong)

In ancient time, this Chinese character's meaning was “bright”. It was written in the ancient Chinese dictionary ‘Yubian\_part of jiong’:“囧 jiong means bright”. “bright as the moon in autumn (囧囧秋月明 it can be also written as“炯炯秋月明”; 囧 and 炯 has same pronounce as *jiong*) ”,



“炯炯有神 *jiong jiong you shen* ( means bright eyes )”“囧然 *jiong ran* (means bright appearance)”“囧彻 *jiong che* (means bright)”

In the web-based era, this Chinese character means: “bored, sad, helpless, embarrassed, depressed”. “囧剧 *jiong ju* (means “embarrassed” movie)”, “囧吧 *jiong ba* (means funny jokes website) “囧途 *jiong tu* (means embarrassed way)”“囧人 *jiong ren* (means embarrassed person)”“囧人生 *jiong rensheng* (means embarrassed life)”“囧倒 *jiong dao* (means embarrassed)”



Two meanings mentioned above, especially the last meaning, without know this Chinese character, we can know the meaning by seeing the picture. Some people use this Chinese characters as a symbol in the web, others said that this character is the cultural symbol, some has collected hundred of this character's meaning, and show that this character has different meanings. This paper is not concern study about this explanation, but highly agree that this is a “pictograph word”, through the change of form in Chinese character can change the meaning.

(二) The example of “又双叒叕 *you shuang ruo zhuo*”

“又 *you*”“双 *shuang*”“叒 *ruo*”“叕 *zhuo*”. These four Chinese charaters have different meanings, especially two last characters 如: “叒”(ruó) was name of tree in ancient mythology. ‘Shuowen Jiezi’stated: “叒”(ruó) when the sun was rising up from the east, was shining on this tree, the *ruo* tree.”“叕”(zhuò) 1. cluster. 2.short, not enough: “圣人之思脩，愚人之思~。”“a wise man is wise, a fool man is short-sighted”.

but, in these few years, there were appeared some examples like this:

1. “特斯拉又双叒叕降价，要不咱们再等等”  
(Tesla cutting price for many times, lets we wait again).
2. “特朗普又双叒叕攻击福奇了”  
(Trump goes after Fauci for many times).
3. “又双叒叕是连州，省级荣誉，清远首个”  
(Lianzhou, Qingyuan consecutively got provincial honor).
4. “祝贺广东队又双叒叕获得全国篮球冠军”  
(Congratulation to the Guangdong team for winning national basketball competitions for many times).
5. “CBA 又双叒叕写错别字!该请个语文老师了”(CBA did misspelling continuously, must to get language teacher).
6. “林丹又双叒叕输了,这次竟然遭 90 后小将横扫”(Lin Dan lost in a row for many times, and this time he was being defeated by the young post-90s).
7. “又双叒叕是他!赵睿砍 24+10 率队攻克红山猪年完美收官”. (It’s him for many times! Zhao Rui cut 24+10 leading team to complete the pig year of Red Mountain).
8. “祝贺东莞又双叒叕获得粤联赛总冠军”.  
(Congratulation to DongGuan on winning Championship of Guangdong League continuously).

“𠂇” (*ruo*) is formed by three “又” (*you*), “𠂇”(zhuo) is formed by four “又”(you). In Chinese characters, double formed characters have meaning as “many” “heavy” “complex” and “far”. Example: “磊 *lei*” “淼 *miao*” “晶 *jing*” “犇 *ben*”. The structure of “又 *you*” “双 *shuang*” “𠂇 *ruo*” “𠂇 *zhuo*” also have special place which can be understood easily by the form characters. This is the national psychology contained in Chinese characters.

The relation between Chinese character and Han national culture is very close, but it is still changing. The relation between change or not change, how is the process, what is not changed, still requires an in-depth and careful study, and also accurate judgment. The key is to know the characteristics of the Chinese culture spirit expressed by Chinese characters that have a long history, comprehensive, and stable history. Long history refers since the original oracle bone script, the basic features of Chinese characters have not been interrupted, although has a variety of characters such as *dazhuan* (big seal style script), *xiaozhuan* (small seal style script), *lishu* (official script), *kaishu* (regular script), *xingshu* (running script), *caoshu* (cursive script), as well as continuous development and simplification, its fundamental spirit and principles are not changed. Comprehensive refers to the multi-aspects and multi-level in combination, crossing, fusion, and bearing of Chinese characters to Han national culture. Stable refers to the relation of the Chinese character to Han National culture, unchanged spirit, and basic principles. These include the relation between Chinese characters and Chinese language. These basic principles have not changed. The change is only in the degree of strength, the expression of direct and indirect expression.

# **Superheroes Across Borders: Indonesian Domestic Workers (IDWs) as Transnational Mothers**

**Tri Murniati**

Universitas Jenderal Soedirman

[tri.murniati@unsoed.ac.id](mailto:tri.murniati@unsoed.ac.id)

## **ABSTRACT**

Due to the nature of their employment, Indonesian Domestic Workers (IDWs) are conditioned to execute mothering from afar which is known as transnational mothers. In this article, I take the liberty of recognizing transnational mothers as superheroes across borders. A metaphor particularly invented to shed light at these women's hard-working qualities aims at valorizing IDWs as transnational mothers who are oftentimes overlooked. IDWs as transnational mothers, I argue, embody the traits of 'a superhero.' To have a clear picture of IDWs [who are mothers] as superheroes, I focus on examining a memoir written by Bayu Insani titled *TKW Menulis* (IDWs Write). Juxtaposing the discourse of transnational mothers and the conventions of superhero genre, I trace a red thread connecting transnational mothers and superheroes. The result shows that Insani undergoes a mission of 'rescuing' her family to keep it safe [financially]. Similar to superheroes' prosocial mission, Insani takes action of working abroad for the sake of her family. Her superpower comes into being by enduring and overcoming the challenges of working abroad. These qualities are what bring her as a superhero across border.

**Keywords:** IDWs, Mission, Mothering From Afar, Superheroes, Transnational Mother

## **INTRODUCTION**

The presence of female migrant workers is an inevitable reality and some of them are mothers who have to leave their children behind. By nature, migrant workers are crossing borders—both concrete and abstract—to work in the host country. Due to the condition of this particular employment, these mothers are conditioned and have to execute mothering from afar. These migrant mothers are known as transnational mothers. Scholars such as Javiera Cienfuegos Illanes (2010) and Rosa Maria Sternberg (2010)—who examined Peruvian and Latina migrant mothers—argue that transnational mothers exist as one of the consequences of the feminization of migration underlining the high participation of women in the workforce. Such an argument is in line with the findings of Fransisca Ria Susanti (2013) and Dewi Anggraeni (2006) who observed the presence of Indonesian Domestic Workers (IDWs)—many of them are mothers—in countries such as Hong Kong, Singapore, and Malaysia. This indicates transnational mothers are a world-wide issue.

According to Elisabeth Dewi in her article titled "Changing Perceptions of "Good" Mothering and Family Roles among Indonesian Female Domestic Workers," mothering from a distance creates what she calls as "a dislocated chain linking a woman as a mother, another woman as a carer, and their children, in terms of the provision of love, care, and supervision" (2018: 209). Dewi highlights the shifting of traditional mothering due to the process of migration. The practice of mothering across borders, in this case, does disrupt the traditional notion of motherhood which dictates that a good mother is the one staying with their children. It refers to the patriarchal views of motherhood which "depicts motherhood as an inherently gendered role and locks women into

inevitable biological reproduction that denies their identities and selfhood outside this role" (Dewi, 2018: 209). This means women are perceived to be responsible for child nurturing. Such a notion supports the common view that a woman's place is at home (Parreñas 40). Therefore, when a mother has to be separated from their children due to her working condition, it creates a family separation which potentially leads to family disruption (c, 2014: 90). Nonetheless, it is not only the family left behind who is affected. The transnational mothers themselves are also at risk of emotional and psychological problems due to the separation.

This article discusses IDWs as transnational mothers who demonstrate extraordinary qualities despite the many challenges they face in the host country.<sup>4</sup> In this article, I take the liberty of recognizing these transnational mothers as superheroes across borders. A metaphor particularly invented to shed light at these women's hard-working aims at valorizing IDWs as transnational mothers who are often undermined and accused as being "bad and irresponsible mothers," mainly for leaving their children behind. IDWs as transnational mothers, I argue, embody the traits of superheroes. These migrant women are just like superheroes who save mankind from any villains or threats in order to keep the world in peace. In the context of IDWs, they are keeping their family economy in peace. In addition, IDWs who are mothers are facing another challenge in relation to their responsibility of child rearing, a responsibility commonly attached to women. The physical separation puts IDWs as transnational mothers in vain. To have a clear picture of IDWs as superheroes, their challenges and the efforts to overcome those challenges, I focus on examining a memoir written by Bayu Insani titled *TKW Menulis* (IDW Write)<sup>5</sup>. Insani is a returnee who has experiences of working abroad in countries such as Hong Kong and Malaysia.

To contextualize IDWs as superheroes, I begin by reviewing the major theoretical views on transnational mothers which provide a background on the definition and the challenges of being transnational mothers. The second section discusses superheroes genre underlining the common conventions attached to this genre. Next, I elaborate the two previous discussions as a perspective in reading and examining Insani's memoir. Based on the careful analysis of the memoir, I propose the following conclusions: first, Insani's memoir suggests that due to her family financial problem, she embarks on a journey of working abroad. This means, she undergoes a mission to save and protect her family economy which is similar to the kind of mission superheroes would do, saving and protecting people. Second, as a transnational mother, Insani experiences physical separation and is forced to execute mothering from afar. Her hard work in overcoming challenges of working abroad as well as fulfilling her maternal duty indicates her superpower. Such a power is what resembles superheroes' power used in securing people from any threats.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Transnational Mothers: A New Understanding of Motherhood*

Heather Millman (2013) in her article "Mothering from Afar" argues that motherhood is a relational concept which depends on the personal, social and cultural perceptions (71). Taking the case of transnational mothers, she further claims that the concept of motherhood is fluid and flexible. This means motherhood as a concept is contingent upon the circumstances of the mothers. Quoting Alzoubi (2011), Millman explicates that transnational mothers' experience of motherhood is mixed with intertwined dimensions of personal, sociocultural as well as economic (2013: 72). These dimensions situate transnational mothers to radically change their belief of ideal motherhood and at the same time shape a new understanding of motherhood.

Due to the nature of their employment, transnational mothers are not physically available for their children and family. This geographical separation positions transnational mothers to negotiate the [social] constructions of motherhood (Dewi, 2018: 217). Since they are unable to stay around their children, these mothers are transgressing the common social construction of

<sup>4</sup>Once they arrive in the host country, IDWs are facing challenges of language, socioeconomic, and cultural differences.

<sup>5</sup>TKW Menulis is a collaborative memoir written by Bayu Insani and Ida Raihan. This memoir consists of two parts. The first part is Insani's memoir and the second part is Raihan's memoir. Both memoirs highlight Insani's and Raihan's journey of working abroad as domestic worker and their participation in the world of creative writing.



motherhood which requires mothers to stay with their children. This means transnational mothers are susceptible to stigmatization of being irresponsible mother simply for not staying with their children. Rachel S. Parreñas in her book chapter "The Care Crisis in the Philippines: Children and Transnational Families in the New Global Economy" argues that migrant mothers are prone to media accusation than migrant fathers because of the assumptions that children left by their mothers are facing serious problem than those of migrant fathers (2002: 40). In a similar vein, Judith K Benhard et al. in their article titled "Transnational, Multi-Local Motherhood: Experiences of Separation and Reunification among Latin American Families in Canada" find similar observation that transnational mothers are at risk of stigmatization as well as social disapproval (2005: 5). This indicates that transnational mothers are more likely to experience psychological problems. Thus, migration affects not only the children and family left behind but also the transnational mothers themselves. It means transnational mothers are more likely to suffer from feelings of anger, guilt, hopelessness, and regret as the emotional consequence of the geographical separation (Benhard et al. 2005: 25; Parreñas, 2001: 361). Further, such emotional and psychological consequences point out that transnational mothers are more likely to experience a more profound challenge in relation to fulfilling their maternal role.

However, the physical distance does not necessarily impede transnational mothers to exercise mothering. Through negotiations, these women are constantly working on methods which work well for their current situation. In her article titled "Mothering from a Distance: Emotions, Gender, and Intergenerational Relations in Filipino Transnational Families" Parreñas points out three kinds of coping mechanism employed by Filipino transnational mothers. First, these mothers commodify their love by sending goods to their children. In a way, they fulfil and grant everything their children need and want. Second, the Filipino transnational mothers tend to repress their emotional strains. Parreñas points out that denying emotional cost is commonly employed among her interviewees. However, despite the emotional tensions, these transnational mothers try to amend the loss by keeping regular contact with their children and family. This is the third coping mechanism (Parreñas, 2001: 371-374). Nonetheless, the rationalization of the distance, according to Parreñas, can be tricky. Such a rationalization indicates a precedent that parents might stay abroad longer because "they are reassured that separation is manageable and does not mean the loss of intimacy" (Parreñas, 2001: 374). In light of Parreñas' observation on the coping mechanism exercised by the Filipino transnational mothers, Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo, and Ernestine Avila underline similar finding. In their article titled "'I'm Here, But I'm There': The Meanings of Latina Transnational Motherhood," they explicate some coping methods employed by a Latina transnational mother in fulfilling her maternal role namely by sending remittance and maintaining contact (1997: 557-8). In harmony with Parreñas, Hondagneu-Sotelo and Ernestine Avila, Millman argues that gift giving, and remittance serve as a strategy in exercising mothering from afar (2013: 78). This, of course, indicates a new understanding that the concept of motherhood has evolved and developed in accordance with the situation and condition of these transnational mothers.

#### *A Glance of Superheroes*

Christian Russell in his article titled "Heroic Moments: A Study of Comic Book Superheroes in Real-World Society" explicates that superhero is a general term for imaginative characters of hero with costumes or masks and they "may or may not have superhuman abilities like flight or super-strength" (122). Russell lists several types of superheroes namely human with superhuman abilities (The X-Men, Spider-Man, The Incredible Hulk, Captain Marvel), aliens (Superman), gods and goddesses (Thor), robots (Red Tornado), and costumed vigilantes (Batman, Green Arrow). Further he argues that these fictional heroes are "all inherently good and fight for justice" (Russell, 122). These two traits help people to identify a superhero.

Likewise, Peter Coogan in his book *Superhero: The Secret Origin of a Genre* adds and argues that people are able to identify a superhero because of the conventions of the superhero genre. This means the combination of the conventions such as those of setting, plot, icon, theme and character creates the genre (2006: 24). In defining the superhero, Coogan contends that it comprises characteristics of mission, powers, and identity (2006: 30). These three elements—mission, power, and identity or known as MPI—are fundamental to superhero genre. However, this does not mean that MPI are always ingrained in all superheroes. Batman, for

instance, is a good example of a superhero who does not own superpowers and the Incredible Hulk does not necessary carry out mission (Coogan, 2006: 40-41).

In general, Coogan explicates, the mission undergone by a superhero is for the benefit of others (2006: 31). In other words, such a mission is "prosocial and selfless, which means that his fight against evil must fit with the existing, professed mores of society and must not be intended to benefit or further his own agenda" (Coogan, 2006: 31). It is important to underline that undergoing a mission—which benefits others—is what makes a character a superhero. The second essential element is power. The hero's powers or superpowers, according to Coogan, are also easily recognized. He exemplifies Superman's powers which include super-strength and super-speed, tough, Coogan adds, such abilities "emphasize the exaggeration inherent in the superhero genre" (2006: 31-2). In a way, the easiest method to note superheroes' characteristic is by identifying what kinds of superpower they own. Next, costume and codename underscore superheroes' element of identity. Batman, Spider-Man, and Superman exemplify superheroes with special costumes. In addition, masks and capes are commonly used to conceal the real identity of the superheroes. Though mysterious identity is a typical convention, Coogan adds, this is not a compulsory (2006:42).

## DISCUSSION

### *Exercising Mothering from Afar: The Depiction of Transnational Mothers as Superheroes Across Borders in Bayu Insani's Memoir*

In the beginning of her memoir, Insani clearly states that her family financial crisis is what brings her to work abroad. Her decision to work abroad in order to get money in a relatively short time<sup>6</sup> highlights Insani's participation in the world of domestic employment following thousands of Indonesian women who have already embarked on a similar journey. Insani, in particular, sees herself fit in doing this work as she thinks herself lacking technical skills and education. Such a perception underlines the common assumption that this employment is do-able for everyone. In addition, employed as domestic workers in foreign countries, for example, Singapore and SAR Hong Kong, Insani and her fellow IDWs are able to earn money more than what their home country can offer (Susanti, 2013:22). In relation to this, Barbara Ehrenreich and Arlie Russell Hochschild find similar case in the context of Filipino migrant domestic workers (8). These two cases signify that global wage inequalities take role in encouraging women from poorer countries to work in richer countries. In this case, women from the Philippines and Indonesia are willing to work in countries such as Singapore and SAR Hong Kong. This is to say that these richer countries pay similar job more than what these women can earn in their home country. Therefore, this employment is oftentimes seen as a fast way to earn money. Insani illustrates this particular perception as she says, "in my opinion, if I stayed here in the village, I would not be able to pay my debt which was getting accumulated every single day. There was no other way but working abroad again" (2011: 4). The quote clearly implies a sign of pessimism underscoring Insani's helplessness that it is pointless to look for a job in the home country. She thinks that earning money in Indonesia will not help her much to pay the debt. In other words, Insani already has the assumption that working abroad offers far better opportunities of earning money, which is in line with what Susanti's, Ehrenreich's and Russell's findings in their observation of transnational mothers in Indonesia and the Philippines. The word "again" in the quote also indicates that this is not the first time for Insani to work abroad. In a way, she has proved that working abroad works to earn more money.

Insani's decision to work abroad is mainly because she feels responsible for helping her husband pay the debt and at the same time securing her children's future. It is not easy for her to finally decide to go abroad again. With a heavy heart, Insani says, "I asked my husband to allow me working abroad again in order to support the family economy and to save money for my

<sup>6</sup> Short time here refers to the better wage IDWs can get when working abroad. Thus, it is associated as enabling people to get money in a shorter time. If they work in their country, they might need a longer time to collect the same amount of money they earn from working abroad.

beloved children's future" (2011: 4). In Indonesia, when a married woman would like to apply for a job abroad, she needs approval from her husband. Insani further argues that her life situation is what drives her in taking action to save her family economy which is getting tighter as her husband can no longer work. To make things worse, she loses her house by the fire. This makes her even worried of her children future as she says "I felt helpless to think of my children's future. My life situation haunted me as if there was no way out unless I made decision to save my family economy. I tried to be a tough woman who was not easily crying over my current situation" (Insani and Raihan, 2011: 4). This quote demonstrates the driving force of Insani's decision to look for a job in a foreign country. In the sentence "my life situation haunted me as if there was no way out unless I made decision to save my family economy" illustrates a condition where a wife is taking the responsibility of earning money after her husband is failing to support the family. Indonesian women are no stranger to this. In addition, Insani heightens the urgency to work abroad because of the unbearable life condition as she says, "my life situation haunted me." She, in short, could not stand of the bitterness of her current life situation.

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that Insani undergoes a mission to save her family. This particular mission is not for the sake of herself but her family's welfare. Insani's mission resembles the kind of mission superheroes would do. Coogan underlines that superheroes missions have to be prosocial, sacrificing themselves for the sake of others (2006: 31). Insani, in this case, has displayed a selfless quality the ways in which she "sacrifices" herself as many Indonesian women out there to help their families.<sup>7</sup> She exemplifies Indonesian woman who participates in the workforce in order to support her family. Nonetheless, the remittance sent is oftentimes not only benefiting the nuclear family but also the extended family.

Embarking on a journey of family-saving mission, Insani has to be ready for any consequences that might come, so do any superheroes. Their path is not going to be easy for the villains are ready to attack them anytime. For Insani, the villains are in the form of working abroad challenges and one of them is to live separately from her beloved child. Working abroad does provide the challenge of physical separation from family and loved ones. By working across borders, Insani is taking the challenge of being a transnational mother and she is aware of this particular trial. She admits that she is already heart-broken once the approval letter is signed. Furthermore, she has already imagined that her parting with her son is going to be the hardest challenge, the meanest villain superheroes might have. She briefly narrates her concern as follows:

Not long after, my husband gave his approval for me to work abroad. To be honest, my maternal instinct was broken to pieces. As the letter signed, my soul shivered and shrieked. I felt like I was about to go far away leaving my beloved child and would never see him again. I was frightened to death. I was devastated and unable to bear the pain in my heart. If anyone asked: is there any mother who would like to be separated from her beloved? Everyone would answer: No. This was because every mother would always want the same thing, to be able to see their beloved children grow. Isn't it the greatest moment for a mother to be able to see her beloved grow? (2011: 4)

The above quote vividly illustrates Insani's mixed and devastated feelings as in "my soul shivered and shrieked," "I was frightened to death," and "I was devastated." These emotional reactions demonstrate how unimaginable it is for a mother to live without her children. Here, the readers can feel the personal conflict—the clash—between what Insani believes as the ideal motherhood and her future situation where she is away from her child. Her narration illustrates the psychological excess as future transnational mother would have. This particular situation illustrates what has previously mentioned by Parreñas and Benhard et al. that transnational mothers are at risk at

<sup>7</sup>Indeed, these women—wives, mothers, and daughters—are participating in the public domain which is previously reserved for men, husbands, fathers, and brothers. In Indonesia, men are the primary breadwinner, therefore, women are not [fully] responsible for the family economy. However, when the men cannot or fail to provide the basic necessity for the whole family, the women are taking over this particular responsibility.

stigmatization of being irresponsible mothers and social disapproval<sup>8</sup> mainly for leaving their children behind.

Being a transnational mother, then, means to be ready to transgress the ideal notion of motherhood. In Insani's case, she has the perception that a good mother is the one staying with her children. Therefore, she feels it hard to believe that she is going to 'betray' this belief. Nonetheless, the force of saving her family is stronger and as the future transnational mother, Insani has to be strong. She pulls herself together and gathers her strength to face all of the challenges. Like superheroes unleashing their superpowers in overcoming challenges, Insani's powers lies deep in her heart embodied as the spirit to move on and live the new life as migrant worker as well as a transnational mother. Not only experiencing the pain of physical separation, Insani is also facing problems of language and cultural differences. She admits that her first week working in Hong Kong is painful. She has to adapt to new things, and it is not easy. Insani briefly explains as she says:

After a week in the new place, the new environment, I found it hard to adapt. In addition, I cried a lot because I felt stupid. They were too kind, but I could not communicate well with them. Each time they said something or asked me to do something, I would always say "hoa/ok," however I actually could not comprehend what they said or asked me to do ... I felt terrible remembering the time when I first communicated with people in Hong Kong. (Insani and Raihan, 2011: 20)

The above quote clearly illustrates the challenge of adaptation to the host country. Language difference proves to impact the communication between Insani and her employers. When communication breakdown happens, it can affect the working performance as stated in "I actually could not comprehend what they said or asked me to do." Language embodies as a border which should be crossed. Later on, Insani finally finds a way to improve her language skill by learning it with her employer's children as she says "I had just realized that learning language with kids was much faster than learning with adults who were easily get irritated" (Insani and Raihan, 2011: 24). Language difference is not the only challenge Insani has to overcome. Cultural difference is another border she needs to cross. Understanding the values operated in the host country is needed in order to adapt well and survive. Insani confesses that her employers tell her not to cry or look gloomy. In Hong Kong, people believe that crying will bring a bad luck. Therefore, Insani says, people in Hong Kong are not keen on crying (2011: 19). Nonetheless, for Insani, crying helps her release the pain of living far away from home. Crying, thus, embodies two different perceptions of the host and home countries. This also serves as one of the coping mechanisms mentioned earlier by Parreñas that transnational mothers tend to repress their emotional tensions.

In combating the pain of living far away from family and especially from her beloved child, Insani regularly communicates with them through letters.<sup>9</sup> It takes her a month to finally have contact with her family. Through letters, Insani are able to share her update to her husband and beloved child as she says, "I told my husband and our dearest child that I started working" (2011: 22). Petty thingssuch as telling her daily activity can ease the pain of geographical separation. This is in line with Parreñas' findings that regular contact helps transnational mothers to cope with the psychological excess. Maintaining regular contact serves as a way to bridge the distance separated transnational mothers from their children and family.

In addition, Insani also benefits from the activity of writing. After sometimes, she manages to get a day off where she participates in a creative writing community. Her participation in this particular community has provided her a perfect defense mechanism in channeling her psychological excess of mothering from afar. In her memoir, she admits that she writes by and for her son. Not only functions to provide ideas for her writing, Insani also takes her son as her primary supporter, the one who gives her endless support as she says, " yes, I believed that my son was the one who encouraged me to keep writing and it was because of him I kept on writing" (Insani

<sup>8</sup> See literature review

<sup>9</sup> Insani admits that her employer prohibits to have a cellular phone. She owns a cellphone after a year.



and Raihan, 2011: 59). Thus, through writing, Insani is able to negotiate the demand of her maternal duty.

Any executed coping mechanisms function as the abilities to endure challenges of working abroad which include mothering from afar. Though Insani does not provide details on her fulfilling maternal role, she clearly pictures the unbearable feelings of separations. This magnifies a challenge particularly inherent in a transnational mother. The powers to survive any challenges in her employment—the language and cultural difference, the pain of physical separation—are what I identify as superpowers. These powers work similar to the power of superheroes used to defeat the villains. In the context of transnational mothers, these villains are in the forms of everyday challenges. As a superhero, Insani does not necessarily wears costumes or mask. She does not have any secret identity. On the contrary, she embodies multi-layered identities, as a woman, as a foreign domestic helper, as well as a mother.

## CONCLUSION

This paper has demonstrated that IDWs as transnational mothers are apt to be valorized as superheroes across borders. As illustrated in her memoir, Bayu Insani as a transnational mother, has met some superheroes conventions, for example, undergoing prosocial mission. She establishes tremendous efforts to selflessly 'save' her family economy. Insani is truly a heroin her family. In addition, her so-called superpower embody in her endurance of working abroad such as bearing the pain of physical separation. In addition, she also has to face other challenges such as problems with local language and cultures. Though Insani does not specify how she fulfils her maternal duty, the way she describes her pain of geographical separation is ample to confirm that it is indeed the most profound issue faced by transnational mothers. Aside from their economic remittance contribution, IDWs as transnational mothers are not yet recognized, thus inserting this issue into a wider conversation could pave a way to bring it into attention. Recognition of the vulnerability of transnational mothers as illustrated in Insani's memoir has the potential to allow people in general to see, understand, and appreciate IDWs as transnational mothers better.

## REFERENCES

- Anggraeni, Dewi. *Dreamseekers: Indonesian Women as Domestic Workers in Asia*. Jakarta: Equinox Publishing, 2006. Print.
- Coogan, Peter. *Superhero: The Secret Origin of a Genre*. Austin: Monkey Brain Books, 2006. Print.
- Dewi, Elisabeth. "Changing Perceptions of "Good" Mothering and Family Roles among Indonesian Female Domestic Workers." *Journal of the Motherhood Initiative* 2.2 (year): 208-225. <<https://jarm.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/jarm/article/download/34546/31407>> Accessed March 10, 2018.
- Ehrenreich, Barbara and Arlie Russel Hochschild (Eds.) *Global Woman: Nannies, Maids, and Sex Workers in the New Economy*. New York: Metropolitan Books/Henry Holt and Company, 2002. Print.
- Illanes, Javiera Cienfuegos. "Migrant Mothers and Divided Homes: Perceptions of Immigrant Peruvian Women about Motherhood." *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 41.2 (2010): 205-224. Print. <[https://www.academia.edu/4871498/Migrant\\_mothers\\_and\\_divided\\_homes\\_Cienfuegos](https://www.academia.edu/4871498/Migrant_mothers_and_divided_homes_Cienfuegos)> Accessed Sept. 10, 2017.
- Insani, Bayu and Ida Raihan. *TKW Menulis: Mereka saja Bisa, Kenapa Anda Tidak?* Yogyakarta: Leutika, 2011. Print.
- Millman, Heather M. "Mothering from Afar: Conceptualizing Transnational Motherhood." *Totem: The University of Western Ontario Journal of Anthropology* 21.1 (2013): 72-82. <[ir.lib.uwo.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1265&context=totem](http://ir.lib.uwo.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1265&context=totem)> Accessed July 19, 2016
- Russell, Christian. "Heroic Moments: A Study of ComicBook Superheroes in Real-World Society." *Exploration*, n.d:121-131. <<https://uncw.edu/csurl/explorations/documents/russell.pdf>> Web. 15 Sept. 2020

- Sørensen, Ninna Nynberg and Ida Marie Vammen. "Who Cares? Transnational Families in Debates on Migration and Development." *New Diversities* 16. 2 (2014): 89 – 108. <[https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:n3B4w0hthVIJ:https://newdiversities.mmg.mpg.de/%3Fpage\\_id%3D1742+&cd=3&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=id&client=firefox-b-d](https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:n3B4w0hthVIJ:https://newdiversities.mmg.mpg.de/%3Fpage_id%3D1742+&cd=3&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=id&client=firefox-b-d)> Web. 15 Sept. 2020
- Sternberg, Rosa Maria. "The Plight of Transnational Latina Mothers: Mothering from a Distance." *Field Actions Science Reports* Special Issue 2 (2010): 1-4. <<https://journals.openedition.org/factsreports/pdf/486>> Accessed July 19, 2016.
- Susanti, Fransisca Ria. *Tentang Sedih di Victoria*. Park. Bandung: Penerbit Nuansa Cendekia, 2013. Print.

# Highly Educated Blacks as the Alternate Educational Opportunities in Marvel Movies

**Irma Febriyanti**

Universitas PGRI Madiun

[irma.febriyanti@unipma.ac.id](mailto:irma.febriyanti@unipma.ac.id)

## ABSTRACT

American popular culture and their concept of power have been known worldwide since their influence on other countries outside the United States was quite massive. Being the world's dominant economic and military power, the United States also has a huge influence on major global film industry, where the reflection of American society is seen and exposed. Hollywood has been holding a great cultural imperialism with its planted and structured image of American society or so called as the Americanization. Yet, it undeniably draws global attention to American diverse culture as well, where white superheroes, characters, and actors hold greater power and are represented as the higher educated ones. Until Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) recently has been exposing highly educated black characters in their movies and it seems 'too good to be true' due to the racial achievement gaps which later found black educated characters to be crucially important in validating young black representation and identity in Marvel movies. This research is analyzed under Gramsci's concept of power as the background of this cultural phenomenon and Galtung's theory on structural violence where blacks have no opportunities to represent their race equally powerful and educated compared to their white counterparts in American structured society. Thus, with Marvel's well-known phrase 'alternative universe', this study aims to uncover the highly educated black characters in Marvel movies which can be considered as the 'alternate educational opportunities' and developed to be a meaningful inspiration to all black Americans and minorities in the U.S

**Keywords:** American Culture, Education, Black Americans, Marvel Movies, Structural Violent

## INTRODUCTION

The United States of America is noted as a preeminent superpower in which its influence is experienced in a global scale. As the largest and foremost developed country in the world, America has enormous reach in shaping how the world is developing. This view is addressed by Tomlinson(1996), which explores the correlation America as the most advanced capitalist society in the world and consumerism culture as the driving force behind globalization. As noted by Pieterse (2003) the global domination of U.S culture can be designated as the example for a long stretch of U.S hegemony which is placed on societies all over the world in which globalization is one defining example. Pieterse contextualizes that while in theory globalization allows for equal exchange of information and culture among countries, the vastly superior U.S economic, financial, instructional, and military power allowing this exchange is one-sided in the favor of the U.S. Another of his idea concerning U.S dominance in a global scale explores the idea of cultural imperialism -which is covertly rather than overtly so, and less visible in everyday life– in which the cultural industries, coined as "Coca-colonization, McDonaldization, Disneyfication and other forms of U.S media functions as the apparatus to promote U.S culture. (Pieterse & Barbara, 2015, p. 300)

As explored in the prior section, media and other cultural forms, especially in the era of internet is one foremost extension of U.S cultural imperialism. Media promotes hegemony through consent and coercion instead of force and domination in which the hegemony seems natural instead of enforced. The U.S cultural hegemony in this case is attributed due to its values of freedom and liberty and its representation of media. As noted by Nye Jr, the alluring American

values which is commonly expressed in media such as democracy, upward mobility, personal freedom, and openness affects the preference of others and provide a lens in contextualizing American culture. (2002, p. 9) This view is echoed by West's assertion that hegemonic culture encourages peoples' identification into the world views, ideology, sensibility, and habit or the dominant class or culture. (1982, p. 119) In short, it can be affirmed how the American values which is reflected through media as the cultural production works to establish cultural hegemony of the U.S.

The importance of American film industry, which is popularly known as Hollywood in promoting U.S culture cannot be understated. For years, an oligopoly of Hollywood Studios which comprises of M.G.M, United Artists, Colombia, Fox, R.K.O, Walt Disney, Universal, Paramount, and Warner Brothers, collectively known as 'the Major' have dominated the world cinema industry. The rise of Hollywood in dominating world culture has been linked with several factors, such as the large domestic market in the U.S, the lack of unified studios in the foreign film industry, the lack of financial resources for the independent/indie filmmaker outside Hollywood.(Ibbi, 2014) Besides its thematic aspect of promoting American values, as explored in the prior section, the success of Hollywood, mainly in its blockbuster budgeted film lies with its visual spectacle and its focus of action. In Puttnam's opinion (1999), The formula commonly used in Hollywood blockbusters mainly aims at predominantly young male audiences, in which the heavy focus of visual, fast-paced actions is easier for even non-English speaking audience to comprehend, engage, and elate with the movies.

"the secret of Hollywood's dominance is not simply economic. American movies appeal to audience because they deliver visceral power and special effects rather than dialogue and plot, and therefore require relatively little grasp of English. In this, their appeal mirrors that of the early silent films in the United States – which provided newly-arrived immigrants- few of whom spoke a great deal of English – with access to a cheap, easily understood form of entertainment." (Puttnam, 1998, p. 42)

Throughout Hollywood's domination of the box office market, the focus on creating film that catered into young male audiences results in the fewer opportunity for gender and ethnic minority representation. As Hollywood mainstream movies mainly promotes American values, it is recognized that only the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASP) which are predominantly male has the higher ratio of representation on the silver screen. Several studies, such as conducted by Nulman (2014), Geldano and Colon (2016) and the USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative (2018) have explored the disproportionately rate of white-male and other gendered/ethnically minority in U.S films released by Hollywood. Nulman's study (2014) focuses on the representation of women within twelve most popular movies from 1990-1999 which includes blockbusters such as *Titanic*, *Jurassic Park*, *Forest Gump* and *Independence Day* and also between 2000-2009 which is populated by lists such as *Avatar*, *Spiderman*, *Transformers : Revenge of the Fallen* and *Lord of the Rings Trilogy*. Her study explores that the representation of women in those films are characterized by tropes such as peripheral role, tendency to be rescued by the hero, and becoming the love interest. Different with Nulman, study from Geldano and Colon argues that there exists a tendency in Hollywood movies to portray the non-white characters as the Other in which nationality such as Vietnamese, Russian, Arabs and Chinese are casted in a villainous role. America's inevitable victory upon those stereotypical villains are placed to designate the superiority of American values and civilization. Lastly, a comprehensive study by the USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative of around 1.100 films released from 2007 to 2017 indicates that around 30 % of all speaking characters in those movies were portrayed by a marginalized racial/ethnic group. (Smith et al., 2018) All the prior studies explored the inequality of the non-white male representation in American Hollywood blockbuster and how the movies still predominantly preach the superiority of American white culture.

In recent years, the representation of women and people of color in mainstream Hollywood blockbusters highlights the increasing concerns for diversity, and superhero movies is not an exception. (Hunt & Ramón, 2020; Richardson, 2017; Scott, 2017) This genre mainly adopts popular



superheroes from comic books such as Captain America, Superman, or Wonder Woman in which their original appearance during World War II contributes into the war effort as an explicit political statement condemned the atrocities in Europe. While the comic books circulation remains popular throughout the post-war and contemporary period, it is only in the recent years that comic books movies become a viable and marketable product for the consumerist American culture. As summarized by Burke (2015), the early success of superhero movies such as *Blade* (2000), *X-Men* (2000) and *Spiderman* (2002) proves the enormous potential market for superhero movies, although surprisingly, the majority of the movie-goers actually does not read the comics and were not compelled to read the comics after movie screening. The current state of comic book movies is dominated by Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) which depicts the alliance of superheroes, the Avengers from a shared universe in around 23 films from 2008-present. Their most recent movies, *Avengers: Endgame* (2019) manages to surpass *Avatar* (2009) as the highest-grossing movies of all-time. (Whitten, 2019) This phenomenon illustrates that the production of movie is intended to be marketed on a global scale.

MCU movies, particularly in their most recent adaptation of comic books heroes begins to move away from the overrepresentation of white male characters in the leading role. Prior to 2018 with the premiere of *Black Panther* which places Black actors, screenwriters and directors in the spotlight, MCU is characterized by the absence of the people of color in leading roles. Blockbuster MCU movies such as *Iron Man*, *Thor*, *Captain America*, and *the Avengers* are white-centrist in outlook in which the story revolves around white protagonist. As stated by Richardson (2017), "by exclusively telling the stories of white men, Marvel Studios inadvertently tells its audience that white men's stories are the ones worth telling." (p. 35) The year 2018 with the much-hyped release of *Black Panther* is hailed as a cinematic response of the people of color towards the years of racial underrepresentation in Hollywood movie industry and the wider American discriminatory policy as a whole. Serwer (2018), a notable film critique for *the Atlantic* summarizes the phenomenon as follows

"Black Panther is a love letter to people of African descent all over the world. Its actors, its costume design, its music, and countless other facets of the film are drawn from all over the continent and its diaspora, in a science-fiction celebration of the imaginary country of Wakanda, a high-tech utopia that is a fictive manifestation of African potential unfettered by slavery and colonialism"

Although *Black Panther* is hailed as a symbol of marginalized groups' agency in the white-catered film industry, the representation of the titular hero is also problematized. Griffin and Rossing asserts that Black Panther, T'Challa is "moored by Western values and virtues despite hailing from Africa", (2020, p. 208) which affirms the internalization of Western values by people of non-Western descend. Moreover, the majority of the actions takes place in fictionalized country of Wakanda instead of directly addressing histories of racial inequality in the U.S. Griffin and Rossing's critique indicates that the representation of non-Western superheroes remains linked with the intention of White to maintain their cultural imperialism.

This study aims at exploring the representation of ethnic minorities, especially the Black characters in MCU movies. The focus is on foregrounding the presence of the Black characters, not just as major characters which plot-relevance in the stories, but also focusing on the fact that these characters are highly educated. This study argues how the depiction of the educated black characters in MCU provides a critique towards the racial achievement gaps in American society in which the African-American community are hindered in their progress to achieve higher education. This research employs Gramscian concepts of power and its circulation to contextualize the socio-historical background behind this cultural phenomenon. Secondly, Galtung's concept of structural violence is applied to underline the existence of an invisible structure which systematically works to disenfranchise the African-American community. Lastly, through the concept of Possible World theory, this study argues how the alternative reality conjures through MCU movies especially with the depiction of the highly educated Black characters provide an avenue of empowerment towards the African-American community and other ethnic minorities in the U.S

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section contextualizes theoretical framework as the foundation of the analysis. The study employs several theories, the first is Gramsci's concept of power to underline the limited agency of the African-American which also result in the lack of representation in media such as film. Another theory for the analysis is taken from Galtung's concept of structural violence, in which his assertion for the existence of a structural barrier than limits the African-Americans' upward social mobility. Galtung theorizes that the violence is systematically embedded into the society, in which apparatus such as housing, taxes, and neighborhood quality works to create an achievement gap between the Black minority and the White majority. Lastly, this paper provides the concept of possible/alternative world in which the imaginative reality conjures through superhero Marvel movies works to inspire ethnic minorities in their struggle for equal opportunities.

The first theoretical framework employed in this paper derived from Marxist theorist, Gramsci, mainly concerns with his elaboration with how power is circulated which results in the form of cultural hegemony. Hegemony in this case is defined as domination or power which is held by one social groups over others which can be caused by economic, cultural, political or ideological domination. While prior Marxist criticism tends to be more materialistic in outlook, Lull (1995) explores how Gramsci expands his critique to include ideological aspects especially how the power of media is employed by the dominant class. Gramsci's analysis of power relations emphasizing on the superstructure of a society which is defined by three main aspects (i) legal/political institutions (ii) forms of consciousness and (iii) political and cultural practices. (Lears, 1985, p. 570) Media possesses pivotal role in shaping the consciousness of the masses by "introducing elements into individual consciousness which will not be rejected by consciousness because they are so commonly shared in the cultural community." (Lull, 1995, p. 33) In short, through representation in media, it is possible to shape public opinion in line with the intention of the ruling classes. The circulation of power, in Gramscian terminology is characterized by the willing submission of the working class which indicates the successful element of hegemony, while violence and submission indicate the failure for the reproduction of hegemony.

"They are the levels of force and of consent, authority and hegemony, violence and civilization, of the individual moment and of the universal moment, of agitation and of propaganda, of tactics and strategy, etc...The bourgeois society, at its more developed phase, requires less and less violence to assure its reproduction, to the degree that this reproduction is assured by the association of the classes on the realms of values and cultures, that is mainly by the generalization of the self-interest as general interest." (Gramsci, 1971, p. 170)

After briefly summarizing Gramscian concept of power and its circulation through media, the terminology structural violence, as coined by Galtung provides a useful lens in analyzing the existence of a structure that systematically restraint the advancement of the lower and marginalized classes. This concept was first conceptualized in Galtung's article, *Violence, Peace and Peace Research* (1969) in which he criticizes the narrow understanding of the term violence. Previous conception of the term violence and peace defines violence only in the term of direct physical violence, and the absence of such violent act equal peace. (1969, p. 169) Contrary to the prior belief, Galtung asserts that the term violence can also be applied whenever a situation, which usually intentionally and systematically enforced by the ruling class hinders the actualization of an individual/group potential. The term structural violence, in his understanding is employed to underline the existence of a structure which legitimize exploitation and marginalization of a particular individual/ethnic groups. As the violence is built upon the system itself and might seems natural instead of enforced, it is less overt, more subtle and less identifiable compared to individuals commit the act of racism. Structural violence is "a violent structure that impedes the development of the group and the self through a structure which is generally invisible." (Graf et al.,

2009, p. 141). Galtung (1990) further identifies how the violence can occur in both structural/macro levels or individuals/micro levels.

Lastly, this paper provides a cursory explanation of the theory of possible world. Possible/alternative world provides a way to ponder and compare the situation in the real world and the way the world could have been, in which futuristic imagination of fictional works provides one such example. The possible world (PW) main thesis argues that reality is a universe which is comprised from a plurality of distinct worlds. Those worlds are structured through an opposition between the center of the system, or known as the 'actual' or 'real' world with the alternative /non-actual possible world. Kripke (1963) conceptualizes his theory about possible worlds, with plural form, in which the actual world is just one among many diverse possibility of worlds. All other worlds are made possible through the byproduct of mental activity, which consists of cognitive behavior such as dreaming, promising, storytelling, imagining or foretelling. In Kripke's example, the sentence "it is possible for me to become a dentist" is true because there exists at least one possible world where the speaker becomes a dentist. Another opinion proposed by Lewis (1973, p. 85) conceptualizes that although someone does not actively imagine the existence of a possible world, all possible worlds are real, even though only one world can be actual in a point of view.

## METHODS

This research is a qualitative study in which focuses on foregrounding the representation of Black characters in MCU as highly educated individuals. Qualitative research emphasizes on the exploration and understanding of individuals or groups in order to explore social problem. (Creswell & Poth, 1998, p. 77) The data is taken from MCU movie, in which the primary source is *Black Panther* (2018) as a movie which does not only includes actors of African descents but also directed by African-American. The data from the film, mainly the dialogues and also images is then analyzed under the theoretical framework of Gramsci, Galtung and Possible World. Beside the primary data from MCU movie, this study also includes the secondary data from journals, books, surveys, interviews, or other academic sources to provide contextualization concerning the representation of Black characters in MCU within the present state of minorities in American society.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

*Black Panther*, a 2018 movie released under the banner of MCU dramatizes racial tension between the Blacks and the Whites through its futuristic portrayal of a high-tech African country named Wakanda. The film focuses on the ascension of the titular Black Panther, Prince T'Challa to the kingship after his father King T'Chaka was assassinated. The succession is marred by dynastic dispute when Erik "Killmonger" Stevens, which is an exiled Prince N'Jadaka from Wakanda claims the throne for himself. In the past, Killmonger was exiled and having to live in Oakland, America where his exposure toward racial injustice in America motivates his radical outlook of ethnic liberation. After initially defeating T'Challa in battle, Killmonger reveals his plot to globally reveal the hitherto isolated country of Wakanda and mass producing vibranium weapon to support insurgencies all over the world. Killmonger is finally defeated, and T'Challa begins to open Wakanda's borders and support technological and medical growth globally.

The futuristic depiction of a modernized, high-tech African country in *Black Panther* abide into the concept of Afrofuturism. As defined by Strong and Chaplin (2019), Afrofuturism employs techno-culture and science fiction to uncover Black experience across African diaspora. Afrofuturism questions "what if" to provide an alternative outlook of Black diasporic life in which the impact of colonialism in Africa is not experienced, Africa is represented not through the stereotype of civil war, famine, disease, and ethnic conflict and instead narrates "a way of viewing Black culture in a fantastical, creative and hopeful manner." (p. 58) The trace of Afrofuturism in *Black Panther* manifested through its fantastical portrayal of the fictional nation of Wakanda, in which the populace employs *Vibranium* technology to become the most sophisticated country in the world, which in the later film can even stand against alien invasion. Different with the most mainstream Hollywood blockbusters and even other film in the MCU that falls into the usual trope of "America



saves the day", the Afrofuturist theme in *Black Panther* ponders a reality in which the Black nation becomes the superpower of the day. Furthermore, Afrofuturist also manifests through the representation of iconic characters in *Black Panther* that celebrate the highly intellectual capability of the Blacks as leaders, activists, scientists, and warriors.

Being the titular iconic superhero, Prince T'Challa receives top billing as the leading role in *Black Panther*. While his Black Panther suit and serum provides him with superhuman attributes to fight the looming threat worldwide, his most pivotal contribution to world peace occurs when he does not wear the Black Panther suit. As a member of the United Nations and the speaker for Wakanda, T'Challa delivers a speech that declare Wakanda will no longer remain neutral and isolated. While his speech is interrupted and heckled by many politicians who consider Wakanda as a third-world country, he remains unaffected and continues his speech. One white character even asks, "with all due respect, what do farmers have to offer the rest of the world?" which confirms the stereotypical depiction of Africa as mainly rural and undeveloped country. Challa's speech, foregrounded below which is often considered as a critique toward Trump administration for hostility toward immigrant(Jones, 2018) also foregrounds a cosmopolitan view of world citizenship.



Figure 1. T'Challa speech to the United Nations

"Wakanda will no longer watch from the shadows. We cannot. We must not. We will work to be an example of how we as brothers and sisters on this Earth should treat each other. Now, more than ever, the illusions of division threaten our existence. We all know the truth: more connect us than separates us. But in times of crisis the wise build bridges, while the foolish build barriers. We must find a way to look after one another as if we were one single tribe." (Coogler, 2018)

Beside the titular Prince T'Challa, several other Black characters feature prominently in *Black Panthers*, in which the majority are female. Different with the portrayal of female characters in mainstream movies which commonly delegates them into the "damsel in distress" trope and eventually becomes the hero's love interest, each of the female characters in *Black Panther* is notable in their own right. The egalitarian Wakanda society enables women to advance far in the social ladders and are able to become leaders, scientists and activists. The characters, such as Nakia, who although the lover of T'Challa shows agency and free-thinking in her career path to free kidnapped people in Nigeria and general Okoye, who commands the all-female warrior army, the *Dora Milage* decides to threaten his husband who tries to support Killmonger. All these characters are defined by their equal status with the male, which rejects the stereotypical depiction of Africa as a land characterized by patriarchal religious tradition.

Perhaps the most notable female character in the movie is Shuri, T'Challa sister and the foremost engineer in Wakanda. The presence of Shuri in the movie symbolizes the growing awareness of the necessity of representing Black female comic book characters in hero as an active agent. Her introduction scene as a master of vibranium technique conveys her superiority from the prior techno-wizard in the MCU movies, both white men, Tony Stark/*Iron Man* and Bruce Banner/*Invisible Hulk*. In the climatic final battle, she proves capable in holding her own through her technological savviness that disregard the 'damsel in distress' trope. Her popularity further shows by Marvel Comics release of a standalone animated series, entitled *Marvel Rising : Operation Shuri* in 2019. As extrapolated by Gipson, "Shuri's animated series continued the legacy of showing young black girls in STEM fields, help to close the STEM and gender gap, and expands the possibility of positive representation in pop culture as a whole." (2019, p. 189).





Figure 2. The promotional poster of Marvel Rising: Operation Shuri

The alternative reality conjures through *Black Panthers* can be stated to criticize the achievement gap the African-American has to experience in struggle for equal education opportunities. Gramsci elaborates his conception of hegemony as power or dominance that one social group holds over others which can be caused by economic, cultural, political or ideological domination. All these aspects intertwined with the historical circumstances of African-American community under the Whites domination. Several studies have found out how Blacks are often constrained in low-income neighborhood with poorer public facilities and often denied opportunities for having mortgage taxes. (Feldman & Hsu, 2007; Rothstein, 2017; Rury, 1999) Similarly, Sensoy and DiAngelo (2017) criticizes certain mechanisms that hinders the upward mobility of the African-American community which consists of higher mortgage rates, difficulty in getting loans, discrimination in hiring, and unequal school founding. Their study concludes that these factors become a major obstacle in limiting the number of school's Black students have the option to.

The existence of systematic and structural barriers, which Galtung defines as structural violence further plays an important role in disenfranchising the African-American community in which education is one avenue. By taking the data from several surveys of Newark Public Schools (NPS) and Chicago Public Schools (CPS) into account, this paper highlights the presence of structural violence which work to systematically deny the right of equal education. Both cities shared a high rate of racial and economic education, in which a survey from Acs et al in (2017) reveals how these two cities remained in the top ten most segregated cities in the U.S concerning Black-White and Latino-White from 1990 into 2010. A phenomenon illustrated in NPS is the limitation of school choice for the African-American community, in which several of its most highly performing schools only have a low percentage of Black demographics. (Austin et al., 2018) Similarly, CPS implements sorting at high school levels which is purely based on students' performance in the middle grades. (Barrow et al., 2018) This policy privileges the White students coming from better quality neighborhood and educational facilities. All these structural barriers limit the advancement of African-American community which in turn lead into achievement gaps between themselves and the Whites.

Within the racialized American educational field, representation of ethnic superhero which also transcend gender lines provides an avenue of inspiration and encouragement of the Blacks. Black superheroes, as in the case of T'Challa and Shuri is interpreted as a source of racial narrative that expresses possibility through imagination and fantastical reimagination of Black identity. The representation of Black superheroes by Black director ensures that the adaptation will remain abide into the rich cultural heritage of the African descends, instead of trapped in a 'whitewashed' retelling of dominant White discourse. An interview with David Seymour the first black board members of Dekalb School board highlights his belief regarding the possibility of change, as long as someone already prove that it is possible. Deriving from his personal experience in his ability to break the overwhelmingly White-conservative community in Dekalb by electing not only himself but also one other Black member, he states his opinion that

"You can't be what you don't see. If I never see a Black man on the school board and I am a young Black man myself, maybe I will get myself permission to believe that it is possible for Black man to be on the school board. If I only see a White man there, White/male/middle-class, if that's all I see then I will not necessarily assume that there is something I can be. I can be, but again, if I don't see it nothing will automatically tell me that it is possible for me." (D. Seymour, Personal Communication, November 15, 2019)

Positioning Seymour's possibility of change within the imaginative realms conjured through MCU, especially through its representation of Black superheroes can function as a catalyst of encouragement for young children from marginalized groups. Possible world theory maintains that our reality, or is known as actual world is only one of the infinite possible worlds. Possible world provides a conception of the way universe might have been, instead with the way things currently are. Depiction of an Afrofuturistic theme, in which the country of Wakanda reimagines the freedom of Africa without Western imagination proves a shared link between people of African descents in America and their ancestral homeland. Furthermore, by representing the two aspects of T'Challa, both as superhero in-suit or as diplomat without his powers, this portrayal inspires children to aspire that someday they can deliver a speech in the General Assembly of the United Nations. The female characters in *Black Panthers* is not delegated as a passive object but instead an active agent in their own rights, in which depiction of Shuri, Okoye, and Nakia provides a role model for a generation of strong-willed, intelligent and independent Black women. In short, it can be stated how representation of Black characters in *Black Panthers* can inspire younger generation and encourage them that change is possible, even within the racialized American educational field.

## CONCLUSION

This study argues how within the racialized American educational field, in which structural and systematic barrier hinders the African-American community's quest for higher education, the release of *Black Panther* movies function as a catalyst that change is possible. This study contextualizes how cultural products, such as movies released by Hollywood function as an apparatus to promote Western values and limits the presence of the marginalized ethnicity. Within this field, the production of *Black Panther* functions as an avenue of resistance and racial empowerment. Deriving from Afrofuturistic theme in which the African people managed to flourish culturally and scientifically, *Black Panther* conjures an alternative reality or possible world. The imaginative realms conjured in the movie places Black characters as iconic, strong-willed and highly educated individual to inspire the younger generation of African-American community of the possibility to change. While this study limits the analysis only on one MCU movie, further study in this field is encouraged. In line with the recent development in which marginalized community also managed to produce their own voices through movies, analysis of other ethnicities, either within the U.S or outside can be an insightful topic to pursue.

## REFERENCES

- Acs, G., Rendall, R., Treskon, M., & Khare, A. (2017). *The Cost of Segregation : National Trends and the Case of Chicago, 1990-2010*.
- Austin, K., Batista, L., Bisht, M., & Karas, A. (2018). *Newark Enrolls : A Principled Approach to Public School Choice*.
- Barrow, L., Sartain, L., & De La Torres, M. (2018). *Selective Enrollment High Schools in Chicago : Admissions and Impacts*.
- Burke, L. (2015). *The Comic Book Film Adaptation : Exploring Modern Hollywood's Leading Genre*. University of Mississippi.
- Coogler, R. (2018). *Black Panther*. Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures. <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1825683/>
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (1998). *Qualitative Design and Research Design : Choosing Among Five Approaches*. SAGE Publications, Inc.

- Feldman, M. B., & Hsu, H. L. (2007). Introduction : Race, Environment, and Representation. *Discourse*, 29(Number 2 & 3, Spring & Fall), 199–214. <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/266834>
- Galtung, J. (1969). Violence, Peace, and Peace Research. *Journal of Peace Research*, 6(3), 167–191.
- Galtung, J. (1990). Cultural Violence. *Journal of Peace Research*, 27(3), 291–305.
- Gipson, G. D. (2019). *The Power of a Black Superheroine : Exploring Black Female Identities in Comics and Fandom Culture*. University of California, Berkeley.
- Graf, W., Kramer, G., & Nicolescou, A. (2009). Conselling and Training for Conflict Transformation and Peace Building, the TRANSCEND Approach. In C. Webel & J. Galtung (Eds.), *Handbook of Peace and Conflict Studies* (pp. 120–140). Routledge.
- Gramsci, A. (1971). *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci* (Q. Hoare & G. N. Smith (eds.)). Lawrence & Wishart. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10286630902971603>
- Griffin, R. A., & Rossing, J. P. (2020). Black Panther in widescreen: cross-disciplinary perspectives on a pioneering, paradoxical film. *Review of Communication*, 20(3), 203–219. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15358593.2020.1780467>
- Hunt, D., & Ramón, A.-C. (2020). UCLA Hollywood Diversity Report 2020: A Tale of Two Hollywoods. In *UCLA Social Sciences*.
- Ibbi, A. A. (2014). Hollywood, The American Image And The Global Film Industry. *CINEJ Cinema Journal*, 3(1), 93–106. <https://doi.org/10.5195/cinej.2013.81>
- Jameson, F. (1990). Modernism and Imperialism. In S. Deane (Ed.), *Nationalism, Colonialism and Literature* (pp. 43–66). University of Minnesota Press.
- Jones, V. (2018, February 17). Black Panther is a Revelation. *Cnn.Com*. <https://edition.cnn.com/2018/02/15/opinions/black-panther-donald-trump-van-jones/index.html>
- Kripke, S. A. (1963). Semantical Considerations on Modal Logic. *Acta Philosophical Fennica*, 16, 83–94.
- Lears, T. J. J. (1985). The Concept of Cultural Hegemony : Problems and Possibilities. *The American Historical Review*, 90(3), 567–593. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1860957>
- Lewis, D. (1973). *Counterfactuals*. Basil Blackwell Ltd.
- Lull, J. (1995). *Media, Communication, and Culture: A Global Approach*. Polity Press. <http://www.amazon.ca/Media-Communication-Culture-Global-Approach/dp/0231120737>
- Nulman, E. (2014). Representation of Women in the Age of Globalized Film. *Journal of Research in Gender Studies*, 4(2), 898–918. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235912510%0Ahttps://search.proquest.com/docview/1645383689?accountid=16562%0Ahttp://sfx.cineca.it:9003/sfxbic3?url\\_ver=Z39.88-2004&rft\\_val\\_fmt=info:ofi/fmt:kev:mtx:journal&genre=article&sid=ProQ:ProQ%3Asocscijournal](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235912510%0Ahttps://search.proquest.com/docview/1645383689?accountid=16562%0Ahttp://sfx.cineca.it:9003/sfxbic3?url_ver=Z39.88-2004&rft_val_fmt=info:ofi/fmt:kev:mtx:journal&genre=article&sid=ProQ:ProQ%3Asocscijournal)
- Nye Jr, J. S. (2002). *the Paradox of American Power*. Oxford University Press.
- Pieterse, J. N., & Barbara, S. (2015). *Hyperpower Exceptionalism : Globalisation the American Way*. February. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1356346032000138032>
- Puttnam, D. (1998). *Movies and Money*. Alfred A. Knopf.
- Richardson, A. (2017). Fandom, Racism, and the Myth of Diversity in the Marvel Cinematic Universe. *Undergraduate Honors Theses*. <https://scholarworks.wm.edu/honorstheses/1019>
- Rothstein, R. (2017). *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America*. Liveright Publishing Corporation.
- Rury, J. L. (1999). Race, Space, and the Politics of Chicago's Public Schools: Benjamin Willis and the Tragedy of Urban Education. *History of Education Quarterly*, 39(2), 117–142. <https://doi.org/10.2307/370035>
- Scott, S. (2017). Modeling the marvel everyfan: Agent coulson and/as transmedia fan culture. *Palabra Clave*, 20(4), 1042–1072. <https://doi.org/10.5294/pacla.2017.20.4.8>
- Sensoy, O., & Di Angelo, R. (2017). *Is Everyone Really Equal? An Introduction to Key Concepts in Social Justice Education Second Edition*. Teacher College Press.

