

Application of Juxtaposition Panel of Indonesian Comic

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Abstract. The purpose of this research is to find the application of panel juxtaposition style in Indonesian comic entitled Jagabumi. Descriptive research method was used to get a description of the juxtaposition treatment on this heroic comic panel. The steps taken are in the form of a literature study on comics and local existence, as well as observations on the Jagabumi comic episode Kesatria. The result is an understanding of the displacement of objective reality and reality in the Jagabumi comics, especially the panels depicted in this episode. Juxtaposition in comics does not stop only at the comparison between two panels, but also the relationship between text and images. Episode Ksatria applies seven categories of juxtapositional style, which includes the creation of images with a local concept. This can be seen in the visual elements and written terms as expressions. By doing this research, it will reveal the renewal of reality through the panel juxtaposition style in the Jagabumi comic.

Keyword: Comic, Jagabumi, Juxtaposition, knights, panel

1. Introduction

Comics are a medium that contributes to the formation of popular culture. It contains a narration in the form of juxtaposed images. Juxtaposition in comics shows the fabric of space and time [1]. Comics are defined as “images juxtaposed with other images in a deliberate sequence, intended to convey information and/or to produce an aesthetic response in the viewer” [2]. In addition to images, there is text that forms a narrative connexion. Textual materials are loaded with cultural objects, as well as pictorial elements [3]. In the context of this relationship, the idea of Indonesian localization is contained, which is shown in the selected panels. Comics provide the possibility for a detailed look at narrative construction between socio-culturally bound readers and specifically designed media [4]. In addition, it refers to the thoughts of Jackendoff and Audring who position images in comics as language components that interact with each other in a parallel architecture, meaning that the language components in images are independent structures that unite to create a whole expression [5]. In this case the language of the image is strongly influenced by the local culture.

Jagabumi comic in this study is a derivative of idealism from Bumilangit. In the Bumilangit.com website, it is explained that this large project seeks to collect Indonesian superhero comics from the beginning until now, as well as become a forum for Indonesian creators [6]. Bumilangit divides the universe or superhero universe into two categories, namely the Patriot Universe (Semesta Superhero) and the Jawara Universe (Semesta Pendekar). In addition, the term universe is separated again into Jagat Pusaka which contains classic comics by previous comic artists, and Jagat Revolution which is a

reinterpretation of comics with styles adapted to the time of publication. The position of the Jagabumi comics is in the Revolutionary Universe, so the appearance of the characters, visualization, narration refers to the comics that are recognized today. Jagabumi is in the comics universe of the Era of Legends, tells the story of three kingdoms, namely the Kingdom of Wiba, the Kingdom of Rawaya, and the Kingdom of Godam [7]. The narration of the Jagabumi comic expands the concept of previous comic artists. Especially related to the alignment of the timeline of the appearance of the characters and their role in the world of the Jagabumi comics version of Bumilangit Universe.

Bumilangit's idealism to reserve local comics was related to the condition of national comics in the 1990s which had been declared 'sad' [8]. The triumph of Indonesian comics in the 1970s and 1980s fell apart. This condition was driven by the high cost of the production process, so producers cut back by buying the rights to publish foreign comics. However, the spirit to revive the world of Indonesian comics has always been there from time to time. The term indie comics or independent comics accompanies the emergence of comics with special characteristics, namely 'weird', as stated by Imanda, an anthropologist and filmmaker, in his article. Comic expression tends to be free, even in some works it looks vulgar and leads to pornography. There are also comics supported by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), voicing social issues to the community. However, the fact that comic works, and characters existed during the heyday of Indonesian comics is still lingering in the minds of comic fans. Therefore, this study explores the comics that appeared through the Bumilangit Universe.

The concept of the universe in comics departs from the realization that every comic narrative departs from the world in the comic itself. This concept was used by Stan Lee in building the Marvel universe, to create connections between comic narratives and characterizations [9]. Sales of new comic books featuring Marvel (and DC) superheroes became a niche market [9]. Beatty states that even superhero fans differentiate audiences into "hardcore" and "casual" based on knowledge level and affective intensity, regardless of geographic position [10]. The concept of the universe provides an opportunity to better understand the world narrated in the comics. Hayot explains that comic narration gives readers the opportunity to "feel that one lives in the same world as everyone else, that the rules that govern history, physics, economics, communication, culture, space, and time, are the same everywhere and all the time.", became the effect of the spread of universalism [11]. This is shown in the Jagabumi comic, providing a comprehensive understanding of the Indonesian version of Bumilangit Universe comic. In comics, the multiverse is a fictional construct that proposes the existence of numerous parallel and independent realities that are separate from one another. Every universe has its own timeline and history [12]. Since, traveling across universes is a difficult task, it usually necessitates the presence of superpowers (like as Flash's superspeed, which allows him to vibrate between realms) or super-science capable of piercing the barriers that separate universes. At least since the Greek Atomists, the concept has existed in philosophy. It was popularized in the 1950s by Schrodinger in science and by Michael Moorcock in fiction [12].

