

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2. 1 Masculinity

The basic concept of masculinity covers the definition of maleness which is biological while the one of masculinity's characteristic is cultural (Beynon 2). It can be understood that the male is a sex which is biologically constructed. On the other hand, masculinity is socially or culturally constructed in which a man is not born with his masculinity as a part of his genetics, but his masculinity is constructed by the society and the culture where he lives.

There are some types of masculinity such as Hegemonic Masculinity, New Man, and New Lad (characteristics and appearance: smart, muscular, and powerful). The first type, the hegemonic masculinity, is the standardization of being a man can be seen more clearly when it is compared to a woman. It reflects on the relationship of gender hierarchy in which a man will always dominate over woman (Connell and Messerschmidt 831). The domination of men over women still exists because of the cultural control which supports men's dominance. Hegemonic Masculinity is established by both the consensual negotiation through the power and the achievement (Beynon 16).

Secondly, The New Man figure firstly was established as the effect of the feminist action that demanded for the equality in 1970s (Edward 22). Moreover, many gay masculinities protested about the high number of homophobia that was considered as a threat for them. According to Beynon (2002), New Man is divided into two types which are New Man as nurturer and New Man as a narcissist. Man as nurturer is a reaction against the first wave of feminism; these men support all women's movement and take the previous women's roles in domestic area like child-rearing. According to Beynon (2002), the characteristics of man as nurturer include the pattern changes in family life in which when a man decides to get married or not at all, he has the willingness to support his wife as a career woman and this emerges the new man as an ideal.

New Man as the narcissist is associated with the commercial masculinity (Beynon 102). In short, the characteristics of the New Man as narcissist covers having a tall and muscular body, paying attention to his health and appearances, and being very interested in shopping, fashion, clothes, and grooming (Beynon 121).

New Lad is represented as a return to reactionary, pre-feminist values of sex, sport, drinking, the relative male-only world of pubs, pornography, and football (Edwards 34). The origin of *New Lad* is linked up to pop music and football in Britain associated with drinking, football, and sex (Beynon 1).

Hegemonic Masculinity in this case focuses on Indonesia. During the New Order era, the boundary between masculinity and femininity was strictly

maintained (Nilan 330). It means that gender role was important enough during that era. Male and female had their own rules so that they had to obey their roles in their entire lives and the rules had not been mixed or inverted. It was aimed to make the nation-building program become successful (Nilan 330). Basically, the masculinity in that era embraced the concept of Javanese masculinity determining a man as *Bapak* which means father. The basic principal of *Bapakism* is that always ruling over the family. Moreover, in the New Order era, *Bapak* also ruled over the business and even the nation-state. Indeed, this concept of masculinity gave the men an authority towards the women, the younger men, and the men with lower position or the status quo (Nilan 332).

There was also another type of masculinity in the New Order era against *Bapakism*. It was *Pemuda* or young unmarried men. This type of masculinity challenged the authority of the older men or *Bapak* (Nilan 333). *Pemuda* in this era was associated with the male protesters or activists and they demanded for the law enforcement dominated by older men because older men were the ones having the most authority in Indonesia. This type of masculinity represented an ideal masculinity, having a heroic trait who fights for the public right.

According to Nilan (2009), there are three stereotypes of masculinity in Indonesia. The first stereotype comes from the young Muslims who believe that men should be the leader of the family, organization, even country by applying the law of Islamic Shari'a. Husni called it as a *santri*. According to Fealy (2004), Muslim *santri* can be recognized from the white cap and the white flowing shirt that they wear (Nilan 328).

The second stereotype is the ‘cool’ youngster or ‘*cowok trendi*’ which refers to the men who care about their physical appearance, luxury lives, and sexual adventures. The examples of young men can be taken from the male protagonist characters of recent films like *Kuldesak* (1998), *Arisan* (2003), *Ada Apa dengan Cinta* (2003), and *Ayat-Ayat Cinta* (2008). Many of the commercials of evening sinetrons on television also depict the central characters of this kind. The profile of Ramli below illustrates that the aspect of financial and emotional influence the fast-living of cowok trendi lifestyle.