- Smith, S. L., Choueiti, M., Pieper, K., Case, A., & Choi, A. (2018). Inequality in 1,100 Popular Films: Examining Portrayals of Gender, Race/Ethnicity, LGBT & Disability from 2007 to 2017. In *Annenberg Foundation* (Issue July). <http://assets.uscannenberg.org/docs/inequality-in-1100-popular-films.pdf>
- Strong, M. T., & Chaplin, K. S. (2019). Afrofuturism and Black Panther. *American Sociological Association*, 18(2), 58–59. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1536504219854725>
- Tomlinson, J. (1996). Global Experience as a Consequence of Modernity. In S. Braman & A. Sreberny-Mohammadi (Eds.), *Globalization, Communication and Transnational Civil Society* (pp. 63–87). Hampton Press.
- West, C. . (1982). *Prophecy Deliverance*. Westminster Press.
- Whitten, S. (2019, July). 'Avengers: Endgame' is now the highest-grossing film of all time, dethroning 'Avatar.' *Cnbc.Com*. <https://www.cnn.com/2019/07/21/avengers-endgame-is-the-highest-grossing-film-of-all-time.html>



# Cape, Mask and New York as the Basic Identities in the American Comics and the Hollywood Movies: the Semiotic Analysis in a Subliminal Message of Americanization as the Modern Popular Culture

**Deswandito Dwi Saptanto**

English Literature Department, Universitas Ngudi Waluyo  
dittoissublime@gmail.com

## ABSTRACT

The presence of superheroes in fiction is a magnet that always teases fans. These superheroes' existence is a reflection of the imagination that blends with the author's expectations in creating characters who have abilities and strengths above the average human being. This research is a literature study that focuses on American superheroes that have similar patterns as a basic rule and are often carried out to create a superhero's character and depict the city of New York as a center of world power. The purpose of this study is to find similarities in the patterns of superhero creations in American superhero comics, which are then transferred to the realm of a movie to provide an Americanization influence for his fans. The theory used is a semiotic analysis and is supported by popular culture studies to support this research. This research uses a descriptive qualitative method using some superhero characters and settings raised in comics and movies from two famous comic giants in America, namely Marvel and DC Comics. The results obtained from this study are the basic concepts of superheroes, and the American symbols that are inserted in the story are a natural form of the idea of Americanization. This concept seems to show and state that America is a superpower country. Creating a superhero story is a real concept of shaping American ideology as a form of modern popular culture.

**Keywords:** American Superheroes, Americanization, Cape, Mask, Modern Popular Culture, New York

## INTRODUCTION

When we mention the word superhero, our memories will return to our childhood filled with images of fictional characters with superpowers. They act to quell crime in big cities. This memory of the past has been transforming and improving very rapidly in this modern era. Children enjoy superhero stories, but all ages today are idolizing words based on superhero characters' presence. The culture of contemporary society in worshipping these fictional superhero characters has become a trend and has become a form of modern popular culture. The thing that interests us most is the freedom to fantasize in our minds to idolize our superhero figures, as stated by Cawelti (1977). Bordwell (2006) also expresses his opinion about the main character. He noted that the plot made must be the focus on the ultimate goal. It must break through the obstacles that block the story of the main character.

If we idolize a superhero character, then this cannot be separated from the existence of America. The United States is a country that creates famous superhero characters, as well as world film parameters. America has succeeded in 'injecting' Americanization symbols as a popular culture through Hollywood. The following are some examples of box office movies in the 1980s to the present, which are filled with America's symbols such as American Ninja that brings the concept of a group of American superheroes with fancy colorful ninja suits, Kevin Eastman and Peter Laird's work called Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles which are a group of mutant ninja living in the gutter of New York, Detective John Mc. Clane in Die Hard which acts as a brutal antihero figure in 'exterminating' crime in New York City, American super-soldiers GI. Joe fight against a crime

organization named Cobra, and Jason Bourne is a CIA operative who tries hard to find his true identity. Some of these films depict America's symbols as a powerful country and show the superiority of America through cinema.

Coogan, in Gavaler (2006), states that the fictional character named John Carter is a perfect figure who symbolizes American imperialism, and this figure is a metamorphosis of the Superman version without kryptonite. With John Carter's figure's birth, a new term called 'imperial adventure' was born. It has the intention that the author tries to convey the message to the audience and fans of the comic or film to feel amazed at the American culture that lies behind the creation of superheroes. This motive makes American culture a role model and a form of modern popular culture.

The superhero character's success with superhuman abilities named John Carter by Marv Wolfman and Gil Kane began with his debut in the form of a serial comic titled John Carter: Warlord of Mars. The success of John Carter is inseparable from the role of his predecessor, Jack 'The King' Kirby, who has created various characters in the legendary American comics, namely Marvel Comics and DC Comics. 'The King' created different fictional characters with superhuman powers such as fantastic four, black panther, The Hulk, Galactus 'The Devourer,' Red Skull, Iron Man, Thor, M.O.D.O.K, Dr.Doom, The Avengers, Captain America, and many more. Jack Kirby later played a role with Stan Lee, who succeeded with the Fantastic Four character in the 1960s. On the other hand, Stan Lee collaborated with Steve Ditko to create a new superhero character named Spider-Man, then published it in a serial comic called The Amazing Spider-man. Jack Kirby, Stan Lee, and Steve Ditko then built a superhero universe called Marvel Universe, created in the 1960s. The three of them opposed many and various challenges in creating new characters in the comics they published. The brilliant idea from these three masterminds has attracted other comic artists' interest to join in and make various new superheroes.

Kaveney (2008) explains that reading comics requires an understanding of the clarity of the story's continuity. Still, our imagination must also run wild to understand the imagination and abstract conditions that the author tries to convey to the reader. The universe created in Marvel Comics and DC Comics is vast; various kinds of characters live in it with the full diversity of backgrounds and superpowers. Each story from multiple characters that have been created in this fictional universe must be able to interact, have a correlation, and relate to one another. This is what makes the uniqueness of an imaginary story creation process in comics. None of the artists or writers can create this individually. This creative process must be carried out collaboratively between several individuals because creating detailed stories in this vast universe is a collective work of art.

The comics with brilliant and exciting story ideas have received an extraordinary reaction from American society. These superheroes' stories have turned into a modern pop culture that is very popular among readers of all ages. The emergence of superheroes fictional characters that began from the comic version and then spread to other media, namely films, has become very well known by many Americans. The fame of the fictional stories is based on the basic concept of American society's imagination, namely the phenomenon of myth and things related to paranormal activity as a particular form that is believed by American society. Kripal (2011) states that beliefs about myths accepted by these societies have evolved and turned into countless more scientific things. Pulp fiction, science fiction, superhero comics, and metaphysical films about events outside human reason have become American popular culture.

This fictional atmosphere of a superhero with outstanding strength represents the supernatural, which is very popular in American society. Knowles (2007) states that an X factor inspires a superhero story, combining the concept of superhuman strength with supernatural things that cannot be accessed literally but are interpreted as being beyond our limits. Kripal (2011) divides the understanding of western world imagination into six parts, namely: (1) the world above, (2) the earth below, (3) speculative prehistoric world or lost land, (4) geographically distant civilizations, tribal cultures and most recently, (5) outer space, (6) future world, other dimensions or parallel universes. Most Americans are very fond of heroic stories that have an American patriotic touch. These works of fiction that highlight America's power and supremacy are a form of nationalism towards their country. American symbols made for comics and films made to give

America an image of a great nation. Costello (2009) states that as a totalitarian icon, Captain America is described as trying to eradicate a criminal organization called Hydra. Hydra is a representation of the Nazi depiction led by the Red Skull.

This portrayal of a powerful American symbol is both a strength and an attraction for the author as a subliminal message of the Americanization doctrine. New York is a strong magnet to attract the interest of the world's broad audience. The city that never sleeps is the main symbol underlies superhero stories in Marvel Comics and DC Comics. New York offers many lessons about the town's importance and the close links between the superheroes and New York. The city of New York seems to be described as an awe-inspiring city; even Marvel Comics, which has a very vast universe, needs this city's existence. New York is an essential ingredient in superheroes because the town is a portrait that represents the United States.

This research is a literature study that focuses on the pattern of superheroes in comics and movies. Furthermore, the discussion also focused on the existence of New York as a dominant city that plays an essential role in the comic and even movie. This research uses a qualitative descriptive method with a semiotic analysis to reveal the symbols and icons in comics and films. Those are lead to subliminal messages about the existence of Americanization patterns in a story as popular culture.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### Semiotics: The Peircean Model

Semiotics is a study of sign which then produces meaning in our lives. The study of sign holds an important role to reveal the hidden meaning of representation of something. Peirce in Chandler (2007) states that

A sign . . . [in the form of a representamen] is something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity. It addresses somebody, that is, creates an equal sign in that person's mind, or perhaps a more developed sign. That sign which it makes I call the interpretant of the first sign. The symbol stands for something, its object. It stands for that object, not in all respects, but about a sort of idea, which I have sometimes called the representamen's ground.

Chandler (2007) also explains in the Peircean model that something can be said as a sign if it has three essential elements as follows: The sign is a unity of what is represented (the object), how it is represented (the representamen), and how it is interpreted (the interpretant). The workings of the Peircean model can be seen in the illustration below:

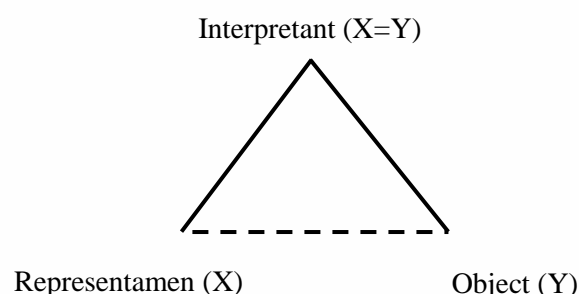


Figure 1: Semiotic Triangle of Peircean model

### Symbols and Icons in Objects

Understanding a work of art is a challenge in itself. The meaning generated from a story can create opinions and new theories that are very diverse, because this is the interpretation of every person in understanding a work. There are various symbols and icons that appear along the storyline. This research focuses on the presence of symbols and icons about the basic identity of superheroes

and the settings that are always presented in the concept of storytelling in the world of Marvel Comics and DC Comics through comic and film versions. Cobley (2001) explains Peirce's statement about symbols, symbols are complicated. Symbols are linguistic signs which related to semiotic object. The form is conventional (generally understood and agreed upon). Chandler (2007) also explains Peirce's statement further that the symbol refers to an object which usually has a close correlation with conventions in the wider community, a symbol refers to the existence of the object. Symbols are always connected with all the objects we see and then are processed by our minds so they can interpret the existence of these objects.

In other corridors besides symbols, the other thing we need to look at in analyzing a work is to focus on finding icons that are shown both literally and implicitly. Chandler (2007) states that according to Peirce the terms icon and iconic are things that have different meanings to the terms used in everyday life. An icon doesn't have to be visually always visible, a sign is also an icon. Peirce also stated that the picture could also be categorized as an icon in accordance with mutual agreement in the wider community. On the other hand, an iconic is something or someone who is expected to be recognized instantly or known instantly in a particular cultural sphere. Peirce revealed the meaning of the iconic sign is representing the object, especially in the similarity that is formed. Cobley (2001) explains that an icon is a sign that has an interrelated correlation with similarities of existing semiotic objects.

In the scope of this research, the concept of symbols and icons is very essential. Marvel Comics and DC Comics are two well-known comic giants in the United States that have the depth and complexity of a detailed story and are filled with symbols and icons that may be displayed implicitly or hidden so this increasingly makes the reader feel curious. The message that is displayed in secret or hidden pattern requires the carefulness of the comic readers and the audience of the film, important information that is hidden usually to be called the 'easter egg'. Pieces of images or writings placed hidden in this film or comic that makes the fans become more curious and raises the opinion speculation in their minds about the purpose and continuation of the story.

### **Americanization in Comics and Movies as the Popular Culture**

Popular culture is very easy to follow and liked by a broad audience because its form is far more flexible and does not require complicated conditions. Popular culture is more easily created in the community because it is based on people's tastes. Popular culture has become a tradition or trend created in the general public; Popular culture plays an essential role in the modern era. We can easily find famous cultural examples, such as The lifestyle of young people in urban retro style by riding a vintage Vespa, hip hop music with turntables and synthesizers, street murals which use walls in public places as its canvas, films and television broadcasts, as well as many other things that are easily consumed by the public.

Barker (2000) states that ideologically popular culture is a map of universally understood meaning and agreed upon. It is indicated by news and info broadcast via television and then watched by a broad audience to form a paradigm about something. The shaping of opinions and new views is caused by the news content delivered. The process of creating, maintaining, and reproducing people's mindsets is called hegemony. Williams in Storey (2012) suggests four forms of meaning from the word 'popular': 'well-liked by many people,' 'inferior kinds of work,' 'work deliberately setting out to win favor with the people,' 'culture made by the people for themselves.' Referring to Williams' statement, the definition of popular culture is a culture that many people liked and conventionally approved by the wider community.

As a multiracial country where the population comes from various countries, America has diversity in culture and ethnicity. The community's existence has experienced the influence of Americanization so that it changes the original cultural concept of their country to have a pattern of alignments to the new culture of America as its current residence. Its inhabitants have adopted American culture into a form of popular culture. Frith in Strinati (1995) explains that Americanization is often associated with increasing consumerism among young people and the



working class; America is becoming the object of consumption. The American dream has become an inseparable part of the mass cultural fantasy. German film director Wim Wenders put forward a statement that Americans have invaded our conscious world; it happens in film and music that become an object of consumption and a symbol of pleasure.

The influence of Americanization in comics and films has been demonstrated through the emergence of various superhero figures from different backgrounds. The majority of their existence is in the city of New York as a picture of the center of world power. As a city with people's cultural and ethnic diversity, New York seems to be the most important object globally. The initial idea of New York's dark period began in the early fall of 1941 when Namor, The Submariner unleashed a massive assault on the heart of New York, Manhattan, in reaction to his hatred of the city's inhabitants. The existence of New York as a story center in comics of Marvel Comics and DC Comics was also inspired by the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center building (Maslon& Kantor, 2013)



Figure 2: The depiction of 9/11 tragedy in both Marvel Comics and DC Comics

## METHODS

### Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is a type of social science research that collect and analyze the data without numerical data. This research method is proper to explore meaning, symbol, interpretation, processes, and relations of social life or social phenomenon. This study uses a qualitative approach with the scheme stated by Berg (2001) as follows:

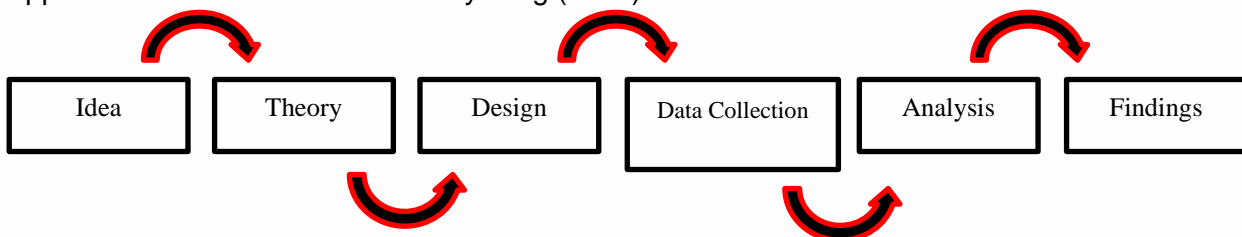


Figure 3: Qualitative method scheme by Berg

### Sampling Technique

The Sampling Technique used in this study was purposive sampling.

- A. American superheroes in Marvel Comics and DC Comics were chosen as the research samples based on the following considerations:

- Cape and mask as the basic identities of Superheroes in the realm of Comics and films.
  - American imperialism as a popular culture through comics and the Hollywood movies
- B. American flag and New York were chosen as the research sample based on the symbol of American power and the iconic city in the American comics and Hollywood movies.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Cape, Mask and Suit as the Basic Identitites of superheroes in the Comics and Movie.

"I choose to run towards my problems and not away from them. Because that what heroes do."

*Thor, Thor: Ragnarok (2017)*

The words above depict Thor's words in the movie sequel Thor: Ragnarok, which implies a heroic symbol of a superhero. The dream of becoming a superhero is everyone's childhood dream. Imagination about a character with a muscular body, having strength above the average human, and wearing a cape and mask is a picture of a superhero and almost everyone's expectations. This imagination is a fantasy that is not real, but it seems to have its nature in our minds. The presence of superheroes in this story is a metaphor for the circumstances that occur in real life. Some authors try to make this happen like Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster who successfully created a superhero character named Superman, Todd McFarlane with fictional characters named Spawn, Jack Kirby and Stan Lee who managed to create the Fantastic Four, Steve Ditko and Stan Lee with nature The Amazing Spider-Man, Bob Kane and Bill Finger who managed to create a cloaked detective character named Batman.

The existence of fictional characters' birth in the comic universe became an extraordinary response from the broader community throughout the world. Their success was later raised to the film's realm; this indeed increased the success of the fictional characters because of the diversification of products from comics into the realm of cinema.

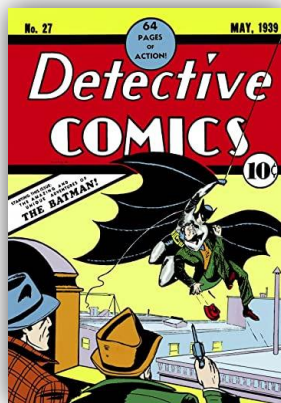


Figure 4: Batman's first comic that appears in the Detective Comic series #27 and classic movie footage of Batman and Robin scenes in the TV series around the 1960s

Based on the pictures above, these have shown how important the existence of masks and capes is as a superhero's identity. The presence of this cape and act serves to cover his true identity. The transformation process from ordinary people into superheroes is very clearly demonstrated by using unique costumes to change their true identity from regular human to superhuman. These capes, masks, and costumes play an important role, more than just as a disguise of identity; furthermore, those items are very pivotal to be a differentiator between ordinary people, heroes,

and enemies. Changing forms is a superhero tradition that is always carried out and much awaited by its fans. The depiction of Clark Kent as a more like a nerd journalist then turns into the figure of a perfect superhuman called Superman just by transforming in a hidden place.



Figure 5: Transformation process of Clark Kent into *Superman* in the comic

This cape's function, costume, and mask are not purely as a 'sweetener' of the superhero character. The use of projections, costumes, and masks also has an essential role for its users. In the story of Batman, the cape and deception are used not only as a cover for his true identity, but his cloak serves as a deterrent against enemy attacks. Furthermore, it can be useful as wings when gliding from higher ground. Another example from Marvel Comics' Dr. Strange desperately needs the role of his cloak, called the 'Cloak of Levitation,' this cloak faithfully serves his master and has mystical powers capable of protecting Dr. Strange. This cloak is also capable of carrying its users flying. Some superheroes make or wear capes, costumes, and masks made of extraordinary indestructible power, such as Barry Allen. He has a unique outfit that can survive at super-speed when he turns into The Flash.

Other superheroes, such as Captain Marvel and Human Torch, have costumes made from superior fabrics that can withstand very high temperatures when they use their superpowers. Technological advances also support some of the costumes worn by superheroes; this is shown by Iron Man, who has super-sophisticated costumes and is equipped with a computer assistant system J.A.R.V.I.S (Just A Very Intelligent System). Falcon is an example of another superhero who is also very dependent on the advancement of his costume technology; this particular costume is in the form of robot wings that can help him fly freely.

### **Americanization Imperialism as a Popular Culture Through American Comics and the Hollywood Movies**

America as a country that 'injects' Americanization culture into comics and films has become cultural heterogeneity throughout the world. For example, symbols of American domination have been clearly shown to Captain America. American characters are displayed in the super soldier's name, the star symbol, and the line on the vibranium shield, and the costume is an iconic reflection of the American flag. Binary opposition is clearly shown that Captain America represents America against the Red Skull, which is a metaphor for Hitler and the Nazis. Figure 6: First appearance of Iron Patriot in Marvel Comics: *Dark Avengers #1* (2009) and the depiction of Iron Patriot in *Iron Man 3* (2013).





Figure 6: Depiction from time to time of Captain America fights against Nazi in the Marvel comics' Captain America #1 (1941), Captain America #2 (1941), Captain America: Captain America vs. Red Skull (1968-1996). The appearance of Hitler has been changed into a red skull form.

In 1941, Jack Kirby and Joe Simon were fearless in illustrating the American super-soldier, Captain America punches right in the face of the Nazi leader, Adolf Hitler. Marvel Comics, which describes the resistance of its superheroes against the Nazi regime, Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, also created a superhuman crossover from the planet Krypton dealing directly with Adolf Hitler and his troops. This portrayal of American superhero figures against the Nazis was an attempt by superhero comic writers to increase the sense of nationalism towards his country and improve the spirit and mentality of American society when the tension of the second world war was heating up. American propaganda through comics was indeed very intensively carried out by the authors, including political elements in comics, which became a popular culture in America.



Figure 7: The depiction of Superman defeats Adolf Hitler and his army.

Another portrayal of American dominance that can be found is by displaying Iron Patriot in the Marvel Comics series in comics and films. Iron Patriot is an amalgamation of War Machine's super sophisticated costume with star and line symbols as a characteristic of Captain America. Tony Stark designed the War Machine to be an Iron Patriot to increase the power of the War Machine and an icon of patriotism towards America. Iron Patriot first appeared in the Dark Avengers # 1 series in 2009. Iron Patriot was created to help Captain America eradicate crime. In the sequel of Iron Man 3, Aldrich Killian managed to hijack the Iron Patriot suit to kidnap the United States president. Iron Patriot also appears in the sequel to Avengers: Endgame to be with other heroes against Thanos and his army.



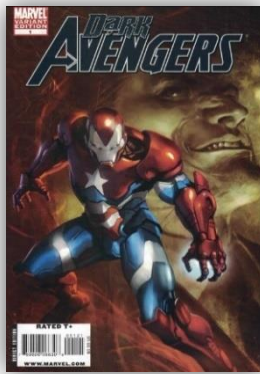


Figure 8: First appearance of Iron Patriot in Marvel Comics: Dark Avengers #1 (2009) and the depiction of Iron Patriot in Iron Man 3 (2013)

### Big Apple, Gotham and Daily Bugle

Talking about the American superhero's journey, we cannot skip the existence of the city of New York and many elements of the American flag in the story. As we know, the Marvel universe always links the city of New York as the core of the story. Some superheroes in the Marvel universe originated and lived in New York. For example, Peter Parker, as the alter ego of Spider-Man, designed and lives in Queens, Steve Roger 'The First Avengers' comes from Brooklyn Heights, Daredevil and Jessica Jones are two heroes who live and act on the streets of Hell's Kitchen. Doctor Strange and Iron Man have their headquarters based in Manhattan. Almost all of the Marvel universe heroes can never escape from the existence of 'The Big Apple' because New York is a cosmopolitan city and full of cultural diversity.



Figure 9: The depiction of Queens, New York in Marvel Superhero Adventures #1 and the representation of Daily Bugle in movie, the famous newspaper in New York.

In contrast to the DC Comics version that disguises the existence of the city of New York into a city called the city of Gotham. Although a lot of debate about the truth of Gotham's town in DC Comics is a representation of New York, this can not be denied that New York gives a special touch to the story of Batman's journey. Gotham in DC Comics is more about merging several places in the United States such as New Jersey, Chicago, and New York.

These superheroes' love shows some strong touches on patriotic messages to readers and viewers of the Marvel and DC Comics universe in defending America. They are ready to protect America from any threats from abroad, from other dimensional or even galactic creatures. The emergence of many superhero actions with American symbols and their superiority against various

threats to their country is a form of American imperialism often shown to comic readers and film viewers. This is done continuously to get serious attention from the worldwide community. American culture and flag seemed to be inserted into every story to hypnotize their fans; American culture has become a cultural heterogenization globally.



Figure 10: The depiction of the spirit of americanization through comics to the reader

## CONCLUSION

Identity as a superhero must be disguised to maintain the safety of the character's life and the people around him. The existence of capes, masks, and costumes provides a vital role in a superhero's presence. Some superheroes need costumes and capes to show their true identity as superheroes because they already have superpowers. Still, some superheroes are very dependent on their capes or costumes because they are ordinary humans. A superhero needs a cape, mask, and unique costume as a primary identity of a superhuman.

According to the authors' expectations, the concept of Americanization has influenced the public in the world; this is true. The message was sent and hypnotized the readers to follow American culture; this is a form of propaganda of American imperialism through comics and films. American symbols and icons scattered throughout the story attempt to doctrine the world community with the American culture. Through this research, it can be concluded that the cape, mask, and New York are three essential elements that cannot be separated in the process of superhero creation.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The writer would like to thank the participants who have helped in data collection. The writer would also like to state that this research was conducted to prove that the concept of Americanization can be found in almost every American comics and film. This propaganda has the purpose of boosting the American people to be more patriotic and nationalist to their country. Moreover, this motive can create cultural heterogenization among people all around the world. This form of Americanization is a form of popular culture.

## REFERENCES

- Barker, C. (2000). *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice*. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Berg, B.L. (2001). *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Science*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. United States of America: A Pearson Education Company
- Bordwell, D. (2006). *The Way Hollywood Tells It: Story and Style in Modern Movies*. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. Los Angeles: University of California Press
- Cawelti, J., G. (1977). *Adventures, Mystery, Romance: Formula Stories as Art and Popular Culture*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press
- Chandler, D. (2007). *Semiotics: The Basics*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New York: Routledge.
- Cobley, P. (2001). *The Routledge Companion to Semiotics and Linguistics*. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. London: Routledge.

- Costello, M.J. (2009). *Secret Identity Crisis: Comic Books and the Unmasking of Cold War America*. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group Inc.
- Gavaler, C. (2018). *Superhero Comics*. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc
- Kaveney, R. (2008). *Superheroes!: Capes and Crusaders in Comics and Films*. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. London: I.B Tauris & Co Ltd
- Knowles, C. (2007). *Our Gods Wear Spandex: The Secret History of Comic Book Heroes*. SanFrancisco: Weiser Books
- Kripal, J.J. (2011). *Mutants and Mystics: Science Fiction, Superhero Comics, and The Paranormal*. 7<sup>th</sup> ed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Maslon, L., & Kantor, M. (2013). *Superheroes!: Capes, Cowls, and the Creation of Comic Book Culture*. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. New York: Crown Archetype.
- Storey, J. (2012). *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: An Introduction*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Routledge
- Strinati, D. (1995). *Popular Culture: An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture*. 1<sup>st</sup>ed.London: Routledge Press.



# **"The Use of WhatsApp in Teaching and Learning Process: Is It a Hero During the COVID-19 Pandemic?"**

**Indriyati Hadiningrum, Indah Puspitasari**

Universitas Jenderal Soedirman

indriyati.hadiningrum@unsoed.ac.id, indah.puspitasari@unsoed.ac.id.

## **ABSTRACT**

It is good to look at how digital technologies can be used to ensure that university teaching and learning processes go ahead in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, especially for populations in developing countries with limited internet access. In the middle of March, most cities in Indonesia, including Purwokerto, have implemented the Work from Home (WFH) system. It is used to reduce the spread of the virus. Since then, most lecturers and students spend a more significant part of their time in a day on internet access. The internet traffic data from the most prominent provider in Indonesia shows an increase of 16% in online learning applications such as Ruang Guru and Google Classroom. In contrast, the use of social media during WFH tends to be stable. Things are different in the use of instant messaging like WhatsApp, which has increased by 40%. Increased traffic also occurred on the use of online games by 34%, and the use of video conferencing and streaming increased by 17%. Using instant messaging for academic purposes is less common before the pandemic, but we would argue that it is potential for the university to exploit, especially in this era. WhatsApp (WA) has become popular, with 1.5 billion users in 180 countries, making it the most used chat application. Although the lecturers do not know this traffic data, they look at this as a big opportunity and try to enhance it by exploiting the features of WhatsApp. Based on the explanation above, the writers describe WhatsApp's use and role in the teaching and learning process during the pandemic of COVID-19 in Humanities Faculty, Universitas Jenderal Soedirman. The writers used the qualitative method, which focuses on description analysis. We gather data and information by google forms and spread it throughout Humanities Faculty, Universitas Jenderal Soedirman. The study results show WhatsApp features commonly used are group chat with exchange text, photo, audio, and video. Those features allow direct access to lots of information in real-time, or we call it synchronous online learning. Based on the survey, WhatsApp's role is to support the teaching and learning process and maintain communication in the classroom (between lecturer and students). Moreover, the lecturers think that WhatsApp is easy to use and cost-effective, giving it a competitive advantage over the other social network platforms. We conclude that some lecturers consider WhatsApp is providing more benefits for students and lecturers.

**Keywords:** WhatsApp, Teaching Media, Teaching Process in Covid-19 Pandemic

## **INTRODUCTION**

December 2019, the world was in an uproar because there was a new virus in Wuhan, China. It is known as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-COV2); another name is COVID-19. The World Health Organization (WHO) informed the outbreak one month later, 30 January 2020, and declared that it became a pandemic on 11 March 2020. The epidemic has caused global social and economic disruption. It has led to the postponement or cancellation of sport, religious, political, and cultural events. Schools, colleges, and universities have been closed. Moreover, it affects the world's students' activity.

As one of the highest populations in Asia, Indonesia got the first case of Covid-19 on 2 March 2020. Two Indonesian, mother and daughter, were infected by a Japanese national. Since then, the pandemic had spread to 34 provinces in Indonesia. In the middle of March, the government announced this pandemic and closed all schools and campuses. The government decided to apply to the school for a home learning system. Teachers and lecturers did not have



much preparation for facing this pandemic. One of the communication media at that time was WhatsApp. WhatsApp was an effective medium for communication in an emergency because many students and parents already have and use it. It was a hero for building communication between teachers, parents, and students or between lecturers and students in pandemic situations.

In the university context, the government decided to close all campuses in the middle of March. The teaching and learning process had already started from the first week of March to the end of July. Lecturers and students had begun their classes, and they must continue the process until the even semester was over. Universities directly prepared a digital platform to facilitate their lecturers. The education minister has instructed universities to use blended learning, the combination of online and in-class learning. It is a long time ago before the outbreak comes. Although some universities already have their e-learning website and have conducted socialization and training, it still has not been fully implemented. Now, in the pandemic era, lecturers must be ready to work long-distance education. It is not only blended learning but fully online learning. Using an e-learning website is good, but it needs a process to learn. Some of the lecturers choose WhatsApp as their teaching and learning media because it is as easy as they use instant massaging. Using instant massaging like WhatsApp for academic purposes is less common, but the writers would argue that it is potential for universities to exploit here. In this paper, the writers describe WhatsApp's use and role in the teaching and learning process during the pandemic of COVID-19 in Humanities Faculty, Universitas Jenderal Soedirman.

Some previous researches talked about the use of WhatsApp in the teaching and learning process. Gon and Raweka (2017) explained their research about "Effectivity of E-learning through WhatsApp as a Teaching-Learning Tool." They assess social media's effectiveness like WhatsApp in delivering knowledge to the 4th-semester students and compare knowledge gain through e-learning and dictates lecture. Assessment of learning was done by giving pre-post and post-test questionnaires. Perception of e-learning through WhatsApp was done by feedback form. This research showed no significant difference between the gain of knowledge from WhatsApp or didactic lectures, advantages (technical, educational, or instructional) out pars the disadvantages. A few drawbacks, like message flooding and eyestrain, can be overruled by making small groups and using mobiles with more giant screens. Enabling Wi-Fi on the college campus can make its use cost-effective.

The second research was explained by Annamalai (2018). He explained, "How do we know what is happening in WhatsApp: a case study investigating pre-service teachers' online activity." The purpose of this study addresses the issue of investigating how lecturers used WhatsApp in an educational context and what are the pre-service teacher's views when WhatsApp is used in teaching and learning activities. A qualitative case study was conducted in this study. This research showed that the lecturers employed a blended learning approach and were not keen to entirely run their lessons in the online learning environment. The focus group interviews were conducted to bring the data together to generate emerging themes related to pre-service teachers' positive and negative views when they were engaged in WhatsApp for learning activities. The positive themes were related to bite-size learning, seamless learning, 21st-century learning, and WhatsApp to support learning and extended interaction space. The study may influence the use of Information Communication and Technology (ICT) tools in education. It also contributes to new ideas and knowledge on how teachers and learners can conceptualize and use ICT. There is a strong case to argue for instructors to be actively involved in interactions to guide students to develop knowledge and ideas.

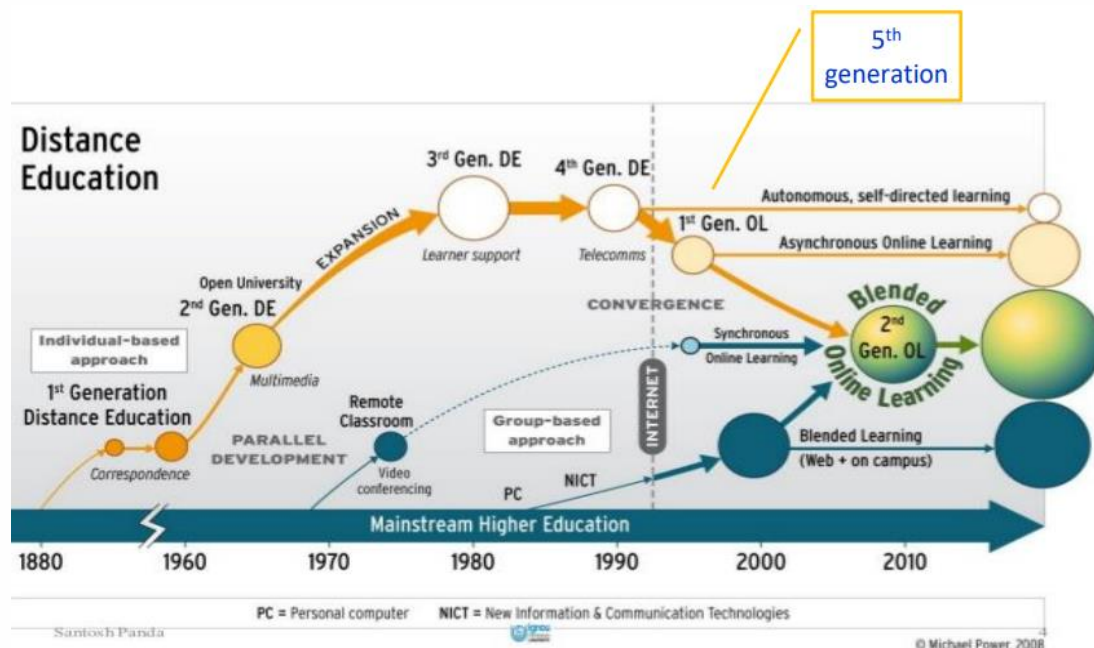
According to Kheryadi (2017), the implementation of WhatsApp as a media of English Language teaching gives many benefits to assist students in communicative language learning. It allows them to engage actively in online conversation and create confidence to use English in daily communication through two forms of conversation. The first type helps students interact among themselves to discuss some topics, whereas teachers are not involved in their online dialogues. In the second type, the teacher guides the whole process and participates actively in the online discussion. These findings showed that WhatsApp could help the student to build their confidence and motivation to learn. It also gives a positive attitude to learn English.

Based on those researches, we can conclude no significant difference between knowledge from WhatsApp or didactic lectures. WhatsApp can teach and learn media in the virtual class to gain students' knowledge and give positive attitudes to learn.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Media is a tool to convey information or messages from one place to another place. In the teaching and learning process, lecturers use media to make the class more useful and exciting. It also uses to reach the learning outcome easily. Generally, teaching and learning media mean tools to deliver teaching material. There are many kinds of teaching and learning media. Teaching and learning media are also called instructional media. In general, there are three kinds of instructional media. They are audio, visual, and audio-visual media (Kasbolah, 1993:57).

1. Audio media is media that can be listened to. The audio aids include a record player, tape recorder, and language laboratory.
2. Visual media is media that can be seen. The visual media may include a blackboard, textbook, a real object, picture file, chart, pocket chart, flashcard, word card, number card, flannel or felt board, magnetic board, opaque projector, overhead projector and transparency, slide, filmstrip, and miscellaneous materials.
3. The last, audiovisual media, cover film, television, and programmed instruction. It is a combination of audio and visual media.



Picture 1. The development of distance Education (Michael Power,2008)

Audio, video, or audio-video media are commonly used in the second generation of distance education. Suppose we see picture 1 about the development of distance education. In that case, the media above are included in the multimedia model, which is focused on a printed book, audiovisual, computer-based learning, and interactive video. The second generation of distance education was in the 1970s. It is no longer relevant to the current situation. What media are we used in the era of the covid-19 pandemic? We must use different kind of media which is relevant to the current situation. Power (2008) explained that the purpose of distance education is to provide educational services to a group of people who can not join on-campus instruction. The government has regulated the process of distance education and e-learning in the minister of education regulation no. 109 /2013 (Permendikbud 109/2013). The regulation said distance education is a teaching and learning process which is carried out remotely through the use of

various communication media. What is communication media? It is a media of teaching and learning, such as the mobile learning model. We can access the materials anywhere by smartphone, computer tablet, or netbook. We can conclude that distance education is an educational service by mobile learning model.

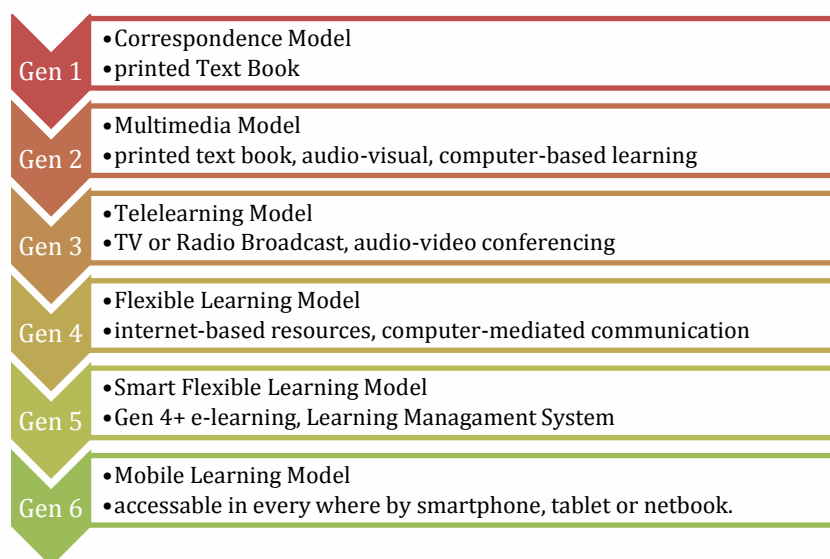


Chart 1. The development of teaching and learning model

This chart explains the development of the teaching and learning model. Generation 1 is a correspondence model that focuses on printed textbooks. Generation 2 is a multimedia model that focuses on a printed textbook, audio-visual, and computer-based learning. Generation 3 is called the telelearning Model, which concentrates mainly on tv or radio broadcast. Generation 4 is flexible learning, which focuses on internet-based resources. Coming to the 5th Generation, it is the era of e-learning and Learning Management System. It is also known as the first generation of online learning. The first generation of online learning started at the beginning of the 1990s. It included asynchronous online learning, which required students' autonomous and self-directed learning. This era is also popular with blended learning. It is a combination of web and on-campus education. The sixth-generation is the mobile learning model. In the pandemic era, it creates a new model of distance education. Teachers and lecturers use asynchronous online learning systems, but they also use synchronous online learning as WhatsApp, zoom, and Google meet.

Online learning is defined as flexible learning experiences delivered through information and computer technologies to be accessible anytime, anywhere, by anyone. There are two different models of online learning; those are synchronous and asynchronous.

Table 1 Difference of Synchronous and asynchronous

	<i>Synchronous</i>	<i>Asynchronous</i>
<i>Time study</i>	Real time	Without real time interaction
<i>communication</i>	surfing the internet, accessing website to obtain information	stand-alone courseware, downloaded materials for study
	Chatroom, conferencing, net meeting	by email or no real time communication

Synchronous learning means two parties are conversing or working together simultaneously in the online learning world. The conversation has a beginning and an end, typically with real-time or instant responses. Asynchronous learning occurs in online channels without real-time interaction. WhatsApp as the mobile learning media can be functioned as synchronous or asynchronous. It depends on how the lecturers use it in their class. The lecturer can use

synchronous, asynchronous, or both for teaching and learning processes in their virtual class. Example of learning activity using WhatsApp:

Asynchronous learning activity: The lecturer shares downloaded files in a group chat and ask them to read in their free time. Synchronous learning activity: The lecturer starts the group chat and discusses certain materials in real-time with instant responses.

## **METHODS**

The research design is a qualitative method. Merriam in Cohen (2007) says there are three types of case studies; those are descriptive, interpretative, and evaluative. The writers use a descriptive method which describes the use and the roles of WhatsApp for university teaching and learning context. The participants of this research are the lecturers of Humanities Faculty Universitas Jenderal Soedirman. This university is chosen because it represents the rural area campus, located in a small city in central Java Province, Indonesia. The writers want to know how digital technologies can ensure that university teaching and learning processes go ahead in the covid -19 pandemic context. The sample is 56 lecturers. There are two methods of collecting data. First is a field study. In the field study, the writers obtain information about the use of WhatsApp. We got the data from the survey through a google form. We collect all information about the media used by the lecturers during the pandemic. The second is a library study. The library study is used to collect relevant theories and analyze WhatsApp's roles in the teaching and learning process.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

WhatsApp is an application on the mobile phone which we can install in the play store. It started as an alternative to Short Message Service (SMS). The product support is sending and receiving various media; text, photos, videos, documents, location, voice calls, and video calls. The messages and calls are secured with end-to-end encryption, meaning that no third parties, including WhatsApp, can read or listen to them. It makes people communicate anywhere in the world without barriers. Here are the WhatsApp features that the writer took from WhatsApp official website:

1. Texts  
It is used to message your friends and family for free. WhatsApp uses the phone's internet connection to send messages so users can avoid SMS fees.
2. Group Chat  
It is used to keep in touch with the groups of people that matter the most, like the user's family or coworkers. With group chats, users can share messages, photos, and videos with up to 256 people at once. Users also name the group, mute or customize notifications and more.
3. WhatsApp on Web and Desktop  
With WhatsApp on the web and desktop, users can seamlessly synchronize all of chats to users' computer so that users can chat on whatever device is most convenient for users.
4. WhatsApp Voice and Video Calls  
With voice calls, users can talk to your friends and family for free, even if they are in another country. With free video calls, users can have face-to-face conversation for when voice or text just is not enough. WhatsApp voice and video calls use phone's internet connection, instead of cell plan's voice minutes, so users don't have to worry about expensive calling charges.
5. End to end encryption  
Some of most personal moments are shared on WhatsApp, which is why WhatsApp built end-to-end encryption into the latest versions of WhatsApp. When end to end encrypted, messages and calls are secured, so only users and person who are communicating can read or listen. Nobody is between, not even WhatsApp.
6. Voice messages  
Sometimes, users feel that giving voice messages is better than written messages. Users just one tap, then users can record a voice message.



## 7. Photos and videos

Users can share photos and videos on WhatsApp instantly. Users can even capture the moments that matter to you most a built – camera. With WhatsApp, photos and videos send quickly even if you are on a slow connection.

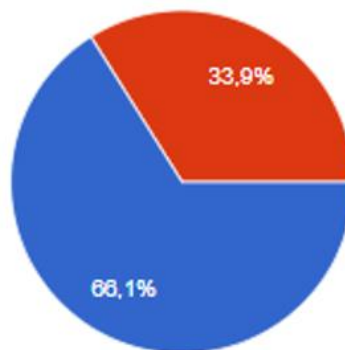
Those are the main features of WhatsApp, and every feature has its sub-features. For example, when you start to chat with Group Chat students, you can see who is reading your messages by tapping the messages in seconds till menu (i) appear. By having and using WhatsApp, users can explore every feature and get the benefits from it.

WhatsApp (WA) has become popular, with 1.5 billion users in 180 countries, making it the most used chat application. The internet traffic data from the most prominent provider in Indonesia shows an increase of 16% in online learning applications such as Ruang Guru and Google Classroom. Things are different in the use of instant messaging like WhatsApp, which has increased by 40%. Using instant messaging for academic purposes is less common before the pandemic, but it becomes very popular nowadays.

WhatsApp as teaching and learning media in distance education has functions to stimulate interest, encourage students' participation, provide knowledge and information, help students learn and communicate, and make the class more alive. Based on those functions, the writers are curious to know the use of WhatsApp in Humanities Faculty, Universitas Jenderal Soedirman. The writers obtained the data from the survey. The lecturers fill out the google form survey to answer the questions about what platform they use in the even semester's teaching and learning activity (March- July 2020). Of 92 lecturers in Humanities Faculty, only 56 returned the form to the writers, or it is about 60% of total lecturers.

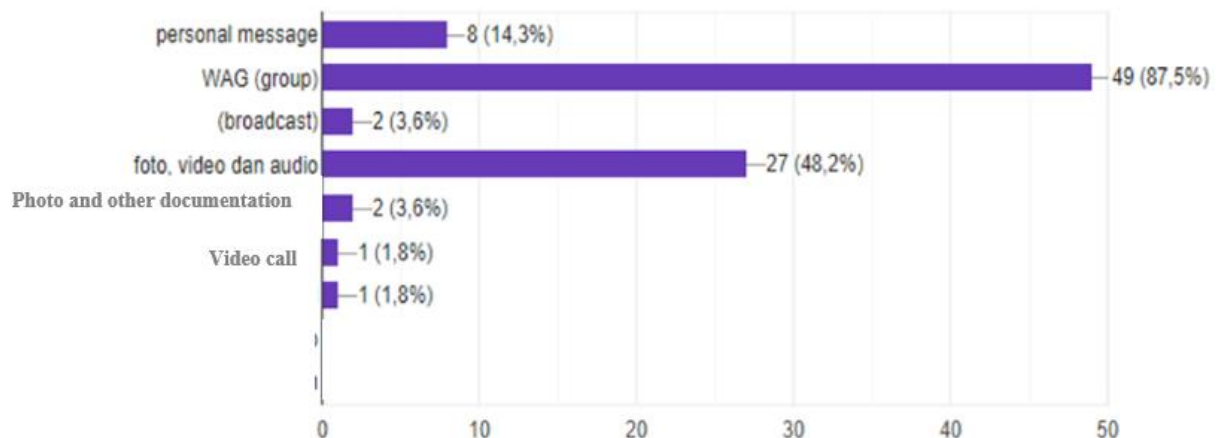
This paper analyzes what platform the lecturers used in the teaching and learning process during the pandemic, what WhatsApp features they used, how they use WhatsApp, and why they use WhatsApp.

Diagram 1. The use of WhatsApp in teaching and learning process during pandemic



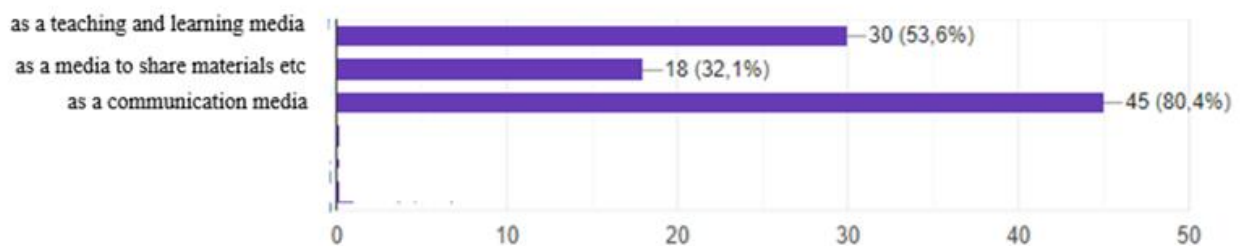
Do you use WhatsApp in the teaching and learning process during a pandemic? 66.1 % say yes, and 33.9 % say no. Most of the lecturers who use WhatsApp also use another platform. So, they use a combination platform in one lecture. The lecturers who did not use WhatsApp use google classroom, google meet, and eldiru. This finding matches the students' needs in distance education, and mobile application needs in the learning process. In the pandemic era, lecturers use asynchronous online learning systems, but they also use mobile synchronous online learning like WhatsApp.

Diagram 2. WhatsApp Features mostly used by the lecturers



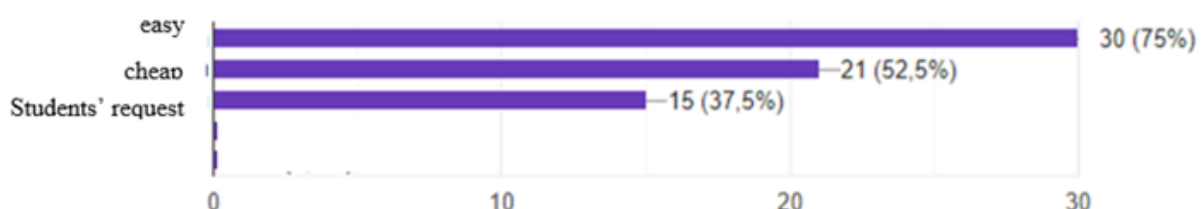
The diagram above is data about WhatsApp features mostly used by the lecturer. In the survey, the researchers asked what WhatsApp's features do they use? 87.5% use WhatsApp Group; they also use WhatsApp Group to share photos, videos, audio, and documents. Only a few of them use personal messages and broadcast. By using WhatsApp Group (WAG), the lecturer start the group chat and discuss certain materials in real-time with instant responses from the students.

Diagram 3. WhatsApp use in teaching and learning process during the pandemic



How do they use WhatsApp in the teaching and learning process during the pandemic? 80.4 % use WhatsApp as a communication media between lecturers and students. Besides that, they also use WhatsApp as a media to begin the lecture for the first time, to share material, assignments, and evaluations. Sugiharto (1994) explained that one of the media's roles in the teaching and learning process is the communicative role. It means that it has a function to enhance comprehension and help the students understand the message.

Diagram 4. Reason for choosing WhatsApp as a media in teaching and learning process during the pandemic



Why do they use WhatsApp in the teaching and learning process during the pandemic? 75 % say because WhatsApp is easy. Others say that it is cheap and some of them say that it is the students' request. One also says students' respond in the discussion is faster and more confident. This finding can be evidence of an increase of 40% using instant messaging in Indonesia.

WhatsApp (WA) has become popular, with 1.5 billion users in 180 countries, making it the most used chat application. The internet traffic data from the most prominent provider in Indonesia shows an increase of 16% in online learning applications such as Ruang Guru and Google Classroom. Things are different in the use of instant messaging like WhatsApp, which has increased by 40%. Using instant messaging for academic purposes is less common before the pandemic, but it becomes very popular nowadays.

Based on the survey, three types of the lecturer—first, only use WhatsApp entirely from beginning to the end. The data shows 14.3%. Second, the ones who use combination media in one subject and one class. In one class, they use WhatsApp and other media like google classroom, email, google meet, and zoom, which is used to avoid boredom. The data shows 48.2 %. Third, the ones who do not use WhatsApp in teaching and learning process. There are 33.9% say use other platforms like google classroom. We can conclude that there are 62.5% of respondents use WhatsApp in the teaching and learning process.

Some studies related to the use of digital media, including WhatsApp, have been undertaken. Based on the observation and interview with some lecturers and reflecting upon six-month experiences establishing WhatsApp in English Class, it can be noted that there have been various positive effects on the students' progress in learning. Good news comes when the lecturers establish group communication among students through WhatsApp. Less-active students attempt to be active in joining the conversation. Previously, they only read and/or try to write a comment in words or phrases. However, a couple of weeks later, they showed significant improvement as they were brave to write or comment and develop their critical thinking. Students contend that they are not afraid and embarrassed anymore to make any mistakes.

WhatsApp enables students to become autonomous learners because they can learn independently. They can read the materials given and give their ideas while discussing in a group chat. However, lecturers must observe, facilitate, and guide students in conversation. They have to monitor all the students' activeness, assist the group and guide them during the class. The lecturers' role in group chat is important to guarantee that the student has adequate knowledge and instructional guidance. More importantly, teachers are required to play their important roles in helping students develop autonomy.

Enthusiasm is a crucial factor that may also hinder students from participating in classroom activities. However, the use of WhatsApp can increase students' enthusiasm for learning. Sometimes students have less-motivation in learning; it is surely hard to reinforce them to do any activities. However, the use of WhatsApp can increase their enthusiasm for learning. Students feel excited to join online chats using their own words as it looks like they communicate with their friends in a daily context. That they show their motivation to perform well than what they have done in a regular or conventional class.

87.5 % of respondents use Group Chat in the teaching and learning process during the pandemic. They use WhatsApp for many purposes. WhatsApp's roles in the teaching and learning process during the pandemic are to make good communication, give fast information, and share files like internet sources, video, audio, photos, or documents in real-time. Besides being an application, WhatsApp is also a medium for delivering learning material. According to Richards in Sugiharto (1994), media in the teaching and learning process has several roles. Three of them are attention role, communicative role, and retention role.

1. Attention role

Attention role of media is to attract the students' attention, to heighten the students' curiosity and to convey the information. Media can make the knowledge and information more attractive. Lecturers use WhatsApp as a media to share audio, video, photos/ pictures are easily shared and it can hold the students' curiosity so they want to download them in group chat.

## 2. Communicative role

In its communication role, media can function to enhance comprehension and to assist the students in understanding the message. Communication role of media is a way of clarifying the message by making explicit certain concepts of the lesson.

## 3. Retention role

Many people believe that images are better retained in memory than words. Using WhatsApp, lecturers can share files like images, video, audio easily because WhatsApp group can be a learning source. Learning source is anything that can be used as a resource for getting knowledge. Learning resources can be grouped into five categories, namely human, library books, media, natural environment and media education. Media education helps the lecturers to make the student more understand about the material.

Learning resource is anything that can be used as a resource for getting knowledge. Learning resources can be grouped into five categories, namely human, library books, media, natural environment, and media education. Media education, as a source of learning, helping the teachers to make the student more understand about the material. WhatsApp as a media of education is become sixth generation of media in distance education. WhatsApp is one of the mobile based learning media.

## CONCLUSION

The results of the study show that group chats with exchange text, audio, and video are the most dominant feature used by the lecturers. Those features allow direct access to lots of information in real-time or call it synchronous online learning. The previous research stated no significant difference between the gain of knowledge from WhatsApp or didactic lectures. WhatsApp can be used as a teaching and learning media in the virtual class to gain students' knowledge and give positive attitudes to learn. Based on the survey, WhatsApp's role is to support the teaching and learning process and maintain communication in the virtual class (between lecturer and students).

Moreover, the lecturers think that WhatsApp is cost-effective and easy to use, giving it a competitive advantage over the other social network platforms. Based on the result above, we conclude that some lecturers consider WhatsApp is providing more benefits to students and lecturers. Although WhatsApp gives more advantages, the writers suggest for the lecturers to combine WhatsApp with another platform such as WhatsApp and google meeting, WhatsApp and zoom, or WhatsApp and learning management system. It is used to make the virtual class more effective and exciting. This research has a limitation because the data taken was only in one faculty and one university, and the analysis was in even semester during March to June 2020. It will be more challenging if another researcher conducts a bigger survey in one university and some universities in Indonesia..

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my special thanks of gratitude to Rector of Jenderal Soedirman as well as the dean of Humanities faculty. This paper and the research behind it would not have been possible without the exceptional support of my colleges in Humanities Faculty who helped us to share and fill the survey form. Their enthusiasm, knowledge, support and exacting attention to detail have been an inspiration and kept my work on track. We also thanks to the committee of international conference of Language, Linguistics and literature who already recommend my paper to be published in Colalite international prosiding.

## REFERENCES

- Annamalai, N. (2018). *How do we know what is happening in WhatsApp: A case study investigating pre-service teachers' Online activity*. Malaysian Journal of Learning and Instruction, 15(2), 207–225.
- Cohen, Louis. (2007). *Research Methods in education*. New York: Routledge Taylor& Francis Group.



- Cunliffe, R. (2006). *Investigating the Use and Usefulness of Instant Messaging in An Elementary Statistics Course*. (2002), 1–5.
- Gon, S., & Rawekar, A. (2017). 8454-16768-3-PB.pdf. *MVP Journal of Medical Sciences*, 4(June), 19–25. <https://doi.org/10.18311/mvpjms/2017/v4i1/8454>
- Kasbolah, Kasihani. (1993). *Teaching-Learning Strategy I*. Malang : IKIP Malang.
- Kementrian RISTEKDIKTI. (2016). *Kebijakan Pendidikan Jarak Jauh dan E-Learning di Indonesia*. *E-Learning Indonesia*, 1–21. Retrieved from <http://kopertis3.or.id/v2/wp-content/uploads/Paulina-Pannen-Kebijakan-PJJ-dan-E-Learning.pdf>
- Kheryadi (2017). *The Implentation of WhatsApp as a Media of English Language Teaching*. LOQUEN Vol. 10 No. 2
- Power, M. (2008). *The Emergence of a Blended Online Learning Environment*. *Journal of Online Learning and Teaching*, 4(4), 503–514.
- So, S. (2016). *Mobile instant messaging support for teaching and learning in higher education*. *Internet and Higher Education*, 31, 32–42. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iheduc.2016.06.001>
- Sotillo, S. M. (2006). *Using instant messaging for collaborative learning: A case study*. *Innovate: Journal of Online Education*, 2(3), 1–7. Retrieved from <http://nsuworks.nova.edu/innovate/vol2/iss3/2>
- Sugiharto, Willy. (1994). *The Use of Visual Media in The Teaching of English in Public Junior High School in Kodya Malang*. Unpublished Thesis. Malang : FPBS IKIP Malang.



# "Intertextuality of the Hero Traits of Robin Hood and Pitung"

Mardliya Pratiwi Zamruddin<sup>1</sup>, Eka Pratiwi Sudirman<sup>2</sup>

Faculty of Cultural Studies, Mulawarman University, Samarinda, East Borneo, Indonesia

[mardliyapратиwi@fib.unmul.ac.id](mailto:mardliyapратиwi@fib.unmul.ac.id)<sup>1</sup>, [ekasudirman@fib.unmul.ac.id](mailto:ekasudirman@fib.unmul.ac.id)<sup>2</sup>

## ABSTRACT

This research talks about two hero characters from two folklore of two nations. One is Robin Hood from England, and two is Pitung from Indonesia. This research aims to find out whether there is or there is not any intertextuality in both characters of different nation's folklore. Intertextuality will be seen from the hero traits that will be seen in the characterization of both characters Robin Hood and Pitung. The research will be done by doing a descriptive qualitative analysis that involves the theory of intertextuality and hero traits of the folklore written literary works. The result of this research is assumed to be helpful to enrich the knowledge in literary theory and criticism as well as understanding in the area of intertextuality.

**Keywords:** Intertextuality, Hero, Robin Hood, Pitung

## INTRODUCTION

Intertextuality is a concept that informs structuralist poststructuralist deliberations in its contention that individual texts are inescapably related to other texts in a matrix of irreducible plural and provisional meanings. The term is used to signify the multiple ways in which anyone literary text is made up of other texts, by means of its implicit or explicit allusions, citations, its repetitions and transformations of the formal and substantive features of earner texts, or simply its unavoidable participation in the common stock of linguistic and literary conventions and procedures that are "always already" in place.

The intertextual productions are fundamental to literary production, involving particular ways of seeing based on power relations, forms of resistance, and so on, which have their import in various theoretical disciplines including Marxism, Feminism, and Postcolonialism. Most critics agree that the term was coined in the late 1960s by Julia Kristeva, who combined ideas from Bakhtin on the social context of language with Saussure's positing of the systematic features of the language. Kristeva's work on intertextuality in the late sixties coincided with the transition from structuralism to poststructuralism. Intertextuality is a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another. (Kristeva 85, cited in Moi 37).