Comics as a series of images provide understanding through the interaction of text and images. This sequence is intended to convey information and/or to produce an aesthetic response in the reader [13]. Groensteen emphasizes the creation of a "network" of information, the fabric of which is created from interrelated ideas, acting as a "kind of bridge" between visual information [13]. The concept of juxtaposition is attached to the rows of panels on a page. Inside the panel contains a series between text and images. Between the panels there is a gutter or the distance between panels which also plays a role in perfecting the explanation of the comic world. In the Jagabumi comics, the volume of Ksatria, the use of 'braid' is made in several ways. The Jagabumi comics, the volume of Knights, is in the third order after Legend and Stealth. The narration of Jagabumi is organized into eight volumes containing four eras, namely, the era of Legend, Champion, Patriot, and Revolution. The first three volumes are in the Legend era, which was preceded by the historical events of the eruption of Mount Krakatoa in 1883 [14]. This article examines the application of juxtaposition based on the appearance on the panel, including illustrations, text, effects, onomatopoeia, and gutters shown on three pages of the Jagabumi comic book Ksatria volume. Locality is traced through the use of symbols and interactions between text and panel illustrations in the five selected pages.

2. Method

The deepening of this research was achieved through descriptive research. The search for meaning and can affect the substance of the study significantly [15]. Art Based Research (ABR) puts principles-based works of creative arts into social research projects. This approach opens an understanding of creative thinking in a visual work [16]. Research based on the understanding that arts and humanities can facilitate social scientific goals. In the context of works of art, an "aesthetic intersubjective paradigm" is formed which is based on sensory, emotional, perceptual, kinesthetic, tangible, and imaginal ways of knowing. Relationships in works of art form the meaning of knowledge between humans and nature [16].

In understanding juxtaposition in comics, it is explored through three stages, namely observing the selected comics, and finding pages that have a specific application of juxtaposition. Furthermore, reduction is carried out in the form of sorting the pages to be studied. The second stage takes an in-depth look at the illustrations on the selected panels. There are seven styles in creating the relationship between text and images, namely word-specific, picture-specific, duo specific, intersecting, interdependent, parallel, and montage [17]. Observing the application of gutter on selected pages, as well as the relationship of text and illustrations in it. Jagabumi Ksatria's comic book consists of 56 pages. There are 50 pages containing juxtaposition of panels. There are five panels to be studied. The selection of these five panels was based on the way in which a typical juxtaposition was applied among the fifty pages. So, observing these relationships is done to find the tendency to apply communication styles in the Jagabumi comic book Ksatria volume.

The next stage is exploring the meaning based on the visualization of the Jagabumi comic illustration. In understanding the work of art can utilize interpretive, critical, or transformative theoretical thinking [16]. The meaning of comics is stored in narrative creation. Abbott describes narrative as "a representation of events, consisting of narrative stories and discourses, stories are events or sequences of events (actions), and narrative discourses are represented events" [18]. The narration in the Jagabumi comic is in an alternative world. Even though it refers to historical events in Indonesia, the events are not in a specific location or region. However, traces of interpretation can be found in the socio-cultural facts of Indonesia.

3. Results and Discussion

In the creation of comics, although juxtaposition is a view that is accepted by the reader, the interpretation of it varies. Jagabumi comics, the volume of Ksatria applies at least five types of juxtaposition. The five selected pages do not only refer to the style of the relationship between text and images. There is a page that uses the principles of Visual Language to describe an event.

The five pages that are discussed refer to the appearance as follows:

1. The presence of gutters or the distance between separate panels on one page.
2. Gutter in a full-page illustration
3. There is continuous text through the gutter in one full page
4. Illustrations that are inside illustrations on one page
5. The existence of the concept of Visual Language in one full page.

