

Semiotic in Lyrics and Perception of Community of Nagari Suayan on Saluang Ratok Suayan Anguih

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Abstract: This research aimed to describe the codes and their meanings that are used in the Saluang Ratok Suayan Anguih lyrics and the perception of Nagari Suayan community on Saluang Ratok Suayan Anguih. This research used descriptive qualitative method, while community perceptions were analyzed using simple statistics. The data of this study are the words in the lyrics of Saluang Ratok Suayan Anguih and responses of informants to questionnaire or interview. Based on data analysis, it is concluded that: First, there are three semiotic codes, namely denotation, connotation, and myth in the lyric. The semiotic codes are used to describe the suffering of people due the fire that hit their country. Second, the younger informants are unfamiliar with the Saluang Ratok Suayan Anguih, while the older ones are more familiar with it. It is because the fire event told in Saluang Ratok Suayan Anguih occurred long-long time ago and this storytelling is getting less and less performed.

1 INTRODUCTION

Literature as a branch of art is an integral part of culture. Literature has become part of the experience of human life, both from the human aspect that utilizes it for the life experience as well as from the aspect of its creation that expresses humans' inner experience into the literary work. Literary works reveal human and humanity concerns about the meaning of life and life itself. They describe human suffering, struggles, affection, and hatred, passions and everything that people experience (Ahadiat, 2007). In line with this, Ratna (2007) said that the literary work is fiction or more often called imagination. Imagination in literature is based on the fact that others also imagine it. In essence, literary work is a fiction of real life and the issues raised in literature are therefore human problems.

The Minangkabau community is rich in oral traditions that produce various forms of art and literature, one of which is kaba. Kaba is told to audiences through performances brought by kaba mason with certain characteristics occasionally accompanied by musical instruments *saluang* and *rebab* (Gozali, 2012). One form of oral literature found in Nagari Suayan, Sub-district of Akabiluru, District of Lima Puluh Kota, is *saluang*. Many

saluangs are found in Nagari Suayan, one of which is *saluang Ratok Suayan Anguih* (in the next description abbreviated with SRSA). SRSA lyrics is a literary work created by a saluang singer (*pendandang*) named Gadih, a native from Nagari Suayan. The lyrics of Saluang tell the story of the *nagari* or village and the people of Suayan during the fire accident that destroyed their village several years ago. Because Gadih who created the lyrics saluang has died, SRSA is later popularized by *Si E*, one of the saluang singers from Payakumbuh located about 15 kms from Negeri Suayan.

SRSA's lyrics are fascinating to examine because in addition to telling the factual events that occurred in Nagari Suayan during fire accident, this saluang lyrics also have many symbol used by the author to convey meaning. Therefore, the approach that can be used in this research is semiotic approach.

In addition to analyzing the signs contained in SRSA's lyrics, the present perceptions of society towards *saluang* are also interesting to study. The literary receptions in question is how the "reader" gives meaning to literary works that are read or heard so as to give a reaction or response to the literature that she or he enjoys.

This study aims to describe: (1) the signs used in the lyrics of SRSA, (2) the meaning of the signs used in the lyrics of SRSA, and (3) the perception of

Nagari Suayan community, in Sub-district of Akabiluru, District of Lima Puluh Kota towards SRSA.

2 RESEARCH METHODS

The type of research used is qualitative research with descriptive method. According to Moleong (2010), qualitative research is as a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or oral words of the people and behavior that can be observed. Furthermore, according to Moleong (2010) qualitative research is a study that intends to understand the phenomenon of what is experienced by research subjects such as behavior, perception, motivation, action, etc. holistically and by way of description in the form of words and language, on a unique, natural context and by utilizing natural methods. The data collection steps in this study were (1) directly recording SRSA lyrics from the singer, (2) reading, understanding and collecting data from other sources such as downloading SRSA video, (3) recording and marking data relating to the research object and (4) Providing questionnaires and conducting interviews with the community. The steps used in analyzing the data are as follows: (1) Identifying data about the signs contained in the lyrics SRSA. (2) Analyzing signs that have meaning in accordance with the aspects studied by using semiotic theory. (3) Identifying the public perception of Nagari Suayan, Sub-district of Akabiluru, District of Lima Puluh Kota, about SRSA lyrics by using simple statistics.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 The Signs and the Meaning of the Signs Used in the Lyrics of SRSA

The human and life problems presented in the literature are presented using a language that is actually a sign system. Hoed (2004) states that semiotics is the study of systems, rules, and conventions that allow signs to be meaningful. According to Sobur (2012) semiotic is the science of signs. It considers that social phenomena or societies and cultures are signs. The semiotics studies the systems, the rules, the conventions that allow them to have meaning. Thus, literary works as a system of signs that have systems, rules, and conventions can be analyzed in semiotics. According to Abdurahman

(2012) semiotic as an approach to the analysis of literary works required its application in literary research as a continuation of the structural approach.