The stories about heroic characters are among those who are popular in literature. It is not limited to children's literature but also to teenagers and adults. The vast range of heroic theme is considered because the theme is fascinating and giving a positive vibe towards readers. It is also can be said because the theme of a hero is universal among nations, meaning that every nation has its own hero in one way or another, yet the hero shares one thing that is a characteristic of fighting over evil conducts. The similar yet different hero that occurs as explained before leading the researchers to do research on two heroes from a different nation is Robin Hood from England and Pitung from Indonesia.

Robin Hood is a legendary heroic outlaw originally depicted in English folklore. According to legend, he was a highly skilled archer and swordsman. In some versions of the legend, he is depicted as being of noble birth, and in modern retellings, he is sometimes depicted as having fought in the Crusades before returning to England to find his lands taken by the Sheriff. In the oldest known versions, he is instead a member of the yeoman class. Traditionally depicted dressed in Lincoln green, he is said to have robbed from the rich and given to the poor.

Through retellings, additions, and variations, a body of familiar characters associated with Robin Hood has been created. These include his lover, Maid Marian, his band of outlaws, the Merry Men, and his chief opponent, the Sheriff of Nottingham. The Sheriff is often depicted as assisting Prince John in usurping the rightful but absent King Richard, to whom Robin Hood remains loyal. His partisanship of the common people and his hostility to the Sheriff of Nottingham have early recorded features of the legend, but his interest in the rightfulness of the king is not, and neither is his setting in the reign of Richard I. He became a popular folk figure in the Late Middle Ages, and the earliest known ballads featuring him are from the 15th century (the 1400s). There have been numerous variations and adaptations of the story over the subsequent years, and the story continues to be widely represented in literature, film, and television. Robin Hood is considered one of the best-known tales of English folklore.

Si Pitung (Old spelling: Si Pitoeng; or sometimes written just Pitung) was a 19th-century bandit in Batavia, Dutch East Indies (modern-day Jakarta, Indonesia). His real name was Salihoen. Based on oral tradition, the name Pitung is derived from pituanpitulung (Javanese for a group of seven). As a child, Salihoen studied at Hadji Naipin's Islamic boarding school. Aside from learning his prayers, he also received training in pencak and situational awareness. Pitung's criminal career started after money earned from the sale of his father's goats was stolen in Tanah Abang. His father forced him to compensate for the loss. As a result, he chased down the thief. This incident made him known as a *jago*, a cocky person or local legend. Later Pitung invited his friends – Dji-ih, Rais, and Jebul – to rob Hadji Sapiudin, a wealthy landowner who lived northeast of Batavia, on 30 July 1892. One telling has it that the four men posed as civil servants and stated that Sapiudin was under investigation for fraud but offered to keep his money in safekeeping. Sapiudin surrendered the money, unaware that he was being conned. Some tellings have Pitung stealing money only from rich persons who had collaborated with the Dutch colonial overlords.

His crimes received the attention of A.W.V. Hinne, a police officer who was stationed in Batavia from 1888 to 1912. Hinne wanted to capture Pitung and had caught him once. However, Pitung had escaped with the help of his gang members; folklore attributes the escape to Pitung's magical powers. Reports differ on what happened next. One account gives Hinne convincing Pitung's former teacher Hadji Naipin to reveal what talisman (*jimat*) gave Pitung his powers. The *jimat* itself differs depending on the retelling. One source says it was his *keris* (a kind of dagger). Another says it was his hair, and his power would weaken if his hair was cut. Some sources suggest that Pitung would lose his supernatural powers if he was pelted with rotten eggs. In the *lenong* version, Pitung is described as a humble person, a good Muslim, a hero of Betawi people, and an upholder of justice. According to Indonesian author and screenwriter Lukman Karmani, who wrote about Pitung in the 1960s, the bandit was an Indonesian Robin Hood, stealing from the rich to give to the poor. This very statement supports the researchers' aim in doing this research that is to know whether there is or there is not any resemblance of ideas of a hero in any kind of forms in both characters Robin Hood and Pitung.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### Folklore

Folklore is fictional stories about animals and people of cultural myths, jokes, songs, tales, and quotes. It is a description of the culture, which has been passed down verbally from generation to generation, though many are now in written form. Folklore is also known as "folk literature" or "oral traditions." Folklore depicts the way the main characters manage their everyday life. It is about individual experiences from a particular society.

Folktales employ certain characteristics or conventions common to virtually all tales. The most familiar involve the setting, character, plot, theme and conflict, and style (Russell, 2009)

#### 1. Setting

- Most folktale settings remove the tale from the real world, taking us to a time and place where animals talk, witches and wizards roam, and magic spells are commonplace.
- The settings are usually unimportant and described and referred to in vague terms (e.g., "Long ago in a land far away..." and "Once upon a time in a dark forest...").



- Some settings reflect the typical landscape of the tale's culture, for example, medieval Europe with its forests, castles, and cottages, Africa with its jungles, India, and China with its splendid palaces

## 2. Character

- The characters in folk literature are usually flat, simple, and straightforward. They are typically either completely good or entirely evil and easy to identify. They do not internalize their feelings and seldom are plagued by mental torment.
- Motivation in folktale characters tends to be singular; that is, the characters are motivated by one overriding desire such as greed, love, fear, hatred, and jealousy.
- The characters are usually stereotypical, for example, wicked stepmothers, weak-willed fathers, jealous siblings, faithful friends. Physical appearance often readily defines the characters, but disguises are common.
- The hero or heroine is often isolated and is usually cast out into the open world or is apparently without any human friends. Evil, on the other hand, seems overwhelming. Therefore, the hero/heroine must be aided by supernatural forces, such as a magical object or an enchanted creature, to fight against evil forces.

## 3. Plot

- Plots are generally shorter and simpler than in other genres of literature.
- The action tends to be formulaic. A journey is common (and is usually symbolic of the protagonist's journey to self-discovery). Repetitious patterns are found, suggesting the ritual nature of folktales and perhaps to aid the storyteller in memorization; for example, events often occur in sets of three (e.g., three pigs, three bears, three sisters, three wishes),
- The action is concentrated, with no lengthy explanations and descriptions. Conflicts are quickly established, and events move swiftly to their conclusion. The action never slows down. Endings are almost always happy ("They lived happily ever after")

## 4. Theme and Conflict

- Themes in folk literature are usually quite simple but serious and powerful. Folktale themes espouse the virtues of compassion, generosity, and humility over the vices of greed, selfishness, and excessive pride.
- Common folktale themes include the following (pp. 160-161):
- The struggle to achieve autonomy or to break away from parents ("Beauty and the Beast")
- The undertaking of a rite of passage ("Rapunzel")
- The discovery of loneliness on a journey to maturity ("Hansel and Gretel")
- The anxiety over the failure to meet a parent's expectations ("Jack and the Beanstalk")
- The anxiety over one's displacement by another – the "new arrival" ("Cinderella")
- These themes are at the very heart of growing up. Also, they are similar to the themes of Greek tragedy: Wisdom comes through suffering. For every benefit, there is a condition; nothing in life comes without strings attached, responsibilities to be met, and bargains to be kept.

## 5. Style

- The language is typically economical, with a minimal amount of description and a heavy reliance on formulaic patterns, e.g., conventional openings and closings.
- Repetitious phrases are common; they supply a rhythmical quality desirable in oral tales and perhaps aided in memorization of the stories.
- Dialogue is frequently used; it captures the nature of the character speaking.
- Folktales often use a technique – stylized intensification, which occurs when, with each repetition, an element is further exaggerated or intensified. This has the effect of increasing the drama.
- Folktale motifs (i.e., recurring thematic elements) are quite prevalent; they may have served as mnemonic devices when the tales were still passed on orally. Examples of common motifs include journeys through dark forests, enchanted transformations, magical cures or other spells, encounters with helpful animals or mysterious creatures, foolish bargains, impossible tasks, clever deceptions, and so on.



- Some folktales have powerful visual images that we can readily identify, such as a glass slipper, a beanstalk, a spinning wheel, a poisoned apple, a red riding hood, a magic lamp, and a bluebird. These stark visual elements give the tales their enduring strength.
- Many folktale motifs (i.e., recurring thematic elements) are examples of magic: helpful animals, enchanted transformations, granted wishes, etc. The magic, when it appears, is always greeted by the characters with matter-of-factness. Characters acknowledge magic as a normal part of life without surprise or disbelief. This stylistic feature distances the folktale from reality, and it provides an important distinction between folk literature and literary/modern fantasy.
- Folktales often lift their heroes and heroines to higher and more refined levels where they remain beautiful, noble, and pure through the process of sublimation.

### **Intertextuality**

Intertextuality was first coined by Kristeva (1980), who believes that there is no text which is totally independent and isolated from the text preceding it, which means that every text is influenced by the text and textual elements relating to it. Her statement was assumed to be influenced by Bakhtin (1981), who stated that story or prose formed by literary elements referred to acts are not neutral, but it is made in response to the previous discourse. In detail, Bakhtin argued that every linguistic utterance is the unique expression of social interaction within a special context, conditioned by past utterances and planned in advance by the speaker (Lehman and Greensfeld, 2011). Furthermore, Bell (1993) and Halliday (2003) consider intertextuality as a history text in which previous texts gave connections and influences on the present particular text. It sharpens the understanding that the present literary work is often related to old or classic literature. Therefore, there is no total originality of the current text viewed from the perspective of intertextuality.

From this point of view, the concept of intertextuality is believed to be distinguished into two: intertextuality of text/author and intertextuality of the reader. The intertextuality of text/author focuses on the text itself and analyses it to find the textual elements of other texts influencing the present text. On the other hand, the intertextuality of the reader considers the reader's reading experience and prior knowledge, which will influence his interpretation and understanding of the current text (Ahmadian & Yazdani, 2013, p. 156). In sum, the former intertextuality talks about the text construction and other elements embedded in the previous text and the present text, while the latter intertextuality concerns how the reader forms his understanding and interpretation toward the present text by using his knowledge of other texts related to the current one.

In intertextuality, the core of a text, namely hypogram and the following texts after it is called transformation. The transformation itself is a prediction, absorption, and transformation. The best way to discover the hypogram is by concerning the time of publishing to trace the texts published before the present text or those surrounding it. Besides, the first step to do is to look at the works which potentially similar to others or even seem to re-writing or write-back-to.

According to the previously mentioned explanation, the researchers argue that intertextuality is indeed the study of how a text relates to other texts which coming preceded it or those published in the same era by looking at the similarity of either its textual elements or moral value embedded in the literary text.

### **Character and Characterization**

To collect the data needed from both literary works, the researchers focus on the intrinsic elements of the text, specifically the character. Abrams suggested that "Character is people who are appeared in narrative prose or novel and it is interpreted by the reader as a person who has a moral quality and certain tendency such as being expressed in what they say and what they do" (76). Fictional characters in fiction are categorized into major and minor, flat and round, and static and dynamic.

The characters who are being the center of the story or theme are called major characters, also known as the protagonist, and the minor characters are the ones who involved in the story with the major characters. The role of the minor character is not as strong as the major character in the story, but it is needed to support the major characters. The minor characters are often static

and unchanging that remains constant from the beginning to the end of the story. On the other side, the major character is dynamic; they possess some kind of change of attitude, purpose, behavior in the storyline. (Griffit 60-61).

One of the most vital parts of the story is the characters, as the story is centered on what happens to them. Characters can be described by using character-traits. Character-traits are constructed by collecting numbers of character indicators scattered across the text and sometimes inferring the traits from these indicators when needed. These character-indicators are known as 'characterization'(Rimmon-Kenan, 61).

Direct definition and indirect presentation are the two basic types of textual indicators of a character (Ewenqtd. in Rimmon-Kenan 61).

In direct definition, character traits could be quite straightforward. It is identified by an adjective (e.g. 'he was fearless'), an abstract noun ('Ben was honest to a fault'), it could also be some other kind of noun ('he was such a douche') or part of speech ('she was insecure about herself'). However, it could only be categorized as direct characterization if the one who identifies the character's features has "the most authoritative voice" in the text (Rimmon-Kenan 62). They are the narrator or the main character, or any other characters who may influence how the story progresses. Thus if, for example, a minor character called someone 'deranged'. This opinion should not be taken at face value since the character who said it is neither an authoritative voice in the text nor do they have a big influence on the story.

A character trait is not mentioned explicitly. Instead, it shows and illustrates it in various ways so that the reader could deduce what traits do they imply (Rimmon-Kenan 63). Four ways to show traits indirectly are through action, speech, external appearance, and environment.

### **Hero trait**

There have been many experts who define what a hero is, but there is no single definition of a hero. In general, a hero is a person who is engaged in the act of heroism that feels concerned and care for the people around them, and they are able to feel what those in need of help are feeling. Hero is a person or main fictional character who risks their life rescuing people; according to Kinsella (2015) heroes have eleven central traits. They are moral integrity, bravery, conviction, courage, self-sacrifice, selflessness, determination, inspiration, helpful, protective, honesty.

Zimbardo said that the key to heroism is a concern for other people in need—a concern to defend a moral cause, knowing there is a personal risk, done without expectation of reward. While Allison and Goethals define heroes are perceived to be highly moral, highly competent, or both. More specifically, heroes are believed to possess eight traits, which we call The Great Eight. These traits are smart, strong, resilient, selfless, caring, charismatic, reliable, and inspiring. It's unusual for a hero to possess all eight of these characteristics, but most heroes have a majority of them.

Heroes are conceptualized diversely, and no rigid boundaries exist in this social category. Instead, the hero concept is made up of fuzzy sets of features organized around prototypical category members (Fiske & Taylor, 2008; Hepper et al., 2012). The most prototypical features of heroes, identified in our research, are bravery, moral integrity, courageous, protecting, conviction, honest, altruistic, self-sacrificing, selfless, determined, saves, inspiring, and helpful. Kinsella, Ritchie, and Igou). Other definitions often break heroism down by types or degrees of the personal risk and sacrifice involved. Some involve grand acts such as endangering one's life in order to save another person, while others are smaller, everyday acts designed to help another human being in need..

Researchers Franco, Blau, and Zimbardo suggestthat heroism involves more than just this, however. In their definition, heroism is characterized by:

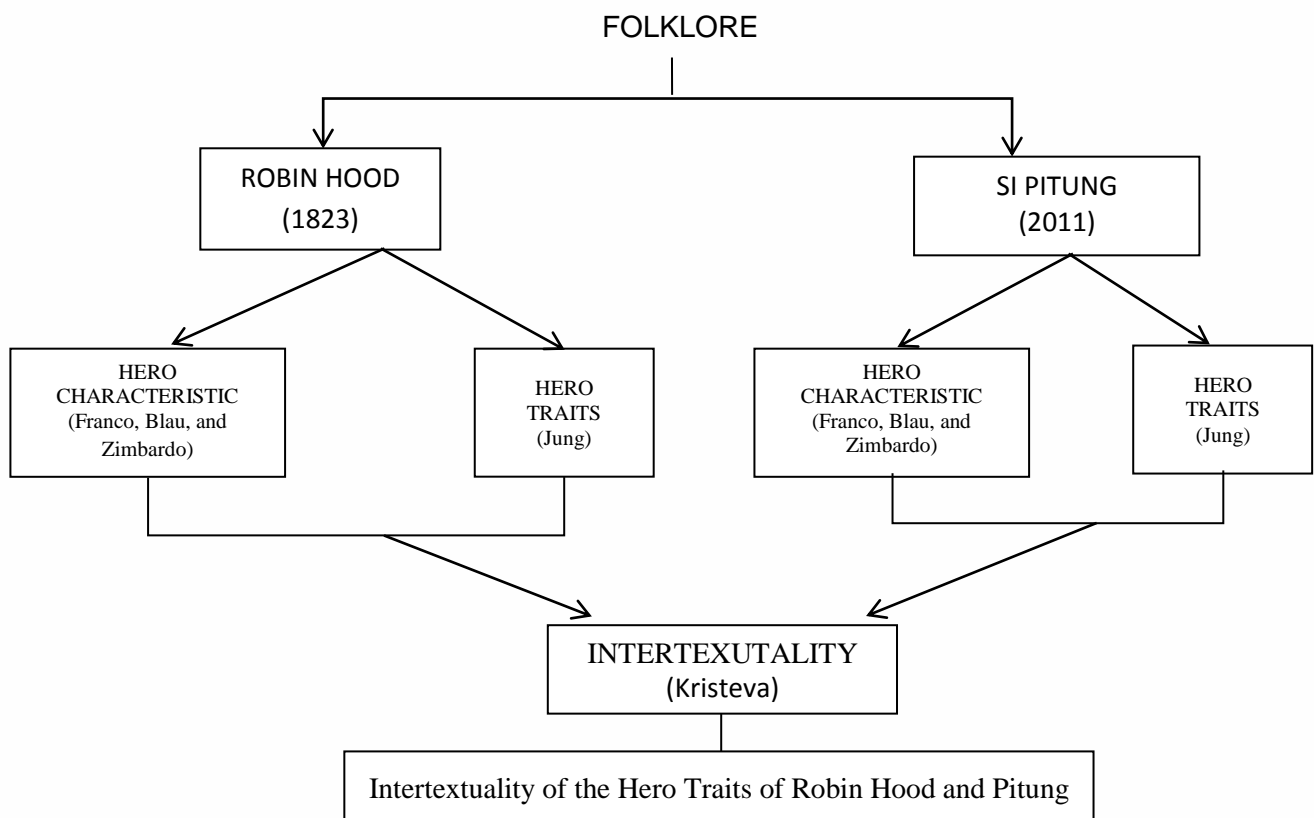
- Actions that are done in service of others who are in need, whether it is for an individual, a group, or a community
- Actions that are performed voluntarily
- The individual recognizes the potential risk or sacrifice they are making by taking these actions
- The heroic individual willing accepts the anticipated sacrifice they are making

- They engage in these actions without any expectation of reward or external gain

From the 12 archetypes, The Hero, according to Jung, owns the characteristics as:

- Motto: Where there's a will, there's a way
- Core desire: to prove one's worth through courageous acts
- Goal: expert mastery in a way that improves the world
- Greatest fear: weakness, vulnerability, being a "chicken"
- Strategy: to be as strong and competent as possible
- Weakness: arrogance, always needing another battle to fight
- Talent: competence and courage
- The Hero is also known as: The warrior, crusader, rescuer, superhero, the soldier, dragon slayer, the winner and the team player.

From the descriptions above the traits of a hero character in a literary work will be identified based on the characterizations and actions that build the character in the story.



## METHODS

### Research Method

This research applies qualitative descriptive research method with intertextuality approach. Descriptive method attempts to describe and interpret the objects in accordance with reality. The descriptive qualitative method is implemented because the data analysis and findings will be presented descriptively. Furthermore, the researcher uses intertextuality approach to seek for the intertextual relationship of hero traits which exist in both texts, *Being a Complete History of All the Notable and Merry Exploits* by William Darton and *Si Pitung* by Soekanto. Since this study aims to examine the product of culture which is literary work, qualitative research design is considered as the most suitable design for this study.

Data sources in this study are (1) the novel of *Robin Hood: Being a Complete History of All the Notable and Merry Exploits* by William Darton that was published in London, it has 54 pages long and the story is set in England around the late middle age era and (2) *Si Pitung*, a story

written by Soekanto published by Mizan on February 2009 with 156 pages. The data will be analyzed in the form of words or sentences describing hero traits to find out the intertextuality in both texts.

The analysis procedure of this study used the following stages: (1) Read the two literary texts, (2) Analyzed the hero traits that shows in the novel Robin Hood: Being a Complete History of All the Notable and Merry Exploits by William Darton and Si Pitung by Soekanto, and (3) Analyzed the intertextuality in both novels, (4) Concluded the results of the research.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Robin Hood and Pitung are two main characters of two heroic stories in their era. Robin Hood is an outlaw for the sheriff yet a hero for the poor people of the kingdom. Pitung is an outlaw for the police yet a hero for the poor people in his nation. Both characters are serving poor people by stealing from the rich which stealing from the poor. The findings of this research are presented in the table in the appendix section. The findings show that Robin Hood and Pitung are both fulfill five heroism characterizations by Franco et al (2011) and eight hero traits by Jung (1921).

Based on the theory of intertextuality, Robin Hood and Pitung are two texts that have connections and influences with each other. It can be seen from the theme of the two stories where both are talking about a hero by society yet considered an outlaw by the police or the government. In this research, Pitung is the one which is considered inspired from the classic story of Robin Hood. Some researches also confirmed this statement by saying that Pitung is the Robin Hood from Indonesia. One reason of this is could be seen from the year of Robin Hood is being told or published is a lot earlier than Pitung. This is in accordance to the theory of intertextuality which said that earlier literary works may and will inspire the later (Bell:1993 and Halliday: 2003).

This research finds the similarity of the textual elements and the moral value of both stories of Robin Hood and Pitung. The similarity can be seen in: character and characterization, setting, and moral value of both folklores with the main focus on the character and characterization. The first is about the characterizations of the main characters of both stories: Robin Hood and Pitung.

The main character of both stories also has resemblances where they both are young men that are trying to help the poor by robbing from the rich. They both collecting fellows that have the same mission to help the poor and doing their actions in group.

### Appendix 1.1:

Though Robin Hood was a robber, which to be sure is a very bad thing, yet he behaved in such a manner as to have the good word and good wishes of almost all the poor people in those parts. (33)

He never loved to rob anybody but people that were very rich, and that had not the spirit to make good use of their riches. (34)

### Appendix 2.1:

"So, do you wanna protect him?". "I will, Kong Haji, in a heartbeat." (Sehabis Menggembala 7)

Si Pitung rush back to his home. Without a sound, he walked into his kitchen. Then open the rice storage which is almost empty. He took two or maybe three handful of rice, stuffed it in his pocket. And fleet to the hut where he listened to the crying girls. (Nasi untuk Hari Ini 3)

Both characters are also skillful in using weapon: Robin Hood with his arrow and Pitung with his *golok*.

### Appendix 1.2.

Here there was plenty of deer; and **Robin Hood and his company were very excellent marksmen at shooting them with the cross-bow** (27)

Robin Hood was a man of a bold spirit, and could not rest till he had seen this friar; so he slung his **bow** across his shoulder, and took his quarter-staff in his hand, and away he went to Fountain Dale. (141)



#### Appendix 2.2.

As fast as thunder, Raisan turned around. Curious to see where the Golok that suddenly appeared almost killed him. (61)

Pitung was alone in his hiding place. Very tired and sleepy yet he tried to stay alert of his surrounding. Golok in his left hand, ready to be pulled out in case something's coming from the moving bushes. (82)

The resemblances of the two characters can clearly be seen from the table in the appendix of heroism characterization and traits of hero.

The situation where the story takes place that is the setting of the story, also of similar ones. They both live in an era where there are people that are very rich while on the other side there are also people who are very poor. The government in both stories are seemingly not taking care of this economic gap condition which in turn become the cause which make both hero character done their mission.

The moral value embedded in both stories of Robin Hood and Pitung show another intertextuality which is happened in the stories. Robin Hood and Pitung are both considered a hero by the poor of their society despite them doing their outlaw acts (Appendix 1.1 and Appendix 1.2). They both serve the society that is being ignored by the government..

#### Appendix 1.2

Now Robin had a great dislike to the popish clergy, because one of them had cheated him of his uncle's estate ; and the bishop of Hereford had quite as much dislike to Robin, because of the trick Robin had played him in the marriage of Allen-a-Dale, and because he did not think it right that such a robber should live in his see. (101)

**"I am an outlaw,"**replied he, **"and my name is Robin Hood;** and yonder is the bishop of Hereford, with all his men, who wants to bring me to the gallows." (107)

#### Appendix 2.1

Si Pitung predict. People like Sapri and his gang only use their power to rob and steal, to make themselves rich. For that, they will have the same place with the landlord, colonialist, and traders. And Pitung is ready to face them all. (*DiPasarTanahAbang* 6)

From the findings, it can also be seen that although Robin Hood and Pitung are from different era, nation, and culture yet they present the same idea about how a hero or an act of heroism present when they are being forced by the situation. The absent of the government to fulfill the needs of their people is filled, although by force and unlikely way, by the so called hero characters. It is also shown that intertextuality may and can happen because human beings have the same ideal about life and how to overcome the problems in life. Despite of the span of time spread between the two stories, the need for helper, a hero character, during difficult time is longing wherever human live.

## CONCLUSION

The findings show that the intertextuality can and may happen across the span of time as well as across country. Despite the different time and countries, the connections found in the story of Robin Hood and Pitung prove that one story may and can inspire other story with adjustments according to the context: time, situation, genre, race, language, and culture. Intertextuality shows that one story can add variety of understanding social condition according to the context and the way people live their life. The adjustments made in the process of intertextuality show the creativity of the author as the producer of the story.

This research is done merely on the surface of the elements of the text and a touch in the elements of the reader as well as the moral values embedded in the stories. Hopefully the next research done in the same topic will go deeper on the intertext elements of the author as to seek for the ideology of the authors involved in the intertext as well as the intertextuality of the readers that is also an interesting topic to be done thoroughly.

## REFERENCES

- Abraham, M.H. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. New York Holt: Rinehart and Winston. 1981.
- Ahmadian, M. & Yazdani, H. *A study of the effect of intertextuality awareness on reading literary text: the case of short stories*. Journal of Education research Vo. 3 (2) pp. 155-166.2013.
- Allison ST, Beggan JK, Efthimiou O. Editorial: *The Art and Science of Heroism and Heroic Leadership*. Front Psychol. 2019;10:655. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2019.00655
- Bakhtin, M.M. (1981). *The dialogic imagination: our Essays*. (M. Holquist, Ed; C. Emeron, Trans). Austin, texas: university of texas press(Lehman and Greensfeld, 2011).
- Bell, R.(1993). *Translation and Translating: theory and practice*. Longman, London and New York. 1993.
- Darton, William.*Robin Hood: Being a Complete History of All the Notable and Merry Exploits*. London: Holborn Hill. 1823. Pdf
- Franco, ZE, Blau, K, & Zimbardo, PG. Heroism: *A conceptual analysis and differentiation between heroic action and altruism*. Review of General Psychology. 2011; 15(2): 99-113. doi: 10.1037/a0022672.
- Griffith, Kelly. *Writing Essay About Literature*. USA: Wadsworth. 2011.
- Halliday, M.A.K. (2003). *On Language and Linguistics*,vol.3, edited by Webster, J. Continuum, London and New York. 2003.
- Jung, C.G. 1921. *The Psychological Types*. Online.
- Keczer Z, File B, Orosz G, Zimbardo PG. *Social Representations of Hero and Everyday Hero: A Network Study from Representative Samples*.PLoS ONE. 2016;11(8):e0159354. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0159354
- Kinsella, E. L., Ritchie, T. D., & Igou, E. R. *Lay perspectives on the social and psychological functions of heroes*. 2015. Pdf
- Kristeva, J.*Desire in language: a semiotic approach to literature and art*. 1980. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Liebst LS, Philpot R, Bernasco W, et al. *Social relations and presence of others predict bystander intervention: Evidence from violent incidents captured on CCTV*. Aggress Behav. 2019;45(6):598-609. doi:10.1002/ab.21853
- Rimmon-Kenan, Shlomith. *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics*. Routledge, 2003. Pdf
- Russell, D. L. (2009). *Literature for children: a short introduction*. Online.
- Soekanto SA. *Si Pitung*. Mizan Group. 2011.
- Tsuji K. Kin selection, species richness and community. Biol Lett. 2013;9(6):20130491. doi:10.1098/rsbl.2013.0491
- Yin, R.K. *Qualitative Research from Start to Finish*. New York. London. The Guilford Press. 2011.

## APPENDIXES

### Appendix 1. Robin Hood Analysis

#### 1.1. Heroism characterizations by Franco, Blau, and Zimbardo (2011)

NO	CHARACTERIZATION	DATA
1	Actions that are done in service of others who are in need, whether it is for an individual, a group, or a community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Though Robin Hood was a robber, which to be sure is a very bad thing, yet he behaved in such a manner as to have the good word and good wishes of almost all the poor people in those parts. (33)</li> <li>- He never loved to rob anybody but people that were very rich, and that had not the spirit to make good use of their riches. (34)</li> <li>- He never let any woman be either robbed or hurt; and, in cases of hardship, he always took the part of the weak and the injured against the strong; so that it was truly said, "that of all thieves he was the gentlest and most generous thief." (37)</li> </ul>
2	Actions that are performed voluntarily	Robin Hood said no more, but put off his scarlet suit, and dressed himself like a harper, with a harp in his hand. (80)
3	The individual recognizes the potential risk or sacrifice they are making by taking these actions	Robin Hood knew very well that his way of life was against the laws; and that, if he were once caught, it would go very hard with him. (158)
4	The heroic individual willing accepts the anticipated sacrifice they are making	Robin Hood knew very well that his way of life was against the laws; and that, if he were once caught, it would go very hard with him. (158)
5	They engage in these actions without any expectation of reward or external gain	When he met with poor men, in his rambles, instead of taking anything from them, he gave them money of his own. (36)

#### 1.2. The hero characteristics by Jung (1921):

NO	TRAITS	DIRECT	INDIRECT			
			ACTION	SPEECH	EXTERNAL APPEARANCE	ENVIRONMENT
1	<b>MOTTO</b>	He never let any woman be either robbed or hurt; and, in cases of hardship, he always took the part of the weak and the injured against the strong; so	When he met with poor men, in his rambles, instead of taking anything from them, he gave them money of his own. (36)			



		<p>that it was truly said, "that of all thieves he was the gentlest and most generous thief." (37)</p> <p>Robin Hood was a man of a bold spirit, and could not rest till he had seen this friar; so he slung his bow across his shoulder, and took his quarter-staff in his hand, and away he went to Fountain Dale. (141)</p>				
2	<b>CORE DESIRE</b>	<p>Now Robin had a great dislike to the popish clergy, because one of them had cheated him of his uncle's estate ; and the bishop of Hereford had quite as much dislike to Robin, because of the trick Robin had played him in the marriage of Allen-a-Dale, and because he did not think it right that such a</p>	<p>Though Robin Hood was a robber, which to be sure is a very bad thing, yet he behaved in such a manner as to have the good word and good wishes of almost all the poor people in those parts. (33)</p>	<p>" I wish from my soul," said Robin, " you would quit this lazy life, and come and be one of us ; we range the forest merry and free, and are as happy as the day is long." (155)</p>		





		robber should live in his see. (101)				
<b>2</b>	<b>GOAL</b>	He never let any woman be either robbed or hurt; and, in cases of hardship, he always took the part of the weak and the injured against the strong; so that it was truly said, "that of all thieves he was the gentlest and most generous thief." (37)	He never loved to rob anybody but people that were very rich, and that had not the spirit to make good use of their riches. (34)			
<b>3</b>	<b>GREATEST FEAR</b>	Robin Hood knew very well that his way of life was against the laws; and that, if he were once caught, it would go very hard with him (158)				One time, when Robin was walking alone in the Forest of Sherwood, he heard the trampling of horses; and, looking round, he saw his old enemy, the bishop of Hereford, with six servants. The bishop was very near before Robin looked round and saw him ; and he had nothing to trust to but the swiftness of his heels ,to save him from danger. (103 – 104)



<b>4</b>	<b>STRATEGY</b>	As he had lost his estate by the cunning of a popish priest, he had a great dislike to the whole set; and the popish priests at that time behaved in such a manner, that hardly anybody liked them: so that Robin Hood was not thought the worse of for his usage of them. (35)			-His gang soon grew to above a hundred in number, and they were some of the tallest, finest, and boldest, men in the kingdom. (31)  -Robin Hood dressed them in an uniform: he himself always wore scarlet; and each of his men had a green coat, a pair of breeches, and cap. (32)	After this, no man could travel alone through Sherwood Forest, without being stripped of his money. (29)
<b>5</b>	<b>WEAKNESS</b>	Robin Hood knew very well that his way of life was against the laws; and that, if he were once caught, it would go very hard with him. (158)				
<b>6</b>	<b>TALENT</b>	Here there was plenty of deer; and <b>Robin Hood and his company were very excellent marksmen at shooting them with the cross-bow</b> (27)		Robin Hood was haughty and proud, and said, "Now, my good fellows, do you think there is a man in the world that could wrestle or play the quarter-staff with me, or kill a doe or buck so sure as me?" (133)		



7	KNOWN AS:	<p>-He never let any woman be either robbed or hurt; and, in cases of hardship, he always took the part of the weak and the injured against the strong; so that it was truly said, <b>"that of all thieves he was the gentlest and most generous thief."</b> (37)</p> <p>-The road they took led through the forest of Sherwood ; and, as they rode along, the sheriff cried out, "God preserve us this day from <b>a man they call Robin Hood !</b>" (55)</p>		<p><b>"I am an outlaw,"</b> replied he, <b>"and my name is Robin Hood;</b> and yonder is the bishop of Hereford, with all his men, who wants to bring me to the gallows." (107)</p>		
---	-----------	--	--	---	--	--

## Appendix 2. Si Pitung Analysis

### 2.1. Heroism characterizations by Franco, Blau, and Zimbardo (2011)

NO	CHARACTERIZATION	DATA
1	Actions that are done in service of others who are in need, whether it is for an individual, a group, or a community	<p><i>"Ialu, kau ingin membelanya?". "saya, Kong Haji, kalau mampu."(Sehabis Menggembala 7)</i></p> <p>"So, do you wanna protect him?". "I will, Kong Haji, in a heartbeat."(Sehabis Menggembala 7)</p> <p><i>Si Pitung bergegas pulang. Dengan hati-hati, ia pergi ke dapur. Lalu, ia membuka tempayan beras. Sudah hamper kosong. Kemudian, ia mengambil kain. Di atas kain itu, ia menumpahkan dua tiga empat kepal beras yang diambilnya dari tempayan. Lantas ia membungkus kain itu. Kemudian entah mengapa, ia mengambil golok dan menyelipkannya di pinggang. Selanjutnya, ia kembali bergegas menuju gubuk dengan anak-anak yang menangis itu. (Nas iuntuk Hari Ini 3)</i></p> <p>Si Pitung rush back to his home. Without a sound, he walked into his kitchen. Then open the rice storage which is almost empty. He took two or maybe three handful of rice, stuffed it in his pocket. And fleet to the hut where he listened to the crying girls. (Nasi untuk Hari Ini 3)</p>
2	Actions that are performed voluntarily	<p><i>"Tidak, Bang, cumamenolong Kong Haji."(Mataharitelahterbit 5)</i></p> <p>"No, brother, I'm just helping him out." (Matahari telah terbit 5)</p>
3	The individual recognizes the potential risk or sacrifice they are making by taking these actions	<p><i>Si Pitung berpikir. Mereka ini orang-orang seperti Bang Sapri dan anak buahnya, menggunakan kekuatan untuk merampok dan mencopet serta memperkaya diri sendiri. Karena itu, kedudukan mereka sejajar dengan tuan-tuan anah, kompeni, atau juragan-juragan sero. Dan si Pitung siapmenghadapinya (Di Pasar Tanah Abang 6)</i></p> <p>Si Pitung predict. People like Sapri and his gang only use their power to rob and steal, to make themselves rich. For that, they will have the same place with the landlord, colonialist, and traders. And Pitung is ready to face them all. (DiPasarTanahAbang 6)</p>
4	The heroic individual willing accepts the anticipated sacrifice they are making	<p>Pitung tak sabar. Ia berlari memanjang pematang-pematang dan mencabuti patok-patok yang tidak pada tempatnya itu. (Patok yang berpindah 6)</p> <p>Pitung furious. He dig up the signs which doesn't belong there.(Patok yang berpindah 6)</p>
5	They engage in these actions without any expectation of reward or external gain	<p><i>"Terima Tasih, Nak. Nanti saya ganti kalau kambing saya sudah laku, ya ...." . "Tak usah dipikirkan, Kek ...."(Di Pasar Tanah Abang 4)</i></p> <p>"Thank you, son. I will pay you back once I get the money from selling this goat". "Don't worry, pop...."(Di Pasar Tanah Abang 4)</p>



2.2. The Hero, according to Jung, owns the characteristics as:

NO	TRAITS	DIRECT	INDIRECT			
			ACTION	SPEECH	EXTERNAL APPEARANCE	ENVIRONMENT
1	<b>MOTTO</b>	<p><i>Semangat si Pitung berkobar-kobar lama kin yakin akan tugas hidupnya untuk melindungi mereka yang lemah. (Patok yang Berpindah 3)</i></p> <p>The spirit of Pitung is on fire. He is more and more convinced of his life's duty to protect those who are weak. (Patok yang Berpindah 3)</p>		<p>"kau harus sabar dan banyak mengalah. Kau harus membela yang lemah. Kau harus menegakkan keadilan dan kebenaran..."</p> <p>"Sayaberjanji, Kong Haji." (Pelajaran Kedua 3)</p> <p>"You have to be patient and give in a lot. You must defend the weak. You must uphold justice and the truth."</p> <p>"I promise, Kong Haji." (Pelajaran Kedua 3)</p>		
2	<b>CORE DESIRE</b>	<p><i>Tak sedikit pun si Pitung merasa letih atau canggung. Tak sedikit pun ia mengendurkan sikapnya. (Pelajaran Kedua 9)</i></p> <p>Not the least bit Pitung feel tired or nervous. Not one bit he relaxed his pose. (Pelajaran Kedua 9)</p>		<p>"Nah, sekarang kulihat gelap-gelap kau telah menimba, tentu ada sesuatu yang kauinginkan. Katakanlah sekarang." "Benar, Kong Haji. Saya mau belajar Ilmu." "Ilmu apa, Bontot?" "Ilmu agama dan ilmu"</p>		



				<p><i>persilatan."</i> (Bontot 7)</p> <p>"Well, now I see what you are doing here at dawn in the darkness you have start fill the bucket with water, there must be something you want. Say it now."</p> <p>"That's right, Kong Haji. I want to master the art. "" What art, Bontot?""martial arts and religion." (Bontot 7)</p>		
2	<b>GOAL</b>	<p><i>Alangkah senangnya bila ia benar-benar menjadi pendekar dan boleh berperang, membunuh, jika kebajikan dikhianati. (Bermalam di Marunda 6)</i></p> <p>How happy it would be if he really became a warrior and could fight, kill, if his virtue was betrayed. (Bermalam di Marunda 6)</p>		<p><i>"Kong Haji, saya ingin menjadi orang yang sakti, ingin jad ipemdekar silat." (Sehabis menggembala 6)</i></p> <p>"Kong Haji, I want to be a powerful person, I want to be a master of martial art." (Sehabism enggembal 6)</p>		
	<b>GREATEST FEAR</b>		<p><i>Si Pitung menyerah ketika goloknya diminta. Iamenyerah</i></p>			



			<p><i>pula ketika tangannya diborgol dandimasukkan ke penjara. Semuanya demi keselamatan ayahnya yang tak berdosa. (Kesibukan di Tangsi Grogol 8)</i></p> <p>Pitung gave up and put down his sword. He let himself handcuffed and threw into jail. It was all traded for his father's life. (Kesibukan di Tangsi Grogol 8)</p>			
3	STRATEGY		<p><i>la meresapi janji pendekar. Kemudian, ia melatih gerak-gerak yang sudah diajarkan Haji Naipin, terutama cara memukul yang keras. (Pelajaran Kedua 12)</i></p> <p>He took in the promise of the warrior. Then, he practiced the movements that Haji Naipin had taught him, especially</p>			



			how to hit hard. (Pelajaran Kedua 12)			
4	<b>WEAKNESS</b>			<p>Maaf, saya sombong, Kong Haji...,” sesal si Pitung (Khutba di Masjid Tambora 3)</p> <p>Sorry, I'm arrogant, Kong Haji ..., "regretted Pitung (Khutbadi Mesjid Tambora 3)</p> <p>“Nah, kausalah, Bontot. Syarat utama pendekar adalah sabar ... ini harus kau latih. Ilmu harus dipelajari setapak demi setapak...” (Pelajaran Kedua 3)</p> <p>"Well, you're wrong, Bontot. The key to become a swordsman is to be patient ... you have to practice this. Knowledge must be learned step by step ... ” (Pelajaran Kedua 3)</p>		
5	<b>TALENT</b>	Namun dengan tenang dan mantap, si				





	<p>Pitung mengelak. Sehingga berkali--kali kemudian, Bang Sapri hanya menampar angin. (Di Pasar Tanah Abang 10)</p> <p>But calmly and steadily, Si Pitung can ducked the attacks. countless times , Bang Sapri only slapped the wind. (Di Pasar Tanah Abang 10)</p> <p>Cepat bagai kilat, Raisan membalikkan badannya ke arah datangnya Golok. (61)</p> <p>As fast as thunder, Raisan turned around. Curious to see where the Golok that suddenly appeared almost killed him. (61)</p> <p>Si Pitung ketika itu sendirian di persembunyian nya. Ia terkantuk-kantuk karena kelelahan semalaman. Namun ia cepat terjaga, ketika terdengar krisik semak dikuak. Golok dipegangnya di</p>				
--	---	--	--	--	--



		<p>tangan kiri. Siap dicabut. (82)</p> <p>Pitung was alone in his hiding place. Very tired and sleepy yet he tried to stay alert of his surrounding. Golok in his left hand, ready to be pulled out in case something's coming from the moving bushes. (82)</p>				
6	KNOWN AS:			<p><i>"Bambu Petung adalah bamboo teladan .... Badannya tinggi, besar. Tetap iurat-uratnya lemas, dapat dengan mudah dibuat tali, dianyam, dan tak pernah patah meskipun ada angin rebut besar. Ia bisa menunduk sampai mencium tanah. Tetapi, ia takkan patah ...."</i> (Ujian Bagi Pendekar 9)</p> <p>"Petung bamboo is the model bamboo .... Tall, big. But the veins are limp, can be easily roped off, woven together, and</p>		



				never break despite the strong winds. He can duck until he smells the ground. However, it won't break .... ." ( <i>Ujian Bagi Pendekar 9</i> )		
--	--	--	--	---	--	--

# "Reception of Tokusatsu Film in Japanese Culinary World"

**Santi Andayani**

Prodi Sastra Jepang Univ. Brawijaya

[santi\\_andayani@ub.ac.id](mailto:santi_andayani@ub.ac.id)

## ABSTRACT

The popularity of the tokusatsu (superhero) series and its franchise influences the Japanese culinary world. One of them is the company Nissin Foods, which uses tokusatsu to promote one of its ramen noodles products known as UFO Kamen Yakisoban. The popularity of this advertisement was made into a film with several series. The tokusatsu character also appeared in the Udon film. Inspired by his love for the tokusatsu character when he was a child, the main character created the tokusatsu character, which he called Captain Udon to introduce udon noodles to Japanese society through an advertising magazine where he worked. The merging of the theme between the world of tokusatsu and the culinary world has created a parody of the tokusatsu film. The reading of film directors in the reception of culinary-themed tokusatsu films will be the aim of this research. This research used the reception theory and descriptive analysis method. This study indicated that although the UFO film Kamen Yakisoban and Captain Udon are a parody of tokusatsu films, especially from the Kamen Rider film, the influence of other types of tokusatsu characters is also illustrated in both names. The parody of the two tokusatsu films was found in costume designs, weapons, kick style, and villain characters.

**Keywords:** Reception, Tokusatsu, Parody, Kaptan Udon, UFO Kamen Yakisoban

## INTRODUCTION

Those in their 30-40s, of course, remember the tokusatsu or superhero series from Japan such as Satria Baja Hitam and Ultraman that have been broadcast on Indonesian national television. This series became one of the children's favorite shows at that time. Many children are inspired to play brawl by imitating the movements or kicks of these legendary tokusatsu characters. In Japan, this phenomenon among children is known as the henshin (transform) boom, where children will follow movements such as role calls, henshin poses, and hissatsu waza from the famous tokusatsu character Kamen Rider. There were also reckless actions of these children by climbing trees or roofs of houses just to make jumps like a Rider kick.

The popularity of the tokusatsu characters is inseparable from the many franchises produced. The tokusatsu genre began with the Super Giant series directed by Ishii Teruo and produced by Shintohe in 1957 (Sharp, 2011: 263). This series greatly impacted the development of subsequent tokusatsu series, such as Kamen Rider which marked the henshin boom in the 1970s, and then the Super Sentai series (American power rangers), and the Ultra Series. The popular Kamen Rider metaseries have parodied versions of them and become a reference in pop culture, especially in their costumes and poses. The [kamenrider.fandom](http://kamenrider.fandom.com) site mentions several anime, manga, video games, live-action TV, and advertisements that use Kamen Rider references, such as the Bleach anime where Masahiro's Hollow form gives her a bodysuit with an insect-like mask and scarf and he also uses kicks in the same style. Then the anime Detective Conan/ Case Closed appeared on the superhero series tv broadcast named Kamen Yaiba wherein the Boy Detective watched the scene. Then in the Doraemon anime, it is stated that during the episode "Experimental Dream Scheme", Nobita enters a dream, and in that dream, he fights Big Spicy Mamma. Nobita executes a transformation by announcing "Henshin" which means "transform" (the word used by Kamen Rider when changing) and changes his costume by wearing a typical Kamen Rider mask. Then Nobita calls himself: Kamen Nobita. "



The popularity of tokusatsu characters is also used by other entertainment industries, such as by producing various kinds of merchandise, figurarts, games, and tv shows. This brave masked hero, truth defender, and crime-fighting hero character attracts attention among children and tokusatsu fans of all ages. The popularity of the tokusatsu series, which has been around for more than 5 decades, is also used by one of the food industries, the Nissin Food company, which is known for producing instant ramen noodles. To promote one of its cup noodle ramen products, Nissin Food made an advertisement featuring a tokusatsu character known as UFO Kamen Yakisoboy. Interestingly, the ad artist dressed like a Kamen Rider but was modified with a costume that showed the uniqueness of the product being sold, namely instant yakisoba noodles. Unexpectedly, this unique advertisement gained popularity in the 1990s in Japan until the movie and video games were made with this character. One version of the film is titled UFO Kamen Yakisoban: Kettler no Kuroi Inbou (<https://tvtropes.org>).

Not only does it inspire instant noodle products, but the tokusatsu series is also able to spark creativity from its fans. Tokusatsu characters can bring ideas that can arouse imagination and fantasy so that the company can produce new art products. This is illustrated in the Udon film directed by Katsuyuki Motohiro which aired in 2006. In one of the stories, it is told about the love of the main character, Matsui Kosuke when he was a child with the character of tokusatsu and also to udon noodles. This love affects his imagination so that he creates an imaginary character, whom he calls Captain Udon. The name "Captain Udon" is inseparable from his life, where his father was an udon noodle maker. However, after Kosuke grew up, the life around him which was full of udon makers or sellers made him embarrassed especially when he saw his father who rarely talked to him anymore because he was busy with his efforts to make udon. This influenced Kosuke's dream so that after graduating from college he then decided to migrate to America to become a comedian. However, after failing to become a famous comedian, Kosuke finally returned to his hometown and was accepted to work as a magazine editor that was not so well known. To increase magazine circulation, Kosuke, who was inspired again by his local noodle products, then created a project with his team whose goal was to introduce udon to the wider community through their magazine. Kosuke also proposed to make manga with the character Captain Udon, the character he imagined since a child. Their business was successful and even attracted people from outside the city to visit and buy various kinds of udon sold by the residents until the udon boom arose. At the end of the film, a scene depicts how little Matsui Kosuke's fantasy is finally realized with his success as an actor who plays the tokusatsu character of his dreams, Captain Udon.

The tokusatsu characters in the UFO Kamen Yakisoban and Captain Udon films were both inspired by the character Kamen Rider. Through the courage of these characters, they were used to introduce food products to Japanese society. The amalgamation of two worlds, the world of tokusatsu and the world of food is a really interesting combination because it can create a unique creative power that is captured by the world of the food industry as well as film. Food industry players and food genre filmmakers do not just read or watch but can take advantage of the situation upon the object they are reading, namely the tokusatsu character which is transformed into a new work. It is interesting to examine how these tokusatsu characters are perceived in the culinary world as reflected in Japanese films.

The research about the creativity born from tokusatsu is conducted by Edria Sandika in 2010. Sandika examined how creativity is manifested in tokusatsu fandoms in the Komutoku community. With their love for tokusatsu, their creativity was provoked so that they could create designs and choreography, create workshops for making tokusatsu cosplay costumes, sound effects, and be able to reenact tokusatsu heroic acts through stage performances. The dynamics that occur between fans by watching and creating text, namely the tokusatsu series and films in the Komutoku community prove that they are not only reading but also able to take advantage of the situation in their love for tokusatsu so that this intensive interaction makes Komutoku members develop further (2010: 38-39).

In contrast to the research from Edria Sandika which emphasizes the interaction of fan culture in the community and cultural production created from fan culture activities in the community, this research as mentioned in the previous explanation will focus on how the reception

of tokusatsu characters is represented in Japanese culinary world, especially in the film UFO Kamen Yakisoban: Kettler no Kuroi Inbou and in the film Udon. These two research objects were chosen because the tokusatsu characters in the two films were perceived differently from tokusatsu's general image. Literary reception pays attention to aesthetic aspects, how literary works are responded to, and then processed. The merger of two different worlds, the culinary world and the world of tokusatsu in these two films has produced new work. This work may create surprising or unexpected tokusatsu characters. As expressed by Zoetmulder, in literary receptions, modern readers want to be surprised and want something completely new (Ratna, 2015: 208). So, how to read the tokusatsu characters in the culinary-themed film work is interesting to study further using literary receptions.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Reception Theory**

Literary reception is derived from the word *recipere* (Latin), *reception* (English), which is defined as the reader's reception or reception. In a broad sense, reception is defined as text processing, ways of giving meaning to works so that they can respond to it (Ratna, 2015: 165). The meaning here is a continuous process of concretization in which the meaning is not given objectively but by the reader according to their social environment (Ratna, 2010: 210). Apart from the social environment in which the reader is located, the level of knowledge also influences the process of meaning-making. According to Junus, the response to the literary work he reads can be passive, namely how a reader can understand the work or see the aesthetic nature contained in it and the response can also be active, namely how the reader realizes the response (1985: 1).

In reception theory, the beauty and benefits of literary works for the community and cultural actors in, general, are not definite. Such beauty is not timeless beauty and the work of art in this connection is not universal. Conversely, beauty is relative, which means that the quality of which depends on the reader's socio-cultural situation through which readers can explore and understand cultural activities differently. According to Zoetmulder, in the process of reading, modern readers want to be surprised, want something completely new, the aesthetic of conflict according to Lotman's understanding, this is different from traditional readers who want relatively the same values so that they are in a calm, peaceful situation (Ratna, 2015: 208).

This reception theory is a little different from interpretation. Luxemburg distinguishes reception from interpretation, where at the reception, the characteristics of the reception are reactions, both direct and indirect, while interpretation is more theoretical and systematic, reception enters the field of literary criticism. The review of novels in newspapers includes acceptance, while the novel's discussion in scientific magazines includes interpretation. Even so, the literary reception in contemporary theory is not limited as a reaction but has been accompanied by a very detailed interpretation and even interpretation. Some forms of reception, apart from reviews, for example, reports, diaries, copies, translations, and adaptations. For example, various transformations are a short story into a novel, drama, film, painting, etc. as well as text processing in the form of innovation and parody. Soeratno reveals that a response or greeting text to another text could be in the form of reprocessing, distorting, confronting, and rewriting. Then, the reader's acceptance, in turn, is a storehouse of culture as well as creative energy. Sometimes, new forms as reception are often more popular, more desirable, often more meaningful than the original one (via Ratna, 2015: 167).

### **Tokusatsu**

In Japan, the term tokusatsu is currently known as the title pinned to superhero characters such as Kamen Rider Black (or in Indonesia known as Satria Baja Hitam), Ultraman, and Super Sentai (which in America was later adapted into the Power Ranger series) and monster-themed films, such as Godzilla. Initially, tokusatsu was used for all films that used special effects / visual effects. As from the origin of the kanji, namely 特撮 (read: tokusatsu), 'toku' means special, and 'satsu' means film (Yoshida, 1990). This term usually refers to a lot of live-action films that use CGI (Computer-Generated Imaginary). Special effects in Japan were popularized by Eiji Tsuburaya as

the creator of Godzilla's giant monster character in 1954. The success of this film eventually gave birth to the success of another tokusatsu series.

However, the popularity of tokusatsu began to decline, along with the development of Japanese manga and anime that featured more exciting images and stories. Also, there is an assumption that tokusatsu is primarily aimed at children only. Even though it has experienced a decline in popularity, several tokusatsu manufacturing companies in Japan still maintain it today because there are still segments that enjoy it, such as the emergence of tokusatsu lovers communities.

### **Noodles in the Japanese Culinary World**

Japan is known as one of the countries that have succeeded in introducing its culinary specialties to the international community. Foods such as tempura, sushi, sashimi, ramen, udon, takoyaki, and okonomiyaki are popular Japanese culinary delights and have even been found in restaurants or food outlets big cities in Indonesia. Historically, Japanese food has been heavily influenced by Chinese and Korean eating cultures. Chinese influences include the birth of several types of noodles in Japan such as ramen, soba, and udon. According to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the total consumption of noodles in Japan in 2009 reached 10.9 million US dollars, including ramen, soba, and udon, both frozen, plain, instants fresh noodles (Kim, via Hall, 2016: 136).

Ramen became known to the Japanese public during the Meiji period, named after Japan began to open itself to the international world in 1859. According to the [raumen.co.jp](http://raumen.co.jp) website, the first ramen restaurant opened in the Asakusa area (Tokyo) in 1910 where served ramen with a combination of Chinese noodles and cuisine typical of Japan. Ramen reached its popularity in 1958 when the Nishshin Food company succeeded in launching and marketing instant ramen products that marked the further development of the food business also changes in dietary lifestyle in Japan (Solt, 2014). Today ramen has become Japan's national dish (kokuminshoku) and is gaining popularity overseas very quickly. Traditional ramen transformed into a more modern model like fusion ramen appears that uses a mixture of ingredients from various parts of the world. Similar to ramen, udon also made from wheat flour. To different between them, ramen is usually straight, thin, slightly curly, and yellow, while udon tends to be thick, large, and white. Both ramen and udon have their uniqueness in each region in Japan and are also one of the icons of food culture and food tourism in Japan. Like udon in Gunma prefecture is famous for Mizusawa udon and Kagawa prefecture is known as Sanuki udon (Kim via Hall, et al. 2018: 138). In fact, according to the Japan monthly web-magazine, there are more than 700 udon restaurants spreading across various places in Kagawa with their respective styles (<https://japan-magazine.jnto.go.jp>). Sanuki udon is interesting because it can become a symbol of the identity of Kagawa prefecture, thereby stimulating the regional food industry and promoting regional tourism. Udon tours gave birth to tour guides so that there are udon tour buses, udon taxis, and udon passports. Also, the existence of udon mascots which gave birth to various kinds of udon themed souvenirs. These are some examples of the successful promotion of tourism in Kagawa prefecture with udon as the flagship product (<https://www.ana-cooljapan.com/destinations/kagawa/sanukiudon>). Unlike udon and ramen that is made from wheat flour, buckwheat noodles are rye. Soba is made of a mixture of 30 to 60 percent buckwheat, the rest being wheat flour. The buckwheat (not a grain at all, but the seed of a plant related to flax) makes the noodles chewy and adds a pleasant, slightly bitter flavor to the mix (Ashkenazi, 2003: 37).

Besides, there is a noodle called yakisoba. Even though the name is yakisoba (fried soba), yakisoba uses noodles that are cooked from wheat flour instead of fried soba noodles. Yakisoba became known after World War II and it is widely sold in street food stalls or when there is matsuri. Several companies make instant yakisoba where is sold in plastic bag and bowl form. One company that has successfully researched instant yakisoba is a researcher from the Nissin company. The research includes the right type of packaging/ bowl material, the shape of the packaging cover, how to package the sauce and how to shape the noodles, etc. so that the noodles are easy to enjoy. UFO is an instant yakisoba brand produced by the Nissin company with the largest market share in Japan and has made factories in several countries such as China, the Philippines, Canada, Brazil, and the U.S.

## METHODS

This research is qualitative. Data collection techniques were literature study and documentation techniques. The data were scenes or dialogues in the Udon film and Kamen Yakisoba's UFO film that was related to research problems, namely tokusatsu figures in the Japanese culinary world. The data were analyzed descriptively and qualitatively. The data collected were classified based on themes, characters and characterizations, plot, setting, and atmosphere. Then it will be analyzed how the tokusatsu reception in the two films by comparing it with the series of tokusatsu characters such as the Kamen Rider and other types of tokusatsu.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

With the popularity of the tokusatsu and their franchise, tokusatsu has become a genre in Japanese popular fiction. The popularity of tokusatsu reached its peak until the tokusatsu boom phenomenon emerged in the 1970s. Besides the tokusatsu boom, the food or gourmet genre was booming too in 1980 marked by the appearance of the film Tanpopo which tells how the character tries to recycle or modify leftover food so that it remains delicious food and not wasted. The genre phenomenon in Japanese popular fiction in its acceptance in society is quite diverse in form and some even influence one another. One of the acceptance forms is transformed in the parody, namely deliberately imitating the style, said the writer or creator to look for the effect of humor. This parody that combines the tokusatsu and gourmet genres can be seen from the superhero characters who were created because of their love for food, such as the UFO characters Kamen Yakisoban and Captain Udon. Because of this combination, these two films are no longer classified in the tokusatsu genre or the food genre but are categorized into the comedy genre by several films observing sites. The following are the forms of tokusatsu character receptions in the Japanese culinary world that transformed into parodies in the film Udon and UFO Kamen Yakisoban.

### Superhero Vs Supervillain

The characters that are presented in a superhero story are almost always the same, namely the superhero as the main character of the story and the supporting characters, both the protagonist and the antagonist. The antagonist character has the opposite nature of the protagonist, which is to always create chaos in the world to fulfill their desires or the term villain. Some villain characters have superpowers that are often referred to as supervillains or supercriminal. Likewise, the UFO character Kamen Yakisoban and Captain Udon also have this character. It's just that in terms of character names, both the superhero and supervillain in these two films have unique names, which are named after food so that they sound funny. In the name of the character Kamen UFO Yakisoban, the word 'Kamen' refers to a famous Japanese tokusatsu character named Kamen Rider, the word 'UFO' is the name of the instant noodle brand from Nissin Food known as Nissin Yakisoba UFO, and the word 'yakisoban' is the name of a type of noodle in Japan. This combination of words makes a superhero name that sounds funny. Likewise with the name Captain Udon who took the name from udon noodles.

Not only the name, even the costumes, weapons, and kick styles that characterize the tokusatsu characters were also parodied. The super-suit costume that characterizes Kamen Rider is parodied into a suit with a Superman-like design wearing a red robe with the letters UFO on the hat, chest, and belt, the word 'Nissin' on his socks, and wearing colored "outer pants". red. Then what's unique is that the hat that Yakisoban is wearing is a replica of the bowl-shaped Nissin Yakisoba UFO instant noodle package. Like Kamen Rider's tokusatsu, Yakisoban has a weapon in the form of a sauce bottle and also noodles. The name of a kick to attack an opponent is also given the food name, namely the agedama boomer.