The presence of gutter or the distance between panels indicates a time lag between the illustrations on the panels. The amount of distance between panels increasingly shows the range of time. Scott McCloud describes it as "Observing the parts, but understanding the whole", given that the illustrations in the comics do not provide a real-time picture. So, to provide an overview for the reader the role of gutter becomes important [19]. The application of gutter is shown in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1. Comic Jagabumi Ksatria volume page 7

Figure 1 shows the application of the gutter to provide a perception gap between panels 1, 2, and 3. The width of the gutter between panels 1 and panels 2 and 3 is the same as the width between panels 2 and 3. So it can be explained if the time that occurs between the three panels is sequentially gradually. Panels 4 and 5 on page 7 are illustrated differently from panels 1, 2, and 3. Panel 4 is inside panel 5, with the same gutter spacing as the previous panels. To understand panels 4 and 5, it is necessary to look at panel 3 which contains an illustration of three bombs being thrown down. Panel 4 shows the light from a bomb explosion. Panels 4 and 5 occur at the same time, but viewed from different perspectives. This is a gutter implementation to create reader participation in drawing conclusions about the illustration in interpreting the time and motion that takes place [19]. In addition to the application of gutter, it can also be seen that the styling involves a combination of text and illustrations. Figure 7 uses a picture-specific style. This page is predominantly image and uses very little text. Additional support for the text is onomatopoeia in the form of the sound of large steps and explosions. Onomatopoeia on page 7 says dum, kaboom, wuuush!, ziuuutt!, crack, and bltk.

Pages 14 and 15 show different gutter implementations. There are six types of transitions between panels, each providing a degree of closeness to the meaning of the reader. These six types are movement-to-movement, action-to-action, subject-to-subject, scene-to-scene, aspect-to-aspect, and non-sequitur [19]. Implementation can be seen in Figure 2 below



Figure 2. Panels on pages 14 and 15

Panels 1, 2, and 3 on page 14 implement the subject-to-subject type. While panels 4 and 5 are scene-to-scene. The gutters in these panels are only limited by black lines that are not spaced (see panels 1, 2, and 3). Even in panels 4 and 5 only the color of the object illustration is limited. Page 15 implements a different type, especially in panels 4 and 5, namely the movement-to-movement type. It can be seen that the character of Sri Asih (using a crown and a kemben) in panel 4 looks to the left, while in panel 5 it looks sideways to the right. Panels 3 and 4 relations are subject-to-subject. Panel types 4 and 5 on page 14 are the same as panels 1 and 2 on page 15. However, there are differences in the placement of panels 1 and 2, given the gutter or spacing with annels 3, 4, and 5. Here it can be understood that different activities have occurred, even though it happened in the same room. Page 14 panel 3 applies a duo specific style, in the form of images and text that are equally strong.

Typical juxtapositional depictions can also be found on pages 44 and 46. The relationship between text and images is a way of understanding the narrative on the selected page. The style combinations are also found on page 44. (See figure 3).



Figure 3. Comic Jagabumi Ksatria volume page 44

The juxtaposition style on page 44 is picture specific, but the text application is connected to each panel. Although the illustrations in panels 1, 2, and 3 are different, the action-to-action sequences are emphasized through the text on the word balloons that are connected to each other. Only in panels 3 and 4, which shows the existence of subject-to-subject. Different illustrations are also found on page 46. In this page, the panel view is not limited by lines or gutters, but by the effects of movement by the characters. This can be seen in Figure 4 below.



Figure 4. Comic Jagabumi Ksatria volume page 46

This page becomes interesting given the application of a special juxtaposition. Panel 1 on page 46 is illustrated inside panel 2. The boundary of the panel is a lightning-like effect resulting from the movement of two hammers hitting each other. Meanwhile, the impact of the collision is strengthened by the onomatopoeia written dzrrt, rrttz!!, and ctang!. This panel also adopts the principle of Visual Language, which is a visual narrative method that adds time to the same 1 page. The concept of Visual Language is found in the relief images of temples or wayang beber (see Figure 5).



Figure 5. Wayang beber Pacitan

Figure 5 shows the Pacitan wayang beber the story of Jaka Kembang Kuning. In the stretch (beber) this wayang consists of 4 champions or stories [20]. As an illustration, characters 1 and 2 can be found on the left and right of the wayang stretch. This pattern is applied to the Jagabumi comic page 46.

The narrative in this comic is described as an alternative world, in which there are superhero characters. The origins of the superpowers that these characters possess are different. Some characters get supernatural powers, or it can be said if the origin of the power is not caused by logical events. Sri Asih as one of the characters in the Jagabumi comics, gets strength when she mentions Dewi Asih's name [21]. Maza's character also has superpowers whose origins are not explained, and even has a friend named Jin Kartubi, who comes from the jinn nation [6].

4. Conclusion

The application of juxtaposition on the Jagabumi comic page of the Ksatria volume shows the freedom of expression in comics. Although referring to the principles of creating a juxtapositional style, in its application it uses free combinations. Visual language is also one of the principles found in this comic, and is one of the pages that are specially presented.

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