Because the objective of this research is to express the meaning contained in the signs used in the SRSA lyrics, the theory used in this research is the semiotic theory of literature proposed by Roland Barthes (in Hoed, 2008). This theory is one theory that is considered to reveal the meaning of signs contained in the lyrics of SRSA. In his theory, Barthes develops semiotics into two levels of signification, namely denotation and connotation. Denotation is a level of signification that explains the relationship of signifiers and markers of reality, producing explicit, direct and definite meaning. The connotation is a level of signification that explains the relationship of signifiers and markers in which operate meaning is not explicit, indirect and uncertain. Barthes also saw another aspect of the tagging of "myth". The "myth" according to Barthes lies at the second level of signs, so after a sign-signifier-signified system has been established, the sign will become a new marker which then has a second marker and a new sign. Therefore, when a sign that has the connotation meaning then develops into the meaning of denotation, then the meaning of denotation will be a myth (Hoed 2008).

Based on data collection, there were 102 semiotic codes which consist of (1) denotation meaning, 32 data, (2) connotation, 52 data, and (3) myth meaning, 18 data. One data can have more than one semiotic code. The following are examples of the three types and meanings of signs used in the SRSA.

Quote 1:

*Nan disabik daun sikarau bari taranak Mak.
Nangko mangkonyo aiik.*

(Then the leaves of sikarau was cut by using a sickle to be given to the cattle, mother, so it is [the case]).

Quote 1 conveys the meaning of denotation, connotation, and myth. The significance of denotation is seen from the use of the word leaves of *sikarau* which states really leaves the *sikarau* given for feeding the cattle. The meaning of connotation is seen from the claim that the leaves of *sikarau* commonly used as medicines, then at that time was given to feed the cattle. It illustrates how difficult life was, because if it is taken by leaves to feed the cattle, meaning that the grass commonly used for fodder is scarce. The meaning of myths seen from the use of the word leaves of *sikarau* which usually grows in the fields or where muddy water that always flooded. Local people believe that *sikarau* leaves can be used as a febrifuge. If the leaves of *sikarau* were used for

animal food, then it signifies the life of people at that time was difficult.

Quote 2:

Nan kok sakik badan di rantau tak ado urang maunikan oiii.

(If you get sick in elsewhere, no one is looking after you).

Quote 2 conveys the meaning of denotation, connotation, and myth. The meaning of denotation is seen in the statement that if you are sick on the *rantau* or other places or towns where you make a living, no one is looking after you for it means that in the *rantau* usually it is difficult to find people to accompany, especially if there is no family and relatives there. The meaning of connotation is seen from the statement of the feeling of pain when someone is faraway from his or her home village. This revelation illustrates that in the overseas it is more difficult to interact with unknown persons, in contrast to life in their own hometown surrounded by people whom they have known for life. In addition, a sense of togetherness and mutual care for each other is also more felt when living in the home village itself. Myths seen in the statement "sick in *rantau*", because it has become a belief and many occur in the middle of community life, if one does not have a lot of money will be difficult to live life in *rantau*. Especially if you get sick, it would be hard to find acquaintance to accompany, because life is usually more difficult and hard, and there is no place to depend. If you live in your own village, although you have no relatives, your neighbors still have a great deal of caring with each other.

Quote 3:

Anak urang Suayan Tinggi nampak nan dari luak dari di kida Ranah Pandakian.

(A child of the Suayan Tinggi people is seen coming home from the bathing place of the left of the hilly land).

Quote 3 contains the meaning of denotation and connotation. The meaning of denotation is seen from the use of the word *luak* (bathing place), states the actual situation of the people of Suayan Tinggi who came home from *luak* (bathing place) to the left of hilly land area. The meaning of connotation is seen from the statement of home from the badger from the left of the hilly realm, illustrating the water difficulty experienced by the Suayan people thus making them have to travel a great distance to the hilly area for basic needs. In addition, for the inhabitants of this community who came from Suayan Tinggi, to get water is very difficult and they have to go far to hilly area, whereas the distance that must be taken is very far and the walkway is steep, but in order to get their

water needs, they must be willing through all the challenges. In this quote there is no myth, because there are no words that describe a belief or event that is believed to occur in society.

From the results of data analysis of SRSA lyrics that have been done, each stanza in SRSA contained elements of semiotic, denotation, connotation, and / or myth. This is in line with the basic concept of semiotics that directs and demands the reader to manage accepted symbols for use as a means of understanding oneself or in measuring actions related to life and social life. This fact shows that the Minangkabau people tend to indirectly convey meaning. Riswara (2012) stated that the poetic words used in the lyrics of *saluang* reflect some parts of Minangkabau characteristics, such as the way of how Minangkabau people socially relating with families and with other community members.