If the Yakisoban character wears a costume similar to Superman, then the Captain Udon character wears a bodysuit similar to the Kamen Rider character, wearing a super-suit and a mask with the letter "C" on his head which refers to the word captain and the letter "U" on his chest which refers to said Udon. Captain Udon also has a weapon in the form of 2 sticks attached to his back which reminds him of the character of a ninja turtle who also has two swords placed in his shell.



Another distinctive feature of the tokusatsu character is his kick which is also owned by Captain Udon who is known for his "high fiber kick and two bowl punch. The Captain Udon move will bring up a bowl and lump of noodles which he will then kick at the opponent ". These special weapons and kicks from superheroes are used to strengthen the image of a superhero with the power of ramen noodles and udon noodles. Apart from these two types of characters, there are also antihero characters, namely protagonists who do not have a heroic spirit. Unlike superheroes who are willing to sacrifice their lives to defend the truth and for the sake of humanity, anti-heroes are willing to sacrifice just because they are related to their interests. In Kamen Yakisoban's Udon and UFO films, these anti-heroes do not appear, only heroes and villains. In most superhero stories, the main character is always a boy. Likewise, the main characters in these two films have similarities when transforming into a superhero, such as changes to superhero costumes, words spoken and pose when changing (henshin), and showing the weapons or moves they have or the kicks they display. This change makes the main character stronger, bolder, and ready to protect those who are victims or affected by the antagonist's behaviour.

### **Captain Udon And UFO Kamen Yakisoban Characters**

The character of Captain Udon appears in the trailer for the film Udon. This tokusatsu character was originally a fantasy character from the main character of the Udon film, namely Kosuke Matsui. He expressed his love for the tokusatsu series in a flipbook and named the tokusatsu character by the name of Captain Udon. Udon itself is a popular food in the area, namely in Kagawa, where many people sell udon. His imagined figure, the udon captain, became Kosuke's inspiration when he worked as a magazine editor in his city. Captain Udon is one of the means to promote udon in the form of a magazine manga series that was worked on by his teammates. The promotion was successful until the udon boom phenomenon emerged. At the end of the story, it is described how the mango Captain Udon was filmed and Kosuke succeeded in becoming an actor who starred in the film entitled Captain Udon.

Kosuke's character is implicitly depicted as a creative character. In this film, it seems as if the director is convinced that a child who loves tokusatsu will affect his creativity. A creative person usually has a high sense of humor, is relaxed in response to a problem, immediately gets up to start a new one, a dream hunter. This is as expressed by Munandar (2004: 54) which states that creative people have a high sense of humor, can see problems from various points of view, and have the experience to play with ideas, concepts, or imagined possibilities which are later manifested in works of art, literature, or discovery.

Not only tokusatsu lovers or tokusatsu lovers, food lovers too. Madness or love for something will give birth to creativity. There is nothing wrong with being a food lover or tokusatsu fans because this love can give birth to creativity where the result is that tokusatsu characters are perceived as parody so that tokusatsu characters are created that highlight the food element in themselves. This creative power appears in the character of Kosuke who then creates his fantasy character, Captain Udon. In the footage, Captain Udon is depicted as an athletic figure, wearing costumes such as robocops, gloves, shoes, mask, showing the elasticity of the body, and food as a source of tokusatsu strength. Unfortunately, because it is a fantasy character, the character of Captain Udon is not in detail.

Unlike the story of Captain Udon, the superhero Yakisoban is a tokusatsu character born from the Japanese UFO Ramen ad, a product of the Nissin Foods company, which was popular in the 1990s under the brand name Nissin Yakisoba UFO. Like in the films Superman, Kamen Rider, and Ultraman, Yakisoban is also a creature from another planet, namely the planet Yakisoba. The origins of Yakisoban become the initial narrative in the film where it is told that Yakisoban's arrival to earth brought a mission to establish peace. Superhero stories like Superman and Kamen Rider generally tell the history of the birth or the origin of powers coming from other planets and having powers from there. There is also Peter Parker the spiderman who gets power from the poison of a spider bite that has been radiated, so in Kamen Ufo and Captain Udon's story, the superhero gets his strength from food, namely from yakisoba noodles and udon noodles.

The phenomenon of tokusatsu is an attraction for the Nissin Food company to use it as a medium for promoting its products, so how delicious and the benefits that can be obtained from

consuming yakisoba are part of the transformation of the source of superhero power. The advertisement director tries to promote that the UFO Ramen Yakisoba contains sufficiently complete nutrition that it will be able to make those who eat it become strong like the tokusatsu UFO character Ramen Yakisoban. This kind of power reminds us of the film Popeye the Sailormoon from America where the Popeye characters will become strong after eating spinach. Superhero Yakisoban will also become stronger after eating the UFO yakisoba from Nissin. Besides, Yakisoban is always equipped with weapons with the power of noodles and sauces, and moves that use the names of typical yakisoba ingredients such as Agedama boomer (such as fried batter bits), sauce bazooka, aonori taifu (seaweed hurricane), and various vehicles that resemble product packaging. The UFO Kamen vehicle is similar to a high technology cup bowl and the Ufo Yakisoba packaging bowl hat where the word UFO is written on the hat as well as on the chest costume.

The daily life of the Yakisoban character is made the same as other superhero films, namely being a character who is not so prominent in real life, has an innocent, naive, and weak character so that he often becomes an inferior figure in his workplace. However, this trait will change immediately, when his heroic soul is called to help victims of crime or those who are stricken by disaster. Another interesting thing is that even though he has turned into a superhero, Yakisoban still acts as a general Japanese citizen. In his hero costume, Yakisoban still paid for the ticket when he boarded the public bus and acted casual when bus passengers watched it with curiosity. An interesting thing that does not exist in any superhero movie scene. Another interesting thing that makes superheroes like most men is Yakisoban likes to watch erotic shows featuring beautiful women whose passion is also related to his mission to find a bride from the earth. Then, even though he is called a superhuman, like Superman who has a weakness, that is, he will be helpless when he comes in contact with a krypton stone because it will suck up his strength, Yakisoban also has a weakness where his enemy uses his weakness to defeat Yakisoban. the disadvantage is that it is not resistant to cold water. The cold water would make Yakisoban's body dry and weak and only the hot water could restore her strength. This weakness is the same as things that need to be avoided when making Nissin UFO Yakisoba instant noodles. When making instant noodles, the water used to brew it in hot water because if you use cold water it will make the noodles taste bad and change their shape. Likewise, the character of Yakisoban will become helpless if he is exposed to cold water.

### **Supervillains / Supercriminals in the Culinary world**

The antagonists in superhero films are also known as supervillains or supercriminals. They have alien powers, supernatural powers, or have genius brains and skills that enable them to devise complex and evil plans that humans generally will not be able to do. These supervillains figures include the role of despots, gangsters, corruptors, cruel killers, terrorists, robots, giant beasts, or aliens. Because it is set in the culinary world, in the story of Captain Udon and Yakisoban, the villain character is also associated with equipment and food ingredients. Captain Udon's enemy is the mafia selling illegal wheat flour where the real form is a monster that is similar to a virus and the maker of illegal Udon, while Yakisoban's enemy is a supervillain named Kettler from Chicago who opposes the concept of instant noodles. Kettler has a costume similar to Yakisoban, which distinguishes it from the color of the costume, which is black, and the cap is shaped like a kettle on top of his head. Kettler's character is depicted as an antagonist who is full of evil plans to steal all the kettles in the world so that he can stop people from making instant noodles. The interesting thing about this Kettler character is that he has a childish nature and is a mama's boy. This can be seen in the scene where Kettler asks for his mother's advice to be able to defeat Yakisoban by sulking like a child and the scene when Kettler immediately goes to the playground after defeating Yakisoban by spraying cold water on Yakisoban's body.

Apart from Kettler and his men, the other supercriminal is a fake Yakisoban from Africa. The fake Yakisoban wears a shirt with a known ugly color like black and on his head wears a headband that reads "USO" which means "lie" which is the evil version of Yakisoban where the headband says "UFO". Both Kettler, USO Yakisoban, and other subordinates are described as foreigners who do not speak Japanese, so inappropriate pronunciation is part of this supervillain

character's comedy element. Besides, the desire to destroy Japanese habits such as the way of eating noodles using chopsticks by replacing it with Western-style using forks and then collecting all the kettles in Japan to prevent people from making instant noodles into vices are highlighted on Kettler's character, but this ugliness becomes a force for supervillain Kettler and his men. If Yakisoban used a weapon in the form of noodles and sauce to attack, Kettler used a kettle and fork to attack.

### **Tokusatsu the Hero, the Defender of Truth and the Suppressor of Evil**

In general, tokusatsu characters are protagonists whose character is strong, brave, defender of truth, unyielding, and helpful. The theme of the story is about truth and will prevail against evil. Likewise in the film UFO Kamen Yakisoban and the story of Captain Udon. The tokusatsu character appears as a hero who is ready to fight every crime to defend the truth. The antagonists present are identical with evil monsters of various forms and corrupt humans, con artists, criminals, etc. Sometimes the monster disguised itself as a human until it was finally exposed as a monster. In addition to the theme of truth winning over evil as the main theme, side themes were also raised to strengthen the perpetrators' characters. These minor themes are friendship, finding a partner, or loyalty.

In Kamen Yakisoban's UFO film, the side theme is the story of the hero romance in getting a partner. With a background in the world of journalism, the two main figures are brought together. The love at first sight of the character of Yakisoban for print media photographer Kaya Kumiko becomes Yakisoban's romantic adventure in rescuing his idol from the supervillains. Likewise in the Udon film, Kosuke Matsui, a failed comedian who then meets Kyoko Miyagawa, a female journalist, leads the two on an adventure in the world of udon after Kosuke is accepted to work as the editor of a local magazine where heroin works. In some superhero film titles, journalism plays an important role in shaping the storyline. The journalists' expertise in the form of high sensitivity and analysis also supports the main character's struggle to uphold justice, especially when finding issues that can endanger human safety when covering news. Therefore, apart from being a superhero, the main character also has a job as a journalist or has a female journalist friend who later becomes a superhero lover. Like the story of Clark Kent as Superman who in his daily life works as a journalist at the Daily Planet Metropolis and Lois Lane as a female journalist who becomes his lover, a ninja turtle with his friend April O Neill, a woman who works as a TV reporter, Kamen Rider Ryuki, who is an apprentice journalist at Ore journal named Shinji Kido, Peter Parker as spiderman who also works as a photojournalist in the print media The Daily Bugle and has a relationship with the main female character who appears to accompany the adventures of a superhero. The story of the news hunters' romanticism is the spice of the story in the preparation of this hero-themed plot.

### **Narrative Structure**

Almost all tokusatsu franchise series use a straight plot. In the story of Captain Udon and the film UFO Kamen Yakisoban, the plot's arrangement follows the division of the plot into 5 parts. According to several literary experts, the plot is divided into 5 parts, including situation (the author begins to describe a situation), generating circumstance (related events begin to move), rising action (the situation is starting to peak), climax (events starting to peak), denouement (Author provides problem-solving from all events) (Adi, 2011: 37). Even though they have the same plot, but in the story of the story, the hero Yakisoban is more detailed than the story of Captain Udon. The story of Captain Udon is shorter and simpler because it is only part of the fantasy story of the main character Kosuke Matsui. The following is the sequence of the story of Captain Udon in the film Udon

1. The story begins with an airplane bombing buildings and cities
2. Introducing the antagonist who is carrying out illegal activities, namely transactions between noodle makers and illegal flour dealers
3. The female police as heroin in the story came to thwart their action
4. Heroin almost lost the battle against the antagonist
5. Hero arrives to save heroin and manages to defeat the antagonists

#### 6. The heroic courage makes heroin fall in love with him

The interesting thing about the superhero story of Captain Udon is the goods being traded. In general, illegal items in adventure films are drugs and illegal drugs, but because this story is about udon noodles, the illegal items are in the form of wheat flour, where people who eat the flour noodles will act weird and eventually lead to death. Films that convey the message that food ingredients must be properly maintained so that they will not damage the body.

Almost the same as the story of Captain Udon in the Udon film, Kamen Yakisoban's UFO film also has an advanced plot. The sequence of stories in Kamen Yakisoban's UFO film is as follows.

1. In the opening section there is a narrative about the story of the beginning of the hero and then the kidnapping of a woman by several criminals and the hero managed to defeat them easily and the success of the hero saved the kidnapping of another woman
2. Starting the emergence of antagonists and the introduction of heroes' daily lives as ordinary people and superhero activities in helping women who are in danger
3. The antagonist's attempts to create chaos are always thwarted by superheroes
4. Hero is under pressure from personal problems (pressure to find a bride)
5. The antagonist gets help from other antagonists to defeat the hero
6. The hero meeting with his idol girl and the hero's attempts to approach heroin, but the hero gets into trouble which makes his name bad, especially in the eyes of heroin
7. Hero gives a true confession of who he is on heroin
8. The crime of the antagonist is increasingly rampant and the efforts made by the hero with heroin in overcoming chaos by the antagonists
9. Knowing the weakness of the hero by the antagonist and their efforts to trap the hero through heroin
10. The hero who tries to help heroin ends up in a trap and loses the battle His assistant rescued
11. Hero and the hero regained his strength with the help of his father's old weapon
12. Hero succeeds in defeating all of his enemies including helping heroin which is under the influence of the antagonist
13. The union of heroes and heroin in marriage

Similar to the characteristic structure of popular fiction narrative, these two films end with a happy ending where the victory rests on the side of the superhero and the merging of the superhero with heroin. Superhero stories have a plot similar to those of adventure stories, where a character struggles to overcome danger and succeeds in his mission. In the case of these two films, because they are related to the world of food, the dangers are manifested by the presence of figures who try to damage human health, such as in Udon the movie clip, namely by trading wheat flour which is the basic ingredient of noodles that do not meet nutritional standards. and in Kamen Yakisoban's UFO film the danger comes from enemies who oppose the practicality of making instant yakisoba noodles, namely by seizing all the kettle used to boil water. In the film, hot water is the source of the hero's strength and cold water is a weakness because making yakisoba using cold water will make the taste of noodles bad. Appropriateness in eating yakisoba noodles and enjoying them is also part of the message to be conveyed to the audience.

### **The Setting of Metropolis City**

The film settings of superhero genre generally take the side of the metropolitan city because the story concerns problems related to modern industrial society's criminality, namely Superman, Batman, Spiderman, Kamen Rider, Super Sentai, and the franchise. Likewise, the film UFO Kamen Yakisoban also takes urban locations as its setting, namely, offices, canteens, roads, houses, dining rooms, rooms, shops, minimarkets, parks buildings. In the story of Captain Udon, the location setting is an urban, udon-selling food stall located on a side street near an old warehouse. From the locations in these two films, it can be seen that the place settings are dominated by the locations related to food.

### **Atmosphere**



The atmosphere that builds the story in the UFO Kamen Yakisoban film and the Udon film cannot be separated from the film's characters, plot, and theme. Tokusatsu characters who are patriotic but made a parody, with unique costume designs, especially in the film UFO Kamen Yakisoban where a bowl-shaped that is unique in terms that it differs from the depiction of superhero characters who look cool, athletic with weapons or kick moves in the form of names. Food that sounds funny and strange because superhero films generally always with very masculine names and with spectacular scenes that give the impression of strength. The name of the character has also contributed to the joyful atmosphere because he used the name of the food, namely udon, and a play on the word "ramen" noodles to become kamen as well as the name of yakisoba noodles. The shape and behavior of the tokusatsu characters and their enemies that look funny also support the atmosphere of the story. The fights that should be tense are funny because the scenes performed by both the antagonist and protagonist are ridiculous and beyond expectations as a superhero-themed film. Therefore, the atmosphere of joy, humor, and heroism is the basic color of these two films' stories

## CONCLUSION

The tokusatsu characters that are presented in the UFO Kamen Yakisoban film and the Udon film were received in parody form. The tokusatsu characters in both films are not only parodies of the superhero Kamen Rider, but the influence of other tokusatsu characters is also depicted on these two characters.

Because it is related to the culinary story, the parodies of the two tokusatsu films are mostly around food as well. The parodied things are found in costume design, weapon power, fighting moves, and kicking styles which are also transformed with the strength and names of the foods that are the theme of the story ( udon noodles and ramen noodles ).

The nature of several heroes and villains is also parodied, especially in the film UFO Kamen Yakisoban. The villain character is characterized by a childish character, not very good at Japanese languages, and a bit stupid. These characters are far from the character of the villain in general.

Then, in the characters of Yakisoban, even though he has turned into a superhero, Yakisoban is still described as a generally Japanese citizen, such as paying for tickets when riding buses, liking erotic things, and wanting to have a wife and these make him more human and closer to the audience.

In the entertainment world, tokusatsu characters have been parodied a lot. Especially with many fandoms that exist in cyberspace and at events such as co-play and exhibitions, which have contributed to the transformation of unique tokusatsu characters. Therefore, the studies involving how tokusatsu lovers perceive the tokusatsu characters they like and transform them into cosplay characters are interesting things to study further.

## REFERENCES

- Adi, Ida Rochani. (2011). Fiksi Populer: Teori dan Metode Kajian. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Ashkenazi, Michael & Jacob, Jeanne. (2003). Food Culture in Japan. United States of America: Greenwood Press.
- Junus, Umar. (1985). Resepsi Sastra Sebuah Pengantar. Jakarta: PT. Gramedia.
- Kim, Sankyun. (2018). Regional Development and Japanese Obsession with Noodles the Udon noodles Tourism phenomenon in Japan. In C. Michael Hall & Stefan Gossling (Eds.), *Food Tourism and Regional Development: Networks, products, and trajectories*. New York: Routledge.
- Munandar, S.C. Utami (2004). Pengembangan Kreativitas Anak Berbakat. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta.
- Ratna, Nyoman Kutha. (2015). Teori, Metode, dan Teknik Penelitian Sastra dari Strukturalisme hingga Postrukturalisme Perspektif Wacana Naratif. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Ratna Nyoman Kutha. (2010). Sastra dan Cultural Studies: Representasi Fiksi dan Fakta. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar
- Sharp, Jasper. (2011). Historical Dictionary of Japanese Cinema. Lanham: Scarecrow Press, Inc.

- Solt, George. (2014). *The Untold History of Ramen: How Political Crisis in Japan Spawned a Global Food Craze*. United States of America: University of California Press.
- Sandika, Edria. (2010). *Dinamika Konsumsi dan Budaya Penggemar Komunitas Tokusatsu Indonesia*. Retrieved from <http://lib.ui.ac.id>.
- Yoshida, Makoto, et al. (1990). "The Making of Godzilla Vs. Biollante - They Call it Tokusatsu", *Markalite Vol. 1*, Summer 1990, Kaiju Productions/Pacific Rim Publishing.
- Advertising/ UFO Kamen Yakisoban. Retrieved from <https://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Advertising/UFOKamenYakisoban>
- Sanuki Udon, Noodles popular for the wide variety of ways to enjoy them. (2016) Retrieved from [https://japan-magazine.jnto.go.jp/en/1612\\_sanukiudon.html](https://japan-magazine.jnto.go.jp/en/1612_sanukiudon.html).
- Kamenrider. Retrieved from [https://kamenrider.fandom.com/Ramen\\_History](https://kamenrider.fandom.com/Ramen_History). Retrieved from <https://www.raumen.co.jp/english/#history>.
- Try popular shops with long lines of Kagawa foodie fans. Retrieved from <https://www.ana-cooljapan.com/destinations/kagawa/sanukiudon>

# "Superman's Value to Human Existence in Zack Snyder's Movies Entitled Man of Steel and Justice League"

**Rr. Arielia Yustisiana**

English Study Program, Universitas Katolik Widya Mandala Surabaya Kampus  
lia.6606@gmail.com

## ABSTRACT

What people think about Superman is that he was not real. There was no one as strong as Superman in the world. However, some people believe that what matters about Superman is he cares about everyone in the universe without exception, without judgment. The article aims to elevate Superman's values in human existence. The research focuses on the character of Clark Kent in Zack Snyder's two movies entitled Man of Steel and Justice League. Clark initially used his powers covertly to help people and prevent or thwart disasters. He is valuable to human existence in the universe. The theory used to support the analysis is Nietzsche's superhuman version; the *Übermensch* in English means Beyond-Man, Superman, Overman, or Superhuman. It is the concept of Nietzsche's philosophy. Nietzsche's thought on human philosophy directs us to fully love life and position humans as superhuman. The research design that is taken is qualitative research. There is one literary approach that meets the analysis, that is, the archetypal approach. The research finding is that Clark Kent, as the representation of *Übermensch*, is a human that sees himself as a source of value. A human who has reached *Übermensch* is a person who always says "yes" to everything and is ready to face challenges, who has an attitude of still affirming his life.

**Keywords:** Superman, Human Existence, Nietzsche's *Übermensch*

## INTRODUCTION

According to the movie "Man of Steel," Superman was born on the planet Krypton as Kal-El, and as a baby was launched by a rocket to Earth by his father, Jor-El, just before the planet was destroyed in a natural cataclysm. How Kal-El was born is different from any kryptonite babies. He was born naturally as a baby that was born by a mother. Planet Krypton's technology is far beyond the Earth's. The growth of the kryptonite babies is controlled by a codex that gives the babies power when they are maturely born. Before Kal-El was sent to the Earth, Jor-El destroyed the codex and put its power totally to Kal-El so that Kal-El will help save the universe when he is grown up. The rocket then landed on Earth, in a field which the Kent couple, Jonathan and Martha Kent, lived. They later adopted and named the baby Clark Kent. As a grown-up child, he discovered that he possessed powers beyond what ordinary humans have and used those powers to help others. To hide his identity while not dealing with criminals as Superman, he lives as Clark Kent, an ordinary human being with a subtle character. While on a movie entitled "Justice League," Superman has a very important role in saving human kinds from the attack of an alien, Steppenwolf. Even though Bruce Wayne, a.k.a Batman, recruited Wonder Woman, Cyborg, Aquaman, and Flash, they cannot defeat Steppenwolf. However, in the previous movie, Superman was dead, he was resurrected using a spectacular technological combination of Cyborg's and Flash's powers in "Justice League." It is because Batman believes that Superman can save the lives of people in the universe from the danger of Steppenwolf. Both movies, issues such a certain phenomenon that Superman is valuable to Earth's human existence.

Most people know that Superman has some of the most extraordinary powers, but besides his heat vision, super strength, arctic breath, super-speed, x-ray vision, super-hearing, and flight, Superman, a.k.a Man of Steel has some other insane capabilities as well. The most recent addition

to his already huge array of powers is the explosive Super Flare. In contrast, with a name like Superman and a nickname like the Man of Steel, one would expect Clark Kent to be practically invulnerable. For the most part, however, a few things can bring him to his knees. Most will tell you, the green space rock, Kryptonite, will weaken Superman and leave him vulnerable to attack.

Furthermore, one of Superman's weaknesses that often results in harm is magic. Despite his impressive physical prowess, Superman is not a mystical being. He is a biological life form with enhanced attributes, but he has no foothold in the realm of magic. Therefore, he can be harmed by things like Aquaman's trident or Wonder Woman's sword.

Furthermore, the character of Superman in comics and movie is inspired by the theory of *Übermensch* written by Nietzsche. The word, *Übermensch*, is derived from Germanic vocabulary that means 'super human' in English. Superman, German *Übermensch*, in philosophy, the superior man justifies the existence of the human race. This superior man would not be a product of long evolution; rather, he would emerge when any man with superior potential completely master himself to create his own value which is completely rooted in life on this earth. Nietzsche proposes the *Übermensch* as a way to find a new moral path that celebrates life as opposed to rejecting it. The *Übermensch* embraces life's hardships and pleasures alike and accepts hard truths without complaint. Therefore, the *Übermensch* never denies or is afraid of his life's tremendous urges. Nietzsche also believes that by dealing with conflict, humans would be challenged, and all the abilities they could come out of themselves optionally.

In the movies, "Man of Steel" and "Justice League", Clark Kent is the major point that can help people in the Earth because of the danger that has threatened the Earth. In the movie, Clark Kent described that he is bullet proof, able to take anti tank rounds to the face and not flinch, and he can shrug off things that should have killed him long ago. He has tremendous power that he only uses to help people. His value to the survival of the people is comparable to the philosophical concept of Nietzsche's *Übermensch*.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The *Übermensch* is a German word that refers to "Beyond-Man", "Superman", "Overman", "Uberman", or "Superman". It is a philosophical concept of Friedrich Nietzsche whose book entitled *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* stated that Zarathustra posits the *Übermensch* as a goal for humanity to set itself. According to Nietzsche (2005),

Nietzsche wants man to grow, reach out, pull out, go upward – it is not out of morality or immorality, but because he is alive, and because life is the will to power. Humans must be honest with themselves, and always be innovative.

The *Übermensch* is motivated by a love of this world and of life. His will is life-affirming and creative. He is not guided by a rule book but instead seeks truth in himself and nature. The *Übermensch* has ambition and does not become tired or bitter in the face of hardship. He strives to become his highest possible self. Exactly what this means is left open by Nietzsche as the *Übermensch* finds his own direction. In other words, the *Übermensch* is a way of life as opposed to a system of values.

Moreover, in his book *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Nietzsche has something in his mind about how a man should be more than just human-all-too-human. An overman as described by Zarathustra, the main character in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, is the one who is willing to risk all for the sake of enhancement of humanity. An overman is someone who can establish his own values as the world in which others live their lives, often unaware that they are not pre-given (Nietzsche, 2005: 118). It means an overman can affect and influence the lives of others. In other words, an overman has his own values, independent of others, which affects and dominates others' lives that may not have predetermined values but only herd instinct. An overman is then someone who has a life that is not merely to live each day with no meanings when nothing in the past and future is more important than the present, or more precisely, the pleasure and happiness in the present purpose for humanity.



Nietzsche evoked an idea of will-to-power, life is the will-to-power that underlies how human thinks, behaves and acts in all circumstances. He views that a human being is always in a constant struggle to quench his own desire. A living thing always seeks to discharge its strength, not only to survive but also to power. This sometimes results in violent behavior, allegedly by Nietzsche, intrinsic to the nature of men. However, the way to will can be different, constructive or destructive. In conclusion, an overman uses the will-to-power to influence and dominate others' thoughts creatively from generation to generation. In this way, his existence and power live on even after he dies.

## METHODS

The data that are used in the research are taken from the two movies directed by Zack Snyder's "Man of Steel" and "Justice of League". "Man of Steel" was released in 2013. It is a reboot of the "Superman" film series that portrays the character's origin story. In the movie, Clark Kent learns that he is a super powered alien from the planet Krypton. He assumes the role of mankind's protector as Superman, making the choice to face General Zod and prevent him from destroying humanity. While, "Justice League" released in 5 years after "Man of Steel", is the sequel of "Dawn of Justice" in which Superman was dead. Batman and Wonder Woman recruit The Flash, Aquaman and Cyborg to save the world from the catastrophic threat of Steppenwolf and his army Parademons. In the movie, Superman is resurrected to help them fight off Steppenwolf's invasion and restore hope to mankind.

Moreover, the qualitative research is decided to be used as the research design. Norman (2013: 45) said that qualitative research is a research study that investigates the quality of relationships, activities, situations or materials. Besides, Fraenkel (2012: 156) stated that analysis and interpretation of comprehensive narrative and visual data to gain insights into a particular phenomenon of interest. Therefore, this research uses qualitative method because it focuses on the analysis or interpretation of the scenes, subtitles and images that can support the analysis. There is one literary approach that meets the analysis, that is, archetypal approach. The former concerns itself with demonstrating how the individual imagination shares a common humanity by identifying common symbols or images. Mythological critics identify "archetypes"(symbol, character, situation, or images) evoking a universal response. Wheelwright explains in *Metaphor and Reality* (in Guerin, 2005: 184)

those which carry the same or very similar meanings for a large portion, if not all, of mankind. It is a discoverable fact that certain symbols, such as the sky father and earth mother, light, blood, up-down, the axis of a wheel, and others, recur again and again in cultures so remote from one another in space and time that there is no likelihood of any historical influence and casual connection among them. (111)



Referring to the symbol 'S' Superman has on his suit is such a hero archetype. The hero is involved in a quest (in which he overcomes obstacles). Kal El a.k.a Superman/Man of Steel sent to the Earth helps the people who live in the Earth from the disaster, and as what Kal El has said that 'S' in his suit does not stand for 'Superman' but it means 'Hope' in Kryptonite language. Lynn (1998: 55) stated that archetypal images and story patterns encourage readers (and viewers of films and advertisements) to participate ritualistically in basic beliefs, fears, and anxieties of their

age. These archetypal features not only constitute the intelligibility of the text but also tap into a level of desires and anxieties of humankind.

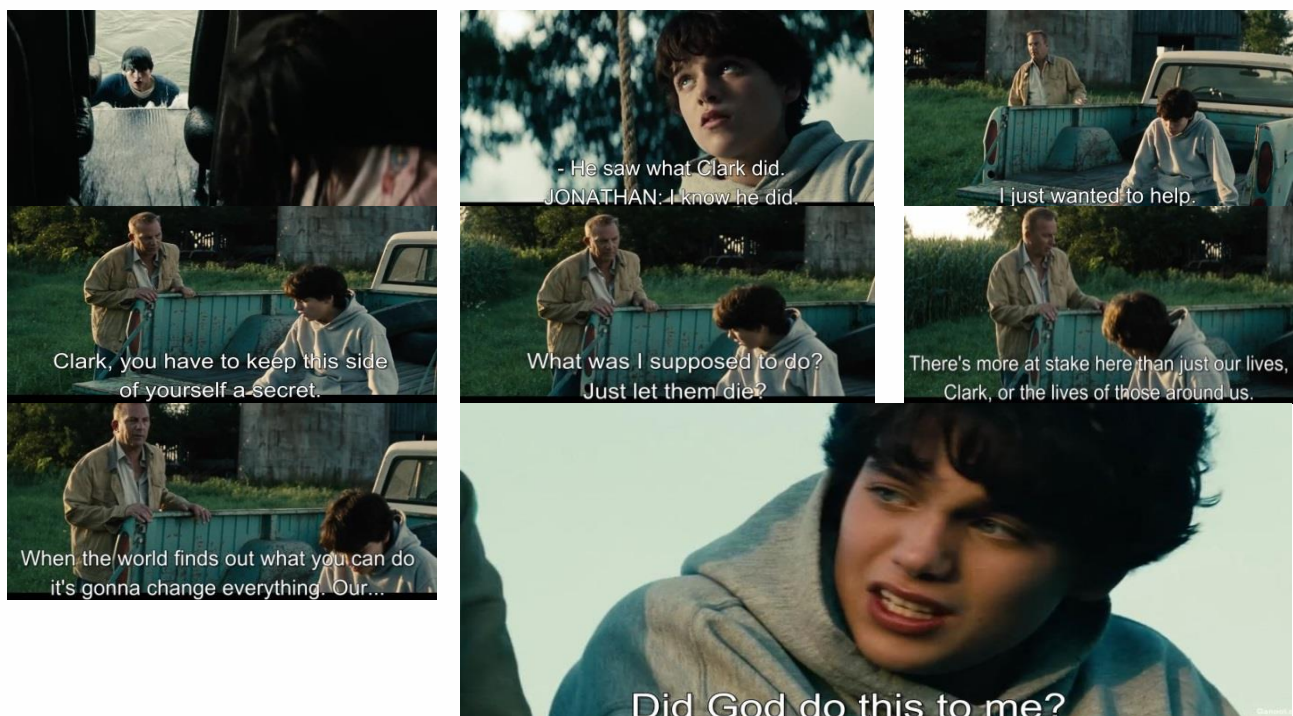
## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Superman is a fictional character that is widely considered to be a symbol of justice. Superman was Kal-El on the far planet of Krypton. After his birth, he was sent to the Earth on a rocket before Krypton's destruction. Kal-El began his life on Earth as Clark Kent, after his discovery and adoption by Kansas farmer and his wife. He was raised with strong moral values and maintained a decent life. He grew up in a normal family and tried to live life just like a normal child. However, as he matured, he realized that he was different. He displayed superhuman abilities, which he used to help solve problems within his community. He is often referred as 'The Man of Tomorrow' that many people turn to for help, and as 'Man of Steel' because he is a bulletproof, super hearing, freezing breath, and many other super characteristics that make him of the super.

Since Kal-El was born, he was planned to save others out there beyond the galaxy. He was extraordinary because he was born just like a normal child was in Krypton. He was sent to Earth because of a reason, that is, to save human race from human's arrogance and supremacy.



On Earth, Kal-El a.k.a Clark Kent was raised as a normal boy. He discovered his powers as a teenager and became dedicated to truth and justice. Jonathan Kent, Kal's foster father, has taught him how to manage his power, mingle with others in the community, and keep the secret of his power to society. Clark Kent has realized that he can help others even to beat the ones who have always bullied him because his father does not allow Clark to show off his power even it is for helping others.





Knowing his friends are in danger, a teenage Clark immediately saves the bus full of his friends from drowning. He does not care what people see and talk about him. One thing in his mind is that he has to save people's lives. What the teenage Clark thinks is the opposite of Jonathan Kent does. Because of his will-to-power and capability to help others, Clark's impulsive efforts to help evokes within him. It is because he realizes that he is valuable to the others' existence. He wants to be honest to himself that he has the power to help. Jonathan Kent, however, forbids Clark to do what he has been supposed to do because it is merely to protect himself from the people's reaction to his power. Then, he blames that what has happened to him is because of God. Otherwise, his foster father presumed that Clark must keep it secret in order that the world does not reject him for his unbeatable power. Jonathan Kent also taught Clark to take everything for granted. It is not only to make him keep his secret but also accept what God's destiny. It happened in the movie "Man of Steel" when Clark wanted to save Jonathan Kent from hurricane that had made him die. From that moment on, he never trusts himself that what he will do to others can guarantee himself from other people's bad perspective to his existence. He keeps all in secret, but he still believes that he has been sent to Earth because of a reason, that is, saving people and the world.



When the world was threatened by the catastrophe that was done by General Zod and his people, it triggered Clark Kent to uncover his identity. General Zod is also another Kryptonian who is eager to destroy Earth and make it into another Krypton. The only one who is able to beat him is Kal-El, under the Earth name, Clark Kent. First of all, Clark felt hesitated that he is able to help the world because he was afraid that the world would reject his existence of being an alien. People condemned him as an enemy and could also threaten the life of the people. Clark Kent is willing to do what a responsible man is supposed to do, just what Nietzsche has suggested in his book entitled *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* said that "the one who is willing to risk all for the sake of enhancement of humanity". Superman is the modern archetype of a dragon slayer. Superman refers to Clark Kent, while General Zod refers to dragon. Dragon slayer is the hero who faces death in order to save a threatened community. Superman is a super hero with extraordinary powers that make him the quintessential of a hero. He uses his power only for good by preventing

evil from rampage in his city and to stop villains from doing bad deeds. Superman lives under a strict moral code that people dream of living.



Because of Krypton's natural destruction, General Zod wants to rebuild Krypton in Earth by helping Codex. It is an ancient Kryptonian artifact that decodes the genetic makeup of the artificially incubated babies on the planet. It means that a child's genetic attributes before his or her birth, and Zod was born to be a soldier, as dictated by the Codex. He needs to codex to shape the genetic future of a reborn Krypton population. Furthermore, the power of codex has been put to Kal-El's body, and he has been destined to save the world by his power. Therefore, Kal-El is willing to do anything to save the world and to prevent Zod doing his dreadful plan.

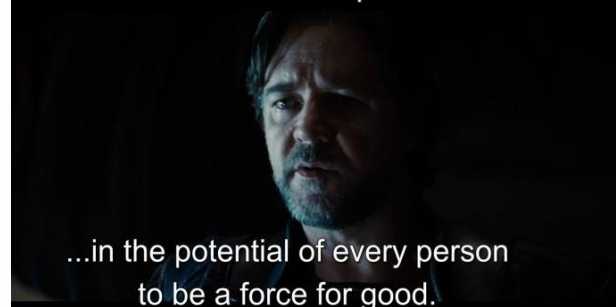
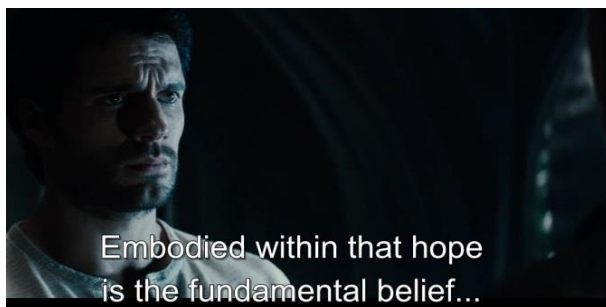
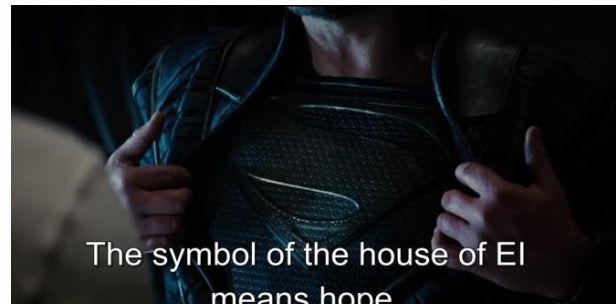
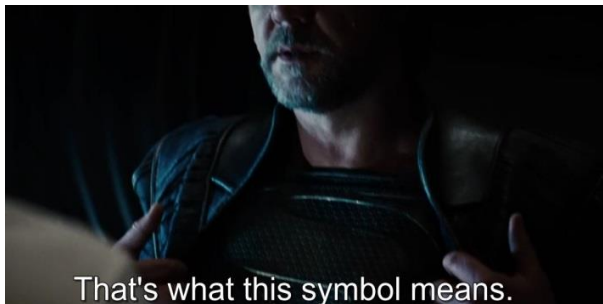
In addition, the last sequel "Justice League", Kal-El who was dead in the previous sequel was resurrected by Batman and his team in order to stop an alien, Steppenwolf. The alien has destroyed half part of universe. Kal-El a.k.a Superman helps Batman and the team to destroy Steppenwolf's conquer..



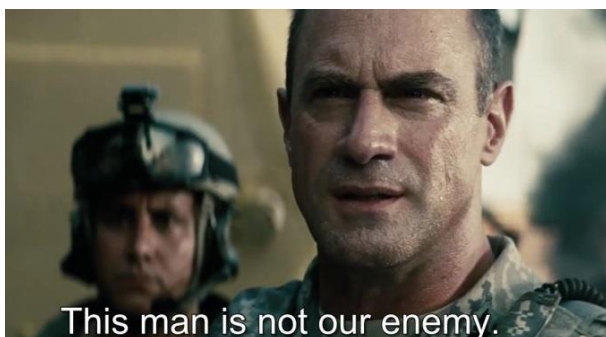
Similarly to the Übermensch, Superman also has ambition and never feels tired and bitter in facing the hardship. He even struggles to keep him becoming the highest of all without sacrificing other people's needs. When Kal-El was sent to Earth, his Kryptonian parents hope the very best thing for the life of the people where their son would be. Jor-El believed that the people of



Earth are different from Kryptonians because they were more civilized and they would not necessarily make the same mistakes all the time if Superman was able to guide and give them hope. The "S" on Superman suit used to mean Superman himself, but actually it has another deep meaning and reason why Superman uses that symbol. It means hope in Kryptonian language. Kal-El has been destined to give and spread a good hope to the life of the people of the Earth.



Another similar point in Nietzsche's concept of *Übermensch* in his book *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, it elevates that an overman does whatever he wants is for the sake of humanity. Clark Kent in the movies also did the same thing as overman, the main character in *Zarathustra*, did. The character of Clark Kent/Kal-El in the movies might be inspired by Nietzsche's philosophy, he remains elitist, rigid, and can sometimes be violent. Therefore, some question how becoming one of Nietzsche's version of superhuman beings without having turn into evil creatures. Clark Kent realizes that life of people in Earth is "greedy". There is always an equal exchange within it. In other words, it takes struggle and pain to get what he wants. It happened when he did not even feel doubtful to surrender to the government and ensure them that he was the one who could help to save the world.



Superman succeeded to save other people's life but the consequence was that he took another's life. Clark was able to stop Zod's plan, but in an act of desperation, he was forced to kill Zod to save lives. In contrast, what he had done was against Superman's nature. He has dedicated himself to the life of the people in Earth, but then when another one was eager to destroy what he has stood for, Superman is against what he has been destined. Similarly with *Übermensch*, the *Übermensch* himself can be interpreted as a figure who defies common

conventions. He likes to fight against danger, accepts challenges, and he is not even embarrassed from confrontations and continues to strive to transcend all the boundaries of ordinary people.

## CONCLUSION

Nietzsche's thoughts on human philosophy want us to fully love and live the life and position humans as superhumans. Nietzsche sees humans as creatures that must continue to exist, namely humans who have high aspirations to become super. For many, Superman is one embodiment of heroism. He is a mythic archetype and a pop culture phenomenon whose insignia is known across the globe. As an archetype figure, pop culture creation like Superman need to be taken in context: he is meant to be both human and more than human. Superhero is meant to give us hope that we, as ordinary people, can aspire to accomplish extraordinary things.

Superman could rule the world with an iron fist if he wanted to. Nonetheless, the best Superman stories show that the character is a paragon of humility. He does not use his gifts to make others feel small and worthless; he uses them to show people how to make the best of themselves. Furthermore, to be an *Übermensch* means to be aware of the fact that life is suffering and has no inherent meaning, yet keep living and finding our won meaning. Superman knows that he might have to hurt others in the name of good things. Sometimes he can be selfish in a strategic way. In certain situations, we have to let people fall so they can learn the error of their way. Sometimes we have to help them fail so that they can become a best version of themselves. The Superman is aware of this and accepts it, instead of resenting the world. The philosophy of the Superman is a lot like that of the stoics but on steroids. It is an extreme, one which Nietzsche thought to be the only salvation for humankind.

## REFERENCES

- Fraenkel, Jack. R. (2012). *How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education*. 8<sup>th</sup> Ed. New York: The McGraw Hill Companies.
- Guerin, W.L. (2005). *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature*. 5<sup>th</sup> Ed. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lynn, Steven. (1998). *Texts and Contexts: Writing about Literature with Critical Theory*. New York: Random House Publishing.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. (2005). *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. translated by Graham Parkes: Oxford: Oxford World's Classics.
- Norman, Denzin. (2013). *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. New York: SAGE Publications
- Man of Steel <http://149.56.24.226/man-steel-2013/>
- Justice League <http://149.56.24.226/justice-league-2017/>

# English Language Priority Used in Manufacture Industries

Fikri Asih Wigati  
Email: [fikri\\_aw@upi.edu](mailto:fikri_aw@upi.edu)

## ABSTRACT

*There is a pressing need to bridge the gap between workplace communicative needs and curriculum development of ESP for industrial engineering. Through a questionnaire survey of 100 manufacture factories employees and interview with ten of them, this study examines language priorities used in the workplace. This research provides insight into the materials that suitable with the actual communicative needs and the desired skills of communication in the workplace.*

## INTRODUCTION

English skills are respected by employers in industries. Having good English skill makes the employees adaptable, giving them upper hand over others who have been in the same level of career path. In other word, being able to apply English confidently means that the career path can also be smoother. In order to offer this competitive benefit, the practitioners must take into account the trends of English used for the workforce. As mentioned before that one of the imperative requirements, that is almost an obligation in all job opportunities, is English competence (Europe,2018).

Key issues in the teaching of English for specific purpose are the to distinguish student needs, the nature of the class that students should have the option to deliver just as take an interest in, and how teacher can realize that the students have had the option to do this effectively, and, if not, what the teachers can do to assist them (Harding, 2007;Kies et al, 2015;Paltridge &Starfield,2013)

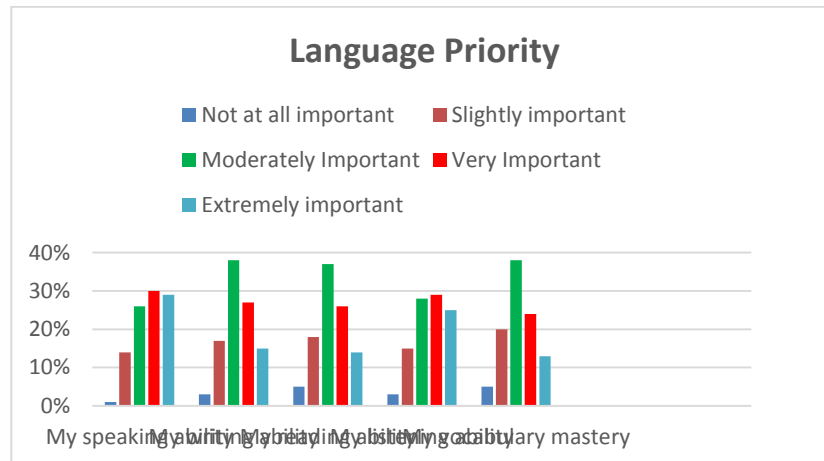
Therefore, this paper will discuss about the result of a survey related to the language priority used in the workplace especially in manufacture industries.

## METHOD

This research used cross-sectional survey design since the researcher collected data at one point in time to examine current needs and practices of the use of English in the workplace in pulp and paper industry. This research is also supported by qualitative data from interviews to clarify the results from questionnaire. The population of this study are workforces who work in pulp and paper industries. One hundred employees of pulp and paper industries then were selected through convenience sampling by giving questionnaire, the most of them are working in production area and some others are working in administration office.

## RESULT AND DISSCUSION

This section report findings obtained from questionnaire and interview about language priority. This language priority is related to the skills the employees often used in their workplace based on the respondents' experiences.

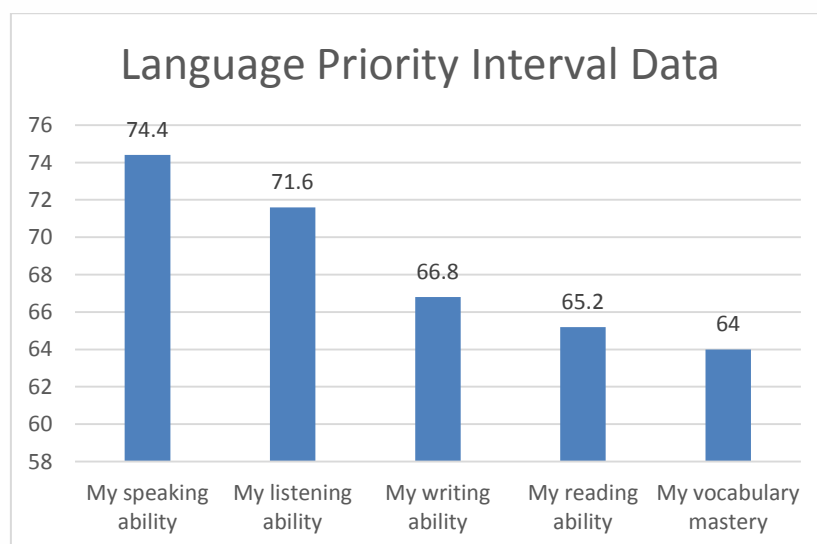


*Figure I. Language priority scales*

The graph above illustrates the language priority based on the order of not important, slightly important, moderately important, very important, and extremely important. The questionnaire asked to respondents was to ask their priority in English-speaking skills based on the intensity of the skill usage in the workplace. Vocabulary mastery, speaking skills, writing skills, reading skills, and listening skills are skills offered. However, the questionnaire shared also gives the specification of the skill needs so that the respondent can make the following language priority specifications:

1. My speaking ability
2. My writing ability
3. My reading ability
4. My listening ability
5. My vocabulary mastery

It appears on the chart that respondents gave a positive response about all the skills given on questioner. A few of the respondents answered that one of those skills is not important. It looks as if that respondents tended to agree that all of the skills are essential to be used in their workplace. It can be a concluded that writing, speaking, reading, listening and vocabulary are important to learn because it is used in the workplace. However, to discuss which skills are more prioritized we are depositing the interval data on the next chart.



*Figure II. Language Priority Interval Data*



The data interval graphs can truly help teachers to make a decision in creating a diagrammatic course content.

The calculation of the score interpretation criteria based on the interval is as follows:

- ☐ 0%-19.99% is construed as not very important;
- ☐ 20%-39.99% can be taken as less important;
- ☐ 40%-59.99% is neutral;
- ☐ 60%-79.99% can be interpreted that the skill is important,
- ☐ 80%-100% means that the skill is very important to gain.

From the chart, it appears here that speaking ability, listening ability, writing ability, reading ability, and vocabulary mastery and has the criteria of interpretation above 60%, it can be interpreted that the skill is essential to be included in the ESP for pulp and paper industries.

It can be interpreted that speaking skill can be the priority skill to be taught because it has the highest percentage, teachers are suggested to put priority in the amount of time to be allocated for speaking skill. From the interview data, it is found that R # 26 distinguishes that speaking skill is widely used skill in the workplace. Conversation with expatriates and foreigners experienced an increase in intensity especially with the digital development that provides wider communication access.

## CONCLUSION

We can recognize that the participants have their priority in learning English language skills. When sorted, the priority would be as follows.

1. speaking ability
2. listening ability
3. writing ability
4. reading ability
5. vocabulary mastery

## REFERENCE

Europe, C. o. (2018, January 9). Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Retrieved April 4, 2018, from Council of Europe Portal: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/table-1-cefr-3.3-common-reference-levels-global-scale>

# **The Pathfinder in American Culture: How White People Survive in the Frontier**

**Riyatno**

Institut Teknologi Telkom Purwokerto  
riyatno@ittelkom-pwt.ac.id

## **ABSTRACT**

The aim of this research is to explain the idea of pathfinder in America in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. This research applies American Studies method, namely the combination of literary, historical and sociological methods. History and sociology are used in the research because they complement the existing source in the literature. The data are mainly taken from James Fenimore Cooper's novel, namely, *The Pathfinder or The Inland Sea* for the idea of pathfinder in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The novel is used in the research as starting points to describe the idea of pathfinder. Other data are taken from film, American history and American sociology in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Based on the research, pathfinder exists because people need him to be able to survive in the frontier. The pathfinder can lead people to get to the place they go safely and can protect them. His skill to live in the frontier makes the pathfinder survive. His understanding to Indian's culture makes him easy, but complicated, to live in the frontier. Meanwhile, white people who live in the frontier still keep their own culture which is unsuitable for the real condition in the frontier. They still think that the Indians are their enemies that cannot live together peacefully.

**Keywords:** The Pathfinder, American Culture, White People, Survive, Frontier

## **INTRODUCTION**

The discovery of America makes many European people move to the New World in order to have better future. People with different backgrounds want to live there although they do not know the real life in the New World. For the economical reason, the New World will give them good work so that they become more prosperous. For the religious reason, the New World will give them religious freedom without being afraid of belief suppression. Others think that they can teach the natives more civilized by Christianity. They think that they will be able to live comfortably without considering that the condition is much more different from their home land. According to Nash (1967: 25), "the discovery of the New World rekindled the traditional European notion that an earthly paradise lay somewhere to the west."

When the people succeed in landing in the New World, they just realize that they have to adapt in the new environment. Not only do they have to prepare for the physical strength, but they also have to prepare for mental strength in order to be able to survive. Moreover, they inevitably have to live in the frontier where the white settlements become densely populated. When they live in the frontier, they have to face the natives' threat since the natives do not like their area to be inhabited by squatters. According to Turner frontier is "the meeting point between savagery and civilization." Savagery is an idea that says that people living in a given area do not have civilization so that they are barbarous, cruel, etc. People who live in such area are mostly Indians, while white people live in the civilized area.

American culture cannot be separated from frontier. Frontier is defined as "the border between two countries; the part of the country which borders on unexplored region." In American culture, frontier is also defined as "forest land to the west of the settled communities." People who come to the forest have to prepare what they need so that they can survive and adapt. For this reason, only those who know well how to live in the forest will succeed. These people have the characteristics to live in the frontier. They are usually unmarried and do not have homes. They get their food by hunting or trapping.

People coming to the New World had a strong will to have better life. They voluntarily went through the danger and misery leaving their own country crossing oceans and deserts as well as borders. All of them had different motives when they came to America, but they had similarities in terms of their aspiration for the future. They wanted to pursue happiness in their lives.

When the level of density in a settlement increases and the level of welfare decreases, people will look for new, more promising areas. Other reasons are that they have to travel quite a distance because their parents or relatives serve in the British military who are stationed in the frontier area. They cannot have traveled without a pathfinder who understand well the conditions in the frontier area.

Pathfinder is "one that explores untraversed regions to mark out a new route" (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/pathfinder>). It means that he is familiar with the area and he knows well what happens if he chooses the wrong way. His skills are shaped by his long life in the frontier. How he has to survive, to defend from the animal or Indian attacks, to communicate with his Indian friends has been learned for a long time.

Another dictionary says that pathfinder is "a person, group or thing that goes before others and shows the way over unknown land" ([https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/pathfinder\\_1](https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/pathfinder_1)). In this case, he has to be ready to scout people in the area that he has not known well. His experience living in the frontier is very useful in order that he succeeds in scouting people without worrying to be lost along the journey. Again, he has to consider the possibility of Indians' attack or ambush because the journey has to cross their territory. Strangers who cross Indians' hunting ground are considered to be seizing power and controlling their food sources. This triggers a war between whites and Indians in America.

Based on the conflict between Whites and Indians in America, white movement to look for better settlement and life becomes dangerous. Besides, they cannot go anywhere they wish freely because of such a condition. The role of pathfinder in such condition is of importance in line with westward movement. He can guide people to get to their destination safely.

Relating to the topic above, there are some researches conducted by some people. In his thesis, Riyatno (2005) talks about the life of the frontiersmen in America in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. There are three things that are covered in the research that is what is meant by frontier, what traits of life in frontier America and the nature of those frontiersmen, as well as a role in shaping the character of frontier life and the attitudes of the American people. In the study, he divides the people who go to the Western region into three major groups, namely the long hunters, backwoodsmen, and the pioneers. But again, the topics of his research are the long hunters and the backwoodsmen.

Based on their goal to go to the Western region, Liebman and Young (1966:208) states that the long hunters come to the West "for the purpose of trading with the Indians." Thus, they often associate with the Indians and sometimes they just like Indians because they live with the Indians. The second is the backwoodsmen, i.e. people who open forests and make settlements. According to Liebman and Young (1966:208) "they cleared some of the forest and built homes." They are not living with the Indians even though they sometimes also trade with the Indians in terms of the fur trade. Both of these groups do not have family members and those living in solitude in the jungle. While the pioneers are people "who proposed to stay and build homes for their families" (Liebman and Young, 1996:208). They have families and they usually look for cheaper land, as claimed by Todd and Curti (1972:59) that "many more became pioneers who moved farther inland where land was cheaper."

Meanwhile, in his thesis, Ceisy Nita Wuntu (1996) talks about wilderness compared to civilization in two novels by James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* and *The Prairie*. In her research, she compares the white people who have civilization and Indians who still live in conditions that are always close to nature so that white people think of it as uncivilized people. For example, the Indians skin the head of their enemy (scalping) in war or battle as proof that they have managed to defeat their enemies. According to the Indians, it is their culture, but for the whites, such practices are obviously barbaric and inhumane.

Another study Conducted by Rumiri Rotua Aruan (2002) is an American pioneer family of the late XIX century in the works entitled *Little House on the Prairie*. This literary work has been played in

the form of a film on national television Indonesia in the 1980s. As noted in the title of that paper, the family of pioneers who become his family are pioneers who live in the area of grassland or prairie where the area is not as fierce as in the forest or wilderness.

Based on the above description, it can be shown that the research on pathfinder in American culture has not been done.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The aim of this research is to explain the idea of pathfinder in America in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In this case, the researcher tries to reveal the idea of pathfinder through literary work, namely *The Pathfinder*. Even though the research is mainly taken from the literary work, it does not mean that it is a purely literary research. In American Studies, the use of interdisciplinary approach is able to analyze the life phenomena in the society. For this reason, it is not only literary approach but also historical and sociological approaches used in the research. According to Henry Nash Smith, American Studies is "a collaboration among men working from within existing academic disciplines but attempting to widen the boundaries imposed by conventional methods of inquiry" (Kwiat and Turpie, 1980: 14). The statement "implies a sustained effort of the student of literature to take account of sociological, historical, anthropological data and methods, and of the sociologist or the historian to take account of the data and methods of scholarship in the fields of art" (Kwiat and Turpie 14). It means that literary study cannot be done alone without being supported by other studies to reveal the social condition in the society. On the contrary, literary study can support other studies to show the mental evidence of the society because literary work reflects the condition in the society. And it is in line with Abrams' statement.

Abrams states that literary work is regarded as "an imitation, or reflection, or representation of the world and human life, and the primary criterion applied to a work is that the 'truth' of its representation of the objects it represents, or should represent" (Abrams, 1971: 37).

## **METHODS**

The research method used in this research is library research. I take main data from James Fenimore Cooper's novel, namely, *The Pathfinder or The Inland Sea*. The secondary data are taken from the relevant books, film, scientific journals, or websites that support to reveal the idea pathfinder in American Culture so that white people can survive in the frontier. To get the data, I read the novel carefully and write them in the data card. I also read other relevant sources so that the data become complete. The last step is I analyze the data based on their categories, namely very relevant, relevant, and less relevant.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

In the eighteenth century before United States of America got his independence, American territory was still contested by France and Britain. Consequently, Indian tribes who lived in America were also divided into 2 groups. Some Indian tribes became British allies and others became French ones. This alliance influenced social life both in the British settlement and in the French settlement. To protect the territory and the settlement, both British and French governments sent the soldiers that caused war between the two countries.

Based on the Treaty of Paris in 1763, "England was given all of the French territory east of the Mississippi River except the town of New Orleans" which was still owned by Spain (Liebman and Young, 1966: 106). For this reason, the eastern part of the Mississippi River becomes the new settlement, where Lake Ontario, which is located in the border between Canada and America, becomes one of the areas that serves as one of the transportation infrastructure for the settlers. In fact, Lake Ontario lies on the hinterland and it is different from the Atlantic Ocean where the immigrants have crossed. It is stated that "a small, ancient clearing was on the shore, and near the margin of lake was a log dwelling, recently and completely, though rudely fitted up" (Cooper, 1961: 425).



Among the white people, there are some groups of people who do not settle in the settlement as common people do. They live in the wilderness and they try to survive by learning how the Indians live. Consequently, they have to keep in touch with the Indians and to learn Indian language. Even, some of them make brotherhood with the Indians and live together in the wilderness. It means that they learn Indian's culture so that they are able to use their skills to help the white settlers who do not understand how to live in the frontier.

As stated above that the territory have to be guarded by the soldiers to ensure the safety of it, the family of the soldiers have to live in the settlement. It takes time for the family to go to the army guard post and it is dangerous because of the condition in the wilderness. Indians and wild animals are still the most dangerous threat since not all Indians are friendly to the white people. Moreover, the Indians who belong to French allies do not let the white people travel along the wilderness safely. For this reason, they need one who can guide them to get to the post or settlement safely.