The third is the thug or in Indonesia it is more well-known as preman who is associated with a drug user or dealer, a pimp, or a collective participant of gambling, drinking, whoring ‘fight club’, and any other forms of culture which characterize the inner-city street life after midnight. Doni’s character portrays the complex nature of a trajectory, injury involving, and incarceration lifestyle.

2.2 History and function of memes

The meme was firstly suggested by Richard Dawkins in his book entitled *The Selfish Gene* published in 1976. Originally, ‘Mimeme’ came from a suitable Greek root which sounded like ‘gene’ and this means an imitation. This is explained deeper by Dawkin by stating, “I hope my classicist friends will forgive me if I abbreviate mimeme to meme. If it is any consolation, it could alternatively be thought of as being related to ‘memory’, or to the French word *même*. It should be pronounced to rhyme with cream” (Dawkins 190).

The next twenty three years, in the book of *The Meme Machine*, Susan Blackmore said that in order to understand the definition of memes, firstly, one must understand that memes, like genes, are the replicators and the success of memes depend on its replication or the copied behavior of humans (Blackmore 5).

There are two types of meme: visual and printed memes. Visual memes covers the animated GIF and video. The internet meme is a form of visual entertainment which can form in many different formats such as a still image (for example a macro image), an animated GIF, and a video. Macro is an image superimposed by text with white letters, black borders, and in impact font.

Historically, memes have many functions such as a joke, humor satire, and political participation. For instance, according to Davison, at first, the emoticon was established at the beginning of memes in 1982 and then this lead meme as a joke (Borzsei 5). He suggested that the usage of ':-)' as the way of marking posts was not supposed to be taken seriously. He also created ':-(' in which this sign indicated that the post was very serious. Another example was the two pictures combined in one meme.

In 1997, the meme was applied as a satirical humor in democracy issue. One of the examples of those satire humors was Bert. Bert was one of the characters in Sesame Street which becomes the first character portraying the satirical humor. According to Ignacio (1997) cited in (Borzsei 7), the meme's creator wanted to show the other side of Bert as 'Bert is Evil' in his meme. Ignacio made all the images in which Bert was photoshopped into existing

photographs by showing him in the incriminating situations (e.g. on the assassination of President Kennedy and in the company of Adolf Hitler). Every image was accompanied by a short background of the story to make them look more realistic. In October 2001, Ignacio made another meme by photoshopping Bert and Osama bin Laden which was displayed in many banners when the pro-bin Laden protest happened in Bangladesh. The Bert meme significantly became a controversy at that time.

According to Shifman (2014), memes in 2014 were used as the forms of political participation which were classified into three categories: memes as a political persuasion, memes as a grassroots action, and memes as a model of expression (Foster 11). In her book, Shifman gave an example of memes as political persuasion by using the “Obama Girl” video, a video created by a young girl singing for her crush who was Barack Obama as the candidate in the 2008 campaign. The second category is memes as the grass-roots action in which Shifman (2014) defined it as the use of the Occupy Wall Street online movement. The movement existed in the physical world but the meme of the “Pepper Spray Cop” was a photograph of a police who sprayed a group of protesters with the pepper spray. This became a worldwide phenomenon and a recall for the protesters to continue again. “The Pepper Spray Cop” meme became a symbol of the institutionally online oppression and was used to represent a number of political parties and governments in a negative way. Shifman (2014) also defined the political memes as a form of expression or a public discussion. She argued that memes could have the function as a form of protest similar to the “Pepper

Spray Cop” meme or they could be a catalyst for political discussion (Shifman, 2014). The best example of meme prompting a political discussion is the “Big Yellow Duck of Tiananmen Square” meme in 2013. On the memorial day of the Tiananmen protests, the Chinese government censored all the online searches and the photographs of that event; moreover, they removed the word “today” from the search engines. However, an enterprising individual edited the famous picture of a man standing in front of the tanks entering the Tiananmen Square and he replaced those men with big yellow rubber ducks. Then it made the users to be able to search for the rubber duck to take a look toward it or to re-post this famous photograph. An international debate of the government, media censorship was actually sparked by the emergence of this meme as the medium for political discourse. Memes can also represent a political idea or candidate by providing a new opportunity to frame a candidate or an issue outside of the traditional media.