Sergeant Thomas Dunham, a British soldier who belongs to the British 55<sup>th</sup> Regiment, asks his daughter, Mabel Dunham, to come to his post at Fort Oswego on Lake Ontario. As a father, he has to make sure that her life will be better in the future because of unsecure life in the frontier. Her journey is accompanied by her seaman uncle, Charles Cap, and two Tuscarora Indians, Arrowhead and his wife, Dew-of-June. Arrowhead, as the pathfinder and the scout, knows well the path they will pass. Charles Cap and Mabel Dunham who do not know Tuscarora Indian well just follow the pathfinder's steps unhesitatingly. Even though Charles Cap is an experienced seaman, he does not have enough experience to travel in the wilderness and the freshwater, namely Lake Ontario. It is stated in the followings:

They were all wayfarers in the wilderness, and had they not been, neither their previous habits nor their actual social positions would have accustomed them to many of the luxuries of rank. Two of the party, indeed, a male and female, belonged to the native owners of the soil, being Indians of the well-known tribe of the Tuscaroras; while their companions were a man, who bore about him the peculiarities of one who had passed his days on the ocean, and this, too, in a station little, if any, above that of common mariner; while his female associate was a maiden of a class in no great degree superior to his own; though her youth, sweetness of countenance, and a modest but spirited mien lent the character of intellect and refinement which adds so much to the charm of beauty in the sex. (Cooper, 1961: 10).

The statement above also implies that going to another place which passes the wilderness has to be guided by the pathfinder or the scout even though the white people are familiar with journey in the ocean. The skills that white people have are not enough to support to travel in the wilderness. They need a help the pathfinder, either Indian or British, so that the journey is successful and safe. Here, the pathfinder is Arrowhead, a Tuscarora Indian. Actually, Charles Cap has to know the Indians who become his scout by looking for the information to which allies the Indians belong, whether they belong to French allies or British ones. It is very important because it is a matter of life or death in the wilderness. If mistaken, the journey will fail and they will be ambushed by the Indians who belong to their enemy.

On the way, Arrowhead has to ensure that no enemies follows or stalks their journey. As an Indian, his instinct is so sharp that any little signs or symbols, like fire, in the wilderness are well understood. Besides, he has to be able to ensure quickly and carefully if the strangers are friend or foe so that he can predict what he has to do when he see a sign or a symbol, as stated by Cooper as follows:

The forest, as usual, had little to intercept the view below the branches but the tall, straight trunks of trees. Everything belonging to vegetation had struggled toward the light, and beneath the leafy canopy one walked, as it might be, through a vast natural vault that was upheld by myriads of rustic columns. These columns, or trees, however, often served to conceal the adventurer, the hunter, or the foe, and as Arrowhead swiftly approached the

spot his practiced and unerring senses told him the strangers ought to be, his footsteps gradually became lighter, his eye more vigilant, and his person was more carefully concealed (Cooper, 1961:17)

Arrowhead finally knows that the strangers consist of one paleface or white man and two Indians. Furthermore, he has to know if the Indians are friends or foes by doing things appropriately. At last, he knows that the Indians are Mohican and he, then, decides to go away because the Tuscarora is not the Mohican's friend. The Mohican does not belong to the Six Nations.

According to Charvat (1958) and Tod and Curti (1972), the Tuscarora is one of Indian tribes that belongs to the Six Nations. Other tribes are respectively the Mohawks, the Oneidas, the Senecas, the Cayugas, and the Onondagas. The Six Nations support the French in the conflict against England. It is in line with the statement that "the French also had the support of a great many more Indians than did the British" (Tod and Curti, 1972: 43). Based on this fact, Charles Cap's decision to choose Arrowhead to be his pathfinder or scout is fatally careless because Arrowhead is a Tuscarora Indian who affiliates with the French.

Mabel succeeds in meeting the Mohican although her presence arises suspicion because she walks slowly like a foe. Fortunately, she can find the true people who are eager to accompany her, as illustrated in the following:

"Fear nothing, young woman," said the hunter, for such his attire would indicate to be, "you have met Christian men in the wilderness, and such as know how to treat all kindly that are disposed to peace and justice. I'm a man well known in all these parts, and perhaps one of my names may have reached your ears. By the Frenchers, and the red-skins on the other side of the Big Lakes, I am called La Longue Carabine; by the Mohicans, a just-minded and up-right tribe, what is left on them, Hawk-eye; while the troops and rangers along the side of the water call me Pathfinder, inasmuch as I have never been known to miss one end of the trail when there was a Mingo or a friend who stood in need of me at the other (Cooper, 1961: 19)

Pathfinder, then, explains why people call him as it is, as described in the following:

"So they call me, young woman, and many of great lord has got a title that he did not half so well merit; though, if truth be said, I rather pride myself in finding my way where there is no path than in finding it where there is. But the regular troops be by no means particular, and half in time they don't know the difference between a trail and a path, though one is a matter for the eye while the other is little more than scent" (Cooper, 1961: 20).

Here, La Longue Carabine or Pathfinder, as a white man who has lived in the wilderness for years, has skills to distinguish between a trail and a path. Living with the Mohican Indian for years has made him get such a skill where common white people who live in the settlement don't have it. In fact, having such a skill makes him survive in the wilderness. For example, by putting his palm on the trail, he can predict how long a man or a group of people has left the trail. He is also able to determine if the trail belongs to friend or foe, white people or Indians. Therefore, he manages to shadow Mabel's movement to Fort Oswego because he really understand the way to the place.

When Mabel says that Indian Tuscaroras has accompanied her journey, Pathfinder cannot hide his worry since Tuscarora belongs to the Six Nations who affiliates with the French, while Mabel is the daughter of British soldier. He worries that Tuscarora will have a plan to ambush them on the way her father. As usual, before such Indians ambush their enemies, they will direct the journey to the wrong way and their companions has waited for them in the place they decide. Pathfinder openly says his feeling to Mabel, as shown in the following:

"I wish a juster minded Indian had been your guide," said Pathfinder, "for I am no lover of the Tuscaroras, who have travelled too far from the graves of their fathers always to remember the Great Spirit; and Arrowhead is an ambitious chief...." (Cooper, 1961: 20)

Pathfinder really understands the life in the wilderness because he has lived with the Indians for a long time. As a white man, he realizes how difficult it is to overcome the cultural differences and values held by Indians and white people. "The whiteman has his difficulties in getting redskin habits quite as much as the Injin in getting whiteskin ways" (Cooper, 1961: 28). Finally he concludes "that neither can actually get that of the other" although he tries to mix his life with the Indian's way of life (Cooper, 1961:28). His identity of a white man cannot be left in line with his life in the wilderness. It looks like that Pathfinder becomes a man who can bridge the communication between the whites and the Indians although it is still limited to the Indians who affiliates to England. His capability to speak in Indian language makes him easy to communicate each other. And when he has agreed to do something, he will make it happen even if he has to die for it.

On the frontier, it is also common for people to work together to fulfil their daily needs based on friendship. Occasionally, the friendship can grow into the serious relationship that directs to marriage. It happens in the relationship between Pathfinder and Sergeant Thomas Dunham. Thomas hopes that Pathfinder can marry his daughter, Mabel, so that her life will be guaranteed because living in the frontier has a lot of dangers. An ideal family needs a husband who is capable of overcoming obstacles, including Indians and wild animals attack. His closeness to Thomas Dunham does not mean as his advantage to marry Mabel, as illustrated in the following:

"You must know, Mabel," he said, "that the sergeant and I are old friends and have stood side by side—or if not actually side by side, I a little in advance as became a scout, and your father, with his own men, as better suited a soldier of the King—on many a hard-fought and bloody day. It's the way of us skirmishers to think little of the fight when the rifle has done cracking; and at night, around our fires, or on our marches, we talk of the things we love, just as you young women converse about your fancies and opinions when you get together to laugh over your ideas...."(Cooper, 1961: 175)

Pathfinder's loneliness on the frontier because of "having neither daughter, nor sister, nor mother, nor kith nor kin, nor anything but the Delaware to love" is not an intention to get Mabel's interest (Cooper, 1961: 175). He does not think that Thomas Dunham has prepared his daughter for him. He actually agrees more with Jasper to become Mabel's husband because Jasper is more suitable in terms of his social background. Besides, Jasper is not too old for Mabel because his age is still young. Pathfinder also realizes that he is not only "a poor hunter," but he is also "untaught and unlearned" (Cooper, 1961: 244). Thomas Dunham, however, "compels the scout to admit that he is a man of experience in the wilderness, well able to provide for a wife; a veteran of proved courage in the wars, a loyal subject of the King" (Smith, 1978: 66).

Pathfinder still holds his faith that "his forest gifts and frontier ways" cannot guarantee that he can make Mabel happy even though she exclaims that her father has thought of her to become his wife. Here, the difference of social background and the difference of way of life between the pathfinder and the soldier's daughter hinder the two people to establish a family. Pathfinder never thinks of having a family in his life. His adventurous life does not enable him to be tied up with a family. He wants to be free in his life and marriage is an institution made by human being to limit his freedom.

The same as religious institution requiring its adherents to be God's obedience, marital institution is available to restrict a man in order that he is loyal to his wife. He has to take care of his family by giving food, home and clothing. It means that he has to choose to get them, by working for other people or by working for himself. Such activities to work and to take care of family need time and it makes people not free to go anywhere they like. In this case, Pathfinder does not have such criteria to establish family life because he is accustomed to living freely in the wilderness with his Indian companions. It does not mean that he does not have morality because,

according to him, "a man without a conscience was but a poor creature" (Cooper, 1961: 395). He also says that he has "not been christianized by the Moravians, like so many of the Delawares," but he tries to "hold to Christianity and white gifts" (Cooper, 1961: 395). According to him, Christianity is borderless in which he does not belong to any denomination and physical church as common people think about. He never goes to the real church that is available in the settlement, as illustrated in the following:

"... I'm in church now—I eat in church, drink in church, sleep in church. The 'arth is the temple of the Lord, and I wait on him hourly, daily, without ceasing, I humbly hope. No—no—I'll not deny my blood and color, but am Christian born, and shall die in the same faith." (Cooper, 1961: 396)

What Pathfinder does to help Mabel meet her father is beyond his personal gain. He understands that Thomas Dunham cannot pick her up by himself although he is a soldier. Thomas realizes that no one but Pathfinder is capable of guiding his daughter crossing the dangerous path in the wilderness. Moreover, the soldiers coming from England without good experience living in the forest are incapable of doing such a job. A soldier like him is not trained to survive in the forest in America in which the forest in England is absolutely different in terms of the climate, the inhabitants and the vegetation. American forest is very unique so that it is called wilderness.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the research, pathfinder exists because people need him to be able to survive in the frontier. The pathfinder can lead people to get to the place they go safely and can protect them. His skill to live in the frontier makes the pathfinder survive. His understanding to Indian's culture makes him easy, but complicated, to live in the frontier. Even though he has lived for years with the Indians, he still has conscience and care to help others. Meanwhile, white people who live in the frontier still keep their own culture which is unsuitable for the real condition in the frontier. To be able to live in the frontier safely and to guarantee their future better, they depend much on pathfinders. Because they still think that the Indians are their enemies that cannot live together, they are suspicious with the Indians. It makes them hard to live together with the Indians peacefully.

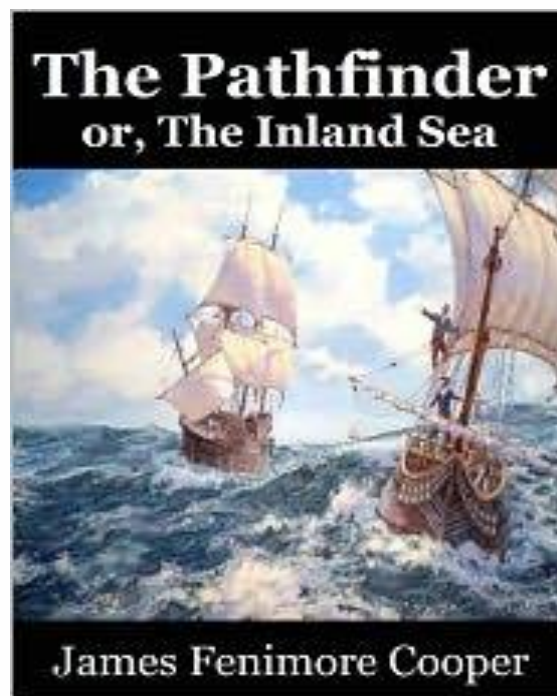
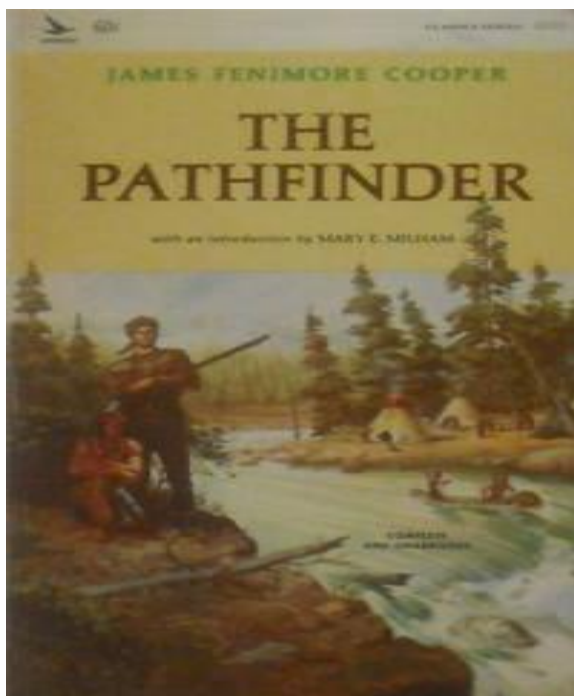
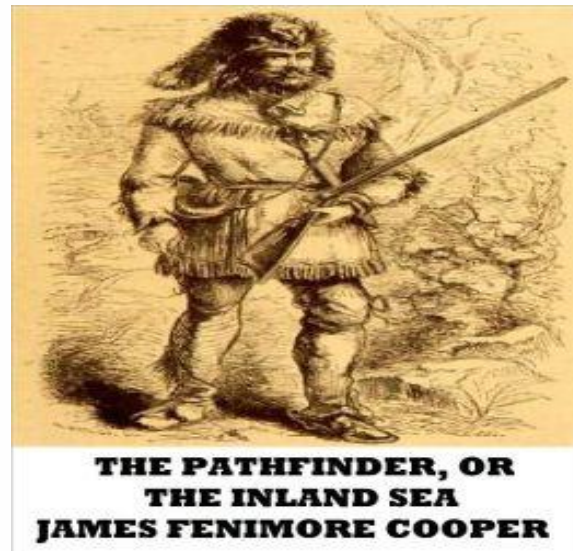
## REFERENCES

- Abrams, M.H. (1971). *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and Critical Tradition*. New York: Oxford UP.
- Aruan, Rumiri Rotua. (2002). *StuditentangKeluargaPionir Amerika Akhir Abad XIX dalam "Little House in the Prairie*. Yogyakarta: UGM
- Charvat, William. (1958). *The Last of the Mohicans By James Fenimore Cooper*. Boston: Houghton.
- Cooper, James Fenimore. (1961). *The Pathfinder or The Inland Sea*. New York: Signet.
- Corstner, Kevin (Director). (1990). *Dances with Wolves*. Orion Pictures.
- <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/pathfinder>. Retrieved on June 1, 2020.
- [https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/pathfinder\\_1](https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/pathfinder_1) Retrieved on June 1, 2020.
- Kwiat, Joseph J. and Mary C. Turpie(Eds.). (1980). *Studies in American Culture*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Liebman, Rebekah R. and Young, Gertrude A. (1966). *The Growth of America*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.
- Nash, Roderick. (1982). *Wilderness and the American Mind*. 3<sup>rd</sup>ed. New Haven: Yale UP.
- Riyatno. (2005). *Frontier Life in America as Seen in James Fenimore Cooper's Novels "The Leather-Stocking Tales"*. Yogyakarta: UGM.
- Smith, Henry Nash. (1978) *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth*. Cambridge: Harvard.
- Todd, Lewis Paul and Merle Curti. (1950). *Rise of the American Nation*. 3<sup>rd</sup>ed. New York: Harcourt.



Wuntu, Ceisy Nita. (1996). *Wilderness versus Civilization as Reflected in Cooper's "The Last of the Mohicans" and "The Prairie."* Yogyakarta: UGM

## APPENDIX



# The Covid-19 Times: Malaysian Society's Unsung Heroes

**Kavitha Subaramaniam, Swagata Sinha Roy**

Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Malaysia

kavitha@utar.edu.my, [swagata@utar.edu.my](mailto:swagata@utar.edu.my)

## ABSTRACT

During the pandemic which has affected every country in the world, there are many sectors of society that have been neglected in terms of not given the appropriate attention for the services rendered. This paper attempts to look at one group of persons often taken for granted as this group belongs to the 3D sector. The three 'D's here represent Dirty, Difficult and Dangerous; in other words, these include work involving construction, plantation, automotive maintenance, cleaning services and other similar vocational occupations. The focus of this paper is on the garbage collectors in the Selangor area in Malaysia. During the MCO (Movement Control Order) that lasted more than three months beginning mid-March, the waste collectors worked regularly and tirelessly picking up waste matter from residential and industrial areas. These workers did so while following the Standard operating procedures (SoPs). The authors were interested to know how social stratification plays a role to influence interactions even during critical times of crises in Malaysia, mostly through observation and data gathered from people involved in the waste collection work.

**Keywords: 3D Sector, Social Stratification, Waste Collection**

## INTRODUCTION

At this particular moment in time, the world is undergoing a crisis of unimagined gravity, the Covid-19 pandemic. It looks like going back to a normal existence will take a long time, so more and more people around the globe are attempting to adjust to what is universally termed as the 'new normal'. And that means to be familiar with all sorts of Standard Operating Procedures or SOPs not only in public places but within one's premises. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) statistics, the cases of Covid-19 are on the rise and there are chances of more infections; now mutations of the virus are beginning to be a source of phobic anxiety. Around December 2019, there was an outbreak of a novel coronavirus in a commercial hub in Wuhan, China. In nearly two months, this virus infected close to 70,000 plus individuals, killing more than 1500 people. This virus is through person to person contact. If a healthy individual is in the close vicinity of an infected person, he or she can contract the disease via the sick person's coughing, sneezing and droplets (Shereen, Khan, Kazmi, Bashir, & Siddique, 2020; Morens, Breman, Calisher, et al. 2020).

The Covid-19 virus took just a few months to spread the world over, resulting in 'lockdown' measures in most countries. Every health care system in the world has been overwhelmed by the challenges this disease has brought upon each nation and there needed to be in place occupational safety measures. Public health measures had to be put in place to help contain the spread of this 'deadly' virus. These measures included "early detection, quarantine and isolation of cases" (Koh, 2020: 4).

The authors were primarily interested in the way the whole pandemic situation was managed by the Malaysian government and the municipal councils. It was seen that despite the lockdown scenario, certain sectors were still servicing the communities. This included the garbage and waste collectors, who still maintained the same work schedule in most areas. Moreover, this form of occupation could endanger the lives of these workers who are in a vulnerable situation due to the virus outbreak. They were willing to take the chance by jeopardizing their health, lives and families for the sake of keeping the nation clean. These frontlines did not look at their low wage

income but instead focused on helping the country to battle the Covid-19. By studying the workers who are involved in what we term 'blue collar' jobs, we were able to understand and foresee the difficulties of these 'unsung heroes' despite their lower strata in the society.

The information gathered was mostly through observation and informal exchanges with the garbage collectors. The authors were looking at how society functions during such a pandemic especially in relation to the 3D sector (involving Dirty, Difficult and Dangerous work) and the interaction between residents and the garbage collectors.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

With the observation(s) made by the researchers, the most relevant theoretical perspective in the light of the pandemic situation, this seems to adhere to the functionalist context of social stratification where the focus is on benefitting society. According to Davis and Moore (cited in Thio, 2009), social stratification is not only essential but serves to be practical and advantageous. More importantly, the survival of society is largely dependent on this kind of 'storey-ing'. To substantiate this, rewards offered by several kinds of occupations are a major motivation. Where the Covid-19 predicament is concerned, it is interesting how those in menial jobs have come to be considered as very important, almost to the point of reverence in some cases. Here we are specifically looking at garbage collectors in the Selangor area in Malaysia. Despite not belonging to say the 'medical experts' league, these garbage collectors still had the incentive to work on tirelessly on the grounds of human values, which overpowered this system of unequal rewards.

## **METHODS**

For this research activity, the researchers applied the qualitative methods of observation and informal interviews. During the Movement Control Order (MCO) in Malaysia, which was a partial lockdown started on 18<sup>th</sup> March and was extended until 9<sup>th</sup> June 2020, only the essential services sectors were allowed to operate. The essential services include Banking and Finance, Electricity and Energy, Water, Uniformed Bodies (Armed Forces, Fire fighters, Police, etc.), Healthcare, Media, Food Supply, among others. Currently in September 2020, Malaysia is undergoing the Recovery Movement Control Order (RMCO) until 31<sup>st</sup> December of this year.

During the MCO, the observations were made as to the frequency of garbage collection, the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) practiced by the Waste Management agencies, as well as the attitudes of the garbage collectors. These observations further led to conversations with the garbage collectors during their rounds of collection. These exchanges are classified as 'informal interviews' that helped gain insight into what the researchers saw as 'heroic acts' especially given the gravity of the situation.

The observations were made at various points during the MCO period, where the researchers observed the garbage collection activity, a few times at which they could converse briefly with the garbage collectors who are primarily foreign workers. As the workers had to move fast from house to house questions posed by the researchers bordered on how they were doing, how risky they feel the work is and what precautions they take in ensuring their resistance to Covid-19.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **TRYING TIMES**

In these challenging times, the government of Malaysia has, over a few months starting March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020 imposed the Movement Control Order (MCO) which further became the Recovery Movement Control Order (RMCO), ongoing until the end of 2020. For these past few months, garbage disposal has also been seen as an integral part of keeping health measures in place. The disposal of Covid-19 patient wearables also caused concern as did many other hospital utilities management. The government and municipal councils kept drawing up measures for the safe and timely removal of substances used daily by the health care workers. As for industrial areas, garbage disposal proved to be challenging but measures had to be implemented and followed.



Since most of the population was restricted to their houses during the first three months of the MCO, the researchers observed the way the garbage was collected in their neighborhoods.

In many areas, the normal schedule of garbage collection was followed despite the restrictions imposed. When asked if this posed a problem, the workers just mentioned that this was a job they had to execute and hence they did it. Of course it was mentioned that there were many Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to be followed and one of the collectors even added the word, which in translation meant 'strictly'. Were they not at a risk of contracting the disease they were asked and there was one who mentioned that every occupation had its own risks. It is also interesting to note that although the garbage truck was driven by Malaysians, the garbage collectors were all foreign workers. In one of the locations in the state of Selangor, where one of the authors resides, garbage is collected three times a week, on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays and this schedule was in place throughout the MCO. Only timings were varied during the MCO, being any time from very early morning to late afternoon whereas normally the pickup truck did its rounds around mid-morning.

It impressed upon the authors that these foreign workers went about their jobs despite the dangers incurred and that they nonchalantly carried out their chores. Of course, they added that the SOPs needed very strict adhering to, especially the wearing of face masks and gloves. Hygiene matters such as washing and sanitizing their hands regularly had to be followed. The researchers noticed that once or twice, one or two collectors even had their heads covered by caps or a cloth. Apparently all clothes, gloves, headgear, masks (if reusable) had to be washed in detergent and disinfectants once their work for the day was over.

When asked about this it was mentioned that for personal hygiene they followed the 'head-to-toe' wash every time they returned to their living quarters. They needed to bathe immediately and wash their apparels. It is to protect themselves and their family members from getting infected from the virus as they work in a risky sector. Hand sanitizers have become a part of their daily necessities. How was social distancing worked out was yet another question the researchers had. Apparently it was practiced as it made up one of the SOPs.

### **Evasive Communication**

Since people were confined to their homes during the Covid-19 MCO, there were many more activities carried out in homes, the major activity being cooking. Even those who barely cooked in their lives, began to cook something or the other to eat. And this meant an abundance of raw and processed food purchases while there were also people who resorted to food delivery companies for their meals. The increase in purchases meant more waste to be disposed of. Generally the food waste is divided accordingly and separated when thrown in the bins. However, the workers had to contend with many instances of 'improper' waste separation and disposal. Since the residents in various areas did not even go beyond their gates during the MCO, the likelihood of them interacting with the garbage collectors was nil.

The collectors had to go on with their work; there was an increase in garbage bags and volume of waste (Rajendra, 2020). There were some overflowing bins as well where waste separation was not practiced. Along certain collection designated areas, there were even illegal dumping at the roadside, under trees and against fences. If these were not collected, it would have resulted in unhygienic issues or even outbreak of dengue and other diseases. These workers had to contend with that as well. It is indeed unfortunate that there is barely any interaction between the residents and those who actually do them a huge favor by helping to dispose of their rubbish. The items which can be reused or recycled in Malaysia such as paper, plastic, aluminum, glass and etc. are further categorized to be sent off to recycle plants and centers. The workers also help with the segregation of the items.

Literally this garbage collection being a job where no thank you is offered and often taken for granted by those of us who do not hesitate to ensure the rubbish is put at the gate for collection and disposal, needs a reexamining. Perhaps a major reevaluation and a rethinking need to be done. The citizens must be aware of the kind of sacrifices made by those who work in the 3D sectors, without whose services, the general population would not have a clean and healthy environment.



## Uncelebrated Deeds

It is indeed disheartening that these 'mere' workers are not even given a second glance, let alone a thought. These workers, all the way from their home countries are here to earn a living, that too a modest one, are barely recognized for what they do as the services rendered are taken for granted. In many ways, the residents of many neighbourhoods owe the cleanliness and hygiene of their place of residence to unnamed, unknown and very often 'unseen' people- migrant workers who are here to 'work'. The authors feel that a slight change of attitude on the part of the residents could help these workers' motivation levels. It is true that there is not much time to interact as they work in a time-restricted job where they pick up your rubbish and move on to the next garbage bag they need to put in the truck. However, even a greeting when they pick up your bag can go a long way in helping a worker feel appreciated, more so when he is away from his loved ones. The authors feel that these 'unsung' heroes must be acknowledged and recognized. Hopefully, one day they will.

## CONCLUSION

In the observation made by the researchers, there are many households that are unaware of the 'modest' yet 'great' service being rendered by what we see as people from the 3D (Dirty, Difficult and Dangerous). Waste collection and disposal is a service which helps in the daily upkeep, maintenance and cleanliness of one's residential area and surroundings. Without a clean environment, there could be infections of many kinds leading to a rise in health-related issues.

From the observations made, this scenario accounts for what the researchers call the stratification of society in which there is a kind of 'imbalance' in the way people interact with one another based on one's occupational status. That is the reason the functionalist theory is best applied here as one strata of society (in this case workers from the 3D sector) benefit the others from various other strata.

The authors think that although people have their various occupations, it would benefit all of society especially during these pandemic times to show a little appreciation for those considered to be in 'unglamorous' occupations such as those mentioned earlier. If people are willing to accommodate and show gratitude to those who say, collect their garbage, cut their grass and deliver goods to their homes, it will go a long way in the betterment of society at large.

In support of the 'unsung' heroes mentioned in this paper, the discussion can go on; however the authors would like to close this with a quote by Willie Stargell "I see a lot of people who love their jobs. I see some garbage collectors smiling as they go about their work".

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to express their highest gratitude to those they see as superheroes during Coronavirus pandemic, with special reference to the garbage collectors who have tirelessly committed themselves to ensuring the cleanliness of neighbourhoods in Selangor.

## REFERENCES

- Koh, D. (2020). Occupational risks for Covid- 19 infection. *Occupational Medicine* 70, pp. 3-5.
- Morens, D. M., Breman, J. G., Calisher, C. H., et al. (2020). Perspective piece: The origin of Covid – 19 and why it matters. *The American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene* 103 (3), pp. 955-959.
- Rajendra, E. (2020, September 24). Klang folk welcome free bulk waste collection. *The Star*, pp. 4.
- Shereen, M. A., Khan, S., Kazmi, A., Bashir, N. & Siddique R. (2020). Covid – 19 infection: Origin, transmission, and characteristics of human coronaviruses. *Journal of Advanced Research* 24, pp. 91-98.
- Stargell, W. (n. d.). BrainyQuote. Retrieved from [https://www.brainyquote.com/search\\_results?q=garbage+collector+job](https://www.brainyquote.com/search_results?q=garbage+collector+job).
- Thio, A. (2009). *Sociology: A brief introduction* (7th ed.). Boston: Pearson.

# **The Depiction of Superhero in Japanese Fairy Tales (Momo Tarou, Tsuru No Ongasehi, Kaguya Hime, Hana Saka Jisan and Isshunboushi**

**Retno Dewi Ambarastuti**

Faculty of Culture Studies, Universitas Brawijaya

[retnodewia@ub.ac.id](mailto:retnodewia@ub.ac.id)

## **ABSTRACT**

This paper is a literary study used five Japanese fairy tales as the main data. The characters depicted were Momo Tarou, Tsuru no Ongaeshi, Kaguya Hime, Hana saka Jisan, and Isshunboushi. Fairy tales are folk tales inherited hereditary from generation to generation which has good values of the society. Good values were depicted in the main character which known as a hero. Five tales used in this study have different hero, both physical and character depiction. Therefore, this study aims to depict the heroes in five Japanese fairy tales, namely Momo Tarou, Tsuru no Ongaeshi, Kaguya Hime, Hana saka Jisan, and Isshunboushi. The method used is qualitative. The theory used is the definition of fairy tales, the hero in fairy tales and the definition of superhero. The results of this study on the depiction of the superhero in the five Japanese fairy tales were 1) from a physical perspective, the main character has a different physique from ordinary people. Superheroes are not only human, but also can be in the form of animals, 2) from a psychological perspective, the main character has a good personality, cares to the environment, dutiful to parents, and returning a favor, 3) from a sociological perspective, it can be seen that the main character has good personality to the environment, therefore, the society (people around him) behaves well to the main character, and 4) all the main characters have a vision of doing good things for others.

**Keywords:** Care, Kind, Japanese Fairy Tales, Return the Favor, Superhero

## **INTRODUCTION**

Fairy tales is one of old literature works. According to Tengsoe (1988; 166), fairy tales are simply imaginary stories that are hard to believe. In fairy tales, strange, magical and absurd things are presented. Fairy tale usually tells about extraordinary events, with the main character who is shown by characters and physical abilities that exceed of human's ability in general. Fairy tales, are traditional stories passed down from generation to generation from their ancestors, so it is not known who the author is. Fairy tales contain the origin of the place, history, satire, or also advice. However, most of fairy tales contain the advice. This advice is conveyed through the character of the main character through his behavior, thoughts and words. In the past and nowadays, fairy tales were conveyed orally, by being told from parents to children as a lullaby. However, in modern times, storytelling is not only conveyed orally, but also by technological advances, fairy tales are presented digitally, in the form of films, and also in animation.

Fairy tales which presented in an animated form can be found in Japanese fairy tales. Many Japanese fairy tales are currently packaged in anime films. This is intended to make it more attractive to readers, especially children. In this research, the writer will use the Japanese fairy tales namely Momo Tarou, Tsuru No Ongaeshi, Kaguya Hime, Hana Saka Jisan, and Isshunboushi. The five Japanese fairy tales are popular in Japan. So, at this time, the five fairy tales can be found on the internet, both in the form of writing, comics, animation, and even songs.

Momo Tarou tells the story of a child who is found by a pair of grandparents who have no children, in a momo fruit (peach). While washing clothes in the river, Grandma saw the washed

peach, picked it up and brought it home. When split open, inside the fruit is a baby. After being treated with love, Momo Tarou grew up to be a strong, intelligent child. One day Momo Tarou asked permission to eradicate the demon that had been disturbing his village. Grandparents doubted Momo Tarou's abilities. But Momo Tarou convinced Grandpa and asked Grandma for a kibi dango cake. Momo Tarou said that if he ate kibi dango, it would give him multiple strengths. With a heavy heart, Grandparents took Momo Tarou to the demon island, and brought him a kibi dango cake and a sword. On the way, Momo Tarou met dogs, crows and monkeys, who later became his men after being given kibi dango cake. It is kind of a blessing after eating kibi dango cakes, Momo Tarou and his men have multiple strengths. Finally, Momo Tarou and his men managed to defeat the demon, and managed to bring home the stealth. The property was then handed over to Grandparents and also the villagers.

The tale Tsuru no Ongaeshi tells the story of returning the crane's goodness to a young man who releases her from a hunter's snare. At night, a beautiful woman came to the young man's house, and begged to be made a wife. The young man accepted the beautiful woman's request. A few days later the beautiful woman asked for a room for weaving, and asked her husband not to peek at her while she was in the room. Every time he left the room, the wife handed over a very beautiful cloth, and asked her husband to sell it. The husband managed to sell the beautiful fabrics his wife had woven at a high price. One day, out of curiosity, the husband peeked into the room. How shocked he was, because he saw a crane plucking its feathers to weave. The wife found herself being peeped, immediately left the room, told to her husband that she was a crane that he had helped from a hunter's snare the other days, and immediately flew away leaving her husband.

The Kaguya Hime fairy tale tells of a very small baby who was found by a bamboo woodcutter in a bamboo segment. Having no children, the bamboo woodcutter and his wife took care of the child and gave him the name Kaguya Hime. Since Kaguya Hime was cared for by the husband and wife, the husband and wife's life has changed because every day, the husband finds a piece of gold on a stick of bamboo. Over time Kaguya Hime grew up to be a beautiful girl. Her beauty is well known throughout the country. However, when many young men wanted to propose to her and make her a wife, the princess always refused. Finally, Kaguya Hime admitted that she was a daughter from the moon who was sentenced to come down to earth, and now it's time to return to the moon. Kaguya Hime was sentenced to come down to earth because when she was on the moon she was a naughty child. Kaguya Hime stated that the gold found by the bamboo woodcutter was a reward for his kindness to care for and love him while on earth. Then Kaguya Hime returned to the moon with the troops from the moon.

The tale of Hana saka Jiisan tells the story of a poor, honest and kind grandparent who had a white dog. One day the Grandpa took care of a white dog who was tortured by the previous owner. One day, the dog named Shiro was barking to show something to the grandfather. Grandpa dug up the ground Shiro was pointing at, and in it were many pieces of gold. Grandpa's evil and greedy neighbor saw this and asked Shiro. The greedy grandfather told Shiro to show him the dirt, but after being dug up all that was found was trash. The greedy old man was angry, and beat Shiro to death. Kind grandfather buried Shiro well. A few days later on top of Shiro's grave grew a tree that quickly grew bigger. The kind grandfather dreamed that he met Shiro, who told him to cut the tree and then made a mortar. Grandfather also took Shiro's advice. After the mortar is finished, every time you pound rice, gold coins come out of the mortar. The jealous neighbor's grandfather learned about this and asked for a mortar, but what came out was not gold coins, but black mud. Annoyed, the jealous grandfather burned the mortar. The good old man took the ashes of the mortar burning, and spread them on the cherry blossom tree. Magically, flowers are blooming beautifully. At that time, passed by the King. The king was delighted to see the cherry blossoms blooming prematurely. King gives gifts to good Grandpa. Seeing this, the jealous Grandfather immediately sprinkled the remains of the burning mortar, but the ashes hit the King's eyes and made him angry. The king ordered his guards to imprison the jealous grandfather.

Issun Boshi's fairy tale tells of a child who has a small size, as big as an adult's pinkie. This fairy tale begins with a pair of grandparents who do not have children. However, the couple never stopped praying on Kamisama (God) for a child, even as big as a finger. Finally, grandmother gave birth to a very small child, and she was given the name Issunboshi. With great love, Grandpa

and Grandma took care of Isshunboushi. However, Isshunboushi did not grow up to be a big child, he was still like a little finger. Grandpa and Grandma continued to care for and love Isshunboushi. One day Isshunboushi asked permission from his parents to go to the city to find work, and certainly it was forbidden by Grandpa, considering Isshunboushi's very small body. But Isshunboushi insisted on going to the city. Finally, with a heavy heart, Grandpa took Isshunboushi off. Along the way, Isshunboushi had to be extra careful for fear of being trampled and eaten by animals. Finally, Isshunboushi arrived in the city. In a house with high fences Isshunboushi shouted, "Excuse me". The owner of the house was confused because there was no one there, but a voice. Then Isshunboushi shouted, and the owner of the house noticed Isshunboushi. It turns out that the owner of the house is a king. Isshunboushi was accepted to work as a friend to his daughter. The Princess is very happy, because she has friends. One day the Princess wanted to visit the temple on a hill. Accompanied by Isshunboushi, they left alone. On the way home, an evil giant confronts him. Isshunboushi immediately blocked the giant, but because of its very small size, the giant easily swallowed Isshunboushi. Inside the giant's stomach, Isshunboushi who was armed with needles tore apart the giant's stomach. The giant was in pain and vomited Isshunboushi, then left him. Due to the pain, the giant did not notice, a small drum fell from his pocket. The Princess knows that the little drum is a magical object that can grant human wishes. Immediately Isshunboushi begged for his body to be normal. The princess beat the drum, and suddenly, Isshunboushi grew up, becoming a handsome young man. The Princess felt embarrassed because she saw Isshunboushi's good looks. When they got home, the King married Isshunboushi to his daughter. Then, Isshunboushi reporting to his parents. Isshunboushi lives happily ever after.

In the five Japanese fairy tales, the main character is depicted as a person who has more power and also has good qualities. The depiction of a character who has good personality, unlike other characters, shows a depiction of a superhero. Dr. Robin Rosenberg (2013) superheroes are characters who have super powers, and make good deeds their mission in life. In the five Japanese fairy tales above, the main character has the role of as a superhero. Thus, the author will examine the superhero depiction of the main character in the five Japanese fairy tales.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Definitions of Fairy Tales**

According to Nurgiyantoro (2005: 198), a fairy tale is a story that doesn't happen and in many ways it often doesn't make sense. And, according to Tengsoe (1988: 166), fairy tales are simply imaginary stories that are hard to believe. In fairy tales, strange, magical and absurd things are presented. In the past, fairy tales were created for young children, and their content is full of advice. The character in the fairy tales can be (a) animal. According to Danandjaja (2007:86), animal tales are fairy tales characterized by domestic animals and wild animals, such as mammals, birds, reptiles, fish and insects. The animals in this type of story can speak and reason like humans. Thus, fairy tales are stories that don't actually happen cannot be trusted to be true, and often contain things that don't make sense. Fairy tales were created for children, so most of fairy tales contain advice. The characters in fairy tales can be humans, or animals. If the characters in fairy tales are animals, then animals can talk, behave, and think just like humans. In these five Japanese fairy tales, there are those whose main characters are humans, and also animals, moreover, in all of the main characters, featuring superhero characters.

### **Characters in the fairy tales**

According to Abrams (in Nurgiyantoro, 2013: 247), character in a story is a person who is shown in a narrative work, or a drama that readers interpret as having moral qualities and certain tendencies as expressed in speech and what is done in action. In this case the narrative work in this study is a fairy tale. Seen from the importance of the character's role in fairy tales, there are main characters and additional characters. According to Nurgiyantoro (2013: 258), the main character is a character whose prioritized in the novel. He is the most told character, both as the perpetrator of the incident and those affected by the incident. In fact, in certain novels, the main character is always present in every event and can be found on every page of the story book concerned. While additional



characters are usually ignored because the synopsis only contains the essence of the story. As Nurgiyantoro argues, the main character is a figure that plays an important role in a story, while an additional character is a figure that does not have an important role in a story.

The essence of the characters in a story, in terms of fairy tales, can be seen from a physical, psychological and sociological perspective. In a physical point of view, we can see the physical condition of a character, such as body shape, appearance, age, and so on. In a psychological perspective, we can see the feelings, thoughts, and wishes of the characters. In a sociological perspective, the character of a figure can be seen through their environment. In this paper, the author would discuss the main character in terms of physical, psychological, and sociological aspects that describe superhero characters.

### **Definition of Superhero**

Superhero comes from the words super and hero. The word superhero first appeared in book *An Airman Outings* (1917) book, by Allan Bott, it refers to British aircraft pilots in World War I, who called themselves as the superheroes of war. This term is continually used. Nowadays, the term superhero does not only refer to human characters, but also to fictional characters. Superman comic is the first fictional story featuring a superhero character in 1938.

Rosenberg, in his book entitled *What is a Superhero?*, states that a superhero consists of two components, namely (1) super, which means that they are born with super powers, realizing that they have super powers or develop these super powers, and (2) heroes, which means they are consistently doing good. Therefore, the meaning of both components are a superhero always does good deeds, not just once, and makes good deeds their life mission. So, a person who does one good deed cannot be called as a superhero.

In Concept magazine 2007, it was stated that the superhero character in fiction works originally in comics. In fiction, this superhero character has extraordinary powers that are used to eradicate crime for the sake of the public. Superhero characters are also depicted wearing special costumes, and have their own characteristics. The costumes that are worn are intended to hide their personal identity. The concept of a superhero is a good character in fighting, preventing, and catching bad characters. Superhero characters are not always depicted as having extraordinary powers that exceed human strength in general.

From the explanation above, a superhero character is a character who has good qualities, and always does good to fight crime, or also helps fellow humans. There are superheroes who have super physical strength, but some of them are not. The depiction of this superhero can be seen in the five Japanese fairy tales that can be seen from its main character.

### **METHODS**

In this paper, the research method used is descriptive. Sugiono (2013: 147) explains that the descriptive method is a method used to analyze data by describing or representing the data that has been collected without intending to make general conclusions or generalizations.

The data used in this paper are five Japanese fairy tales, namely Momo Tarou, Tsuru no Ongaeshi, Kaguya Hime, Hanasaka Jisan, and Isshunboushi.

Data analysis was carried out by depicting the main character in the five tales from a physical, psychological, and sociological perspective, then explaining their super state, hence the main character shows the superhero character.

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **SUPERHERO DEPICTION AS THE MAIN CHARACTER OF MOMOTARO TALE**

Momotaro's physical image is a healthy little boy who he found by Grandmother. Momo Taro was a small baby, the size like a peach, because she was found in a momo fruit (peach). However, in a shortly time, Momo Taro grew up to be a healthy child. When facing the stealth army, Momo Tarou wore a robe, carried a sword, and carried a flag that read 'Nihon Ichi' which means 'Number 1 in Japan', and also carried a kibi dango cake. This cake gives Momo Tarou and his troops multiple



abilities, so they can defeat the demons. On the way to the island of demon, Momo Tarou with the dog, the monkey and the crow get on a boat.

In psychologically depiction, Momo Tarou is a smart and brave boy. Momo Tarou is a child who cares about his environment. This can be seen when he was growing up, Momo Tarou insisted on going to Demon Island to eradicate the demons that often attack humans in his residence. Momo Tarou also has a leader character, seen when he went alone to Demon Island, on the way, Momo Tarou met dog, monkey and cros who eventually became his troops to attack the island of stealth. After defeating the demons and their troops, Momo Tarou returned to the village with the possessions of the demons and shared them with Grandpa and all the villagers.

In sociological depiction, Momo Tarou is a child who really loves and is devoted to his parents, and cares for his environment. This trait made Momo Tarou loved by the villagers. This can be seen by Momo Tarou who insists on eradicating the demon that has been disturbing the lives of the villagers. With his strength, Momo Tarou managed to defeat the demons. In the village, Momo Tarou was greeted by the villagers because he had eradicated the demon that had disturbed the lives of the villagers. Momo Tarou brought home all the villagers' belongings that were stolen by the demon. At the end of the story, Momo Tarou is said to be living happily with his grandparents who take care of him.

Momo Tarou's superhero image can be seen through physically, psychologically, and sociologically. From a physical perspective, the superhero depiction of Momo Tarou is depicted from a very small baby, and can grow up quickly, healthy and strong. Momo Tarou's appearance also depicts the figure of a superhero, with the flag he carries with the words 'Nihon Ichi' which means 'Number 1 in Japan'. In strength, Momo Tarou explained that he described a superhero because he was able to defeat stealth troops. From a psychological perspective, Momo Tarou describes a superhero because he is intelligent, courageous, has a leadership spirit, and has a social spirit. From a sociological perspective, the superhero figure in Momo Tarou's character is seen when he cares for his environment, and also a figure that is respected by his environment.

Momotaro is the main character who has a superhero character. Momo Taro was carrying a flag that said 'Nihon Ichi' which means 'Number 1 in Japan' and a sword. He also eradicates crime, and has a vision to always do good.

### **SUPERHERO DEPICTION AS THE MAIN CHARACTER OF TSURU NO ONGAESHI TALE**

The main character in Tsuru no Ongaeshi tale is a crane who transforms into a beautiful young woman who is married to a young man who helps her released from the snare of a hunter. The physical depiction of this female character is seen when the crane transforms into a beautiful young woman. She is described as being very beautiful and charming so that the young man is willing to accept her as a wife even though he just knew her. The woman who is the transformed of a crane is also depicted using her beak, plucking her own feathers which she then weaves into a beautiful cloth.

Psychologically, the main character of this fairy tale, the crane that transforms into this beautiful woman with a noble heart, is to return the favor to the young man who has released her from the hunter's snare. This heron-incarnate woman came to the young man's house, and then helped him complete household chores, until finally he asked to marry the young man. She also repaid the youth's kindness by weaving, and the cloth she produced was sold by her husband to the city at a high price.

Sociologically, this crane character really cares about his environment. This can be seen when she transforms into a woman who comes to the youth house. At first, he helped the young man complete household chores, such as cooking, washing clothes, and cleaning the youth's house.

The superhero depiction in the heron who transforms into a beautiful woman can be seen from a physical, psychological and sociological perspective. From a physical point of view, the main character, the crane is transformed into a beautiful woman who is kind and smooth-spoken. This crane is willing to endure pain when plucking its feathers with its own beak when weaving. Psychic depiction of a superhero is also seen in this crane, when she repays the kindness of the young man who helps her release the hunter's snare. Her determination to return the favor is the

soul of a superhero, because it means that he doesn't forget the services of the people who helped him. Sociologically, the superhero depiction of this crane character is his concern for his environment. The nature of caring for the environment is a superhero characteristic.

The main character of this fairy tale is the crane is a superhero, because she is transformed into a beautiful, gentle, friendly, and kind woman. She has a vision of doing good, by repaying the kindness of the young man.

### **SUPERHERO DEPICTION AS THE MAIN CHARACTER OF KAGUYA HIME TALE**

The main figure in Kaguya Hime's fairy tale is Princess Kaguya (Kaguya Hime). Physically, this main character was originally very small. It is said that Princess Kaguya found a woodcutter grandfather on a bamboo segment. However, after being cared for by Grandpa and Grandma who did not have a child, she grew up to be a beautiful girl. Her beauty is well known throughout the country. In addition, Kaguya Hime is also described as someone who has more strength than ordinary humans, known by his ability to create gold in a bamboo. Since finding and caring for Kaguya Hime, every day Grandpa found a lump of gold on the bamboo segment.

Psychologically, Kaguya Hime is described as a girl who is kind, obedient and devoted to her parents (her grandparents take care of her). However, Kaguya Hime is also an intelligent person and is very strong in upholding his stance. This can be seen when she was proposed by many princes from all over the country. Kaguya Hime refuses subtly by giving a contest to his applicants. The competitions that are given are things that cannot be done by ordinary humans. This shows Kaguya Hime's intelligence. Her attitude to refuse the princes' proposal is proof of Kaguya Hime's attitude to firmly hold her position not to marry a human, because she is actually a princess from the moon who is sentenced to live in the world. His devotion to his parents (Grandparents who take care of him) is shown by helping with household chores.

From a sociological perspective, Kaguya Hime has a good character and cares about the condition of others, Kaguya Hime returning the gratitude for Kakaek Grandma who has taken care of her on earth, by creating a lump of gold in a bamboo segment that Grandpa cut down, so that Grandpa can sell it, and can help Grandpa's poor life. Grandfather never knew that the gold nuggets he found every day were Kaguya Hime's doing.

The superhero image in Kaguya Hime's character looks good physically, psychologically, and sociologically. From a physical perspective, the superhero image of Kaguya Hime is a beautiful woman who has extraordinary power, namely creating gold on bamboo joints. Psychologically, Kaguya Hime is a kind and caring person for the condition of others. Sociologically, because Kaguya Hime is a good child, cares for her parents, and is devoted, so Grandpa and Grandma loved her.

The main character Kaguya Hime is a superhero, because she is described as a beautiful and kind girl. She is a good girl who diligently helps the housework, who is obedient to her parents, and also repays Grandfather's kindness. As a superhero, she has a vision always to doing good for the others.

### **SUPERHERO DEPICTION AS THE MAIN CHARACTER OF HANASAKA JISAN TALE**

The main character in Hanasaka Jiisan is Shiro, a white dog belonging to the kind-hearted Grandpa. Physically, Shiro is depicted as a white dog, a kind dog who always follows his master away.

Psychologically, Shiro is depicted as an obedient dog and devoted to his master. It can be seen when Shiro was borrowed by a jealous neighbor's grandfather, Shiro obeyed. Even though, Shiro died at the end because he was killed by a jealous grandfather. His good character and devotion to his master could be seen when Shiro always accompanied Grandpa to work in the fields during his lifetime. His devotion to his master was also seen when Shiro was dead, which is the one who often comes in Grandpa's dreams who leads Grandpa to get gold, as well as gifts from the King. On the contrary, to the evil-hearted neighbor Grandpa, Shiro did not give gifts (gold), but gave trash, black mud, even to the point of making the King angry, and put him in prison.

Sociologically, Shiro is depicted as a dog that gets good, so he gets affection from his master, namely Grandpa. When Shiro lived, Shiro was loved by Grandpa and Grandma. By the time Shiro died, Grandpa buried him well, and took care of Shiro's grave.

The superhero depiction of the Shiro character can be seen physically, psychologically, and sociologically. From a physical perspective, Shiro is depicted as a dog with white hair. In Japanese, white is a color that describes a cheerful, bright feeling to the viewer. It shows Shiro's image as a superhero, which is to give a cheerful, bright feeling to those who see him. From a psychological perspective, Shiro is described as an obedient and devoted person to his master, so that Shiro is still devoted and gives wealth to his owner. Shiro's obedient and devoted nature is the superhero trait of the main character, Shiro. Shiro is also a superhero who fights crime. It can be seen when Shiro did not give the gold as the evil-hearted Grandpa hoped. On the contrary, Shiro gave trash, black mud, and even put the evil-hearted Grandfather in prison. This is proof that Shiro is a superhero who fights crime. Sociologically, Shiro is a superhero who returns the kindness received from his environment, from his owner's grandfather. Therefore, in physically, psychologically, and sociologically, Shiro is a superhero who is good, obedient, returns kindness to others, and also a character who fights evil.

The main character, Shiro is a superhero character. Shiro is a white dog that is loyal to his master. Shiro always do good things to the master.

### **SUPERHERO DEPICTION AS THE MAIN CHARACTER OF ISSHUNBOUSHI TALE**

The main character in Isshunboushi's fairy tale is a young man who has a size like an adult's little finger, named Isshunboushi. Physically, the depiction of this main character is different from the other characters in this fairy tale. Isshunboushi who has a small body always take a needle as his sword. This shows that Isshunboushi is a superhero.

However, within this small body, there was a great spirit. In this case, based on psychologically perspective, Isshunboushi is a brave, always careful, kind, responsible, and devoted to his parents. Isshunboushi's brave character was seen as an adult, even though he did not grow up, Isshunboushi was determined to go to the city, looking for work. Despite his small stature, Isshunboushi managed to reach the city safely. It is said, on the way to the city, Isshunboushi was very careful because he was afraid of being trampled by other people or animals, or also being eaten by animals. This attitude also shows that Isshunboushi is a brave character. Isshunboushi's courage can also be seen when he faces the giant who is about to kidnap the Princess. Isshunboushi can be a good friend to Putri because of her kindness, so that she feels comfortable with Isshunboushi. Isshunboushi's responsible nature was seen when he escorted the Princess to the temple, on their way home, they were confronted by a giant. The giant wanted to kidnap the Princess, but Isshunboushi swiftly blocked the giant, even though his body was very small. Isshunboushi's courage to face the giant is a brave attitude against evil. Isshunboushi is a child who is devoted to his parents. This can be seen when Isshunboushi, who had grown up and married the Princess, did not forget to tell his parents.

Sociological description of Isshunboushi is a character who has a good personality; accordingly his social environment treats him well. Both of his parents cared of him, while at work, Isshunboushi was treated well by his employer (King and Princess). It shows that Isshunboushi has good character from the social perspective. From Isshunboushi's kindness and responsibility can be seen in the end of the story, Isshunboushi's body become a handsome young man normally.

Isshunboushi is the main character as a superhero in physically, psychologically and sociologically perspective. From a physical perspective, Isshunboushi has a different physique from other ordinary people. However, in his small body, Isshunboshi has a superhero character because he is brave, responsible, kind, and dares to fight evil. Because of these characters, Isshunboushi is loved by his environment.

The main character, Isshunboushi is a superhero. He was a small boy, and he turned into a handsome and handsome young man. Although he had a size like an adult's little finger, he brave to fought the giant. He always do good thing to the others. He fought a giant who had been notorious for being evil.



## CONCLUSION

According to the analysis, the writer concludes the superhero character in the main character of Momo Tarou, Tsuru no Ongaeshi, Kaguya Hime, Hanasaka Jisan, and Isshunboushi tales are:

1. The superhero depiction of the main character based on a physical perspective has a different physique from ordinary people. Superheroes are not only human, but also can be animals.
2. The superhero depiction of the main character based on psychologic perspective has a good personality, cares to the environment, is devoted to parents, and always return the favor.
3. The superhero depiction of the main character based on sociological perspective, it can be seen that the main character is a figure that has good personality to the environment, therefore, the society (the people around him) behaves well to the main figure.
4. All of the main characters in there fairy tales have a vision to do something good to others.

## REFERENCES

- Danandjaja, James. (2007). *Folklor Indonesia, Ilmu Gosip, Dongeng, dan Lain-lain*. Jakarta: Grafiti.
- Nurgiyantoro, Burhan. (2005). *Sastra Anak: Pengantar Pemahaman Dunia Anak*. Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press.
- Nurgiyantoro, Burhan. (2013). *Teori Pengkajian Fiksi*. Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press.
- Robin S. Rosenberg. (2013). *What is a Superhero?* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sugiyono. (2013). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif dan R&D*. Bandung: AlfabetaCV.
- Tengsoe, Liberatus. (1988). *Sastra Indonesia Pengantar Teori dan Apresiasi*. Bandung: Nusa Indah.
- Magazine Concept (Vol 04 Edisi 20 tahun 2007

# Representations of Chinese Characters and Culture in Comic Books

Xuc Lin, Mariana

Bina Nusantara University Chinese Department  
xuelin@binus.ac.id, mar14na@binus.ac.id

## ABSTRACT

Recent developments in superhero comics have seen changes to the representations of characters and storylines. This study focus is to examine the representations of Chinese character and culture in comic books; emphasis on the timeline of Chinese representation in comic books, the making of New Super-Man and China Justice League, the representation reflect Chinese culture and shape multicultural and hybridization values in comic books. Historical texts, digital comics, news, and Orientalism perspective were used to investigate the representations of the Chinese characters in different periods. The earliest representations of Asian in American comics reflected and presented what happened in 1950 when Chinese immigrant character (Yellow Claw), and martial arts genre (Shang Chi) was the changed later. After the 2000s, the character especially Chinese representation is no longer presented as "other", it was started with the creation of Ryan Choi (Atom), followed by a first Chinese superman, New Super-Man (Kong Kenan) created by Gene Luen Yang in 2016. The creation of Chinese Super-Man and China Justice League is a significant change related to rare and ethnicity particular Chinese character. Chinese culture elements continued to rich the storyline, such as city background, martial arts, and Daoism concepts (*Qi* and *Bagua*) were presented more than earlier periods. The creativity of the writer to transform the history of China, Chinese legends and customs into the storyline bring the uniqueness of a hybrid culture into the comic' world. Hence, the hybridization presented in the comics brings the world community to the closer exchange of global culture.

**Keywords:** Chinese Representations, Comic Books, New Super-Man, Culture, Hybridization, Gene Luen Yang

## INTRODUCTION

Superheroes have been part of human civilization since the beginnings (Levin et al., 2019). Therefore, the superheroes and comic books represent, in many ways the aspirations, concerns and dreams of contemporary life. Comics books are beginning to be recognized for the impacts in society because they inform, channel and critique cultural norms (Sawyer, n.d.). Moreover, superheroes have the potential to be progressive cultural influences. They form the basis of many of our modern mythological archetypes; millions recognized them, and they are confined only by the limits of creative visualization (Lavigne, 2015). The areas that have received the scholars most attention about superhero comic books are gender roles, femininity and masculinity, feminism, race and identity, representation of political and contemporary issues as well as some studies about readership. Batman, Superman, and the Black Panther are three of the most successful comic book characters of all time. They exemplify a position that the comic book industry has taken on race over the years (Woodall, 2010). Some studies found out that readers' discursive constitution and management of superheroes' bodies, and their engagement with representations of superheroes are related to analyses of multiplicity in individual identities and current theories of audience reception and identification (Covich, 2012). Comics for girls and women had their agendas and limitations. Although comic books were a purveyor of gender normative messages for girls and presented normative images of the female body, comics also presented their readers occasionally with contradictions, thus negotiating women's roles in society. The 70s and 80s

feminist activists, used comics to make feminist' thought reachable to broader readers and utilized the comics to educate girls and women about their rights, possibilities, and desire (Vester, 2017).

Comic books and superheroes are always related to identity and politics. Captain America identity has always been around, preserving and standing for what America believes. His behaviour always reflects the politics and policies of the moment. As America changes, the ideals, values, and identities of the American people change as well, and Captain America is always there to support those changes (Peitz & Peitz, 2013). The superhero narrative is related to American geopolitical identity. The geopolitical narratives and scripts are produced and consumed through popular culture; they create mass identity, a mythicized construction of American self where American monomyth reproduced repeatedly (Miettinen, 2011)&(Kauranen, 2012).

A representation is a visual, written, or audio depiction of something or someone (Beltrán, 2018). Representation, not just concerning to form and content has been growing source of contention within comics culture in recent years (Facciani et al., 2016). Recent developments in superhero comics have seen changes to the representations of characters and storylines. Racial diversity in American comic books has been steadily increasing. A study examined about minorities representation, how superheroes play a role in the social-political, identity, and cultural representation of Black identity. The research explores how Black creators have begun to dis-articulate fictional representations and develop a collective catharsis more "authentic" to the complex Black experience (Cochran, 2017). Other study stated a primarily ignored topic in academic circles and comics studies, many of the descriptions found in mainstream comics still retreat on racial and religious stereotypes. However, Muslimah representation has become more performed in the last ten years, with a more extensive range of fictional Muslim women at the forefront (Karunakaran, 2017). Comic books are a cultural product that always involves many actors when it comes to change the representation of women and minorities. The actions of cultural actors ensured the directions that the representations in comic books would take. Representations of women and minority in comic books are based on the concepts of cultural norms, expectations, and even the stereotypes surrounding how those groups are regarded in American society throughout time (Marshall, 2019).

A majority of comic book creators, until very recently were Caucasian. Until the past decade, many comics contain stories that were inspired by the experience and background of the authors, including Gene Luen Yang (American Born Chinese and New Superman), Sana Amanat (Ms Marvel), and Marjorie Liu and Sana Takeda (Monstress). A study showed the increase in female characters and female-led titles, the swapping of gender from a male character to a female character one, and the increase in female writers and artists, it is how the representation of female characters has evolved (Curtis & Cardo, 2018). It concluded that comic books had reflected the values and identities of the creators.

Until recently, there is still a noticeable absence of the study about culture representation and diversity in comics studies, particularly Chinese characters, storyline and culture. Therefore, this study aims to examine the representation of characters and Chinese culture in comic books. This study emphasises the timeline of Chinese representation in comic books, the making of New Super-Man and China Justice League, and how the representation reflect Chinese culture and shape multicultural and hybridization values in comic books. The study will be divided into three parts to answer those three particular issues.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

In this study, the textual analysis, historical analysis, and cultural studies about cultural features, representation, orientalism and cultural hybridization were used. The theory related to cultural studies about Orientalism (Edward Said), Orientalism as the dynamic by the which Western scholarship and literature on the East have reified global structures of power and imperialism through enforcing notions of an East-West binary. Through this binary, Western cultures are seen as intellectual, rational, and stable, and Eastern cultures and people as primitive, irrational, and weak (Beltrán, 2018).

Hybridization is not merely the mixing, blending and synthesizing of the different elements that ultimately form a culturally faceless whole. In the course of hybridization, cultures often generate new forms and make new connections with one another (Wang & Yeh, 2005). Cultural hybridization emphasizes the adaptation and active articulation of global processes with local or regional norms, customs, needs, and traditions. Cultural hybridity is not merely a form and style, reflecting a new and widespread trend in global popular culture. It implies that the hybridization of culture must occur as local cultural agents and actors interact and negotiate with global forms, using them as resources through which local people construct their own cultural spaces. Furthermore, as Bhabha points out, hybridity needs to open up "a third space" within which diverse factors encounter and transform each other as signifying the "in-between," an incommensurable location where minority discourses intervene to preserve their strengths and particularity. Hybridity is an interpretative and reflective mode in which assumptions of identity are interrogated, and local force should play a pivotal role in developing local culture amid hybridization (Bhabha, 2012).

## **METHODS**

The discussion of this study consists of three parts. The first is about the timeline of the Chinese representation in Comic books, the second is about the making of New Super-Man, and China Justice League character and the third is about Chinese elements reflected in the comic books to illustrate cultural hybridization. In the first part, we utilized historical texts, digital comics and news sources to investigate the timeline of the change Chinese representation in different periods and examined the characters from Orientalism perspective. In the second part, we conducted textual analysis focusing in-depth reading by looking at the text of digital comic books New Super-Man Vol.1-3 (DC Comics 2016-2018) and New Super-Man and the Justice League of China (DC Comics, 2018) by Gene Luen Yang as sources to acquire how the character representations are created. In the third part we used cultural studies theory about culture features and cultural hybridization to examine the Chinese cultural elements in comic books.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **The timeline of the Chinese representation in the Comics**

During the 50s, representation of Chinese in comics took a focus on communism and fear of Chinese immigration. The character Yellow Claw (Plan Chu) agreed with Communist Chinese leaders to break the western democracies and conquer the United States including the rest of the world on behalf of Communist China. In fact, the Claw only pretended to serve Communist Chinese. He intended to conquer the world for himself. The communist forces smuggled him to the United States. He tried to eliminate the FBI, and his most ambitious plan was to kidnap President Eisenhower. The Claw also has unusual features, pale yellow skin colour, unlike the skin tones of other Asian as well as pointed ears. Yellow Claw shows how the fear of communism and immigration still exists in the United States and the concept of "other" for Chinese Americans. The comic shows how the villain Yellow Claw focused on dominating America and Western civilization, reflects the American fear of Communism.

During the 60s, the genre of martial arts movies was prevalent in the United States because of Bruce Lee's popularity. Many people in the entertainment industry tried to create many Bruce Lee-style martial arts movie, especially after he died in 1973. Bruce Lee became a stereotype of Asian American representation. The stereotype of Asian characters representing martial arts has shown in multiple forms of media, including comic books. One of the Chinese first characters created in 1973 was the Marvel character Shang-Chi, whose origin comes from Bruce Lee's persona. Shang-Chi was raised to become a deadly assassin by his father, the immortal crime lord Fu Manchu. He was trained extensively in martial arts. Later, he learns that his father ordered him to kill an innocent man, Shang-Chi became aware of his father's evil and faked his death after his first assignment. He then began to attack various elements of his father's criminal empire, tried to end his father's criminal activities. As consequences, his father sent several assassins to kill him. The theme of betrayal from family member leading to a quest for revenge is significant in martial



arts stories. Shang-Chi is often illustrated by referring to him as a Chinaman. Shang-Chi was viewed as being the "other". Shang-Chi with his martial arts is shown to have a mystical manner and connected to spirituality. He has a strange connection to nature and learnt different martial arts from animals. Many different creations of comics continued with martial arts genre in the 80s and the late of 1990s.

The portrayal of Chinese representation in comic books, the characters presented the sense of "otherness" also reflect in villain characters. The supervillain, The Mandarin, created by Stan Lee in 1964 is portrayed as a genius scientist and a superhumanly skilled martial artist. He is the archenemy of Iron Man. The Mandarin used technology to achieve his goals, to conquer the world and to turn the weapons and computers of the various nations against them. He can manipulate "Qi", and survive for years without food and water by living on stored "Qi". He has telepathy skill which is connected to his ten rings and can speak through the mind. He is fluent in various languages, not only native Chinese and English. Stan Lee also created a villain character, a nuclear physicist and a communist agent in China, Radioactive Man (Chen Lu) in 1963. He exposed himself to radiation and made him a living "Radioactive Man". He confronts Thor, the Avengers, Captain America, and Iron Man. Later, he was deported back to China. These characters develop more abilities than only skilled martial arts characters but with the portrayal of the characters reflecting the preference or prejudice among the Chinese from America society' perspective in that time.

Stan Lee created some supporting characters such as Wong in 1963, Doctor Strange' sidekick. He is not only known as a skilled martial artist but also a genius and master of magic. Because of some incidents, Wong allied with Dr Strange' opponent in order to battle Dr Strange. Wong and Dr Strange relationship later changed and rebuilt their old friendship. They tried to treat each other as equals, instead of master and servant. Another character, I-Ching, Diana Prince (Wonder Woman)' mentor, was created by Denny O'Neil in 1968. He combines many forms of martial arts and able to control his nervous system to decrease the pain. I-Ching has displayed exceptional capability with various weapons. He also is an excellent observer of body language, so he can predict what the opponent will do. He joined to help Batman, Superman and become a mentor for New Super-Man. These supporting characters primary function to perform a role to add depth to the protagonist in the process of their differences and transformations to become superhero journeys. The new portrayal of these characters had shown a new transition of relationships between two cultures and societies.

In 2006, Gail Simone (DC Comics) created new Chinese character outside of the martial arts genre in American comic books, Ryan Choi. Ryan Choi is not good at martial arts; his power focus on his understanding technology and science. Additionally, Ryan Choi's origin story is not the typical "fighting for revenge". He was asked to take Ryan Palmer place as professor and the college and The New Atom when Ryan Palmer disappeared. Ryan Choi is not considered as "the other", but he views American culture as being the "other" and strange. Ryan Choi is not presented as a genius child in science or math; he is a child with a natural curiosity towards science. His parents, push Ryan Choi to pursue his career only to encourage their son' interests. His background made him viewed as not the most common Asian stereotype. His Asian culture is not portraying him as a minority or "other", but merely a person trying to live within and to understand a different culture. In 2016, Gene Luen Yang created The New Super-Man and reflected a hybrid between Chinese and American culture.

When addressing female characters of Chinese superheroine representation, we may find Jubilation "Jubilee" Lee, who is created by Chris Claremont in 1989. She is the daughter of Chinese immigrants. When Jubilee' parents were murdered, she was sent to an orphanage, but she ran away. She discovered her mutant power while she was running away from the security guard because of stealing foods. X-Men, Dazzle, and Psylocke rescued her. Later, she joined them and also team up with Wolverine. Jubilee suffers from learning disability but is skilled in gymnastics. She utilized technology to assist her when she lost her superhuman powers. Similar to Ryan Choi, she is not presenting Asian stereotype, which is a mostly high achiever in academics. Another character, Aero (Lei Ling), is a Chinese superhero manhua series written by Zhou Lifen and drawn by artist Keng, and published in 2019. It is published by NetEase in collaboration with

Marvel and is translated into English by Grek Pak. Aero lives a double life as a Shanghai agent and an architect. She possesses the ability of wind manipulation and has its power since she was a child. Later, she was asked to join as a new Agent of Atlas. The creators of Aero are from mainland China who was invited to collaborate with Marvel. This collaboration should make a significant impact on Asian representation in comics, but we have not done more research on Aero' series story to present more about the work.

### **The making of "New Super-Man" and China Justice League Characters**

The members of Justice League of China include Super-Man, Wonder-Woman, Bat-Man, Dr Omen, Avery Ho, Dragonson, and Robinbot. Super-Man, Kong Kenan lost his mother in a plane accident when he was young. Therefore, he often bullies Luo Lixin, his schoolmate, because Luo Lixin is the son of Luo Longde, the owner of the airline that his mother died on it. When he was beating up Luo Lixin, a member of the Freedom Fighters, Blue Condor came to attack Luo Lixin. Kenan threw a soda can on Blue Condor and saved Luo Lixin. This scene was recorded by Laney Lan, a reporter, and make Kenan a hero. Dr Omen, the director of Ministry of Self-Reliance, saw he is suitable for the China Super-Man's project. Dr Omen decided to take him to the facility and infused him with the life force of the dead Kryptonian. After Kenan got his power, he refused to stand down, and Dr Omen sent Bat-Man and Wonder-Woman of China to deal with him. Kenan was on first mission with them, and when they completed the mission, he immediately revealed himself to the world that Kong Kenan is the New Super-Man.

The America Superman adopt Clark Kent' identity, a journalist from Metropolis. On the contrary, Kenan does not have a secret identity; he opened himself in front of national television to tell that Kong Kenan is Super-Man. We knew from the later storylines that he wants to be seen mostly by his father. His father felt obligated to fulfil his mother' life purpose to fight for Truth, Democracy and Justice, by being a member of the Freedom Fighters of China (An essential goal of collectivist is to fulfil their duties and obligations). His father does not have time to care about Kenan, making Kenan feel overlooked and neglected. By revealing he is the Super-Man to the public, he hopes that his father will see it and proud of him. The collectivist orientation of Chinese culture has been widely documented. Both within traditional and contemporary Chinese societies, the well-being and harmony of the group (e.g. the family, society and the state) have been observed to take precedence over the individual. Achieving and maintaining social order and interpersonal harmony is essential within such societies. Chinese values are based on a willingness to put one' agentic strivings aside and to foster the well-being of the broader community. Chinese parents are less physically and emotionally expressive with their children. Love is demonstrated by successfully meeting the child' needs, primarily through instrumental support and sacrifice. The Confucian doctrine also stresses that one' good intention is conveyed through actions more than words (Lau, 2009). Kenan' father did not notice when he did not come home, but he is willing to sacrifice his own life to save Kenan. Since that moment, Kenan realized that his father loves him. The feeling of neglect from his parents makes Kenan has a stronger bond with his mentor I-Ching and his teammates, Bat-Man (Wang Baixi), and Wonder-Woman (Peng Deilan). He thinks them as a family and first real friends after his mother' death. He tried to protect them with every power he has; he would not let anyone hurt them. Kenan even forces himself to entry the ghost realm to save his mentor, I-Ching. Through his superhero journey, Kenan can prove himself trustworthy and reliable leader when then he was asked to become the leader of China Justice League.

Kong Kenan was a self-centred bully who only cares for himself and often looked down to others. When Kong Kenan got a superpower, his self-concept and his identity shift in a powerful way to "someone who helps". We are familiar with superhero storylines that after a character discovers a newfound superpower, the character' task is to decide how to use it for personal gain or the greater good. Kenan' core character is decent and kind-hearted, so when he was given a superhuman ability, he opened himself to heroism and leads to subsequent helping behaviour. However, when he lost his power, he thinks that he is nobody again. Kenan lack of self-confidence is related to Chinese culture regarding self-esteem building in daily life and society. Leonora Chu, an American writer of Little Soldiers, wrote that "self-esteem" does not exist in China the way as in

America. In China, a child regard for herself is rarely as important as a stark evaluation of performance. She enrolled her young son to the Chinese public school in Shanghai and experienced the difference of both culture influence in children self-esteem. Her experience incline with some studies' conclusion that Chinese children tend to have low levels of self-esteem, which caused by the more of humility and modest in Chinese culture, a traditional authoritarian style of education, and highly competitive pressures that schools, families, and society created. (Chiu, 1992), (Chan, 2000), and (Lyu et al., 2019). Hardworking is also the perceptions that people have towards Chinese or Asian compare to American (Zhu, 2016). When Kenan has not mastered to use Qi to active his power, we can see him leave the teammates who were playing video games to go alone and meditate.

Gene Luen Yang, as a comic writer with Chinese ethnic background, has pictured how the Chinese culture as a collective society shape the personality of the character of Kong Kenan. Interestingly, because he is also American, the characters that he creates not stereotyping only one culture, but alsowe also his identity. He did not present a "quite" Chinese in public. The openness is more American than Chinese people behave in public. Chinese people are more reserved or traditional in terms of social life. We also viewed the changes of perspective that Asian or Chinese have high achievement in academics or other subjects. On the contrary, Kong Kenan is not only present as an ordinary teenager, but also called "trouble" and "dummy" by his teammates. Another difference from American Superman whose suits with blue costume and red cape, Kenan suit is a red and black cape. The difference also symbolizes the difference of the country they represent.

The Bat-Man character, Wang Baixi, with his Batsuit, at some points, has similarity traits as American Batman. He has no superhuman powers. He relies on scientific knowledge and detective skills. He modifies the technologies for his advantage, and he can operate various machines and high-tech vehicles such as Batmobile or Batplane. Wang Baixi showed his detective skill when he investigated the secret place of the Ministry of Self-Reliance and found Kenan' father inside a chamber. The difference of Chinese Batman, he did not present as a wealthy man as his primary image. His central characterization is not a vigilante; he is not willing to break the law. He was chosen from Bat Academy to join Ministry of Self-Reliance as a member of China Justice League. Therefore, when China Justice League encountered with Ahn Kwang-Jo (Dragonson), Peng Deilan could communicate with him through telepathy and gave him her word to protect him. Wang Baixi knew that secret police of Korean Government' Workers Party were looking for Ahn Kwang-Jo. He reported Ahn Kwang-Jo whereabouts to the authority. He considered the relationships of two countries between China and North Korea. Though he has has been trained with various fighting skills, however, he does not have an athletic body like Bruce Wayne; Kong Kenan calls Wang Baixi "tubby".

In the early years of the portrayal of American Batman in 1940, Robin, Batman's junior counterpart was introduced. In the storyline of Chinese Bat-Man, Robin character changed into a robot, Robinbot. The using Robinbot to replace Robin character reflects the society and global' life towards Artificial Intelligence. In 2017, the State Council of People' Republic of China published the Artificial Intelligence Development Plan. This strategy is part of bigger national "Made in China 2025" plan and also be linked to new (digital) Silk Road. Under A.I. Industry and the government have collaborated on a plan to make China the world' primary A.I. innovation centre by 2030, and it is already making serious progress toward the goal. The China government is working closely with established digital companies such as Baidu, Alibaba and Tencent. It gives an incredible advantage this three most prominent companies—superpowers. They are known as BAT, and they are all part of that well-capitalized, highly organized A.I. plan (*China Is Leading in Artificial Intelligence--and American Businesses Should Take Note | Inc.Com*, n.d.)(*China – The First Artificial Intelligence Superpower*, n.d.).

Another member of China Justice League is Wonder-Woman (Peng Deilan), and The Flash (Avery Ho), the more salient character in the storyline. Peng Deilan is a green snake who cultivated her Qi becomes human and later imprisoned for centuries until Doctor Omen freed her and gave her name Peng Deilan. The green snake origin story came from the Chinese legend as the Legend of White Snake. The legend begins with a white snake fell in love with a human, Xu



Xian. They got married and opened a drugstore for living and to save people who were in need. Unexpectedly, Monk Fa Hai found out that Xu Xian lives with a snake spirit. He attempted to break them up. He took Xu Xian and locked him in a temple, causing the white snake and her friend green snake should fight him for him to release Xu Xian. However, during the pregnancy weaken the white snake from Fa Hai's spells. She was suppressed under Lei Feng Pagoda beside the West Lake. Afterwards, green snake fled and practised her magic until finally she defeated the Monk Fa Hai, force him to fall into the stomach of a crab and save the white snake from uniting with her husband. In the comic, green snake defeated Fa Hai and threw him to the ocean, but Fa Hai is already cast a spell on her, transforming her into a stone.

Peng Deilan has magic lasso same as American Wonder Woman, but she also equipped with *Guandao* (a type of Chinese pole weapon, which uses in combat or martial arts, and according to Chinese legend, the *Guandao* was invented by the famous general Guan Yu during the 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D.). Using *Guandao* offers her far greater reach than a standard sword, keeping enemies at a distance. Her lasso is not only an enchanted weapon given for her but also is an extension of her skin, able to be manipulated like any other part of her body. Peng Deilan has telepathic communication skill; this is similar to American Wonder Woman. Interestingly because Peng Deilan is a snake, while she in her snake form, she was unable to perform human speech and instead communicated telepathically. It is why she can communicate with Ahn Kwang-Jo while he was transforming into Dragonson. Besides, she has green eyes and noted by her green costume as her transformation of the green snake.

Avery Ho or the flash of China first appearance was in The Flash series in September 2016. During the Speed Force Storm of Central City, she was struck by lightning and able to become like The Flash. The Flash from STAR Labs visited her and taught her how to control her vibrations. Barry Allen or The Flash becomes her mentor. Most of her power similar as The Flash or other speedster. However, because her descent is Chinese who emigrated to America, she speaks Chinese and English fluently. Her character portrays Chinese American's perspective about China or as American overlooked in China. She mentioned a few times that China is a "mess" or "Are things always so crazy in China?" that is why her parents left. It pictures that Avery Ho lacked connections to her origin ethnicity, she has feelings of not belonging to China though she was comfortable became friends with her teammates.

The comics portray an excellent relationship between China and America. When China Justice League visited America, they met Superman, Batman, and Wonder Woman. Kong Kenan and Wang Baixi went to America and met up with America Justice League for the first time. They worked together and helped each other. Wonder woman and Peng Deilan knew each other. Wonder Woman even said she was a good friend with the white snake when they crossed to the human realm.

### **Chinese elements reflect in the comics, representation of Chinese culture and shaping the cultural hybridization**

GeneLuen Yang is an American cartoonist. His parents are from Taiwan and Hongkong, and both emigrated to the United States. When he spoke in Graphic Novel Speaker Series, he said that his parents always told him stories during his childhood, and they reinforced him with Asian culture. His ethnicity background brought a significant influence on his works. In the New Super-Man series, elements representing Chinese culture are exquisitely presented from settings, costume, plot, theme, and also characters. The story place in Shanghai and describes the Pudong Area, Huangpu River, Oriental Pearl Tower, Shanghai Tower (the tallest building in China and second tallest in the world). Shanghai is a global centre for finance, technology, innovation, and transportation. The world described Shanghai as the "showpiece" of the booming economy of China, and one of the fastest-developing cities in the world. By choosing Shanghai as the background place of the story, the writer intended to share and introduce more about the city, the people and the community. It serves to activate the readers' senses and some insight about one of the wealthiest cities in China. Shanghai is a modern city that the world would able to connect easily, and it also gives the Chinese readers a sense of belonging and familiar with the environment. The writer also tries to show the reader another cultural heritage in China such as The Great Wall,



Terracotta warriors, and Chengdu Panda Base when Kenan and Avery Ho were using super-speed to compete in order to prove who is the fastest person in China.

Globalization of local products and the localization of global products is an established story model to make the products more appealing to different viewer groups and become a new phenomenon in the global world community culture. Therefore, hybridization has become part of an ongoing trend in cultural production, with the globalization of the culture industry. In New Super-Man, the Chinese cultural elements were well-blended and well-present in the storyline. First, it showed in the making of the characters. It showed how Kong Kenan, a 17 years old teenager, attain a superhuman power and become China Super-Man. Because he was infused with Kryptonian life force, he has the same power as Superman; he has superhuman speed, superhuman speed, superhuman hearing, superhuman strength, super-breath, X-Rays, and heat vision. The difference is that Kenan's powers are organized using the Bagua—the eight trigrams used in Daoism to represent fundamental principles of reality, seen as a range of interrelated concepts. These trigrams are also representing Yin and Yang philosophy. Each of Kenan's power is related to different trigram. He can activate each power by focusing his Qi into each part of his body. Daoism asserts that all life forces are directed toward harmony and balance since this is their inner nature. Daoism is also a direct to human self-exploration, self-development, transformation, which make it feasible to have a connection with both their true nature and the universe. The practices help to understand how to achieve the state of unity, harmony, and balance with the universe (Danilova, 2014). Kenan was taught by master I-Ching to understand about balance if he wanted to his power to be stable and able to be used simultaneously. With the embodiment of Yin Yang principles, Kenan can resist Kryptonite with his Yang power boost, and he becomes a wraith like-being who can phase through matter and energy with his Yin ghosting abilities. If Kenan loses focus or emotionally unstable, his abilities tend to fluctuate, but later by synchronizing with a mystical artefact, The Red Jade Dragon, he was finally able to overcome his limitations. Dragon in Chinese culture represents prosperity and good luck, as well as a rain deity that fosters harmony. When Kenan succeeds to master his power, the S symbol in his chest blend with the Taiji symbol become a new symbol. The symbol of Taiji, Yang is denoted by white and Yin by black so that within the black, there is always some white, and within the white, there is always some black (Yang, 2010).

America Wonder Woman has been around for 76 years; she is the most iconic superhero that has ever created. By adapting Wonder Woman's name, Peng Deilan shares intellectual, powers and abilities of the origin Wonder Women, Diana Prince. Moreover, Peng Deilan is created to be a leader; the ministry trusted her to lead before Kenan become the leader of China Justice League; she was handed over to lead powerful metahuman under her command. Peng Deilan has a lasso, but hers is pink colour, she also equipped with a spear and a shield but different compared with Diana Prince's Greek-inspired weapons. In order to animate a Chinese representation story in comic books that was only American Superman or Batman who were familiar to the rest of the world, the writer ingeniously involved at least two cultural iconography into the storyline. The storyline about Wonder-Woman (Peng Deilan)' background is from the Legend of White Snake and Buddhism concept of the world. The world divided into six realms, the realms of Gods, Demigods, Animal, Humans, Ghosts, and Hell. The only way to cross to another realm is to reborn through reincarnation. If any creatures crossed over, it would defy the laws of order and balance. Years before, the green snake and her friend white snake crossed the animal realm and entered the human realm. They had to face their enemy, the turtle who also cultivated his Qi and became a Monk Fa Hai. When green snake defeated Fa Hai, she threw Fa Hai into the ocean. Now they found Fa Hai and the league have to face mutated Fa Hai. Once again become a challenge for Peng Deilan to overcome her painful past. In the battle, Fa Hai transformed back to a giant turtle after Peng Deilan attacked him, but it caused Peng Deilan transforming to her snake form. She still in the shape of a snake until Dr Omen find a cure for her. When the team have to fight the Emperor Super-Man, Peng Deilan though already regained her human form, her legs still in snake form.

The second is the storyline also adapted from history and Chinese customs. Ancient China in dynasty period, China was ruled by emperors. It ended after the westerners came to conquer China. In the comics, the emperor Superman was a project that government to make a superman

from China. He was under the influence of All-Yang to conquer China. The emperor Superman wanted to reclaim what westerners took from China centuries ago. He thinks that westerners conquer China more insidiously. "They seduce us into dressing and thinking and acting like them, into adopting their way of life! China' so-called leadership has allowed them to rob us of our strength!". Anti-western sentiment in China includes the collective memory of period Chinese history beginning with the First and Second Opium Wars (the year of 1840 and 1856-1860) when Qing dynasty ruled China. Continue after the Second World War, Chinese was humiliated when a western coalition invaded the country. This history is known as the "century of humiliation". The persistent feeling of insecurity today is used by China' leadership and by its people to frame both China' current national concerns and its future national aspirations. China is often pictured as having suffered three kinds of loss during the Century of Humiliation: a loss of territory; a loss of control over its internal and external environment; and a loss of international standing and dignity (Kaufman, n.d.).

Chinese traditional custom regarding dead people and their ghosts also flavoured the storyline. Kenan accidentally entered the ghost realm, opened the gate and let the hungry ghost came out. The ghosts were attacking people, Kenan and the team have to fight the ghosts and tried to close the gate. The hungry ghost festival is a Chinese festival in the seventh month of the Chinese lunar calendar. The opening of the hell marks the first day of Hungry Ghost month until the last day of the seventh lunar month and the gates of hell are closed up again. During these days, people are gathering to have various ceremonies.

Besides the layout of the characterization, the historical background, the storyline, other elements that we found in the comics are emblazoned Chinese symbolism on each member of the China Justice League' costume and the performance of Mandarin words in the comics. Wang Baixi with his Bat sign, Peng Deilan with her WW sign, and Avery Ho with her flash sign in yellow across their chest and enclosed in an octagon. The octagon is a Bagua symbol or eight trigrams. This symbol also applied to China Green Lanterns' chest symbol and Kong Kenan with his S sign blended with the Taiji symbol. Through the application of Chinese symbol mixed with the origin of Batman, Superman, Wonder Woman, and The Flash' signs displayed a hybrid of both cultures. The Chinese characters were shown not only because the background of the story takes place in China such as shops, research centre, restaurant' name board are in Chinese, but the writer gives the translation on purpose. For example, the name of six realms, it is written both in Chinese and English. Chinese characters also appear when the ghosts from ghosts realm came to the human realm, the ghosts said "e"(饿) it means hungry. Moreover, when master I-Ching gave guidance for him to find purpose, Kenan found the word "lingdao" (领导) it means to lead or leader.

## CONCLUSION

From the timeline of Chinese representation in comic books, we could see the storyline, the making of the character changes in different period of times, the changes from the fear of communism, the martial arts genre when Chinese character as outsider or "others" to Chinese as part of the ethnicity of the global culture. From the making of New Super-man and China Justice League, it shows that though these characters were created under the basis of origin Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman, The Flash' backgrounds, with the additional Chinese flavours and cultural elements in it, it gives new vibration to the comic world characters. The characters in the comics are not the reflections of stereotypical Chinese in most of the storyline from the prior periods but new characteristic, new distinctions and new similarities with the global.

Gene Luen Yang as a writer of New Super-Man, with his Chinese background, not only tend to promote and spread Chinese culture but also show the world that both west and east culture has a very high tolerance and ability to merge. The application of Chinese elements in comics presents a new nuance and a trend of diversity in a global society. The creativity of the writer is able to transform a Chinese history, Chinese legend, Chinese customs into a world known classical comic characters bring the uniqueness of a hybrid cultural product. Hence, the hybridization in the comics brings the world community to the closer exchange of global culture.

The New Super-Man represents Gene Luen Yang conception about Chinese culture and his vision of the comic world. With upbringing the cultural elements in the comics, it will attract western readers to have more interest in Chinese culture, and for the Chinese readers, it gives a sense of belongings especially those who are Chinese American generations or Chinese ethnicity around the world.

The representation of Chinese culture, Chinese characters in the comic books those that do presence and have often played essential roles in comics book, either as principal or minor characters are still not examined through this study. We may examine the portrayal of female characters further; at the gender and hybridization between two cultures that we did not examine in this study. Our study only focused on the representation of Chinese culture in New-Superman series.

## REFERENCES

- Beltrán, M. (2018, June 22). *Representation*. The Craft of Criticism; Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315879970-9>
- Bhabha, H. K. (2012). *The Location of Culture*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203820551>
- Chan, Y. M. (2000). Self-esteem: A cross-cultural comparison of British-Chinese, White British and Hong Kong Chinese children. *Educational Psychology*, 20(1), 59–74. <https://doi.org/10.1080/014434100110380>
- China – *The First Artificial Intelligence Superpower*. (n.d.). Retrieved 22 September 2020, from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/cognitiveworld/2020/01/14/china-artificial-intelligence-superpower/#4ee0f4252f05>
- China Is Leading in Artificial Intelligence—And American Businesses Should Take Note | Inc.com. (n.d.). Retrieved 21 September 2020, from <https://www.inc.com/magazine/201809/amy-webb/china-artificial-intelligence.html>
- Chiu, L.-H. (1992). Self-esteem in American and Chinese (Taiwanese) children. *Current Psychology*, 11(4), 309–313. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02686788>
- Cochran, D. L. (2017). *Canvases of Representation: Addressing the Cultural Politics of Black Male Superhero Identity in Graphic Narratives* [PhD, Illinois State University]. <https://doi.org/10.30707/ETD2017.Cochran.D>
- Curtis, N., & Cardo, V. (2018). Superheroes and third-wave feminism. *Feminist Media Studies*, 18(3), 381–396. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2017.1351387>
- Danilova, T. (2014). Born out of Nothingness: A Few Words on Taoism. *Research Revolution. International Journal of Social Science & Management*, III, 1–6.
- Facciani, M., Warren, P., & Vendemia, J. (2016). A content-analysis of race, class, and gender in American comic books. *Race, Gender, & Class*, 22, 212–226.
- Karunakaran, S. (2017). *Muslimahs in Comics and Graphic Novels: History and Representation*.
- Kaufman, A. A. (n.d.). The “Century of Humiliation,” Then and Now: Chinese Perceptions of the International Order. *Pacific Focus*, 25(1), 1–33.
- Lau, C. (2009). ‘The New Generation: Chinese Childhoods’.
- Lavigne, C. (2015). ‘I’m Batman’ (and You Can Be Too): Gender and Constrictive Play in the Arkham Game Series. *Cinema Journal*, 55(1), 133–141. <https://doi.org/10.1353/cj.2015.0069>
- Levin, J., McLaren, P., & Seale, S. (2019). Race, Identity and Superheroes. *The International Journal of Critical Media Literacy*, 1, 7–25. <https://doi.org/10.1163/25900110-00101001>
- Lyu, H., Du, G., & Rios, K. (2019). The Relationship Between Future Time Perspective and Self-Esteem: A Cross-Cultural Study of Chinese and American College Students. *Front. Psychol.* <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.01518>
- Marshall, L. (2019). Representations of Women and Minorities Groups in Comics. *Master’s Theses*. [https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/etd\\_theses/5071](https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/etd_theses/5071)
- Miettinen, M. (2011). *Superhero Comics and the Popular Geopolitics of American Identity*. <https://trepo.tuni.fi/handle/10024/76552>

- Peitz, W., & Peitz, W. W. (2013). *Captain America: The Epitome of American Values and Identity*. Peitz 2.  
<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/citations;jsessionid=C4A7DBDC39FA53D0E3E7B649DF1DFABB?doi=10.1.1.671.1438>
- Sawyer, E. A. (n.d.). *POSTFEMINISM IN FEMALE TEAM SUPERHERO COMIC BOOKS*. 140.
- Vester, Katharina. (n.d.). "Reduce Your Appearance Instantly!" Representations of the Female Body in the Comic Books for Women and Girls | *fiar*. *Fiar*, 10.2 2017. Retrieved 12 September 2020, from <http://interamerica.de/current-issue/vester/>
- Wang, G., & Yeh, E. Y. (2005). Globalization and hybridization in cultural products: The cases of Mulan and Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 8(2), 175–193. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1367877905052416>
- Woodall, L. A. (2010). *The secret identity of race: Exploring ethnic and racial portrayals in superhero comic books*. /paper/The-secret-identity-of-race%3A-Exploring-ethnic-and-Woodall/6ea88a93ca3fd7def77741806fe87d3c41e7e167
- Yang, C.-D. (2010). A Scientific Realization and Verification of Yin-Yang Theory: Complex-Valued Mechanics. *International Journal of Nonlinear Sciences and Numerical Simulation*, 11, 135–156. <https://doi.org/10.1515/IJNSNS.2010.11.2.135>
- Zhu, L. (2016). *A comparative look at Chinese and American stereotypes: A focus group study*. 2016.
- Covich, A.-M. R. (2012). *Alter/Ego: Superhero Comic Book Readers, Gender and Identities*. <https://doi.org/10.26021/4511>
- Kauranen, R. (2012). Mervi Miettinen's Truth, Justice, and the American Way? The Popular Geopolitics of American Identity in Contemporary Superhero Comics. *American Studies in Scandinavia*, 44, 145–150. <https://doi.org/10.22439/asca.v44i2.4923>



# The Language of Love: Crafting Care in “A Folded Wish”

Swagata Sinha Roy, Kavitha Subaramaniam

Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Malaysia

[swagata@utar.edu.my](mailto:swagata@utar.edu.my), [kavitha@utar.edu.my](mailto:kavitha@utar.edu.my)

## ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to showcase the feelings of love and care despite the absence of the spoken word or dialogue as depicted in the very recent animated short film “A Folded Wish”, released by Artmoeba Productions. It was also screened at the Asian Summer Film Festival which was held from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> July this year. Although it is about a fatal illness, given the pandemic this year this film is not about Covid-19. In fact, this animation was worked on in the beginning of 2019, with the idea of looking at the effects of tuberculosis on the Japanese citizenry in post-World War II. The plot revolves around a set of twins who try to run the race of time to craft one thousand paper cranes as they believe that this can grant them the wish of being saved from their illness. The thrust of this study is to examine how cultural beliefs can be portrayed through simple visuals and get the message(s) across. Globally, the Japanese have given to the world the creative art of origami or paper crafting which is well depicted here. Further, illness is commonplace and serves as a unifying force to bridge diverse nationalities as every viewer can identify with the heartache and pain faced by the characters in the story. The authors will delve into an analysis of the visual text in the perspective of familial interactions.

**Keywords:** A Folded Wish, Origami, Twins

## INTRODUCTION

The authors, in keeping with the theme and sub-themes of this conference, notably ‘culture’ which is further sub-themed as ‘identity’, decided to look at culture and family and coming across this animated film was indeed timely as it got the research for this paper rolling. Furthermore, there is a kind of ‘heroism’ seen in how a twin wants the well-being of her sick sibling and hurries to craft a certain number of paper cranes as the belief is that such an act can help remedy a loved one’s illness.

“A Folded Wish” is an eight-minute short film created by 19 graduating students who majored in the Digital Animation and Illustration courses in The One Academy of Communication Design here in Malaysia. (CGI, 2020). When the acronym CGI is used for an animated film, it basically means it is a 3D (three dimensional) film, or “Computer-generated imagery (CGI) is the application of computer graphics to create or contribute to images in art, printed media, video games, films, television programs, shorts, commercials, videos, and simulators” (Wikipedia, 2020).

Working on this paper was made easier as the details of how the images were done are found in the following site (Chyen, 2020) where the students showed how the sketches came about for each scene, including the backdrop, furniture and all else. This film can be viewed on the YouTube channel. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PORCFqcu3Jc>)

What was also interesting is that since 2020 is seeing the challenges of a global pandemic, this story happens to be about illness and eventual death. It is however not in any way related to the Covid-19 situation. The inspiration for this story came from an ancient Japanese legend or the Senbazuru where it is believed that folding one thousand paper cranes can help someone who is gravely ill to recover from the malady (Kōjō, 2002; Long & Crocker, 2016). According to the website, this story is set in post World War II in Japan (Aragón & Fernández, n.d.), which saw the rise and devastation of the ‘incurable’ tuberculosis, which forced many who suffered from it to remain at home until their death, this historical fact being the ‘underlying background’ for the film (Chyen, 2020).

The authors were interested in how the cultural beliefs are put across and in turn how this legendary narrative is incorporated in the Japanese society. When one refers to culture, as is one of the sub-themes of this conference, there is always a reference to society, and in this paper what is considered is the cultural identity as well as the factors influencing family dynamics that is to say how a certain family functions within a certain nation.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The animation *A Folded Wish* basically looks at love and support of family members hence the researchers are looking at a theoretical framework revolving around familial concepts. The functionalist perspective (Thio, 2007) can be seen from the basis of the emotional security the members in this particular story through the way the members comfort and reassure one another. There are three characters in all, a grandmother and a set of twins who live under the same roof. Nothing is overtly known or about the parents, except from the framed picture on the wall, of the parents (the father apparently a 'uniformed' personnel) leading the researchers to also consider the symbolic interactionist view, wherein interaction between the twins and among the three family members show a lot of inter dependence, love and support. It is also not obvious to the audience whether the grandparent is maternal or paternal. These concepts are applied as familial relationships are looked at very closely especially as the authors are studying this in the 'Asian' context as the story is about a Japanese household. Such familial relationships, even if sometimes dysfunctional in certain cases can be gauged from novels, write-ups as well as social interactions, especially so in many Asian based narratives.

The elders in Asian societies are looked upon as guardians of the younger family members as well as custodians of the culture. Here, although the grandmother appears briefly her encompassing love can be felt and her cultural values are supposed as being passed down to the younger generation. The siblings adore each other and it is heartbreaking to see one losing a much loved sibling.

## **METHOD**

The researchers are considering the qualitative approach as viable for this particular study. This is not a typical field work, nor a participant observation but a textual analysis of a particular narrative, in this case, an analysis of the animated short film *A Folded Wish*. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PORCFqcu3Jc>)

This kind of an analysis looks at understanding symbols, movements and pictures found in the story and delve into how life is experienced. Messages can be visual and these messages engender understanding of what the characters feel and mean. One of the major symbols here is the folded cranes as that alone is not just a cultural signifier but a national tradition. The story is further elaborated in the following sections in the discussion, wherein the timeframe, emotions, illness and family bonds are included.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **If Wishes Were Cranes-Art, Beliefs and Myth**

In '*A Folded Wish*' the audience is introduced to the Japanese art of origami, which is now a cultural symbol. To add to that is the crane symbol. The art of origami or paper folding (from 'oru' meaning folding and 'kami' refers to paper) goes back to the 8<sup>th</sup> century when creases were found when paper was used to fold during gift wrapping. The basic idea of origami is the use of geometric folds and creases. Only one piece of paper is used without the need to use scissors or glue.

In 1797 the '*Hidden Senbazuru Orikata*' (Secret to Folding One thousand Cranes) was published and it is considered the oldest book about origami (Mitchell, n. d.).

The word '*Senbazuru*' actually denotes 1,000 cranes and refers to the crane in origami. The mythological *tsuru* or crane is believed to be the bird of happiness, but what gets more mystifying is that this crane is believed to live for a thousand years. Although still considered a challenge to

complete one thousand origami cranes, many still go for it as it is said to be rewarded with a wish (Kara & Teres, 2012). It also shows the concern one has for the sick person towards whom a wellness wish is directed. The ailing person may hang the cranes in the room. A thousand- crane origami can also be presented to a bride by her father for one thousand years of happiness for the newlyweds.

How did this *Senbazuru* come to be known by audiences outside Japan? Actually it came to be popularized in the sad story of a young girl named Sasaki Sadako. This story is told in many versions; however, the basic premise is that a two-year old Sadako, having been exposed to high levels of radiation during the bombing in Hiroshima went on to contract leukemia a few years later. Having heard the legend of the *senbazuru*, she started to fold paper cranes, in the hope of recovering from her illness. Sadako sadly could not survive and it is told that her friends completed the making of the cranes for her.

"Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes" by Canadian writer Eleanor Coerr, based on the true story of Sadako was written in 1977.

Sadako's story has been made into a film as well. "Senba-zuru" or "Sadako Story", as it is known internationally was released in 1989 directed by Seijirô Kôyama

Another reference can be made to 'Senbazuru' (Thousand Cranes) which is a 1952 novel by Japanese author Kawabata Yasunari, set during the Second World War that speaks of love, grief and survival during the times of war. It is indeed noteworthy that *Senbazuru* has become a major part of the literature in Japan (Brazil, 2020).

Given the above details, the story in *A Folded Wish* reflect this belief and shows the pair of twins in the animation desperately crafting paper cranes in order to ensure the longevity of one another. There are a few frames that focus on the making of the origami cranes, symbolizing again and again the importance of cultural and national beliefs in Japanese society.

### **Ties That Bind**

On the first viewing of the short animated film *A Folded Wish*, the authors were touched by the non-verbal narrative. It was found that gestures, movements, facial expressions and eye contact spoke volumes. The first 'frame' shows one of the twins working on folding a paper crane. As the frames move, there is the image of one twin in blue clothes and another in pink clothes, especially distinguishable because of the pink ribbon her hair is tied with. According to the creators of the animation, the elder twin Chiharu (in pink) is cheerful, vivacious and tries to conceal the gravity of her illness from the younger Hanako (in blue); the younger twin is the quiet, timid twin who had contracted the illness first. This can be seen in the way Obachan or the grandmother attends to Hanako, feeding her and taking care of her.

The twins are shown in happy moments, playing with each other and with toys. Even if there are no dialogues, there are the sounds of chatter, giggles and laughter. The more depressing sounds are of the twins coughing and the wailing cry of Hanako when her paper crane tears as Chiharu succumbs to the illness.

The animation shows a few instances of the three family members together at a meal and also when Hanako in the beginning and later, the older twin are attended to by the grandmother when they are ill. When Chiharu is very ill, Obachan attends to her and from the movements she makes especially across the transparent screen, the audience can gauge the seriousness of the twin's condition.

Hanako meanwhile realizes that she still had to complete many more paper cranes and desperately tries folding them while looking at the screen where Obachan nurses her sister and when her paper crane tears, the heartbreaking wail that breaks out from Hanako, the pain and regret that she could not save her sister in time is so poignantly shown.

What is even more heart-breaking is when Hanako discovers in the play crate all the folded cranes that her sister stayed up to make as a wish for Hanako's recovery. What can be seen in the actions of Obachan in caring for the ill twins and in how both siblings wish for each other's well-being is the connection the three have as a family. Blood ties definitely but beyond that is the emotional binding shared.

## CONCLUSION

Due to time restrictions, the authors could not go into the various genres (novel and films) showcasing the story of Sadako and other related stories. However, from the animation film 'A Folded Wish' one could actually look at the way the Japanese society functions, the beliefs, customs and traditions pursued by them and the way family ties work. In yet another account of the sadako story called *The Complete Story of Sadako Sasaki and the Thousand Paper Cranes* (2020), the twenty-one chapters speak of Sadako's birth to her passing in a subtle way reflected in *A Folded Wish* in a different context. Just as she passed on at a very young age, the twins are also shown to be very young and the other main feature is the origami cranes that are a symbol of hope and encouragement.

The authors tried to study how the story, in non-verbal expressions spoke of the magnanimity of family love and support as well as the faith one needed to have in order to believe in hope. Although the story ends in death and despair, the end symbol of the two folded paper cranes signify that the twins are finally supposedly together (often as a matter of interpretation of the viewer) even if it is in the afterlife, as one may be lead to interpret the last image of the two origami cranes placed at the porch of the house.

The research into this paper has opened up huge possibilities of looking into many other cultural beliefs not only in Japan but the world over. And short animated films have been found to be a most amazing medium to convey such stories.

The authors would like to end this paper with some words (translated) from Sadako Sasaki which have resonated with the situation seen in *A Folded Wish*.

Do you know that the wind feels good?

Do you know that the air is delicious?

To walk without worry

To sleep without care.

To eat without concern.

So many take for granted these simple pleasures.

Do you? I hope you do not.

Be thankful for these things.

I want to tell you, they are wonderful.

(DiCicco and Sasaki, 2020: vii)

On that note, if this is not heroism, what is?

## REFERENCES

- Aragón, A. G. & Fernández, J. G. (n.d.). *Thousand cranes. Representation of nuclear impacts on the life and death of Japanese people*, pp. 41-50.
- Brazil, M. (2020). Japanese culture: Senbazuru one thousand cranes. Retrieved from <https://www.japanvisitor.com/japan-house-home/senbazuru-one-thousand-cranes>.
- CGI Animated Short Film (2020). *A folded wish*. Artmoeba Productions: The One Academy.
- Chyen (2020). *Rookie awards 2020*. Retrieved from <https://www.therookies.co/entries/4852>.
- DiCicco, S. & Sasaki, M. (2020). *The complete story of Sadako Sasaki and the thousand paper cranes*. North Clarendon: Tuttle Publishing.
- Kara, M. & Teres, E. (2012). The crane as a symbol of fidelity in Turkish and Japanese cultures. *Millî Folklor* 24 (95), pp. 194-201. Retrieved from <http://www.milifolklor.com>.
- Kōjō, T. (2002). *The Japanese crane – Symbol of good luck*. ProQuest Information and Learning Company.
- Long, B. B. & Crocker, D. A. (2016). The good luck paper crane: Paper folding and mathematics activities. *OAME/AOEM Gazette*, pp. 37.
- Mitchell, D. (n. d.). Origami heaven: A paper folding paradise. Retrieved from <http://www.origamiheaven.com/senbazuruorikata.htm>.
- Thio, A. (2009). *Sociology: A brief introduction* (7th ed.). Boston: Pearson.



Wikipedia (2020). Retrieved from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computergenerated\\_imagery#:~:text=Computer%2Dgenerated%20imagery%20\(CGI\)%20is%20the%20application%20of%20computer,commercials%2C%20videos%2C%20and%20simulators.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computergenerated_imagery#:~:text=Computer%2Dgenerated%20imagery%20(CGI)%20is%20the%20application%20of%20computer,commercials%2C%20videos%2C%20and%20simulators.)).

# Superheroes in The Development of Indonesian Prurilingualism Culture on Industry 4.0

**Tri Asiati, Riski Utami, Monika Herliana**

tri.asiati@unsoed.ac.id, rizki.utami@unsoed.ac.id, monika.herliana@unsoed.ac.id Faculty  
of Humanities  
Universitas Jenderal Soedirman

## ABSTRACT

There are inspirational values, struggle, courage, and toughness in the modern superhero as a meritorious figure in the development of prurilingualism culture on industry 4.0 likely the fundamental role of a foreign language and cultural institution when they must implant their languages in Indonesia. In this case, their roles are not only implantation of language competence, but also all the aspects contained such as: para-linguistic behavior: (i) body language, (ii) onomatopoeic, (iii) prosody, and para-textual behavior: (i) illustration and (ii) typography. Of course, in this term, superheroes are not only as someone who bravely to struggle the language and culture life but also their particular institution. This is the evident from their efforts to ensure the continuity of their language likely in global language competition that is happening in Indonesia suggested by UNESCO to make foreign language as one of the keys to the younger generation facing the industrial world. Based on this study, the problem raised in this research is how the foreign language and culture institution strategy become a super-patriot institution on prurilingualism culture in Indonesia across the phenomenon of language confrontation. Other than that, how they can realise the prurilingualism culture in their ways is to promote their particular language and culture to Indonesian people. In this study, we use qualitative method in order to declare and analyze this aspects.

**Key words:** Development, Industry 4.0, Institution, Prurilingualism, Superhero

## INTRODUCTION

When we were children, we were inspired by accounts of leaders, caped and or masked superhero's and brave men or women who did amazing things to transform themselves, us, and the world. We looked up to those who made a metamorphosis in our lives while at the same time they overcame their own personal struggle to achieve their goals. We regard their nerve and commitment in high esteem and we aim to be as courageous and focused to their achievement they set out to do. And then, Keindra (2020)<sup>10</sup> said that heroism isn't about accomplished only, it's the influence that our hero's achievement has on us, and what we can ascertain from the battle and adversity they've endured. So, heroes as a person who inspires us most times its everyday people who've done extraordinary things in their creativity or innovation which have diverse characteristics and qualities that make them heroes, because we may not see someone as a hero, doesn't mean that person isn't a hero to someone else<sup>11</sup>.

If all this time we know that heroes are human characters, now days we can think that some institution can also be assumed to be hero because they are part of civilization which contains cultural development. This institution usually is presented to people about the new ideas and it originated by their cultures likely in phenomenon of Indonesian prurilingualism culture. People are connected to many cultures and many languages by the existence of language and cultural institution with their multiple roles to rise the quality of communication competences based

<sup>10</sup> Cherry, Keindra (May 14, 2020). The Characteristic Of a Hero. In very well-mind. <https://www.verywellmind.com/characteristics-of-heroism-2795943>.

on cross-cultural understanding, para-textual skill and paralinguistic skill. These three things refer to individual or institutional capacity to use more than one language in social communication whatever their command of those languages. So, it can be concluded that in cultural and language dynamism, foreign language and culture institution becomes superheroes when our world enters the globalization on industry 4.0.

Based on the term of plurilingualism as a result of latest global culture, language is assumed to be a cultural capital because of economic globalization trends and internationalization. They made it inevitable for all peoples in the world to speak in language, especially in foreign language to be able to understand global world. In this context, foreign language act as world's connection instruments to explore different parts of the world, knows about diverse cultures, places, lifestyle, and also the local language<sup>12</sup>. Another reason, it can enhance the cognitive, analytical abilities, and involves a lot of mental exercise. Therefore, all the benefits encourage foreign languages to compete which can be equated with international political struggles. Each country competes to show their powers by the development of their languages and culture institution because in this notion it related to "cultural capital"<sup>13</sup> which Pierre Bourdieu has explained. Cultural Capital is not an economic term because it involves a broad range of linguistic abilities as well as orientations which are present in the family and nation-state. In the last case, it may exist in an institutionalized form (such educational qualifications) or form of cultural artifact. Besides, language is also a form of cultural and linguistic capital can be defined as "fluency in, and comfort with, a high-status, world-wide language which is used by groups who possess economic, social, cultural, and political power and status in local and global society."<sup>14</sup> This implies that individuals and group's speakers global or majority languages have considerable advantages over their counterparts whose mother tongues are ranked lower in the social scale. Many benefits accrue to those speaking a major language such as prestige, honor and educational credentials speaking the global language becomes a form of capital or investment which can consolidate or enhance one's credibility in the non-material sector. Moreover, privilege and prestige can be transmitted inter-generation through forms of cultural capital.<sup>15</sup>

If the foreign language and culture institution are superheroes in the global civilization according to their roles, they should a popular position compared to another, but unfortunately in Indonesia, they are still exclusive because our society think about these affiliation considered as capitalism agent. Another role, they also contribute to our civilization through the educational system by their support. Then, we want to describe and analyze the ideal role of language and cultural institution in Indonesia as civilization *avant-garde* where they are in front line of the global cultural changes likely in plurilingualism culture on industry 4.0.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this decade, language has various nomenclatures starting from the word language itself until the terminology likely mother tongue, foreign, second language, and etc. As in the *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe*, plurilingualism is one's ways to beginning of life for all peoples in the global world, not only for European citizenship. This term may give rise

2 Dastoli, Paul (January 27, 2016) *The Importance of Learning Foreign Languages in today's World* . In <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/importance-learning-foreign-languages-todays-world-paul-d-astoli> , accessed June 31, 2020.

3 Bourdieu, Pierre (1991) *Language and Symbolic Power*. In [https://monoskop.org/images/4/43/Bourdieu\\_Pierre\\_Language\\_and\\_Symbolic\\_Power\\_1991.pdf](https://monoskop.org/images/4/43/Bourdieu_Pierre_Language_and_Symbolic_Power_1991.pdf), accessed on June 31, 2020.

4 Morrison, K. (2000) 'Ideology, Linguistic Capital and the Medium of Instruction in Hong Kong', *Journal Of Multilingual And Multicultural Development*, 21(6), pp. 471-86. June 31, 2020.

5 Swartz, David (Spring, 1996) *Bridging the Study of Culture and Religion: Pierre Bourdieu's Political Economy of Symbolic Power*, *Sociology of Religion*, in *Jurnal Sociology of Religion* Vol. 57, No. 1, Special Issue: Sociology of Culture and Sociology of Religion, pp. 71-85, Published by: [Oxford University Press](https://www.jstor.org/stable/3712005) DOI: 10.2307/3712005 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3712005>, Page Count: 15, accessed on June 24, 2020.

to misunderstanding, because it is not synonym of polyglot or multilingual<sup>16</sup> which mean ability to communicate in several languages although perfectly, but it is the capacity of individuals to use more than one language in social communication whatever their command of those language. This set of skills constitutes complexity but unique competence, in social communication, to use languages for different purpose with different levels of command. The prurilingualism is the practical manifestation of the capacity for language of human being possesses genetically and it can successively be invested in many languages. In this case it focused on the individual's language acquisitions since childhood in various ways (learning, teaching, independent acquisition, etc.) and in which they had acquired different skills (conversation, reading, listening, or writing) to various levels. In this notion, inter cultural competence rise to support individual's skills to survive in the diversity culture or language. *Common European Frame Work of Reference for Language* explains the prurilingualism differs from multilingualism, which is the knowledge of number languages in a given society. Multilingualism may be attained by simply diversifying the languages on offer in a particular school or educational system.<sup>17</sup>

Bases on diversifying languages on European educational environmental, prurilingualism is a global policy that is embedded strategically in the education system. This policy explained by the Council of Europe to updating and developing the CEFR<sup>18</sup> to develop a linguistic repertory, in which all linguistic abilities have a place. Prurilingual competence consequently is not seen as the superposition or juxtaposition, but rather as the existence of a complex or even composite competence on which the user.<sup>19</sup> It's also focus to learn language means having some awareness in several other languages and this competences involved the ability to : (a) Switch from one language or dialect to another, (b) Express oneself in one language and understand the other, (c) Call upon the knowledge of a number of languages to make a sense of a text, (d) Recognize words from a common international store in a new guise, (e) Mediate between individuals with no common language, (f) By bringing the whole of their linguistic equipment into play, (g) Experiment by alternative form of expression in different language or dialects, (h) Exploiting para-linguistics (mime, gesture, facial expression, etc.).

6 Aronin, Larisssa (2018) *What it's Multilingualism?* In ResearchGate [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/329124383\\_Lecture\\_1\\_What\\_Is\\_Multilingualism/link/5bf6aa129251c6b27d22d79/download](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/329124383_Lecture_1_What_Is_Multilingualism/link/5bf6aa129251c6b27d22d79/download) DOI: 10.21832/9781788922074-003, accessed on 24 June, 2020

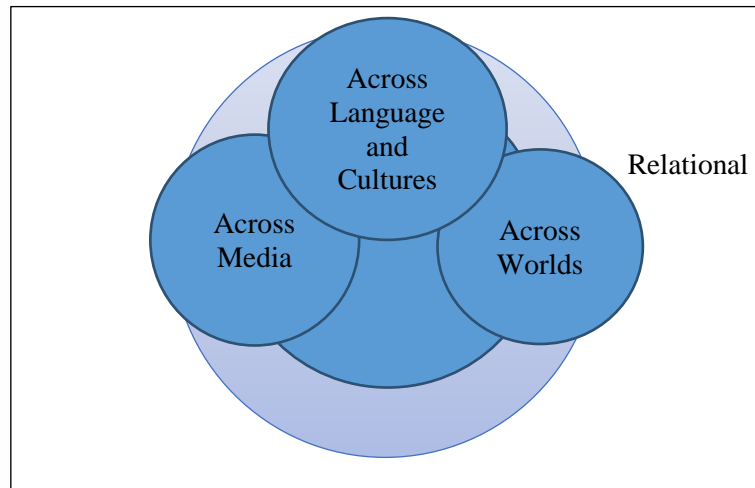
7 DOMBI, Judit ( 2010) *European Language Policy on Prurilingualism and Intercultural Communication* Bulletin of Transilvania University of Braşov, Vol.3 (52) -2010 serie IV: Philology and Cultural Studies, in [http://webbut.unitbv.ro/BU2010/Series%20IV/BULETIN%20IV%20PDF/LANGUAGE%20AND%20LINGUISTICS/25\\_D\\_ombi.pdf](http://webbut.unitbv.ro/BU2010/Series%20IV/BULETIN%20IV%20PDF/LANGUAGE%20AND%20LINGUISTICS/25_D_ombi.pdf), accessed on June 25, 2020

8 Council of Europe (2018) *Common Europe Framework of Reference for Language:CEFR*. In <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/home>, accessed on June 25, 2020

Ibid



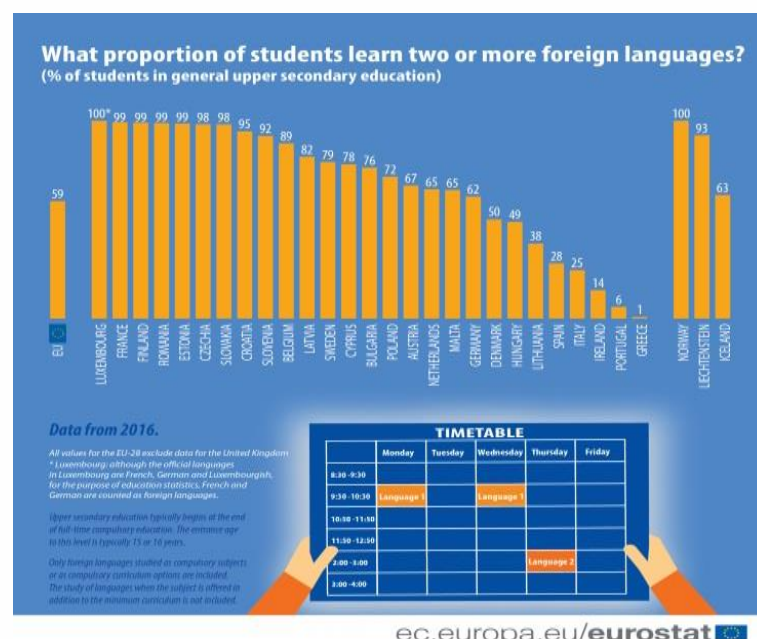
**Chart I**  
Prurilingual and Pruricultural



In order to prurilingualism, there are 24 languages official and working languages on European Union likely : Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, and Swedish. In 1958, this union set Dutch, French, German, and Italian as a first official languages and followed by Danish and English in 1973, Greek in 1981, Portuguese and Spanish in 1986, Finnish and Swedish in 19986, Czech, Estonian, Hungarian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Slovak and Slovenian in 2004, Bulgarian, Irish and Romanian in 2007, and Croatian in 2013. Nevertheless, the Eu's language policy and official languages the European Economic Community are English, French, and German.<sup>20</sup> Therefore, all of three languages set as educational languages in Europe.

**Data I**

Language Learning in Primary and Secondary Schools of the European Union's



<sup>20</sup> Linguisticator (2018) *What Are the Official EU Languages and How are They Used?* In <https://linguisticator.com/official-eu-languages-used/>, accessed on June 24, 2020

## METHOD

Raised the title of "Superheroes In The Development Of Indonesian Prurilingualism Culture On Industry 4.0" we focused on superheroes of language and culture implantation, particularly by the role of language and cultural institution and theirs action in the teaching of foreign language across the element: (1) cross-cultural understanding, (2) para-linguistic skill, and (3) para-textual skill as a part of qualitative research.<sup>21</sup> In this ways, we focused on the research data through: (a) the data of foreign language and cultural institution, (b) the data of public language and cultural in Indonesia, and (3) the data from the prurilingualism elements in the teaching foreign languages material.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Superheroes in this era's not always assumed of personal, but also institutional which is associated to political and economic relations between one's state and the language owner. Then all aspects which offered in foreign languages are also taken into consideration for their speakers. Finally, all these aspects become the starting point for the language and cultural contestation in each country.

Based on number of foreign language and cultural existence on education in Indonesia, it rises the domination of the United Nation (UN) official languages over the world likely: Arabic, English, France, Mandarin, Russian, and Spanish<sup>22</sup>. In Indonesia, there are several languages and cultural institutions initiated by each country to improve the quality and quantity of speakers. For example, the *British Council* launched by the United Kingdom, the *Alliance Française* and the *Institut Français* from France, the *Spanish Language Center* from Spain, and the *Confucius Institute* from the Republic of China. These five foreign institutions play a role in monitoring and controlling the distribution of their languages in Indonesia, including encourage the quality of foreign teaching and learning, where the goal is to increase the number and quality of speakers of those languages. This is evidenced by the emergence of similar foreign institutions launched by other countries such as *Instituto Italiano di Cultura* by Italy and *Goethe Institut* as a Germany representation. Finally, the ultimate goal is increasing the number of visiteur and educational networks between Indonesia and each countries.