Furthermore, memes can also represent the masculinity issue as the object. In this case, there are three examples of the meme which depict the masculinity in representing a *cowok* or a man as undefeated able, strong, and sophisticated. The first meme portrays an undefeated able man who never lost namely Chuck Norris, a Hollywood actor. He is the actor who always plays to win in his films. He was the actor of the cold war between American and Uni Soviet. Later, in other more famous talk show, the Saturday Night Live, it continuously talks about Chuck Norris with some fresh jokes. #SaveHajiLulung is the replica of Chuck Norris. The meme creator make the same joke as Chuck Norris, but #SaveHajiLulung use Bahasa but Chuck Norris use English as the language. One example of the meme

about Chuck Norris is “A SNAKE BITE ME, IT DIED 2 DAYS LATER”. In that film, he never reloaded the gun, meanwhile he holded a thing which can become a weapon.

The second meme tells about a man with his strength which is represented by an Indonesian Masculine Artist, Mad Dog. He acted in *The RAID*, an Indonesian film. In one scene, Mad Dog said that “pake ini gak ada gregetnya, nah ini baru greget (throwing his weapon)”. It means that without a weapon, a man cannot be said as “greget” or masculine so that a masculine man can be classified as *greget* if he throws his weapon and fights by using the weapon. The word “greget” is used to humor in comic meme. The word *greget* here describes a person who is extremely dangerous.

The last is the meme which depicts sophisticated people who are popular with the technology. The writer has found a meme displaying Steve Job vs Bill Gates. Steve Job is a very popular person known as the founder of the Apple and he is a perfectionist person. Meanwhile, Bill Gates is also one of the popular people in the world as he is the founder of Microsoft. They become the model in that meme because they can be classified as the very important people in the technology field.

2.3 Rhetoric of Image

According to Saussure, the signified and the signifier are the components of the *sign* (Barthes 35). According to the arbitrary choice of various authors, the sign is placed in a series of terms which have affinities and dissimilarities with

it: *signal, index, icon, symbol, allegory*, is the chief rivals of the *sign*. The signified is not 'a thing' but a mental representation of the 'thing' (Barthes 42). Saussure himself clearly marked the mental nature of the signified by calling it a *concept*: the signified of the word ox is not the animal ox but its mental image (this will prove important in the subsequent discussion on the nature of the sign) (Barthes 43). Some researchers (Barthes 44) such as Hjelmslev decomposed a moneme like 'mare' into two smaller significant units: 'Horse' + 'female' and these units can be commutated so that it can be used to reconstitute the new monemes ('pig', + 'female' = 'sow', 'horse' + 'male' = 'stallion'); Prieto sees in 'vir' two commutable features 'homo' + 'masculus'; Sørensen reduces the lexicon of kinship to a combination of 'primitives' ('father' = male parent, 'parent' = first ascendant).

The definition of signifier is purely a *relatum* which cannot be separated from the signified. The only difference is the signifier as a mediator (Barthes 47). The signifier is always material forms (sounds, objects, images).