Apart from implementing foreign language and cultural institutions in Indonesia, each country is competing to affiliate with higher education institutions to create the foreign language department in Indonesia. One of them is through the higher education level, which currently rise the distribution of foreign language study programs with: (1) English department is found in one hundred institutions (50%), (2) French department spread across ten universities (4%), (3) Arabic department in eighty eight institutions (39%) under the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Religion, (4) Mandarin department across thirteen universities (6%), (5) and Russian department in two universities (1%). Meanwhile, (6) Spanish it's only one of the languages choice in various France department.

						
<i>British Kingdom</i>	<i>France</i>	<i>Spain</i>	<i>France</i>	<i>China</i>	<i>Germany</i>	<i>Italy</i>
2	5	2	4	5	2	1

<sup>21</sup> Bhat, Adi (2019) *Qualitative Research : Definition, Types, Methods, and Examples*. In <https://www.questionpro.com/blog/qualitative-research-methods/>, accessed on June 24, 2019.

<sup>22</sup> Language and Communication Program (2018). Language Learning Resource For 6 Official Languages. In [https://hr.un.org/sites/hr.un.org/files/Language%20Learning%20Resources%20for%20the%206%20Official%20Languages%20October%202018\\_0.pdf](https://hr.un.org/sites/hr.un.org/files/Language%20Learning%20Resources%20for%20the%206%20Official%20Languages%20October%202018_0.pdf), accessed on 17 November 2020

According to the foreign language and culture institution or foreign language and culture department in Indonesia, they contributed all out to the: creation, manage and control the quality and quantity of speakers. They also play a role in improving the teaching strategy to prove in Indonesian society about their importance for human survival. In this cart below, we can see the weakness of foreign language and culture institution or foreign and culture department in the development of foreign languages in rural area likely in Banyumas region where reflected on Senior High School (SMA/MA).

**Chart II**  
The Weakness of Teaching Foreign Language in Banyumas Region



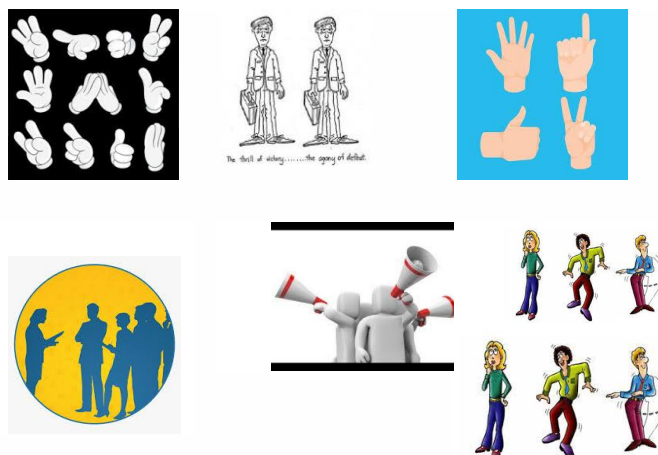
This chart explain about teaching foreign language based on Senior High Schools in Banyumas region, where it is widespread in all public and private schools. In this area, there are fifty-four SMA/MA by the Locale Education and Culture office. This institution recorded from 2000 until 2010 that English was the main teaching foreign language. This refers to Indonesia's linguistic policy which pointed English as compulsory subject. Then, there are ten schools which have French subject, and also there are four schools give the Mandarin language to theirs students. In out of English, Arabic occupies in twenty-three schools. Meanwhile, in the period of 2010 to 2020, the existence of English is still in the same number and also for Mandarin language increases in seven, and Arabic is in twenty-four, but there is a difference condition for French language which is only in six institution. Clearly, this chart explains that the existence of Arabic and Mandarin is maintained by their respective communities, where in the Banyumas region the strong Arabic and Chinese communities support all the development of the both languages, while for teaching French language only depend on the teachers and schools policy which support or distinguish this language.

Apart from the number of teaching foreign language based on the data in Senior High School in one's particular region, this fact related to the quality of teaching foreign language method with prurilingualism concepts which is presented in the following tables:

**Table I**  
 Prurilingualism Construction in Teaching Foreign Language

No.	Elemen	English	French	Mandarin	Arabic	Note
1.	Paralinguistik					
	(a) Body language	X	X	X	X	non-verbal
	(b) Onomatopoeic	X	X	X	X	looks like the sound it makes
	(c) Prosody	X	X	X	X	the patterns of rhythm and sound used in poetry
2.	Paratekstual					
	(a) Ilustration	X	X	X	X	Image
	(b) Typographie	X	X	X	X	Art of language

Based on the table, the teaching foreign language has been embedded all aspects prurilingualism. *First* (a) body language refer to the one's communication instrument. In the universal communication, this nonverbal signals make up a huge part of daily communication from the facial expressions to our body movements. It has been suggested that body language may account for between 60% to 65% of all communication such as:



There are several body languages examples for material in the teaching foreign language because it is easy to understand each other in the global communication. It means it uses body language as a practical language competence which is the basic capital for speakers learners. Therefore this should be the main approach for learning foreign languages in Indonesian teaching foreign language, It is also because non-verballanguagr as a basic way to entering the global communication. *Second* (b) onomatopoeic as a figure of speech in which words evoke the actual sound of the thing they refer to or describe. This element can use real world, made-up words, or just letters used to represent raw sound likely “zzzzzz” for someone sleeping or snoring. There are several onomatopoeic in Unites Nation official languages such as:





In the third aspect (c) using prosody as a literary technique likely: intonation and rhythm of poetic work. It is a phonetic term that uses meter rhythms, tempo, pitch, and loudness in a speech for conveying information about the meanings and structure of language that contributes toward rhythmic and acoustic effects in piece of writing. It including different element, such as scansion, sound, pace, and meaning. In several Unites Nation official language we find the prosody as one's of ways to understanding the meaning of the words, the sentences, and even the meaning of the messages. There is an English and France prosody in the way to understanding the poem :

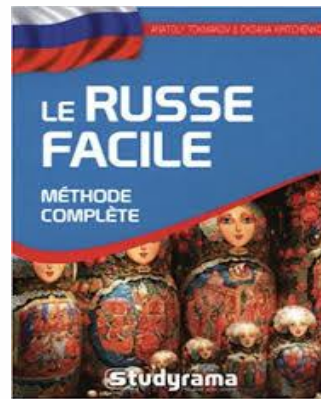
### **In My Craft or Sullen Art**

"In my craft or sullen  
art  
Exercised in the still  
night  
When only the moon  
rages  
And the lovers lie  
abed  
With all their griefs in  
their arms,  
I labour by singing  
light  
...  
But for the common  
wages  
of their most secret  
heart."

*L'extraordinaire effet du soleil sur l'eau  
Où il se brise comme une assiette en mille  
Morceaux toujours plus éparpillés qui  
s'abîment  
En même temps qu'en surface ils se  
multiplient  
Comme de la paille incendiée où le vent  
Rougeoie attisant dans le trou la braise, puis  
C'est un chantier où l'or en feuillage repeuple  
Les profondeurs que les dieux endormis  
habitent,  
Étonnamment beaux, posés sur des lotus  
comme  
On a accoutumé de les voir sur la soie  
Peinte et comme nous les ont transmis en  
image  
Les peuples de la Révélation, de l'Inde  
À l'Égypte, de l'Atlantide au haut des Andes  
Jusque aujourd'hui gardiens des temples  
submergés.*

Vendredi 12 mai 2000

Beside the paralinguistic skill in the prurilingualism competence, there is para-textual element which is a concept in literary interpretation and it is often surrounded by other material supplied by the authors, editors, printers, and publishers, which is known as the para-text. These added elements form a frame for the main text, and can change the reception of a text or its interpretation by the public. Para-text is most often associated with books, as they typically include a cover art, title, front matter (dedication, opening information, foreword), back matter, etc such as :



Book covers rise the special illustration which totally supports the teaching foreign language material likely the Beijing landscape for guiding the Mandarin learners, or the special Russian icon for support the Russian language learners. Using the illustration make sure the language is real and it can represent all the interest thing containing in the language like the cultural dimension. And the last para-textual is typographie as a typeface of letters which is shown uniqueness of each language. This part shown the particular style, legibility, and readability are the most effective when it follows the fundamental principles of typographic design likely:



## CONCLUSION

Superheroes in this era are not always assumed of personal, but also institutional especially in the development of plurilingualism culture that happen in this era as a result of global culture. This situation occurs in Indonesia where there are several languages set up in this region, especially for foreign languages as an effort to realize the UNESCO advice for using foreign language as one's of way in the development of young generation. In this ways, many of language and cultural institution set to rise the quality and quantity of the speakers across the foreign institution, public department, and also all of language and culture affiliated to support the development of each foreign language. They also build the same skill in the latest linguistic model likely plurilingualism across the para-linguistic competence: (a) body language, (b) onomatopoeia, and (c) prosody, and para-textual competence: (a) illustration and (b) typographie. The all aspect still embedded in national education, but it requires the language and cultural institution to struggle in realizing the plurilingualism skill, in which the particular affiliation is the most way to manage, control, develop, and innovate the outcome quality of foreign language and culture competences. Finally, we can imagine that a hero is not always human character, but also institution in the way to set their legitimacy likely the existence of several foreign language and cultural institution in Indonesia with the aim of achieving foreign language as a language skill and intercultural competence.

## REFERENCES

Aronin, Larissa (2018) *What it's Multilingualism?* In ResearchGate [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/329124383\\_Lecture\\_1\\_WhatIs\\_Multilingualism/link/5bf6aa129251c6b27d22d79/download](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/329124383_Lecture_1_WhatIs_Multilingualism/link/5bf6aa129251c6b27d22d79/download) DOI: 10.21832/9781788922074-003, accessed on 24 June, 2020

- Bhat, Adi (2019) *Qualitative Research : Definition, Types, Methods, and Examples*. In <https://www.questionpro.com/blog/qualitative-research-methods/>, accessed on June 24, 2019.
- Bourdieu, Pierre (1991) *Language and Symbolic Power*. In [https://monoskop.org/images/4/43/Bourdieu\\_Pierre\\_Language\\_and\\_Symbolic\\_Power\\_1991.pdf](https://monoskop.org/images/4/43/Bourdieu_Pierre_Language_and_Symbolic_Power_1991.pdf), accessed on June 31, 2020.
- Cherry, Keindra (May 14, 2020). The Characteristic Of a Hero. In very well-mind. <https://www.verywellmind.com/characteristics-of-heroism-2795943>.
- Council of Europe (2018) *Common Europe Framework of Reference for Language:CEFR*. In <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/home>, accessed on June 25, 2020
- Dastoli, Paul (January 27, 2016) *The Importance of Learning Foreign Languages in today's World* . In <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/importance-learning-foreign-languages-todays-world-paul-d-astoli> , accessed June 31, 2020.
- DOI: 10.2307/3712005 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3712005>, Page Count: 15, accessed on June 24, 2020.
- DOMBI, Judit (2010) *European Language Policy on Prurilingualism and Intercultural Communication* Bulletin of Transilvania University of Braşov, Vol.3 (52) -2010 serie IV: Philology and Cultural Studies, in [http://webbut.unitbv.ro/BU2010/Series%20IV/BULETIN%20IV%20PDF/LANGUAGE%20AND%20LINGUISTICS/25\\_Dombi.pdf](http://webbut.unitbv.ro/BU2010/Series%20IV/BULETIN%20IV%20PDF/LANGUAGE%20AND%20LINGUISTICS/25_Dombi.pdf), accessed on June 25, 2020
- Language and Communication Program (2018). *Language Learning Resource For 6 Official Languages*. In [https://hr.un.org/sites/hr.un.org/files/Language%20Learning%20Resources%20for%20the%206%20Official%20Languages%20October%202018\\_0.pdf](https://hr.un.org/sites/hr.un.org/files/Language%20Learning%20Resources%20for%20the%206%20Official%20Languages%20October%202018_0.pdf). accessed on 17 November 2020
- Linguisticator (2018) *What Are the Official EU Languages and How are They Used?* In <https://linguisticator.com/official-eu-languages-used/>, accessed on June 24, 2020
- Morrison, K. (2000) 'Ideology, Linguistic Capital and the Medium of Instruction in Hong Kong', *Journal Of Multilingual And Multicultural Development*, 21(6), pp. 471-86.June 31, 2020.
- Swarz, David (Spring, 1996) *Bridging the Study of Culture and Religion: Pierre Bourdieu's Political Economy of Symbolic Power*, *Sociology of Religion*, in *Jurnal Sociology of Religion* Vol. 57, No. 1, Special Issue: Sociology of Culture and Sociology of Religion, pp. 71-85, Published by: [Oxford University Press](https://www.oxforduniversitypress.com)





## Formation and Meaning of Suffixes at Profession Jukugo Kanji

Benardia Sucisakti Mardianingsih, Haryono  
[benardiasuci.11@gmail.com](mailto:benardiasuci.11@gmail.com), [haryonoku@gmail.com](mailto:haryonoku@gmail.com),  
Universitas Jenderal Soedirman

### ABSTRACT

This research aims to describe the formation and the meaning of suffixes attached to *kanji* profession in Japanese which have different suffixes but the same meaning. Theories used in this research are morphology and semantics. This research is a qualitative research. The data collection technique used in this research is a literature study. The data analysis technique used is the determining element. The data in this research are of profession jukugo *kanji* which have the same meaning but different suffixes. Data collected of profession jukugo *kanji* means doctors, teachers, writers and painters. The data source used is dictionary entitled Japanese dictionary by Pristian Wulanita (Team I-Smart University). The result of this research describes the different meaning of the data collected and 医師 *ishi* is used in more formal situation than 医者 *isha*. 医家 *ika* is an ancient vocabulary which shows that the profession of doctor is the hereditary from his family. 教師 *kyoushi* is used not only for a teacher who teaches certain subjects in school, but also can be used in other teaching contexts. 教員 *kyouin* means a teacher who educates students at school. 作家 *sakka* becomes more specific as a novelist and 作者 *sakusha* is a writer of more general works of art such as *manga*, *anime*, picture books, drama scripts. 画家 *gaka* has the specific meaning of a painter, while 画師 *eshi* 絵師 *eshi* means an illustrator.

**Keywords:** *Suffix, Profession Jukugo Kanji, Formation, Meaning*

### INTRODUCTION

Kanji as an ideographic character gives directly to its meaning (Hirose, 1996:50) and has classifications, one of them is Profession Kanji. The profession kanji consists of two kanji or jukugo (a combination of two or more kanji from now we called Profession Jukugo Kanji or PJK). This research is about the morphological process that involves basic forms, and grammatical meanings mixed with semantic theory that occurred in PJK suffixes.

According to Iori et al., (2004:526), one of the process of word formation with PJK is that the overlapping of the profession kanji. It means that the use of kanji in different professions Kanji that has the same meaning. Based on the background that has been presented, the formulation of the problem in this study firstly are How is the process of establishing PJK in Japanese?; and secondly What is the meaning of PJK that has the same meaning with different suffixes?

The PJK that will be discussed in this research are connected with the medical, teacher, writers and painters Kanji. With this research, it is hoped that Japanese learners will easily understand and memorize kanji by knowing suffix meaning of PJK that has the same meaning but with different suffixes.

### THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

#### Morphology

In Japanese, the term morphology is called Keitairon. It is the study of the word formation, process of changes in word formation and the meaning of the word that caused by the changes of word formation. According to Chaer, (2015:4) that word formation will involve component or element of word formation that is morpheme, reduplication and affixation. The final of the morphological process is word word formations and word meaning.



Morpheme (in Japanese called Keitaiso) is the smallest grammatical unit of meaning (Chaer, 2015:13). Based on its contents, Keitaiso consists of naiyou keitaiso (morpheme contents) and kinou keitaiso (morpheme function). Naiyou keitaiso is a Morpheme that indicates its original meanings, such as nouns, adverbs, and gokan (base words) of verbs or adjectives, while kinou keitaiso is a Morpheme that indicates its grammatical functions, such as particles, gobi (endings) of verbs or adjectives, copulas, and times expression morphemes (Sutedi, 2011:45-46). The process of word formation in Japanese is referred to as gokeisei. According to Sutedi (2011:46-49) there are four kinds of Japanese word formation, namely haseigo, fukugougo/goseigo, karikomi/shouryaku, and toujigo.

- Haseigo is a word formed from the merging of naiyou-keitaiso (Morpheme content) with setsuji (affixes). The formation process can be the mixed of settouji (prefix) + Morpheme contents or Morpheme contents + setsubiji (suffix).
- Fukugougo/goseigo is a word formed from the result of the merging of several Morpheme contents. These words after being combined will form a new meaning as a compound word.
- Korikomi/shouryaku is an acronym of syllables from the original vocabulary.
- Toujigo stands for the first letter expressed in the alphabet.

The word is formed from morpheme or morphemes. The word formation from the Morpheme through a process is called morphological process.

### Kanji and Jukugo

Most kanji in Japanese have more than one way of reading that called Kun and On Reading. Rikusho is the classification of six kinds of formation and the use of kanji introduced in the Chinese classic dictionary that called "Setsumonkaiji" about 1900 years ago. The rikusho according to Hatasa, et al (2011:288) is classified as follows.

- Shoukei Moji or Pictograph.  
Basically, shoukei moji is a kanji lettering formed from an image of the shape of an object and usually quite simple.
- Shiji Moji or symbol.  
Basically, shiji moji is the formation of kanji that formed from the shape of a sign that expresses abstract concepts with the help of lines or dots.
- Kaii Moji or Ideograph  
Basically, kaii moji is a kanji that formed from the merging of two or more pictographs or meaningful marks, and is generally quite simple.
- Keisei Moji or Phonetic – Ideograph.  
Combination of two kanji which one part is bushu that shows meaning and the other part shows the sound, while keisei moji is often referred to as kanji that from sounds and shapes.
- Tenchu Moji that borrow meaning and pronunciation.  
Basically tenchu moji is a kanji that is formed by borrowing the meaning and manner of pronunciation, but tends to have meaning and pronunciation that changes as a result of borrowing process.
- Kasha Moji that borrow other kanji phonetically.  
Basically, the kanji is formed by borrowing other kanji that is borrowed on a phonetic basis.

Jukugo literally means a combination of two kanji, since most jukugo consists of two kanji, but there is also a jukugo consisting of a combination of three or even four kanji (Hirose, 1996:50). Based on their reading, jukugo (especially those consisting of two kanji) can be broadly classified into four groups, namely:

- 和語 *Wago*, which is jukugo whose second kanji is read kunyomi.
- 漢語 *Kango*, which is jukugo whose second kanji is read onyomi.
- 重箱読み *Jubako yomi*, The two kanji in jukugo, the kanji located on the front are read onyomi and the kanji on the back is read kunyomi
- 湯桶読み *Yutou yomi*, the opposite of jubako yomi, two kanji in jukugo, kanji located on the front is read kunyomi and kanji on the back is read onyomi.

## Suffix

Suffix that is attached as PJK 家, 人, 者, 士, 師, 屋, 手, and 工. According to Isfiah (2016:1) the meaning of the word or object after being attached to suffix of 者 (person), indicates the type of work that relies on physical strength, related to the investigation, related to subjective review, related in the field of a particular science, related to as an entertainer, shows the work as a driver. The meaning of a word or object after being attached by suffix 員 (person), indicates the type of work as a member of an organization, and related to supervising and maintaining work. The meaning of a word or object after being attached by suffix 士 (person) indicates the type of work in the field of service, and related to the requirement of advanced equipment.

## Semantic

According to Sutedi (2011:127) the object of semantic include the meaning of the word (go no imi), the relationship of meaning between one word and another (go no imi kankei), the meaning of the phrase (ku no imi), and the meaning of the sentence (bun no imi). The types of meanings in semantics are lexical meanings and grammatical meanings, denotative meanings and connotative meanings, basic meanings and meanings of expansion.

The words imi and igi are two terms about meaning in Japanese. The word imi is used to express the meaning of hatsuwa which is a unit form of parole, while igi is used to express the meaning of sentence as a unit form of langue. Therefore, the meaning of hatsuwa is the object of pragmatic studies, while the meaning of sentences is a semantic study. The meaning of a word will usually evolve because it is influenced by the context or situation of the speaker. (Sutedi, 2011:139).

## METHODS

The present research is aqualitative research. Qualitative research uses the foundation of theory as a guide to focus research. Descriptive methods are methods of problem solving by systematically analyzing and presenting facts so that they can be easier to understand and infer (Azwar, 2004:6). The data in this study is PJK that have the same meaning but different suffixes. The data collected from PJK that have the meaning of doctors, teachers, writers and painters. The objects studied are PJK that express the meaning of the same profession but are different suffixes. The data sources are a dictionary titled Japanese dictionary by Pristian Wulanita (I-Smart University Team) published by the Educational Forum in 2015 and Japanese online dictionary called Weblio that as launced on August 12, 2005 in Tokyo. The technique for analyzing the data is determining element that according to Kesuma (2007:51) by sorting through the language units analyzed.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section will present the results of kanji analysis of professions that have the same meaning but different suffixes. The amount of data to be used is 4 types of jobs with 10 PJK. The data is analyzed based on the type of work and the type of work it attaches to it using morphological and semantic theories.

### a) PJK that meaning Doctor

医 (名詞)	+	者	□	医者 (名詞)
I (meishi)		-sha		Isha (meishi)
Medical (nomina)		(Suffix)		Doctor (nomina)
医 (名詞)	+	師	□	医師 (名詞)
I (meishi)		-shi		Ishi (meishi)
Medical (nomina)		(Suffix)		Doctor (nomina)
医 (名詞)	+	家	□	医家 (名詞)
I (meishi)		-ka		Ika (meishi)
Medical (nomina)		(Suffix)		Doctor (nomina)





A teacher refers to the person who teaches children such as in elementary school, junior high school and high school. Teachers who work part-time. The teacher means organization, group so it is treated as a plural term.

Suffix 師 -- shi attached to the nouns of 教 oshi-eru, oso-waru (kun reading) and kyou (on reading), which means teaching. The word 教 oshi-eru, oso-waru that is attached to the shi 師-forms PJK kyoushi 教師 According weblio, the meaning of a person with special skills or skills, that meaning is teacher who has the skills to teach.

Suffix 員 that attached to the nouns of 教 oshi-eru, oso-waru (kun reading) and kyou (on reading), which means teaching. The word 教 oshi-eru, the oso-waru that is attached to the -in 員 forms PJK 教員 kyouin. According weblio, Suffix 員-in means a person who is a member of a particular organized group or could also mean an employee or staff, so the meaning of the word "教員" is a teaching staff. In terms of meaning, it is a group of people who are in charge of teaching children in educational institutions.

### c) PJK that meaning Writer

作 (名詞)	+	家	□	作家 (名詞)
Saku (meishi)		-ka		Sakka (meishi)
Make, Produce (nomina)		(Suffix)		Writer (nomina)
作 (名詞)	+	者	□	作者 (名詞)
Saku (meishi)		-sha		Sakusha (meishi)
Make, Produce (nomina)		(Suffix)		Writer (nomina)

According to weblio.jp website, the following are the meanings of the kanji:

1) ① 詩や文章を書くことを職業とする人。特に、小説家

*Uta ya bunsou wo kaku koto wo shokugyou to suru hito. Toku ni, shousetsu ka.*  
Someone whose profession writes poetry and sentences. Especially, a novelist.

② 美術・工芸など、個人の表現としての芸術作品の制作者。

*Bijutsu kougei nado, kojn no hyougen to shite no geijutsu sakuhin no seisaku sha.*  
Creator of artistic works such as arts and crafts

2) ① 作品を作った人。

*Sakuhin wo tsukutta hito. Toku ni, geijutsu sakuhin no tsukuri te.*  
The person who makes the artwork

② 芝居の脚本を書く人。

*Shibai no kyakuhon wo kaku hito.*  
Someone who wrote the play.

③ 勅撰集などに作品がえらばれた歌人。

*Chokusen shuu nado ni sakuhin ga erabareta kajin.*  
A poet whose work was selected in the royal court's collection.

Suffix 家-ka attached to the nouns of the words 作 tsuku-ru, tsuku-ri, dzuku-ri (kun reading) and pocket, sa (on reading) which means to make, produce. The word tsuku-ru, tsuku-ri, dzuku-ri that are attached to the Suffix 家-ka forms PJK 作家 sakka. According weblio, Suffix 家-ka gives meaning to professions that have expertise in a particular field, so the meaning of the sakka is an expert in making. Judging by the meaning, it means a person who is good at making things, in this case a writer.





Suffix 者-sha attached to the nouns of the wordtsuku-ru, tsuku-ri, dzuku-ri (kun reading) and pocket, sa (on reading) which means to make, produce. The wordtsuku-ru, tsuku-ri, dzuku-ri that are attached to the Suffix者-sha forms PJK 作者sakusha. According weblio, Suffix者-sha gives the meaning of the subject of an action or perpetrator of a designated action such as from the basic word, so that its meaning becomes the maker. Judging by the meaning, it's the person who makes something or creator.

d) PJK that meaning Painter

画 (名詞)	+	家	□	画家 (名詞)
Ga/E (meishi)		-ka		Gaka (meishi)
Picture (nomina)		(Suffix)		Painter (nomina)
画 (名詞)	+	師	□	画師 (名詞)
Ga/E (meishi)				Eshi (meishi)
絵 (名詞)				絵師 (名詞)
E (meishi)		-shi		Eshi (meishi)
Picture (nomina)		(Suffix)		Painter (nomina)

According to weblio.jp website, the following are the meanings of the kanji:

1) 絵を描くことを職業とする人。絵描き。

*E wo kaku koto wo shokugyou to suru hito. Ekaki.*

Someone whose job it is to paint. Drawing.

2) ①絵描き。画家。

*Ekaki. Gaka.*

Pictures. Painter.

②

律令制で、中務省 (なかつかさしょう) 画工司 (えだくみのつかさ) に属して絵画制作に従事した工人。宮殿・寺院の建立調度の敷設などに際し、装飾・文様・彩色に携わった。

*Ritsuryousei de, naka tsukasa shou edakumi notsukasa) ni zokushite kaiga seisaku ni juuji shita kou hito. Kyuuden, jiin no konryuu, choudo no fusetsu nado ni saishi, soushoku monyou saishiki ni tazusawatta.*

A worker involved in the production of paintings under the ritual system and belonging to the painter of the Ministry of Home Affairs (Nasakasa Sho) (Edakumi no Tsukasa).Involved in the decoration, design and coloring of palaces and temples as well as the laying of furniture.

③平安末期以後、院や幕府の絵所に属した画工。

*Heian makki igo, in ya bakufu no edokoro ni zokushita gakou.*

Painters from the Shogun and Shogun Institute since the end of Heian.

Suffix家-ka attached to the noun of the word "ega-ku, kaku-suru, kagi-ru, hakarigoto, haka-ru (kun reading), dan ga, kaku, e, kai (on reading) which means image. The word "aga, kaku, e, kai" is attached to the word "ka". According weblio, Suffix家-ka gives meaning to a profession that has expertise in a particular field, so the meaning of the person who is expert in the picture. Judging by the meaning, you don't mean a painter.

Suffix 師 - shi attached to the noun of the word "ega-ku," kaku-suru, kagi-ru, hakarigoto, haka-ru (kun reading), dan ga, kaku, e, kai (on reading) which means image. The word "stiff, stiff, e, kai" is attached to the word "shi", which forms PJK 画師 "eshi". According weblio, -- shi師 -- gives meaning to someone who has special skills or skills, so that means being an expert drawing person. Judging by the meaning, you are an artist.

The following are the results of the data analysis presented using the table.

No	Profession Type	Emerged Suffix	Differences
1.	<b>Doctor</b>		
	a. 医者 <i>isha</i>	—者— <i>sha</i>	Cannot be used behind a person's name.
	b. 医師 <i>ishi</i>	—師— <i>shi</i>	Someone with a doctor's license. It's more formal than 医者. 田中-a-tanaka ishi is an example of correct use.
	c. 医家 <i>ika</i>	—家— <i>ka</i>	An ancient vocabulary that suggests that the profession of doctor is hereditary from his family.
2.	<b>Teacher</b>		
	a. 教師 <i>kyoushi</i>	—師— <i>shi</i>	Used for a teacher who teaches certain subjects in school, it can also be used in the context of other teachings such as someone who teaches religion (religious leaders).
	b. 教員 <i>kyouin</i>	—員— <i>in</i>	A teacher who educates students in the school such as someone who teaches subjects in various classes or a teacher, a part-time teacher, a nurse in the health room, a librarian in the library, an instructor in an institution or a practical assistant. At universities, lecturers and professors are 教員 <i>kyouin</i> .
3.	<b>Writer</b>		
	a. 作家 <i>sakka</i>	—家— <i>ka</i>	People whose professions write books mainly write novels. Novelist.
	b. 作者 <i>sakusha</i>	—者— <i>sha</i>	The person who makes various artworks, such as picture book stories, manga, anime, writing plays.
4.	<b>Painter</b>		
	a. 画家 <i>gaka</i>	—家— <i>ka</i>	Someone whose job is painting.
	b. 画師 <i>eshi</i> 絵師 <i>eshi</i>	—師— <i>shi</i>	An illustrator who can publish his illustrations in commercial magazines or publish them in art books, drawing characters in the game.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of data on PJK in Japanese, it is found that the PJK has the same meaning but it is different suffixes. The PJK in the medical profession are as follows 医家 *ika*, 医師 *ishi*, 医者 *isha*. The three PJK have a doctor's meaning, but the Suffix attached to it is different as well as its use in sentences is different. 医師 *ishi* is used in more formal situations than the 医者 *isha*. In addition, 田中醫師 *tanaka ishi* is the correct use because the 医者 (*isha*) cannot be used behind the person's name. Meanwhile, 医家 is an ancient vocabulary that suggests the profession of doctor which is hereditary from his family.

The PJK that has the meaning of the teacher is 教師 *kyoushi*, 教員 *kyouin*. The two PJK literally means teacher but after being analyzed there is a distinction of its use. 教師 is used not only for a teacher who teaches certain subjects in school but can also be used in the context of other teaching such as someone who teaches religion; a monk, father, ustadz, while 教員 who educates students in school like someone who teaches lessons in various classes or a teacher, a part-time teacher, a nurse in the health room, a librarian in the library, an instructor in an institution or a practical assistant. At universities, lecturers and professors are 教員.

PJK 作家 *sakka*, and 作者 *sakusha* have meaning of author. After analyzed those two PJK, it is derived that the meaning of the word 作家 "sakka" is more specific to a novelist and 作者 can mean more than just a writer but a variety from composer to artist (basically someone who creates

something). In addition, 作者 cannot be used as a profession, and 作者 is only used in the context of sharing information about work.

The last data is PJK which has the meaning of painter, there are the PJK 画家 "gaka" and 画師 *eshi* 絵師 *eshi*. The PJK 画家 is "more specific" that has the meaning of a painter, meanwhile 画師 *eshi* 絵師 *eshi* that have meaning of an illustrator or person who draws characters in a game, publishing his illustrations in commercial magazines or art books.

## REFERENCES

- Azwar, Saifuddin. 2004. *Metode Penelitian*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Chaer, Abdul. 2015. *Morfologi Bahasa Indonesia (Pendekatan Proses)*. Jakarta: PT Rineke Cipta.
- Hatasa, Yukiko Abe, dkk. 2011. *Nakama 1: Introductory Japanese: Communication, Culture, Context, Second Edition*. USA: Heinle, Cengage Learning.
- Hirose, Hitoshi. 1996. Functions of Graphemic Components of Kanji on Recognition of Jukugo. Jurnal. Dalam jurnal Hiroshima Forum for Psychology, diakses dari e-resources.perpusnas.go.id Diakses 27 Februari 2019 pukul 19.10 WIB.
- Iori, Isao, dkk. 2004. *Chuujoukyuu O Oshieru Hito No Tame No Nihongo Bunpou Handobukku*. Tokyo: Takaseidouhaku.
- Isfiah, Ainun. 2016. Analisis Bentuk dan Makna Sufiks ~者Sha, ~員In, ~士Shi dalam Koran Bahasa Jepang Tahun 2016. Jurnal. Pendidikan Bahasa Jepang. Surabaya. Universitas Negeri Surabaya. Dalam jurnal mahasiswa unesa, diakses dari <http://jurnalmahasiswa.unesa.ac.id> Diakses 2 April 2018 pukul 19.30 WIB.
- Kesuma, Jati. 2007. *Pengantar (Metode) Penelitian Bahasa*. Yogyakarta: Carasvatibooks.
- Parera, J.D. 2004. *Teori Semantik*. Jakarta: Erlangga.
- Sutedi, Dedi. 2011. *Dasar-dasar Linguistik Bahasa Jepang*. Bandung: Humaniora.
- Weblio, Inc. 2005. Tokyo. <https://www.weblio.jp/> Diakses pada tanggal 3 April 2020 pukul 10.30 WIB.

# **"The Heroic Action of The Humanist Futuristic Robot Doraemonin Spreading Bushido's Values to The World"**

**Nalti Novianti**

Jakarta Bina Nusantara University  
noviantinalti@gmail.com

## **ABSTRACT**

Doraemon is a blue robot cat character in a Japanese comic called manga. This robot came from the 22nd century, went to the 20th century to aid the boy named Nobita, the great grandfather of His master Sewasi. These series were published for the first time in 1969. written and illustrated by Fujiko Fujio. Doraemon series has been adapted into a successful animation series and media franchise. In March 2008, Japan's Foreign Ministry appointed Doraemon as the nation's first "Anime ambassador." A Ministry spokesperson explains the novel decision to help people in other countries understand Japanese animation better and deepen their interest in Japanese culture. This research aims to determine the extent to which the transnationalism factor of Doraemon affected the word. For This research, I will use the pierce semiotic concept related to the Bushido concept and look for educational Giant robot parts that fell from the sky, so Nobita and Doraemon took it into the mirror world to build it and called it the Zandacross. It seems that Zandacross is a dangerous weapon, so they kept it a secret. A mysterious girl named Lilulu appeared and asked for Zandacross for the invasion, but she doesn't agree to invade the Earth. Doraemon and the others join forces to stop the robot army's invasion, but it seems that Lilulu is the only one that can stop it. Elements through didactic concept. The research data were Three Doraemon's movies, "Nobita and the steel troop. " In conclusion, it will be seen the continuity between the didactic value and bushido in their daily life.

**Keywords:** *Bushido, Doraemon, Semiotic Pierce*

## **INTRODUCTION**

"Bushido" (武士道) is a code of moral principles that must be upheld by the knight. It was not written; it only contains a few proverbs passed down by word of mouth or came from a hero's pen scratches or famous scholar. More often than not, "Bushido" has become the unspoken code and unwritten, has stronger sanctions, and a written law deep in the heart (Nitobe, 2015: 24). In ancient Japanese culture, a class of people called "Buke" or "Bushi," an elite class highly respected by the people. "Samurai" belonged to this class of society. Because they are a class of special society ones, they must come from fighters' descendants. "Samurai" is a term for elite class military officers before industrialization in Japan. The word "samurai" comes from the verb "samorau" from ancient Japanese, changed to "saburau" which means "to serve," and finally became "Samurai" who worked as servants for the master (gogen-allguide.com). More terms right is the "bushi" (literally: "armed man") used during the Age Edo. After all, the term samurai was used for elite warriors from among the nobility. Bushido is not only the moral of the knight but as the basis of national morals. The character of the Japanese nation is both tradition and history. Through the centuries, they formed the distinctive Japanese character known as the name bushido and the Japanese people's spirit during the war (Benedict, 1982: 27). After all, the strict samurai nature is known as bushido in contemporary Japanese society and other aspects of their way of life.

This bushido principle in Japanese society has been researched by several previous researchers, which I will introduce below. First, the concept of ethics in bushido by Ratna Dewi



Fatimah (2015), which describes how Bushido ethics are carried out in everyday life of Japanese society. There are also Claudhia Maulani Wahyuningtyas (2020) researchers who use Japanese comics as corpus material for research data Bushido values in the life of the female samurai Aizu comic "Makoto no kuni, by Kanno Aya." Besides, Dede Rahmat (2018) examined the "Rurouni Kenshin" comic to see the substantial value of samurai culture with the Bushido principles that the main character still holds. Then, Nelvita (2007) examines the morality of bushido in the novel "Samurai Suzume no Kumo" by Takashi Matsuoka.

In my research to find Bushido's elements in the heroic actions of the humanist futuristic robot character Doraemon and his friends, I used Pierce's Semiotics theory. The purpose of this study was to determine the bushido elements in the Doraemon film entitled "Nobita and the steel troop", from the signs obtained based on Pierce's semiotics.

The reason I was chose Doraemon's Film for corpus research data because it was in March 2008, Japan's Foreign Ministry appointed Doraemon as the nation's first "anime ambassador." A Ministry spokesman explained that Doraemon film animation attempts to help people in other countries understand Japanese anime (animation) better and deepen their interest in Japanese culture.

The theory used to examine the research data is the concept of the movie (film) heroic concepts, the concept of bushido, and Pierce's idea of semiotics.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The film is one of the mass media, which has a visual characteristic (audio-visual) and can reach large audiences (Kridalaksana, 1984: 32). The film is also a means of artistic expression that combines technology, such as photography and sound recording, fine arts, theater and architecture, and music (Effendy, 1986: 239). The film contains the messages you want to be conveyed by the director to the audience. If you pay attention, the film's messages are usually not shown explicitly by the director, it's implicit, and the messages contained there are also very diverse in the form of propaganda, moral messages, and others. In this case, to find the hidden messages, the elements of bushido, I used Pierce's theory of semiotics through the sign, object, and interpretant.

After selecting the data, I chose the Doraemon film entitled "Nobita and the steel troops," produced in 1986. "Nobita and the steel troops" an anime science fiction drama film and the 31st movie in the Doraemon franchise. It was released in Japan on March 5, 2011, in both IMAX 3D and conventional 2D formats. The film is a remake of the 1986 Doraemon movie, Doraemon: Nobita and the Steel Troops, and it is the first Doraemon film ever to be released in 3D. This movie was ranked the 5th highest-grossing Japanese animated movie in 2011. It is widely regarded as the best Doraemon movie.

As mentioned before, analyzing the data using Pierce's semiotics, through the Pierce Triadic model, will bring out signs of Bushido elements in this Doraemon series film scene.

## **METHODS**

Messages inside the movie/film are conveyed by the director in the movie conveyed through signs in images and text. In examining the signs that represent values heroism in the film, several methods are using semiotic analysis. Semiotics is a science that deals with the study of signs and everything related to signs, such as sign systems and processes that apply to the use of signs (Zoest, 1993). This interpretation process later will find a "truth of meaning" in society and will see an essential meaning (Alex Sobur, 2003). This means that by using Pierce's semiotics in this research, the film's message, which contains elements of *bushido* in Japanese society, will be seen clearly.

### **A. Qualitative Approach**

This research was conducted using qualitative descriptive research methods, which are part of qualitative methods. Sugiono (2012: 9) suggests that qualitative research is a research method based on the philosophy of post-positivism, used to examine the conditions of natural objects,

where the researcher is a key instrument, data collection techniques by triangulation, inductive or qualitative data analysis, and research results. Qualitative emphasizes meaning more than generalization.

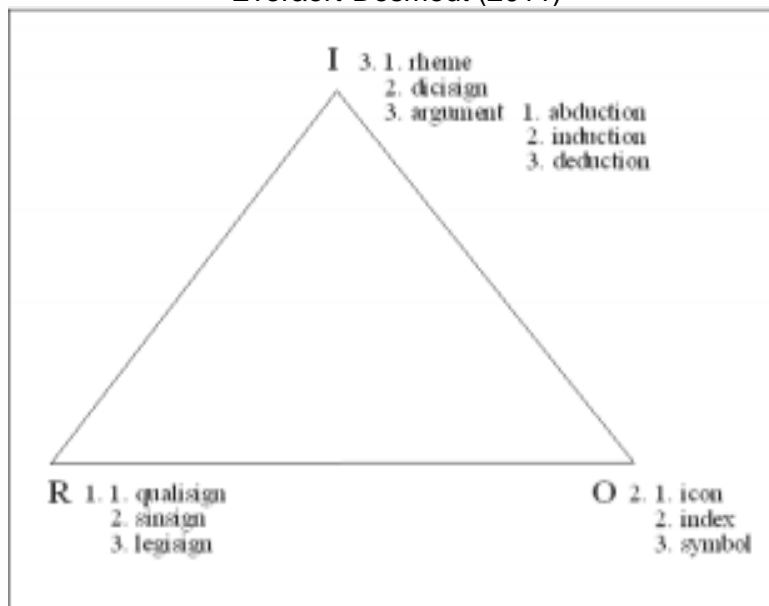
#### B. Semiotika Charles Sanders Pierce

For Pierce (Pateda, 2001: 4), the sign "is something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity." Something that was used to make the sign work, Pierce called it to ground. Based on this relationship, Peirce entered into a classification of signs. The marks associated with the ground are divided into qualisign, sinsign, and legisign. Qualisign is a quality in the sign; for example, white means holy and clean, and black means dirty, gloomy, and dark. Sinsign is the actual existence of objects or events in the sign; for example, the baby's crying voice means hungry, or laughter means happy, crying means sadness. Legisign is a norm that a signal contains, for example, traffic signs that indicate things that humans may or may not do.

Consequently, the sign (sign or representamen) is always present in a triadic relationship, namely ground, object, interpretant. Representation is the process of physically recording ideas, knowledge, or messages. More precisely, it can be defined as the use of signs (pictures, sounds, etc.) to reproduce something that is absorbed, sensed, imagined, or felt in a physical form. In semiotics, it is stated that the physical form of a representation, namely X, is generally referred to as a marker. The meaning it generates (whether it is clear or not), namely Y, is generally called a sign, and the meaning that can potentially be drawn from this representation ( $X = Y$ ) in a certain cultural environment is called signification (the Marking system).

Peirce put forward a theory against the meaning of signs called the triadic model. In the triadic model, Peirce sees the sign (representamen) as an inseparable part of the object of reference and the subject's understanding of the sign (interpretant).

Figure 1 Pierce's Triadic model  
Everaert-Desmedt (2011)



Though Peirce's triadic model, three elements are obtained, which are used as levels in the meaning of a sign: a. Representation (representamen), which discusses importance through marking. b. Object (Object), which discusses the purpose of the signal from the reference object's point. c. Subject understanding (interpretant), which explains the role of the subject in interpreting a sign. In Pierce's view, the inner sign is in a continuous process of change, which is called a process of semiosis. This process is infinite because the process of creating a series of interpretants is endless and runs on a chain of production and reproduction of signs, in which signs continue to develop (Sobur, 2003).

### C. Intrinsic and Extrinsic elements in Literary works

Literary works, in this case, animation, contained two building elements, namely intrinsic elements and irrelevant elements. Noor (2009:31) explains that the inherent aspects of literary work are the elements that build academic work from within. In this case, the manga is one of the literary works genres; imaginative narratives are composed of interconnected intrinsic elements. In addition to scholarly works also contain extrinsic elements, namely elements from the outside that influence literary works' content. The extrinsic elements include psychology, sociology, religion, history, philosophy, ideology, politics, etc. To examine the extrinsic factors in doraemon's animated film, the Bushido theory of Nitobe (2005) was used.

### D. Bushido

Even though the era of the samurai was over, the bushido element, which has now turned into a moral teaching for the Japanese people, still remains in their daily life (Nitobe, 2000). This element is also reflected in the Doraemon film which is the research data in this research paper.

#### 1. Honesty / Makoto (誠)

A well-known Bushido man defines it as strength resolution: "Honesty is the bone that gives consistency and form. Without bones, the head cannot hold on to the upper body, nor can the hands couldn't move, and the feet wouldn't be able to stand. Without honesty, neither talent nor learning can mold a person to become better. Without honesty, everything is meaningless. Honesty are the twins of courage" (Nitobe, 2015: 44).

#### 2. Courage / Yuu (勇)

One of the Bushido values that a samurai must possess is courage, a brave spirit, although it is rarely considered important when compared to other values. Courage is doing what is right by braving all kinds of dangers, risking oneself, and breaking through the jaws of death according to the samurai. This understanding is often identified with courage. The spiritual aspect of courage is evidenced by calmness, peace of mind. Calmness is resting courage. It is a static form of courage, whereas dynamic courage is action. A truly brave person is a person who is always calm, even though he is under pressure, he remains calm and keeps his mind clear (Nitobe, 2015).

#### 3. Virtue / Jin (仁)

When courage reaches its peak, courage becomes virtue, feelings of sorrow, sympathy, which are considered the best human traits. A samurai is also required to have this value, virtue. Nitobe says in his book that virtue is a gentle and caring value like a mother. If honesty and justice seem masculine, compassion has a feminine tenderness and influence. For a samurai the bravest was the gentle, the most merciful was the most courageous. (2015: 59)

#### 4. Politeness Rei (礼)

Maintaining soft feelings has given birth to a caring attitude towards the suffering of others. Courtesy and submissiveness, coupled with respect for the feelings of others, are at the root of modesty. Modesty can be a bad attitude, if aroused solely by a fear of offending others, it should result from feeling sympathetic toward others. Modesty implies respect for the quality of something that distinguishes people from their actions

#### 5. Sincerity / Gi (義)

Politeness will only be a joke if it is without sincerity or truth. Politeness that goes beyond normal limits becomes a lie. "Sincerity is the end and the beginning of all things, without sincerity there is nothing.

#### 6. Honor / Meiyo (名誉)

Implying an awareness of personal dignity, never fails to characterize samurai, who were born and raised to respect the responsibilities and privileges of their profession. For samurai a person's good name or reputation was an eternal part of that person. Violation of his integrity is considered a disgrace, and shame.

#### 7. Loyalty / Chuugi (忠義)

Responsibility for loyalty is the main key in norms, respect and loyalty to superiors are typical norms. Personal allegiance is the moral attachment that exists in all types and conditions of human

beings. Bushido considers the interests of the family and the interests of the family members as something that is bound, an inseparable unity.



## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.

### Nobita and the steel troop

Film Synopsis: Giant robot parts fell from the sky, so Nobita and Doraemon took it into the mirror world to build it and called it the Zandacross. It seems that Zandacross is a dangerous weapon so they kept it a secret. A mysterious girl named Lilulu appeared and asked for Zandacross for the invasion but she doesn't agree to invade the Earth. Doraemon and the others join forces to stop the invasion of the robot army but it seems that Lilulu is the only one that can stop it.

The analysis sub-chapter will be divided into 5 sections based on the main player in the Doraemon animation film, titled "Nobita and the steel troop" that became the research corpus.

#### 1. Doraemon

Scene	Qualisign	Legisign	Sinsign
10.05-10.17  	<p>The robot, which Nobita found at the north pole, seems unmovable, even though all parts of its body have been arranged.</p> <p>From the dialogue seen Doraemon volunteered to buy a remote control from the store in the future</p>	<p>The robot cannot be moved due to the absence of a drive motor.</p> <p>Doraemon feels a responsibility to make Nobita happy.</p>	<p>The giant robot Nobita found at the north pole became a symbol of toughness that should be able to move.</p>
Bushido Element : Virtue / Jin (仁) , Honor / Meiyo (名誉) Honor, Loyalty / Chuugi (忠義)			

Nobita finds parts of a giant robot at the north pole. He immediately wanted to build the robot and couldn't wait to move it. However, because the robot is so large, it is impossible to make it at home. Doraemon finally brings the robot into the mirror world, which is a reflection of the real world. They both built the robot's body part by part. However, after that, the robot is unmovable. Doraemon, who feels that he has a responsibility to keep Nobita happy, immediately proposes to buy a remote control for the robot from the department store in the future. However, it took time, and Doraemon paid the cost.



Doraemon always tries to make Nobita happy, because before coming to the present time, He has promised to Sewasi, Nobita's great-grandson in the future, to always keep Nobita happy. Sewasi is the one who has rescued Doraemon, which is a robot cat that is broken and about to is returned.

Doraemon is very loyal to Nobita's family, especially Nobita. The happiness and luck of Nobita living in the present will make his future family not live in distress. These things caused Doraemon to grant Nobita's wishes because he wanted to keep his promise to Sewasi.

Doraemon also felt sympathetic to the weak and poor Nobita in the lesson. If left alone, Nobita will live rough in the future. This should not happen. All of this reason makes that there are elements of virtue, honor, and loyal of bushido in the scene above.





## 2. Nobita

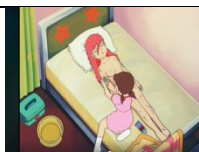
Scene	Qualisign	Legisign	Sinsign
<p>41:45-41:49</p>  	<p>Nobita appears sympathetic to Riruru who is about to return to her army base. That's why she insisted on leaving Nobita.</p> <p>Nobita knows he can't fight Riruru, but he still says valiantly that he will shoot the robot girl if she returns to her army base.</p>	<p>Riruru wanted to return to his army base to tell her boss that attacking the earth was not a good act.</p> <p>Nobita doesn't want Riruru go back to her base because Nobita know she's going to be punished by her boss.</p>	<p>A robot in the form of a little girl is supposed to be gentle and kind. However, Riruru is not like that, she is strong and resilient, because of the program that has been instilled in her.</p>
Bushido Element: Courage / Yuu (勇), Virtue / Jin (仁), Sincerity / Gi (義)			

Nobita feels sympathy for Riruru who has changed a lot since passing the time with her and her friends. Nobita also knows that Riruru is actually a good robot. Riruru knows that human on earth not worthy of being slave. And, she wants to express her opinion to her boss. Nobita forbids Riruru to go to the troop base because he worried about that girl. If Riruru returns to her base, and tells the boss her thought, then the girl will surely be punished. That's why Nobita tries to look valiantly pointing a gun at Riruru, while threatening the girl not to leave him. For Nobita who is a coward, brandishing a gun with the intent to protect someone, is a thing that desperately needs courage. The results of the analysis show that at the scene above shows the element courage, virtue and sincerity of Bushido.

## 3. Shizuka

Scene	Qualisign	Legisign	Sinsign
<p>55:39-58:44</p>  	<p>Shizuka is attacked by a robot in the shape of a beautiful girl.</p> <p>Shizuka is re-attacked by the same robot.</p>	<p>A distraught Riruru is seriously injured by the explosion, holding Shizuka's leg tightly so that the girl does not leave her.</p> <p>The wounded Riruru does not accept Shizuka's opinion that no human being in the world deserves to be made a slave by robots.</p>	<p>Assault symbolizes rudeness, and high emotions, and the culprit should be shunned first.</p>





	Shizuka takes care of the robot that has attacked her.	Although her heart was broken by Riruru's behaviour, Shizuka kept and cared for the robot girl so that her wounds healed.	
Bushido Element: Courage / Yuu (勇), Virtue / Jin (仁), Sincerity / Gi (義), politeness			

Shizuka knows that Riruru is part of the robot troop that will colonize the earth, she has been attacked twice by Riruru. Even so, Shizuka still bargained for that robot to recover from her wounds. Surely it takes courage to accompany the robot girl alone.

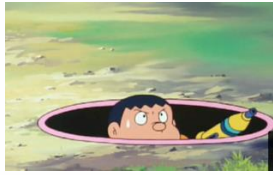

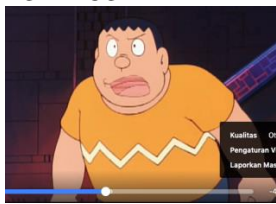
There was no denying that there was an element of virtue and politeness in Shizuka. She will take care of anyone who is injured, be it friend or foe. Shizuka sincerely took care of Riruru even though she knew that she might be attacked again by that robot girl.

#### 4. Suneo

Scene	Qualisign	Legisign	Sinsign
1:35:07-1.35.10 	Suneo ventures to hold the weapon and fire towards the enemy.	Suneo is the spoiled son of a rich man, but he still accompanies his friends to fight an army of robots that invade the earth.	Suneo in Doraemon's story is the son of a rich man whose wishes are fulfilled by his parents, and never live hard.
45.43-45.45 	Accompanied by Giant, his friend Suneo attempts to repel the enemy with a weapon from Doraemon.	Although he was not used to dealing with bad guys, Suneo ventured to continue fighting with his friends.	
Bushido Element: Courage / Yuu (勇), Sincerity / Gi (義), Honor / Meiyo (名誉), Loyalty / Chuugi (忠義)			

In his daily life Suneo often bullied Nobita, boasting of his sophisticated toys. His life as a rich man's son made him never live hard, and always hung everything on his mother who arranged everything. If he's in trouble he'll immediately ask his mother to solve the problem. However, when he found out that there was an army of robots invading the world, he bravely joined his friends on his mission to save the world. The sense of justice that anyone should not be an invader in this world, makes it tough in battle. For a cowardly kid like Suneo to hold a gun and shoot at an enemy is an activity that goes very well beyond his abilities. However, because he has a sense of loyalty to the earthlings and wants to maintain a human good name not to be colonized by an army of robots, he fights hard, despite repeatedly calling his mother. This Suneo action shows elements of Courage, Sincerity, Honor, and Loyalty.

## 5. Giant

Scene	Qualisign	Legisign	Sinsign
23.08.47 	Giant fought to free the earth from the colonies of the robot army.	Because in his daily life Giant is not a cowardly child, except with his own mother, so he without hesitation fights to free the earth from the attack of a robotic army.	In Doraemon's story, Giant is portrayed as a strong child and often bullies his friends.
23.14.13 	With Suneo he fought an army of robots.		
23.14.53 	Giant is not afraid even when entering the robot headquarters in the mirror world.	Giant has no fear or worry because he feels he's a big tall man.	
Bushido Element: Courage / Yuu (勇), Honor / Meiyo (名誉), Loyalty / Chuugi (忠義)			

As the eldest child in his family Giant is accustomed to looking after his younger brother Jaiko. So even though he likes to brag about his friends and likes to be powerful. In the presence of his mother and sister he was helpless. It is Giant who often makes Doraemon pull out various tools to defend Nobita from his distractions. Because he was tall and big, his friends were powerless to deal with him. Especially if Giant has sung which is his hobby. Everyone knows his high screeching voice is irregular, but no one dares say it. However, Giant has a great sense of responsibility towards his family. That's why he's fighting an army of robots with Doraemon and his other friends. His understanding of justice increased sharply and he was not afraid to face the enemy. Moreover, what he defended was the earth, where he lived with his beloved family. It is this Giant behaviour that brings out the element of courage, honor and loyalty in his actions.

## CONCLUSION

The research results on the seven elements of Bushido in the Doraemon animated film entitled "Nobita and the Steel Troops" through Pierce's semiotics with Triadic, sign, object, and interpretant, have been found. The most common element is the element "Yu" or the element of courage. However, it turns out that the Bushido elements are not all independent. There is a link between one element and another and cannot be separated. For example, the elements of courage (Yu) and justice (Gi) are closely related. The results of the research on the elements of courage show that the results are almost the same as justice. This happened with close relating like loyalty (Chuugi) and Honor (Meiyo) too. When we are upholding the value of loyalty, we are protecting the good name of ourselves. This balance principle applies from ancient times until now because the Japanese realize that physical and spiritual life has an equally important role. Treatment that aims to separate the two or ignore the two's disharmony has the potential to cause

disaster and damage (Boy de Mente, 2009: 27). Apart from being based on Zen and Confucian teachings, Bushido was also influenced by Shinto teachings, which taught loyalty to the emperor (Tenno) and the state (Suryohadiprojo: 49). From the description above, it can be explained that Bushido is a code of ethics for the Samurai that has grown since the Samurai formation. Its source is Buddhist and Shinto religious studies in Buddhism, especially Zen teachings. In Buddhism and Shintoism, there is harmony with what the Japanese call "absolute power." Through meditation, the Samurai strived to achieve a higher level of thinking than verbal speech. In addition, Shinto belief teaches loyalty to the powerful, thus neutralizing (possibly) the arrogance of a military warrior. Shinto beliefs emphasize loyalty and love for the country and Tenno. He does not know sin (sin) but emphasizes more honor and dignity.

## REFERENCES

- Baker, Chris. (2004). *Cultural Studies: Teori dan Praktek*, Yogyakarta: Kreasi Wacana.
- Barthes, Roland. (2004). *Mitologi*, (Terj. Nurhadi & Sihabul Millah). Yogyakarta: Kreasi Wacana.
- Danesi, Marcel. (2010). *Pesan, Tanda dan Makna: Buku Teks Dasar Mengenai Semiotika dan Teroi Komunikasi*. Yogyakarta: Jalasutra.
- Everaert-Desmedt, Nicole. (2015). *Peirce's Semiotic*. Diakses dari <http://www.signosemio.com/peirce/semiotics.asp>. Diakses pada 19 November 2020.
- Hoed., B. (2011). *Semiotik dan Dinamika Sosial Budaya*. Depok: Komunitas Bambu.
- Kridalaksana, Harimurti. 2005. *Mongin-Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) Peletak Dasar Strukturalisme Dan Linguistik Modern*. Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia.
- Nitobe, Inazo. 2015. *Bushido the Soul of Samurai: Jalan Kebijaksanaan Para Kesatria Jepang*. Jakarta: Dara Books.
- Sobur, Alex. 2002. *Analisis Teks Media: Suatu Pengantar Untuk Analisis Wacana, Analisis Semiotik, dan Analisis Framing*. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Sobur, A. 2016. *Semiotika Komunikasi*. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Sugiyono. 2013. *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif Kualitatif dan R&D*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Yasraf Amir Piliang. 2003. *Hipersemiotika: Tafsir Cultural Studies Atas Matinya Makna*. Yogyakarta: Jalasutra



# Characterization of Rusdi As a Superhero As Potrayed in "Rusdi Djeung Misnem" By A.C.Deenik & R. Djajadiredja

Nani Sunarni, Idah Hamidah

[nani.sunarni@unpad.ac.id](mailto:nani.sunarni@unpad.ac.id), [idahamidah75@yahoo.co.id](mailto:idahamidah75@yahoo.co.id)

Padjadjaran University, Jenderal Soedirman University

## ABSTRACT

This paper aims to discuss the idea of heroism in a Sundanese child character named Rusdi. The data used in this study are in the form of texts portraying the traits and qualities of Rusdi and his attitude towards his parents and others. The data is collected from a book entitled RoesdiDjeungMisnem (RdM), written by A.C. Deenik& R. Djajadiredja, published in the Dutch colonial era. Based on the results of data analysis through an ethnolinguistic approach, it was identified that Rusdi is a good child who, in Sundanese culture, a child who is well-mannered, well-spoken, and well behaved with others (hade tata, hade basa, hade kapapadajalma). Rusdi is a child with exemplary characters, that in a Sundanese culture known as cageur (healthy), bageur (good), bener (righteous), pinter (smart), jujur (honest), akur (sociable), singer (skillful), danwanter (confident). These attitudes underlie Rusdi's behavior as a good kid so that it becomes an example for others to be called a superhero. Theoretically, this research is useful to add references, especially related to the study of culture. Practically, it can be used as a teaching material about the development of Sundanese characters.

**Keywords:** *Culture, Cageur, Rusdi, Superhero, Sundanese*

## INTRODUCTION

A superhero is depicted as someone physically strong, has good characters, is dedicated to protecting people, stopping crimes, and making the world a better place. According to Dictionary.com, a superhero is a character in a comic book or cartoon portrayed as having superior traits and qualities and uses them to fight crime. In the Merriam-Webster dictionary, a superhero is defined as a fictional character who has extraordinary powers, is very skilled, and is always successful.

Nowadays, superhero characters such as Superman, Spider-Man, Batman, Wonder Woman, the Hulk, Green Lantern, Flash, Aquaman, Captain America, Thor, Wolverine, and Iron Man, are very popular. In Indonesia, there are also superheroes known as Gundala, Si ButadariGuaHantu, Godam, Mandala, Tira, Maza, Aquanus, Nusantara, etc. In terms of physical, superhero characters mentioned above look muscular, strong, large, and tall. However, the hero characteristics that Rusdi have are not in the physical side, but more in the moral and emotional sides, which are in accordance with Sundanese philosophical values, namely cageur (healthy), bageur (good), bener (truthful), pinter (smart), jujur (honest), akur (sociable), singer (skillful), danwanter (confident). These eight concepts serve as the noble principles underlying an excellent Sundanese person who possesses exemplary qualities. Therefore, these eight concepts in Sundanese culture are known as mustika (henceforth will be referred to as mustika in this paper).

Rusdi is the main character in a book used as reading material in elementary school during the Dutch colonial era. There is no official record of when the book was first published, but it is predicted that it was first published in 1913. The book was written in the Sundanese language consisting of four volumes named RusdiDjeungMisnem (RDM), written by A.C Deenik and R.Djajadireja. This book tells the story of Rusdi, a first-grade student in elementary school. It serves as a life-guide for Sundanese people in general. Rusdi is portrayed as chubby, smart, intelligent, helpful, religious, and obedient to his parents. The qualities attributed to Rusdi makes

him a prime example for a Sundanese boy. The book is full of wisdom and serves as a guide to life, compiled as a teaching material that aims to develop human characters. This is stated in the introductory part of the book that reads "... ayaanujadipepelingpanungtun kana kalakuansae...", meaning "...there is a part that serves as a reminder, a guide for good living ...". So, at that time, the book was used as a primary reference. When the Sundanese people do not behave or act following the book's guidance, it is often said, "EuweuhdinabukuRusdina" or it is not in the book of Rusdi. The expression means that it is not in accordance with the rules of social etiquettes that have been defined as those exemplified in the book of Rusdi. In a broader sense, it is not in accordance with the Sundanese way of life.

Along with the changes taking place today, especially in Indonesia, even in smaller areas such as in the Sunda region, the changes have been so abrupt that all existing orders have changed. In contrast, new ones have not yet been fully formed. The old pillars of life have been rendered obsolete by these abrupt changes. The values that we used to rely on have lost their authority, and, as a result, people have also lost their identities. This confusion has caused various crises, including a moral crisis. Our moral values are declining to the point that it can be called moral degradation.

Therefore, a child character like Rusdi, who reflects Sundanese's noble culture, becomes important to study. So that it can restore and recall cultural values as a way of life. Therefore, although this study uses colonial-era data sources, it is still very relevant to our society's current condition. Based on the above reasons, this paper seeks to answer the following questions. (1) What kind of characters are portrayed in the RdM book? (2) What are Sundanese cultural values attributed to Rusdi's characters that make him a superhero character?

Setiawan (2017) has previously conducted a piece of research on "RusdiDjeungMisnem." His research is entitled "IlustrasiBukuRoesdidjeungMisnemsebagaiBacaan Murid-Murid Sekolah Rakyat di Jawa Barat sebelumPerangDunia II." This study illustrates the condition of Sundanese children's education under European colonialism. Hudaya conducted another piece of research (2020), entitled "RusdidjeungMisnem" published by the Dutch East Indies colonial period in the early 20th century. Based on the research, it was found that reading materials for indigenous schools in the early 20th-century place modernity discourse as part of the Dutch East Indies' interests in perpetuating their power, both in terms of aesthetics pragmatics and ideology of the text. However, there has been no research focusing on Rusdi's character as a Sundanese superhero, which is why this research should be considered significant and original.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As a basis for the data analysis in this research, several general theories are used in this study: ethnolinguistic theory, Sundanese indigenous knowledge, and semiotics. The ethnolinguistic approach is employed here as a basis for analysis to identify the relationship between language markers, in the form of text, and culture. Sundanese indigenous knowledge theory is implemented to identify Sundanese cultural values, especially the eight concepts reflected in Rusdi's character in the book RdM. The theory of semiotics is used as a basis for identifying linguistic data assuming cultural significance. Ethnolinguistic consists of two words: ethno and linguistics. Ethno is derived from the English word 'ethnic,' which means ethnicity or ethnic group (Echols & Shadily, 1988: 219) and linguistics, namely the study of language. Ethnolinguistics is a study of the language of a particular tribe or ethnic group.

Based on the Big Indonesian Dictionary, ethnolinguistics is defined as a linguistics branch that investigates the relationship between languages and rural communities or communities that do not have a written language (Depdikbud, 1995:271). Another branch of linguistics that focuses on the relationship between a society's language and culture is known as anthropolinguistics. Anthropolinguistics is a branch of linguistics that studies the variety and use of language in relation to the development of time periods, places, kinship systems, the influence of ethnic customs, beliefs, language ethics, customs, and other cultural patterns of a tribe (Sibarani, 2004: 53). Anthropolinguistics focuses on the relationship between language and culture in a society.

Based on the definitions above, ethnolinguistic studies are not very different from anthropolinguistic studies. However, what is used in this study is ethnolinguistics. Ethnolinguistics used in this research is a linguistic study that involves culture, namely Sundanese culture, which is portrayed in the RdM book. Sundanese culture is an indigenous knowledge system. Therefore, it serves as a theoretical basis for analyzing data about Sundanese culture. Indigenous knowledge consists of two words, namely indigenous and knowledge. Arif meaningful wise, smart, intelligent, knowledgeable. Thus, indigenous knowledge can be defined as a system of society's knowledge to improve welfare and create peace in the community. Therefore, indigenous knowledge is essentially the truth that is the hope of the community. The truth is beneficial for human life. So, local wisdom is the original wisdom or knowledge of a community that comes from the noble value of tradition to regulate people's lives. Local wisdom is a local cultural value that can be used to regulate the order of life wisely or wisely (Sibarani, 2014: 115 Indigenous or local knowledge can be understood as local ideas and knowledge that are well-reasoned, full of wisdom, good value, and virtuous that are owned guided, and implemented by members of the community. This wisdom and knowledge become the identity of the local community. Sundanese people have a saying that goes "Cirisabumicarasadesa, and Javanese people also have a similar saying, which goes *desamawacara, nagaramawatata*. Every village has its custom; every country has its own rules and regulations. Thus the reality, every community upholds a set of norms that, mutually agreed upon, to differentiate between what is good and bad, which is allowed and prohibited. The norm that applies to view people's behavior is called community ethics or social-cultural ethics. The source of value is from the prevailing social norms and cultural values. The concrete form of these values is a set of rules or regulations that govern the way people behave in relationships, in their social life, or in dealing with others. So, social ethics in relationships, in society, or in dealing with others.

So socio-cultural ethics are good and bad provisions that originate from society's social, cultural values and norms. According to Suranto (2010: 209), the basic etiquettes consist of (1) being polite and friendly to anyone (2) caring for others/being selfless (3) Maintaining the feelings of others. (4) ) helping others. (5) having tolerance. (6) being able to control oneself, to control emotions in every situation. Ethical standards determine an action that is considered ethical or right if it is in accordance with social-cultural norms and values in society. Thus, the action is not measured by individuals' subjective interests, but by mutual agreement within the community in general. In a different socio-cultural environment, different ethical norms apply. An old saying in Indonesian goes "*di mana bumidipijak, di situ langitdijungjung*." This means that wherever we are, the locally applicable regulations must be heeded. In Sundanese society, a person is considered good if the way they speak and behave is according to what the community perceives as sound. Indigenous knowledge as a philosophy underlying Sundanese culture is known as *mustika*, which is the basis of applied ethics. Furthermore, this *mustika* is the basis of Rusdi's heroism in the RdM book.

According to the data used in this study in the form of text, and the text is considered a sign, then as a basis for data analysis, the sign theory is used, namely semiotic. Language is a system. The language system in question is in the form of symbols ranging from sounds, words, sentences, to text. Furthermore, every language symbol contains something called meaning or concept. Language is also one of the cultural elements that are a cultural symbol. Alternatively, it can be said that language is a cultural product. Based on this, the book RdM, a story whose main character is Rudi, is text, hence, is also a system of signs carrying cultural values. So, the signs of this language are studied in semiotics.

## METHODS

This research employs a descriptive method for analyzing qualitative data. The data being analyzed is in the form of text, verbal symbols carrying Sundanese cultural values, such *cageur* (healthy), *bageur* (good), *bener* (righteous), *pinter*(smart), *jujur*(honest), *akur* (sociable), *singer* (skillful), *danwanter* (confident). Data is collected from two volumes of the RdM book. The data were collected using the *simak* method, which closely observes each part of the text in each

volume. Next, the behaviors and actions of the character Rusdi, as depicted in the story, are noted down. From the process, 20 individual texts are collected. Of this amount, data reduction was performed. The data reduction is based on the intensity of the cultural context in the text. From the results of data reduction, nine data are taken that are considered to represent data that meet the criteria based on the culture above. The data analysis is carried out in several steps. First, identifying the linguistic manifestation that reflects Rusdi's cultural values. Furthermore, the data is analyzed using an ethnolinguistic approach, namely finding the correlation between the linguistic manifestation that is interpreted culturally. Furthermore, the conclusion is drawn.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the cultural values attributed to the character of Rusdi and how these characteristics and qualities establish Rusdi as a superhero character.

### Rusdi's Characteristics as Portrayed in RdM

Rusdi's heroism (or superheroism) is manifested in the form of narratives highlighting the philosophical values of Sundanese traditional culture, namely *cageur*(healthy), *bageur*(good), *bener* (righteous), *pinter* (smart), *juju r*(honest), *akur* (sociable), *singer* (skillful), *danwanter*(confident). The eight traits show a causal relationship that is rooted in the trait of *cageur*. This is based on the premise that a person who is *cageur* or healthy both physically, verbally, as well as morally, is also a person who is good, righteous, smart, honest, sociable, skillful, and confident. In accordance with Riley's view (2000: 42) that language is a cultural marker. This is in line with Rahyono (2015: 83) that states that language is the embodiment of what is learned and thought by a human being. Language is the representation of culture. A language is a tool or an instrument to verbally express what is learned and thought by a human being. The instrument for expressing the representation in the RdM book is in the form of text. The language used in the RdM is not merely a means of communication, but also as a cultural expression, as a cultural reality of the language owner, the Sundanese people. This is in line with the statement that culture can be identified because it is expressed, manifested, and symbolized by language. This is in accordance with Kramsch in Haryono (2015: 83), which said that *language expresses cultural reality, language embodies cultural reality, language symbolizes cultural reality*. Besides, culture is a sign system that is used as a cultural concept (Masinambow, 2002: 1).

Furthermore, the sign is used as a tool to analyze the cultural phenomenon. Based on this description, texts carrying cultural values rooted in the eight philosophical concepts described above are verbal signs or linguistic signs. Furthermore, these textual signifiers are analyzed here to identify the cultural values that make up Rusdi's heroism. Let us take a look at the following quotes.

*Barudak, sia montong marilu ka Pasar (1), da Ema oge moal lila (2), Engke ti Pasar dikirim keun hakanan jeung cocooan, (3). Caricing bae sia di dieu, tunggu animah, (4)". Heug! tembal barudak the (5) (Deenik&Djajadireja, volume 1: 56)*

'You don't have to come with me to the market (1), I will not be long, anyway (2), I will bring you food and toys (3). Just wait at home (4) ". Yes, Mother, they said' (5)

The quotation above is a statement of the request of a mother (Rusdi's biological mother) when asking her children (Rusdi and Misnem) not to go to the market with her. Moreover, the children do what their mother asks them to do. In terms of structure, the text above consists of five clauses. Clause (1) is a directive utterance from Rusdi's mother to her children (one of them is Rusdi). Furthermore, sentence (5), which is marked with the lingual marker "*Heug*" is an answer that indicates agreement. This is in accordance with Danadibrata (2005: 252) that the word "*heug*" in Sundanese is used to answer or take someone's request. The word is from a Sundanese language variant called *loma* (familiar). The language used in the RdM book is *loma* (familiar) language. According to Suranto (2010: 209), being polite, submissive, and caring for others or being selfless is one of the bases of ethics. Therefore, the word "*heug*" uttered by Rusdi to his mother indicates that, as a child, he listens to his mother, that he is obedient. If he were not



obedient, he would not listen to his mother and do what his mother told him. This scene shows a child's obedience to his parent. Rusdi is only good (*bageur*) to his family, but also others. This trait attributed to Rusdi is portrayed in the story when his friends get in an accident, which is shown in the quotation below.

(2)...*Barang katenjo ku indungna bapana, kacida pisan maranehna karage teunnana, bari nanyanaon sabab-sababna pang ragrag. Ku si Rusdi jeung kusi Jahir dibejake unti mimiti nepi karagragna...*(Deenik&Djajadireja, volume 1: 49)

As soon as his parents found out, they were shocked and asked: "How in the world did my child fall from the tree?" Rusdi and Jahir explained the accident in detail".

In the story, this scene takes place when Rusdi took his friend home, who accidentally fell from the tree while playing. What Rusdi does for his friend is a prime example of a good deed. It indicates that he is a good boy. Conversely, if Rusdi does not help his friend who is in an accident, he is included in a child who does not have a sense of concern for others. Because nowadays, in many cases, it is undeniable that many people lack caring for others, even those who are in difficulty. The nature of Rusdi's concern for others is very high. This is what underlies that Rusdi is a good child. In the Sundanese culture, Rusdi is *budakbageur* (a good boy). According to Sundanese culture, children who are obedient to their parents and good to other people are *budakbageur*. According to Danadibrata (2015: 49) the word *bageur* means *hade adatkalkuannana, teubangor, teubadeur* or well-behaved, not naughty, and having good manners. The denotative meaning of the word *bageur* is a special meaning that can be identified by the terms binary or part binary, contrast. arranged in terms of the different features of + cageur, + bageur, + bener, -bangor. + akur. So the *bageur* value shows a relationship with other values, namely cageur, bener, and akur.

Rusdi is not only helpful to his friends. However, friendly and kind to anyone. This can be seen in the following text.

(3)*Mang, naha bet geus rek balik?" ceuk Rusdi, kapan kakara sakeudeung di dieu teh. Meureun nineungtemen, mang.*" ( Deenik&Djajadireja, volume 1: 54

'Uncle, why are you leaving so soon? But, you just got here, said Rusdi. I'll be missing you.

Quotation (3) tells us a scene when Rusdi's uncle, who had not been staying with his parents for a long time, would return to his home in Bandung. Seeing this, Rusdi expresses his objection. He enjoys hanging out with his uncle or with anyone. Moreover, he is not bothered by the presence of his uncle. He accepts anyone and goes along with anyone. Such an attitude indicates that he possesses the trait of *akur*. *Akur* meaning being good to anyone ( Danadireja, 2015: 12).

As a child, the *akur* and *bageur* nature of Rusdi is also based on the fact that he is religious. This can be seen in the following text.

(4)*Ari datang ka imahna, sabada tarawih, Rusdi buru-buru bug ngedeng, pokna: "sieun kabeurangan saur." Unggal janari Rusdi tanghian pisan, malah sakapeung mahindungna oge sok dihudangkeun kumanehna, sinaburu-buru ngejokeur saur.*( Deenik&Djajadireja, jilid 2: 57).

'After tarawih, Rusdi went to sleep. "I don't want to be late for *sahur*", he said. Every morning in the month of Ramadan, he wakes up quickly before the crack of dawn. Even sometimes he wakes his mother to cook for *sahur* and eat together immediately.

Besides being a good kid, he is also 'good,' right' right,' gets along with 'friendly' and religious, he is also known as a smart kid. His intelligence can be seen in the following quote.

...Unggal tuan Kontrolir mariksa naon-naon, ku Rusdi dijawab sarta bener)  
(Deenik&Djajadireja, volume 2: 102)

'Every time a controller comes to check, Rusdi always answers correctly.'

The incident occurred when the school was under the control of the Dutch. During the Dutch colonial era, every school or institution was regularly controlled by the Dutch. The arrival of the controller is always accompanied by Wedana, Camat, and the local Lurah. Rusdi is the best student in his class. And when the controller asks all, he was able to answer all the questions correctly. Rusdi intelligence is not only related to academic problems in school. He is able to beat her when outside the classroom. His superiority is reflected in the following scene.

...Heug engke kudewek dipapatahan. Lebah dieusilaingnyieungugunungankukeusik, sing luhur, lebah ditusilaing nyieun hiji deui. Dewek rek nyieun bobolaannana, adukeuneun.(Deenik&Djajadireja, volume 1: 37)

The scene takes place when Rusdi and his friends will be playing on the riverbank. His friends have no idea what games they want to play because, at that time, there were no tools or toys that could be played. However, Rusdi suggested the idea to play by making use of objects around him, such as playing with sands. Even Rusdi led the making of toys as well as a game called *Titimplukan*.

This scene tells us that Rusdi is able to utilize and optimize nature around him for creativity. He does not depend on others and on the tools that must be purchased, as is common today. Today, toys and the like are widely available in stores. Thus, children do not need to bother, do not need to make, but they can easily have it instantly by buying finished goods. This makes children today more spoiled compared to children of old who were more reliable in dealing with challenges. Therefore, by being able to optimize himself, utilize all of his five senses, and the intelligence he has, he can become a more creative human being. It is with his creativity that Rusdi is called a smart child or, in Sundanese, *pinter*. The word '*pinter*' (smart) is in contrast with the word *bodo* (foolish). According to Danadibrata (2015: 533) *pinter* means *lobakanyaho, lobakabisa, bisadigawena, gancang kana ngartileuwihtibatur* or 'knowledgeable, reliable, understand more quickly compared to others.' It can be seen that Rusdi, as a child, is knowledgeable, talented, and have some leadership quality.

In addition to that, Rusdi is also portrayed to have another quality, as we can see in from the quotation below.

Semah: "Kadarieu Ujang, Nyai, bapa jeung emaaya?"

Rusdi: "Araya, bapa keur macul di kebon, emake urninun di tukang. Ke! Ku kuring rekdi bejakeun, nya!" ( Deenik&Djajadireja, volume 1:page.14)

Guest: "(1) Come here, children, (2) Are your parents home?"

Rusdi: (3) Yes, (4) father is working in the garden, (5) mother is doing some weaving in the back of the house. (6) I'll let them know.

The conversation above consists of six clauses. The first clause is imperative, indicated by the phrase '*kadarieu*' or 'come here'. Clause (2) is in the form of a question or an imperative clause. The third clause is the answer to the question in clause (2). Clauses (4) and (5) are explanations of clause (3), and clause (6) is Rusdi's requests to the guest as a follow-up to clause (3).

The pronoun *Ujang* or boy refers to Rusdi, and the pronouns *Nyai* or girl refers to Rusdi's sister. In accordance with the discussion of this study, the figure is limited to a child named Rusdi, then only Rusdi's behavior will be described. In terms of speech acts, clauses (1) and (2) are considered as locus acts which show the illocution of invitations and questions. At the same time, clause (6) is an act of speech that is marked by a lingual marker '*Ke! Ku kuringrekdi bejakeun, nya!*'

'I'll let them know'. Without any direct command from the guest to call his parents, he immediately called his parents. From the socio-cultural ethics, Rusdi meets the criteria of socio-cultural ethics that is friendly, polite, caring, and helpful. These actions and traits in Sundanese culture is called as *singer*. According to the Dictionary of Sundanese Language (Danadireja, 2005: 641) *singer* means *hideng kana gawe skilled* or having the ability to take the initiative. Alternatively, if the child is facing a job directly, he does without having to be told. In the text (5) there is clause (2) in the form of speech questions. The core of the clause questions the whereabouts of the child's parents. Furthermore, they answer as contained in clause (3). Because the child is healthy, both physically and spiritually, what comes out of his speech is an honest speech. According to Danadibrata (2015: 298), in the Sundanese Dictionary, the so-called honest word is *henteubasilat* 'not lying.' Besides, judging by the events of his speech, the speech is the utterance of a 'guest' *semah* and a child named Rusdi, who had never before met at all. However, the little boy named Rusdi immediately responded to the guest question, even told his parents, who were working to see him immediately. The child's actions in Sundanese are called *haanu* 'not shy,' *wanter* (confident). Danadireja (2005: 737) in the Sundanese Dictionary mentioned that *wanter* or *sonagar*. *Sonagar* means *heunteudusun* (Danadibrata, 2005: 649). The word *sonagar* in English is equivalent to the word 'confident.' In fact, as proof that Rusdi has a personality that *sonagar* or *wanter* can be seen in the following quote.

*Dina mimiti buka sakola, murid-murid nu aya di kelas hiji aya tilupuluh. Di antara eta ngan Rusdi nu minang kapangsonagarna. ( Deenik&Djajadireja, volume 2: 81)*

When the school opened, there were thirty students. Among these students, Rusdi was the most courageous to stand out.

From the texts (6) and (7) it is identified that Rusdi is a child who has the intelligent character 'smart,' 'skilled' *singer*, and *wanter* 'dare to appear'. All three traits have a causal relationship, which is a talented person 'smart' because he has the ability, so he became a 'creative' *singer*. Furthermore, people who are smart and creative encourage themselves to be people who dare to appear 'wanter.'

Behaviors that are *bageur* 'good', correct 'right', clever 'clever', honest 'honest', get along 'friendly', *singer* 'skilled', and *wanter* 'brave' inherent in Rusdi, entirely based on conditions the physical child is physically healthy. This can be seen in the following text.

*...Euleuh! euleuh!.... geuning lintuh naker. Pipina mani karebi, beuteungna nyemplu....  
...Dadaharan nana unggal poe beak duakati, ceuk emana....Barang hakanna teu aya eureunna. Ti barang hudang nepi ka dug hees, sungut nateu petot-petotnya pek. Sakur kahakanan nu kapanggih dihuapkeun.*

'Oh, he's very chubby. His cheeks are chubby, potbelly... "Every day, he eats twice" (a measure of a weight of 0.617613 kg), his mother said. He eats a lot. From the moment you wake up to sleep, your mouth doesn't stop chewing. Any food on sight, he devours it'

Based on the text (8) in terms of the physical, the child is physically healthy. A physically healthy human being will be healthy spiritually. This is due to all the organs can be optimized to work. Even the phrase "in a healthy body, there is a healthy soul." Even in Sundanese culture, being healthy is not only limited to being physically or physically fit but spiritually healthy. In other words, a healthy human being is physically healthy, healthy, and healthy, physical asman physical/physical health', healthy speech, and healthy / good speech acts'.

The language symbol or language sounds in the form of the word *cageur* as the primary philosophical concept of Sundanese culture commensurate with the word 'healthy' in English. This word in Sundanese has a denotative meaning that is *henteukaterapdeuikasakit*, sane, *eureuntinagering*, *bag gering* (Danadibrata, 2015: 122) or when translated into English commensurate with the words 'no longer illness, healthy, has recovered from illness. The word

*cageur* Sundanese synonymous with the word *Waluya* meaning *cageur-bageurwaluyajeunglampahbageur*, *cageur-bageurlahir-batin* (Danadibrata, 2015: 736) 'healthy-good and good behavior, healthy-both physical and mental.' In addition to having denotative meaning, the word *cageur* also has a connotative meaning. The connotative meaning is stimulating and arousing the senses, feelings, attitudes, judgments, and beliefs and specific needs, as well as stereotypes (Parera, 2002: 99). Stimuli from connotative meaning can be both individually and collectively. The direction tends to be positive and negative or can be overlapping and alternating based on experiences and associations that emerge and live on the individual and the user community of the speech community. Thus, there is no one standard and fixed connotation. However, the connotation can also be supported by the culture of the speaker community. The connotative meaning of the word *cageur* in Sundanese culture stimulates and evokes negative judgments. This is due to connotative meaning is used when assessing things, speech, ideas, and behavior that is not in accordance with the basic rules of socio-cultural ethics, especially the Sundanese people. The value of 'healthy' *cageur* in Sundanese culture is contained in the physical, verbal, and action *cageur* value of 'healthy' as is known that if physically healthy will produce ideas, speech, and actions that are healthy too, likewise, with Rusdi's character as a Sundanese superhero in this study. Therefore, in Sundanese culture, every Sundanese human being needs to be *cageur*, both physically and mentally.

### The cultural values of Rusdi's Superheroism as Portrayed in the RdM Book

The eight concepts called *mustika*, which form the philosophical foundation of life in Sundanese culture, are a potential to form a complete human being. As the name implies, *mustika*, as an invaluable valuable item, needs to be maintained and utilized optimally in human life. In order to become a human who survived the world and the hereafter. Likewise, the RdM book in which he guided a small child named Rusdi became a guide for life as a way to be a good guideline containing cultural values. These cultural values represent a superior potential to become a dignified human being. The relationship of idealization of the potential characteristics of *cageur*, *bageur*, *bener*, *pinter*, *jujur*, *akur*, *singer*, dan *wanter* in the text that was directed by Rusdi manifested in the form of culture. Furthermore, cultural forms function as they benefit. To produce value, it is necessary to work with various attainment strategies. The relationship of idealization can be seen in the following table.

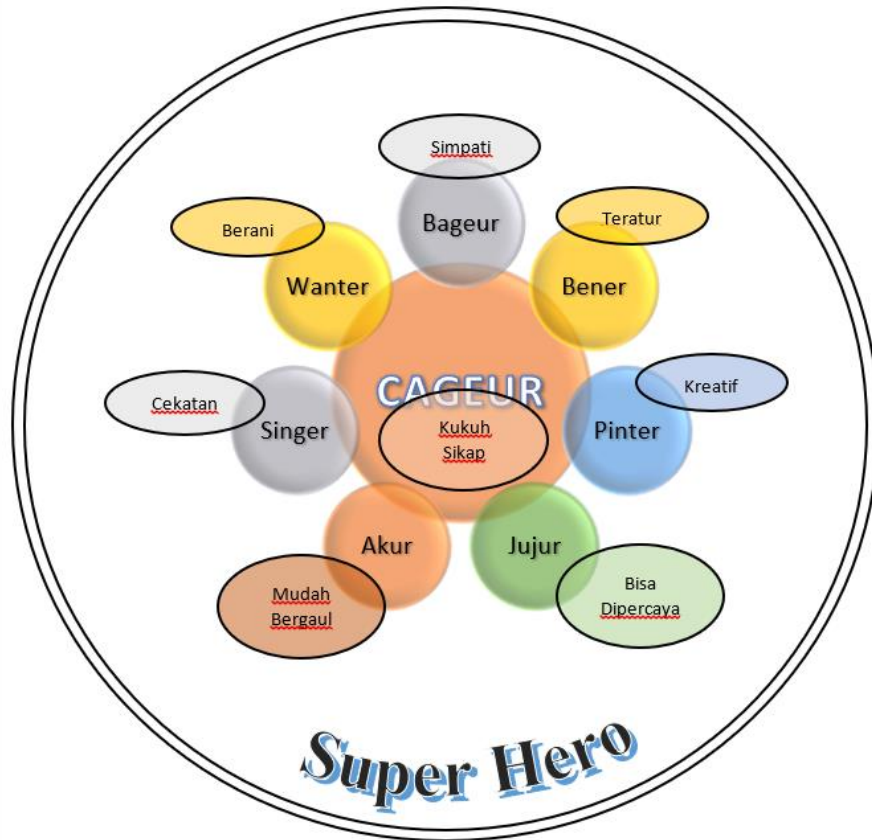
Table 1. Potential relationship, cultural form, and Rudi's Idealization Relationship

Potentials	Cultural Forms	Idealization Relationship		
		Functions	Strategy	Cultural value
<i>cageur</i>	physically and mentally healthy; (physically healthy, ucap, lampah)	consistency	balance	adamant attitude
<i>bageur</i>	-Polite -Well behaved	solidarity	proportional	sympathy
<i>bener</i>	well-mannered/religious	moral basis	well targeted	ordered
<i>pinter</i>	-Being able to answer any question. -Knowledgable& insightful -Having leadership qualities	achievement	professional	success
<i>jujur</i>	Honest in speaking and action	Good-hearted	thoughtful	trustworthy/ trust
<i>Akur</i>	-Good to others -Helpful	friendly	showing solidarity	sociable
<i>Singer</i>	Work and act with skilled	dexterous	creative	dexterous
<i>wanter</i>	Confident, bold	self-actualization	competitive	brave



The eighth potentials mentioned above do not stand alone individually but have a causal relationship. A person who is *cageur*, both physically and mentally, will have a healthy mind. A healthy mind leads to eloquence and a pleasant manner. A person who is well-spoken and well-mannered indicates that he or she possesses the noble characters of *mustika*. All of these qualities are reflected in the portrayal of character Rusdi in RdM. The causal relationship and the elements forming the superhero character of Rusdi can be described as follows.

## CONCLUSION



The RdM book is not just a series of words woven into sentences, and from sentences into text. But it carries messages rich in Sundanese cultural values. Rusdi, a village boy, who always studies hard at school, obedient to his parents, and good at socializing, care for others, is a child with superior qualities. It is all none other than because he always strives to be a Sundanese with *mustika*, that is a 'healthy' and strong human being, who is not easily influenced by bad things. A person who is *bageur* is willing to help and to empathize with others. A person who is *bener* may live a good life. A person who is *pinter* may be successful. A person who is *jujur* can be relied upon by others. A person who is *akur* is sociable and get along with others. A person who is *singer* leads to a skilled person, and a person who is *wanter* tends to be more confident and may achieve self-actualization. All these traits and qualities establish Rusdi as a superhero character. He is a Sundanese superhero. In other words, he is *hade tata, hade basa, hade kapapada jalma* '. Thus, a superhero in Sundanese culture means that he or she is a person who *luhur elmuna* 'berilmu', *pengkuh agamana* ', *ranca gegawena* dan *leber wawanenna* 'berani karena benar'. Furthermore, all the traits and qualities are present in Rusdi, resulting in the so-called superhero Sundanese culture.

## REFERENCES

- Berger, A.Arthur. 1984. *Sign in Contemporary Culture : An Introduction to Semiotics*.
- Deenik, A.C. & Djajadireja. Tanpatahun. Roesdi jeung Misnem. Rijswijk (Z.H.). Blankwaardt & Schoonhoven.
- Hudaya, Asep dkk. Implementasi Nilai-nilai Kearifan Lokal dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa dan Sastra Sunda sebagai Upaya Mewujudkan Generasi unggul dan Berkarakter dalam Prosiding Setali. Bandung: Balai Bahasa UPI.
- Leech, Geoffrey. *Semantik* terjemahan Partana, Paina. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Parera, J.D. 2004. *Teori Semantik*. Jakarta: Penerbit Erlangga.
- Riley, Philip. 2000. *Language, Culture, and Identity An Ethnolinguistic Perspective*. London: Continuum.
- Rahyono, F.X. 2015. *Kearifan Budaya dalam Kata*. Jakarta: Wedatama Widya Sastra.
- Suranto, AW.2010. *Komunikasi Sosial Budaya*. Yogyakarta: Graha Ilmu.
- Sutrisno, Mudhi&Putranto, Hendar. 2005. *Teori-teori Kebudayaan*. Yogyakarta: kanisius.
- Sibarani, Robert. 2014. *Kearifan local*. Jakarta: Asosiasi tradisi Lisan. 2004. *Antropolinguistik*. Medan: PenerbitPoda.
- <https://jambi.tribunnews.com/2019/08/29/daftar-10-superhero-indonesia-yang-tak-diketahui-banyak-orang-dari-godam-gundala-sd-merpati>.
- <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/superhero>
- <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/superhero>
- Dictionary
- Danadibrata, 2015. *Kamus Bahasa Sunda cetakan ke-4*. Bandung: Kiblat Buku Utama.
- Echols& Shadily, 1988. *Kamus Inggris Indonesia*. Jakarta: PT Gramedia.
- Wiyadi, Albertus. dkk.1995. *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*. Jakarta: Balai Pustaka.

# **“Educative Traits Found in Kian Santang on Tv Sinetron *Raden Kian Santang* As Prospective Indonesian Superhero”**

**Dian Adiarti**

Fakultas Ilmu Budaya Universitas Jenderal Soedirman  
dian.adiarti@unsoed.ac.id

## **ABSTRACT**

The world Superheroes in literary works (fiction) named Marvel, Wolverine, Spider-Man, Iron Man, Thor, Silver Surfer, Iceman, Mystique, and Black Bolt have their own unique traits to handle world's chaos. Those superheroes are famous all among the worlds in all ages and eras. Locally, Indonesia's superheroes were also created in some medias ; Godam, Semberani, Zantoro, Aquanus, Kalong, Merpati, Panji Super Millenium, Satria Baja Hitam, etc. Indonesian new superheroes appeared as the main characters who has powerful strength to fight against the chaos and create a secure atmosphere. These are introduced by some Indonesian medias and on Sinetron TV series such as ; Super Dede, Sangkuriang, Bima, Jaka Tigkir, Pangeran 2, Raden Kian Santang. These Indonesian new superheroes are introduced to audiences not only give amusement but also knowledge of various Indonesian local wisdom, values, and culture. Usually, in watching superheroes series, the audiences only consider amusements and the powerful of their superheroes in beating their enemies. They do not consider the good values of their superheroes. On sinetron TV series entitled Raden Kian Santang in fact has educative traits that enable the audiences ( children ) to be influenced positively. These traits will be found through the main characters of Raden Kian Santang. By analyzing, watching, observing, and recording the data of some actions in plot, the researcher will answer the research questions. The researcher will use descriptive qualitative to analyze the data on this sinetron TV series. Then she uses theory of superhero and educative traits answering these research questions. The result are in sinetron TV Raden Kian Santang, educative traits were identified. The findings of educative traits in sinetron tv Raden Kian Santang are Devote to God / religious, adaptive, Intuitive, honest and determine, full of empathy, forgiving, independent, kind, patient, responsible and respectful man. These traits hopefully to enrich adult in educating children who are mostly popular with their negative traits; consumerism, anti social, individualist, disobedient, brutal, pessimistic, selfish and lack of having mind set of local wisdom. Finally, the heroic and educative traits of the character of Kian Santang nominates him as a prospective one of Indonesian superheroes.

**Key words : Educative Traits, Super Hero, Sinetron TV Series**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Talking about famous superheroes, we direct our opinion to Superman, The captain of America, Marvel, Wolverine, Spider-Man, Iron Man, Thor, Silver Surfer, Iceman, Mystique, and Black Boltin. These superheroes have attracted most people in all ages around the world since they have duties in their actions to get rid of injustice, unfairness, crime, chaos, or even dangerous enemies from other spaces. These castings movies or in media become idol for everyone for all ages since they also have unique characters in handling their jobs.

Superheroes also existed in Indonesia and they were created from old days up to now. People in all ages include children, try to amuse with these superheroes; such as *Rama Superman Indonesia (1974)*, Godam, Semberani, Zantoro, Aquanus, Kalong, Merpati, Panji Super Millenium, Satria Baja Hitam, Satria Garuda Bima, Manusia Enam Juta Dollar, Si Buta dari Gua Hantu. While Superheroes in mellenium era are Indonesian new superheroes appeared as the main characters who have powerful strength to fight against the chaos and create a secure atmosphere. These were introduced in Indonesian widescreen film; *Pendekar Tongkat Mas (2014)*,

Satria Heroes Revenge of Darkness (2017), Valentine (2017), 3 Alif Lam Mim (2015), and Gundala (2019). Not only in wide screen, superheroes are also introduced on serial TV sinetron. These are introduced by some Indonesian medias and on Sinetron TV series such as ; Super Dede, Sangkuriang, Bima, Jaka Tigkir, Pangeran 2. Those characters in superheroes can be imaginative characters; (Superdede, Si Buta dari Gua Hantu, Panji Super Millenium), legend characters (Sangkuriang, Bima), or even historical Characters; (Jaka Tingkir).

While people hear about sinetron TV series, they direct to the negative opinion. They thought that sinetron TV series will give the negative impact toward the audience, especially children. Actually, not all sinetron TV series give negative impact for audiences, but it might give positive impact.

In the last two years, there was one of TV sinetron which has 835 episodes entitled Raden Kian Santang. It shows regularly on Monday-Friday on MNC TV and it becomes the 1 st ratter for the audiences. This TV sinetron told the audience about legend of Padjajaran Kingdom. The TV sinetron of Raden Kian Santang tells the audience about the struggles of Prabu Siliwangi (Ananda George) the King of Padjajaran Kingdom governed the state and gave people welfare. On his struggles, the enemies tried hard to defeat him and they would take over the position. This serial TV sinetron series also tell about the fighting of both good (Prabu Siliwangi and the followers) and bad (black magic power) sides. Prabu Siliwangi helped by his three loyal and obedient children and followers demolished the misdeed, unfairness, wicked and injustice treatment. In addition, It also tells about Sundanese culture involving values, moral, the traditional martial arts, religious traits, and West Java local wisdom. This sinetron TV is acted by some children actors as protagonist ; Kian Santang (Alwi Assegaf). Walang Sungsang (Ahmad Ridho), Nyimas Rara Santang (Riem Tami). While the children actors as antagonist is Mahesa (Trick Marcello), and Raden Surawisesa (Gentar Vyandra).

It is also considered that this TV sinetron of Kian Santang with Alwi Assegaf as the main character, becomes perspective Superhero. Superhero as it defines that the characters have unique supranatural ability to eradicate the misdeed and wicked treatment in the world (winterbach, 2006 ). Superhero also has certain vision to do the good traits, has certain name and special costume while doing their duty. Superhero usually has positive masculine traits; helps others, fights against the bad, fights for justice, takes care of others, and gives empathy. In addition he is also brave, honest, tolerant, and manly.

It is also hoped that the children are interested and being amused by watching this TV sinetron, since some of protagonists are children and they become as role models. In addition, it conveys educative message for audience. This is in line with Aristotele in Budianta, et all that literature product will give pleasure, knowledge, and experience ( 2002 : 8 ). By watching this film, the audiences not only get amusement but also got role models for the to adopt the positive values and cultural wisdom into their daily life. In addition, this will give widen sights for the audience about religious traits and good models for educating children. Since nowadays, in the millenium era, children reflected as generation Z's characters who need to be educated and formed as prospective human resources.

Based on the reasons above there are some of questions related to the research:

1. What are the educative traits in characters of Kian Santang on Sinetron TV Series ?
2. Why does Kian Santang become a prospective become superhero ?

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1 Superhero**

The word Superhero reminds to the strong and Superhero as it defines that the characters have unique supranatural ability to eradicate the misdeed and wicked treatment in the world (winterbach, 2006 ). Superhero also has certain vision to do the good traits, has certain name and special costume while doing their duty. As Ridwan ( 2019;1) said in his journal that there are five kinds of superheroes;standard bearers, workers, lovers,bosses, and rugged individuals. Male gender role dominates by characters in film productions is bosses superhero, means a man can



control others, protect others, help others, sacrifice for justice, and defend others. He is also brave, a good role models, independent, though, and tolerant.

## 2.2 Educative Traits

Educative traits in Indonesia are promoted as the result of human education in formal schools. As it is stated in GBHN 1993, that educations are required to fulfill the purpose of national education in Indonesia. Educative traits covers devote to God, well behaved, independent, creative, hard working, high self-esteem, discipline, professional, smart, creative, productive, responsible, and devote to country, has healthy and spiritually mind (Wahyudin, 2001). These traits would be formed to promote professional human resources, the qualified Indonesian young generation with characters. These cover; supported by the combination of characteristics that are innate to people as individuals as well as characteristics that develop from specific life experiences. The personality traits that make up a person goes a long way in determining how successful he is. There are certain personality traits that help young generation to be succeed. Success may mean different things for different people. The following traits based on Meador, 2019 can be described as follows :

### 1. Devote to God / Religious

Someone who obeys to God and he is faithful to God or a certain religion. In this discussions, Moeslem and the followers should pray 5 five times a day; Subuh, Dzuhur, Ashar, Maghrib, and Isa. He/she believes in Rukun Iman and Rukun Islam. In addition he/she should do God's command and do not do the prohibition.

### 2. Adaptive

This is the ability to handle a sudden change without making a distraction. People who have this trait can handle sudden adversity without letting academics suffer. In academic setting, students who have this trait are quickly able to make adjustments that minimize distractions when things do not go according to plan.

### 3. Conscientious

Conscientiousness involves the capacity to complete a task meticulously with efficiency and the highest quality. Usually, conscientious students can produce high-quality work consistently. They are extremely organized and efficient, and they provide others with quality lessons or activities.

### 4. Creative

This is the ability to use original thinking to solve problems. People who have this trait can think critically and they are adapt problem solvers. Someone who has this trait is able to use his/her creativeness to handle the problem.

### 5. Determine

A person with determination can fight through adversity without giving up to accomplish a goal. People who have this trait are goal orientated, and they do not allow anything to get in the way of accomplishing those goals. People with determination could figure out a way to get their job done. They do not make excuses and find ways to reach the goals, even with the most difficult ways.

### 6. Tolerant

Empathy allows a person to relate to another individual even though he/she may not share similar life experiences or problems. Student who has this trait is able to relate to his/her classmates. He/she is nonjudgmental. Instead, he/she is supportive and understanding. someone who has this trait can look beyond the walls of his/her classroom to assess and meet their students' needs. He/she recognizes others well that life is difficult and he/she tries to figure out solutions for helping them.

### 7. Forgiving

Forgiveness is the capacity to move beyond a situation in which someone was wrong without feeling resentment or holding a grudge. People who are forgiving can let things go that could potentially serve as a distraction when they have been accused by someone else. Future teacher with this trait can work closely with administrators, parents, students, or other who may have created an issue or controversy that was potentially detrimental to the teacher.

8. **Honest**  
People who are genuine demonstrate sincerity through actions and words without hypocrisy. Someone who shows genuineness is well-liked and trusted. He/she has many friends and often looks upon as leaders. Someone with this trait is viewed as highly professional person.
9. **Gracious**  
Graciousness is the ability to be kind, courteous, and thankful when someone is dealing with any situation. He/she is gracious is popular among his/her peers and well-liked by their friends. Someone is drawn to his/her personality. He/she often goes out of his/her way to help others any time an opportunity arises. Someone who has this trait is well respected. In educative setting, he/she is invested in his/her school beyond the four walls of their classroom. He/she is volunteer for assignments, helps other teachers when needed, and even find ways to assist needy families in the community.
10. **Gregarious**  
The ability to socialize with and relate to other people is known as gregariousness. In educative setting students who have this trait would work well with other people. They are capable of making a connection with others. They love people and are often the center of the social universe. Teachers who have this trait can build strong, trusting relationships with their students and families. They take the time to make real connections that often extend beyond the walls of the school. They can figure out a way to relate to and carry on conversation with some personality types.
11. **Independent**  
This is the ability to work through problems or situations on their own without requiring assistance from others. Students who have this trait do not rely on other people to accomplish tasks. They are self-aware and self-driven. They can accomplish the task by themselves. People who have this trait can take good ideas from other people. They can come up with solutions for some problems.
12. **Intuitive**  
The ability to read people's mind and predict the next incident. Intuitive people enable other to have a bad day and enable to handle the situation. These who have this trait enable them to tell students to grasp a concept. They can quickly assess and adapt the lesson. They are also able to predict when a student is going through personal adversity.
13. **Kind**  
Kindness is the capacity of someone to help others without getting any return. People possessing this trait have many friends and companions. They are generous and thoughtful. They become very popular for others and look forward to get along together.
14. **Obedient**  
People who is obedient are well thought. They are typically compliant, well-behaved, and never have problem in classroom or in any kinds of setting. Those possessing this trait could build a trusting and cooperative relationship with their friends.
15. **Patient**  
People who have this trait would understand that sometimes they have to wait their turn. They tried to reevaluate, find another approach, and try again. In educative setting teachers who have this trait would understand that the school year is a marathon not a race. They understand that each day presents its challenges and their job is to figure out how to get every student from point A to point B as the year progresses.
16. **Reflective**  
Those who are reflective can look back at a point in the past and draw lessons from its based on the experience. People will take new concepts and match them with previous learning concepts to strengthen the core of learning. They can figure out ways in which newly acquired knowledge in real life situations. In educative setting, teachers who have this trait are continuously growing, learning and improving. They reflect on their practice every day making continuous changes and improvements. They are always looking for something better than before.

#### 17. Respectful

The ability to allow others to do and be their best through positive and supportive interactions is respectfulness. In educative setting Students who are respectful can work cooperatively with their peers. They respect the opinions, thoughts, and feelings of everyone around them. They are sensitive to everyone and try to treat everyone as they want to be treated. Teachers who have this trait would understand what they must do. They maintain the dignity of their students all times and create a positive atmosphere and respect them in the classroom.

#### 18. Responsible

This is the ability to be able to carry out tasks have been assigned. Students who are responsible can complete and turn in every assignment on time. They follow a prescribed schedule. Teachers who have this trait are trustworthy and become valuable assets to the administration. They are regarded as professional and often asked to help out in areas. They are highly reliable and dependable.

### METHODS

In this part, the research methodology, technique of data collection, and data analysis are discussed.

This research is qualitative research which Sutopo said that this research yields descriptive data which are taken in spoken and in written from someone or attitudes (2003 : 49).

The data collection are done by finding the evidences of the film TV series in Raden Kian Santang. These are found from the intrinsic elements; theme, characters, setting, plot, and actions. Then the extrinsic elements were taken from library research related to the basic theory of educative traits, theory of superhero and Javanese cultural values; West Java especially.

The data analysis is aimed to find out the answers of the problem questions which are mentioned before. The data were sorted by watching the sinetron TV series of Kian Santang in some episodes. Then, with the theoretical framework, she related educative traits to the evidences and superhero theory. Then, the main intrinsic elements; plot, characterization, and also theme were also used in this the analysis.

Determining the object of research involves several episodes of Raden Kian Santang. Secondly, they are watched repeatedly. After obtaining the traits and actions of the characters in each episode, next she discovered and elaborated the educative and superhero traits. Finally, she made conclusions.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This sinetron TV told the audience about national history, of Padjajaran Kingdom. The TV sinetron of Raden Kian Santang told the audience about the struggle of Prabu Siliwangi (Ananda George) the King of Padjajaran Kingdom to govern the state and gave people welfare. On his struggles, the enemies tried hard to defeat him and would take over the position. This serial sinetron TV also told about the fighting of both good (Prabu Siliwangi and the followers) and bad (black magic power) sides. Prabu Siliwangi helped by his three loyal and obedient children and followers to demolish the misdeed, unfairness, wicked and injustice men. It is proven from the story line that Prabu Siliwangi's wife, Nyai Subang Larang is the daughter of Syeh Hasanudin a religious man in Karawang. He conveyed Islam through some part of West Java. He and her daughter taught Raden Kian Satang, Raden Walang Sungsang, and Nyi Rara Santang about Islam. Some actions could be seen from the following data and the analysis :

Some educative traits found in sinetron TV Kian Santang are as follow :

#### 1. Religious/ Devote to God

The characteristic of people who devote to God would reveal their traits such as they are afraid of their God for not doing the outlaw and would do all the God's command. In Islam, they would pray five times a day. They believe in Rukun Islam and Rukun Iman, and they try to apply those belief in their daily life. They will always depend on Allah SWT for blessing. They would also believe to prophet Muhamad S.A.W for conveying Islam and adopting his traits as model. In addition, their devotion could be revealed from reading and learning the gist of Al'Quran, to be

grateful and patient for world's temptation, resign for the faith after doing the efforts. ( Mutia Sari, 2020; 1). This opinion is in line with some actions depicted from some episodes of the sinetron tv of Raden Kiang Santang.

In some episodes, Raden Kian Santang spent his time for praying, reading Qur'an, and told people to behave well. When he returned to palace after wandered for experiences, he knelled down and prayed and spelled Alhamdulillah in front of the entrance. This is reflected in his daily that he remembered and devoted towards Allah. He also said Basmallah before doing the activity. He said Astaghfirullah after seeing the wicked traits. While he met the betrayal officer named Arga Dhana, he gave him warning not to do for misdeed. Unfortunately, Arga Dhana disrespected him and threatened to kill him. But he strongly believed that all creatures depend on Allah, S.W.T. In the story, he went to Baitullah to do the last rukun Islam.

These actions reflected on Kian Santang as the main character. The little son of Prabu Siliwangi gave the role model toward the audiences, especially children that to obey God is very important to the next stage of life.

## 2. Adaptive

Raden Kian Santang has this traits well, because when he was child he used to live with people outside the palace. He is responsive and he adapts quickly in a sudden change or makes quick adjustments and minimizes the problem. It is also depicted when Padjajaran Palace got the trouble in handling a sudden attack from enemy; Nini Durga and her faithful followers. He had to take over the position of the betrayal palace officer and lead the soldiers to defeat the enemies. In addition in some incidents, he was trusted by King Padjajaran to handle the troubles happening outside the palace. It was believed that in certain parts of the episodes, he went to Mecca for visiting Baitulloh. On the way to Mecca he met some people with different language and culture. Fortunately, he could get along with them, even he should struggle for being accepted by the foreigners. ( Raden Kian Santang episode 225 part 1 ).

## 3. Honest and Determine

A person who is honest is the basic of having other good traits. Even it is very hard become an honest one. While determine traits is a person with determination can fight through adversity without giving up to accomplish a goal. People who have this trait are goal orientated, and they do not allow anything to get in the way of accomplishing those goals. People with determination figure out a way to get their job done. They do not make excuses. They find ways to reach even the most difficult people through trial and error without giving up. Most of protagonist characters of tv sinetron of Raden Kian Santang have these traits. They fought against the bad and tried to reveal the good traits. The protagonist characters are Raden Kian Santang, Raden Arya Kemuning, Raden Walang Sungsang, Nyimas Rara Santang, The King of Prabu Siliwangi, Ratu Subang Larang, The teachers of Siliwangi's children, Prabu Kuncung Putih, and Prabu Siliwangi followers.

## 3. Empathy

One of basic characteristic of a superhero and in educative traits is empathy. Kian Santang has deep empathy to the weaknesses, poor people, children, women who got unfairness or bad treatment from others. His determination for fighting through adversity without giving up to accomplish a goal. He did not make excuses and found ways to reach even the most difficult condition through trial and error without giving up. Most of characters of tv sinetron of Raden Kian Santang have this traits. Each of them had a role and story depicted in some series. In general they fought against the bad and tried to reveal the good traits. The good characters are Raden Kian Santang, Raden Arya Kemuning, Raden Walang Sungsang, Nyimas Rara Santang, The King of Prabu Siliwangi, Ratu Subang Larang, The teachers of Siliwangi's children, Prabu Kuncung Putih, and Prabu Siliwangi followers ( Maung Bodas ).

## 4. Forgiving

Forgiving is the capacity to move beyond a situation in which someone accepts others wrongdoing without feeling resentment or holding a grudge. People who are forgiving can let things go that could potentially serve as a distraction when they have been accused by someone. This person who has this trait can work closely as administrators, parents, students, or other who may have created an issue or controversy that was potentially detrimental to the



teacher. Raden Kian Santang had the enemy while he was a child named Raden Mahesa, the crown of Burangrang Palace. He actually would like to be Mahesa's friend but he kept on defeating Raden Kian Santang. Even someday he was nearly killed, fortunately Syech Nurjati his teacher saved him.

#### 5. Independent

Raden Kian Santang and his siblings have this traits. This is the ability to work through problems or situations without requiring assistance from others. People who have this trait do not rely on other people to motivate them to accomplish a task. They are self-aware and self-driven. They can accomplish more academically because they do not have to wait on other people. In education setting someone who has this trait can take good ideas from other people and make them great. They can come up with solutions to potential problems on their own. In episodes of Raden Kian Santang mostly told about struggles done by mostly all of Prabu Siliwangi followers. The problems revealed in some episodes that the King concerned and gave good solution in handling problems. In this film the producers expose all struggles of Prabu siliwangi's wife, children, officers, and soldiers to lead better life for people and Padjajaran Palace. In those episodes, each of characters has their own role to handle problems to be solved.

#### 6. Intuitive

The ability to understand something without reason simply through instinct is intuitiveness. Intuitive people enable other to have a bad day and can try and improve the situation. These who have this trait can tell when students are struggling to grasp a concept. They can quickly assess and adapt the lesson so that more understand it. They are also able to sense when a student is going through personal adversity. Some protagonists who have intuitive traits from the story of Kian Santang are Prabu Siliwangi (Pamanah Rasa), all of Siliwangi's children included Raden Kian Santang, The teachers of Kian Santang, (Syech Nurjati, Syech Hasanudin, and Syech Mursyam. In the story, those people have ability to communicate by their mind and could predict the next happening. In this real evidence happened when Prabu Siliwangi was attacked by some Nini Durga followers, he could communicate with Raden Kian Santang, and finally he could defeat the enemies.

#### 7. Kind

Some good characters on this sinetron TV story are played with good traits, one of them is kind traits. One who has this trait possess many friends. He/she is generous and thoughtful. He/she becomes very popular and others will come and look forward to get along. He/she will never makes others upset. While he/she has dispute, he/she will be carefully turn into better situation. The evidences from the episodes are depicted when Raden Kian Santang knew that his uncle Prabu Amuk Maroggol betrayed his father, he still kind and respect him. He also kind and respect to his enemies ( Mahesa, Arga Dhana, Nini Durga followers, Yudakara ) even they would like to defeat him.

#### 8. Patient

People who have this trait would understand that sometimes they have to wait their turn. They are not deterred by failure, but instead, view failure as an opportunity to learn more. They reevaluate, find another approach, and try again. In educative setting teachers who have this trait understand that the school year is a marathon and not a race. They understand that each day presents its challenges and that their job is to figure out how to get every student from point A to point B as the year progresses.

This explanation is in line with Raden Kian Santang's trait who had journey to Mecca. He had a lot of obstacles to eradicate the misdeed and unfairness treatment towards the poor people. He patiently helped them to solve the problems. Even, it was dangerous for his life. He also patiently helped royal family who was attacked by black magic. Fortunately with his hard effort he successfully defeat the devils.

#### 9. Responsible and respectful

These two traits actually have different meaning. Responsible is the ability to do the job or duty well. While respectful means allow others to do and be their best through positive and supportive interactions. In educative setting, students who are respectful can work

cooperatively with their peers. They respect the opinions, thoughts, and feelings of everyone around them. They are sensitive to everyone and try to treat everyone as they want to be treated. People who have this trait understand that they must have positive and supportive interactions with others. They maintain the dignity of others at all times and create an atmosphere of trust and respect in their classroom. When they applied in daily life, those two traits actually very important for keeping the social relation.

Raden Kian Santang, as the main protagonist has these traits. Starting from the first episode up to the end of the episode, the producer revealed the responsible and respectful roles. Those traits dominated Raden Kian Santang as the religious, obedient, responsible, and patient boy. It is depicted in some stories in episodes of Raden Kian Santang that he was assigned by his father Prabu Siliwangi to solve Padjajaran' problems; found the betrayal, saved Nyai Subang Larang, saved his siblings from kidnappers, fought in wars, even found the powerful weapon Keris Cakra Buana and Keris Ciung Wanara. He did those duties well. While in relation with others, he behaved well, so others respect him well and they wanted to get along with him.

## CONCLUSION

Raden Kian Santang on tv sinetron Raden Kian Santang is a prospective Indonesian superhero. He is as a protagonist possessing superhero traits such as religious, adaptive, intuitive; he enabled to read people's mind, he closed to poor people, he liked wandering, he liked to stay outside of palace and undercover as common people in order to find the real evidences for fighting the misdeeds and unfair treatments. He is also honest, determine, full of empathy, forgiving, independent, kind, patient, responsible and respectful character. Not only this, this tv sinetron might be sources or alternative amusement for children who nowadays prefer playing games with their gadget. This tv sinetron also contains of positive values, local wisdom of Sundanese culture which should be introduced internationally, in order to widen the readers or audiences about one of the Indonesian traditional culture.

## NOTES

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to show my greatest gratitude to Allah SWT for giving me a chance to be a part of this seminar. I also would like to appreciate for the great creation made by Indonesian creative actors and actress and producers to reveal Indonesian culture to be well-known by people around the world. The last but not least, I would like to appreciate to the committee of Colalite 2020 which enabled the presenters to acquire the experiences and news about superheroes.

## REFERENCES

- Beressler, E.C. ( 1999 ). Literary Criticism, Prentice Hall, USA  
 Budianta, M. et all. ( 2002 ). Membaca Sastra. Indonesia sastra; Jakarta  
 Sutopo, B. 2002. Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif. Sebelas Maret University Press; Solo  
 Wahyudin, D. 2001. Pengantar Pendidikan. Penerbit Universitas Terbuka; Jakarta  
 Yulistiana, A. ( 2019 ). Teacher Hacks. Kartasura : Diomedia  
 Sari, M, N. 2020. Ciri-ciri Orang Beriman. Retrieved from  
 Meador, D. 2019. Personality Traits That Help Teachers and Students Succeed.  
<https://www.thoughtco.com/personality-traits-that-help-teachers-students-3194422>  
 Retrieved on September 21,2020  
 Ridwan, 2019. Male Gender Role Pada Karakter Superhero dalam Film Produksi Marvel Journal e-komunikasi Universitas Kristen Petra Vol. 2 No. 3 tahun 2014

## APPENDIX

### SYNOPSIS

Sri Baginda Maharaja atau Prabu Siliwangi (Ananda George), Raja Pajajaran has two wives. First wife named Kentring Manik Mayang Sunda, has a son named R. Surawisesa and he will be the next King of Padjajaran. Kentring Manik is Prabu Amuk Marugul's sister, the king of Japura Palace Western part of Pasundan coast. The second wife, Nyi Subang Larang (Inne Azri). She is from Moeslem family, Her father is Kiai Tapa (Syech Hasanudin), the owner of Pesantren Quro, from Karawang. He taught Nyai Subang Larang about Islam.

Nyi Subang Larang and Prabu Siliwangi have two sons and one daughter; Raden Walang Sungsang (Ahmad Ridho), he is famous for Raden Cakra Buana, then, Nyi Mas Lara Santang (Rientammy) and the last son, Raden Kian Santang (Alwi Assegaf). All of their children were grown in an atmosphere which most people devote to Islam. Their three children, especially Raden Kian Santang had special power than two of his siblings. He was able to read `qur'an faster than ordinary boy, he had intuitive power, he was able to read people's mind, he closed to poor people, he liked wandering, mingling with people and gave help them assistance, and he liked staying outside of palace and undercover as ordinary people. Unfortunately, the evil power ( Nini Durga acted by Dwi Putrantiwi) worried of the existence of Raden Kian Santang. Nini Durga is also very powerful. She was able to undercover in variety of creatures and she had faithful followers to destroy Padjajaran Palace, especially Raden Kian Santang.

Raden Kian Santang was estimated become a great obstacle for Nini Durga, as a result she tried hard to get rid of Raden Kian Santang. Unfortunately she failed to beat him. Raden Kian Santang is very smart, cunning, and creative for fighting his enemies. His father Prabu Siliwangi and his martial art teacher, or even his grand father ( Syeh Hasanudin ) suddenly appeared to help him when he was in trouble.

\*\*\*\*\*