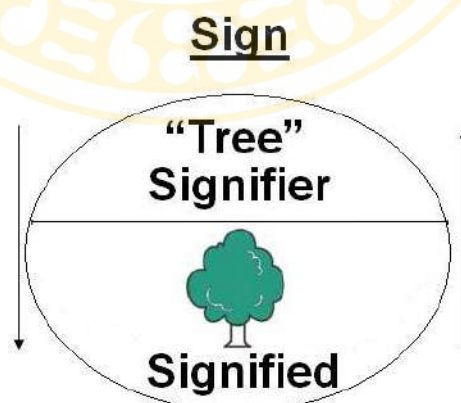


Figure 2.1: Sign = Signifier + Signified

2.4 Related Studies

The first study is from an undergraduate thesis entitled *Penggunaan Wacana Humor Dalam Komik Humor "Rage Face" and "Meme Comic"* by Cyntia Devy Permatasari. This study discusses about the memes in Indonesia which objects are the famous people in Indonesia such as the president, celebrity, and some common people. Cyntia used the qualitative method in order to analyze the rage face meme and comic meme. She used critical discourse by Stubb to explain briefly about the meme. The result of her study reveals the humor discourse in the "Rage Face" and "Meme Comic" such as True Stories, Slang Advices, Table Pictures, Irony, Questions, Challenge, and Rascal. The similarity of Cyntia's study and this study is that both studies use meme as the objects of the research. The difference is that Cynthia used Critical Discourse by Stubb while the writer uses semiotic by Roland Barthes as the method. The writer has the images of the evolution of memes in Indonesia.

The second related study is taken from an undergraduate thesis entitled *A Construction of Masculinity in Silkboy Deluxe Pomade Advertisements: A Semiotic Analysis* written by Aditya Nugroho. This research analyzes the advertisement of Silkboy Deluxe Pomade advertisement in order to show the representation of masculinity in that advertisement. He used qualitative method in order to analyze the signs and the symbols appeared in the Silkboy Deluxe Pomade advertisement. This study applied semiotics theory proposed by Roland Barthes in revealing the representation of masculinity. The result of Aditya's

study proves the interaction between two concepts of masculinity: the advertisement represents the more dominant construction of *New Lad* that embraces traditional masculine stereotypes through Slickboy Deluxe advertisements stereotyped represents the idea of the *New Man*. In short, the stereotypes of traditional masculinity still exist even in men's grooming advertisements. The similarity between Aditya's study and the writer's study is that both of them use the masculinity theory and semiotic methods by Roland Barthes. The difference is that Aditya used Facebook as the media and also advertisement meanwhile the writer uses twitter and memes as the object. The writer has the images of masculinities representation in medium in Indonesia.

The third study is taken from taken from an undergraduate thesis entitled *The Representation of Masculinity in Mama Lemon Advertisement Supermarket Version* written by Kartika Restu Anggara. This research analyzes the advertisement of *Mama Lemon Advertisement Supermarket Version* in order to show the representation of masculinity in that advertisement. She used qualitative method in order to analyze the signs and the symbols appeared in the *Mama Lemon Advertisement Supermarket Version*. This study applied Gender Advertisement theory proposed by Erving Goffman in revealing the representation of masculinity. The result of Kartika's study proves the interaction between two concepts of masculinity: the advertisement represents the more dominant construction of *New Man*. The similarity between Kartika's study and the writer's study is that both of them use the masculinity theory. The difference is that Kartika used gender relation between man and women and also using television

advertisement, the writer showed the power of leader and no women inside the research.

The fourth study is taken from a journal article entitled *It's All in a Meme: A Content Analysis of Memes Posted to 2012 Presidential Election Facebook Pages* by Bobbie Foster. This research examines the memes on the Facebook about the presidential election in 2012. This study also applied the benign-violation theory (McGraw & Warren) for the analysis of memes to understand the design choices made by the memes creators. The benign-violation theory states that a physical or psychological violation is benign if 1) an alternative norm suggests the violation is acceptable, 2) the users have a weak or loose connection to the violated norm, and 3) there is a physical and psychological distance between the users and the violated norm (McGraw & Warren). The result of Bobbie's study is that he gathered those three criteria of that theory. The difference between Bobbie's study and the writer's study is that Bobbie used meme on Facebook about the presidential election in 2012 while the writer uses the #SaveHajiLulung hashtag on twitter. The similarities of both study is that they use meme as their objects. The writer has the images of memes about politics in the presidential election.