Overall, the semiotics contained in the lyrics in SRSA is used by the author to convey the meaning of the suffering of people's lives due to a fire incident that struck one *nagari*. All occurrences and suffering are delivered through semiotic symbols. This is in line with the notion of semiotics as the study of signs in human life, meaning that everything present in life is seen as a sign that must be given meaning. In SRSA *saluang* lyrics, there are also many signs of culture that can be given meaning. In line with this finding, according to Gozali (2012), *kaba* that sometimes accompanied by musical instruments *saluang* and *rebab* usually tells of past events and there is also a story that is delivered is a contemporary occurrence

In addition to telling about suffering, *saluang* is also used to entertain. This is disclosed Sukmawati (2008) that *bagurau saluang* and *dendang* performances is a musical performance combined with the power of *pantun-pantun* sung by the accompaniment of musical instrument *saluang*. There are hundreds of *saluang* song titles that can be sung throughout the night, ranging from songs that are joyous and entertaining to songs with a sad tone (*ratok*) with *pantun-pantun* full of lamentation. According to Sastra (in Sukmawati, 2008) there are nine functions performances *bagurau saluang* and *dendang*, namely: (a) aesthetic dialogue forums; (b) means of communication; (c) the function of emotional expression; (d) means of integrating society; (e) means of cultural continuity; (f) economic functions; (g) cultural learning; and (h) means of generating conflict. In wider point of view, oral traditions are rich sources to knowing events in real life. The same is found in Swanson's study (2008) which concluded that Hawaiian oral traditions are rich sources of eruption information and deserve

much closer examination than preferably by volcanology and the Hawaiian language.

3.2 The Perception of Nagari Suayan Community, in Sub-district of Akabiluru, District of Lima Puluh Kota towards SRSA

Emzir (2015) suggests that literary receptions mean receiving or enjoying literary works by the reader.

Reception is a flow that examines the literary text with a starting point to the reader who reacts or responds to the text. In this case, the researcher will examine the response of the audience towards SRSA.

After analyzing the data about public perception of SRSA, it can be concluded that the younger the age of the audience, the more they are unfamiliar to SRSA and vice versa the older the age of the audience, the more familiar they are with SRSA. This trend can be seen in Figure 1.

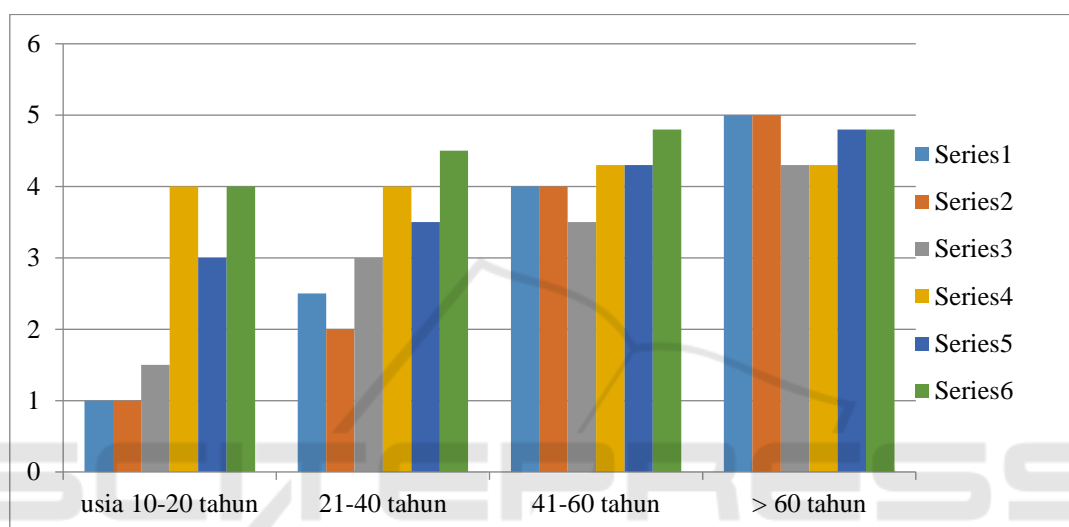


Figure 1: Percentage of Public Perceptions and Age Classification of Informants

Figure 1 shows that informants aged over 60 years in the knowledge aspect occupy the most recognizable position of the SRSA, followed by 41-60 years old, 21-40 years old, and 10-20 years old respectively. The same sequence also occurs in the aspects of experience, interests, habits and motivation, while on the aspect of balanced need between 10-20 year old and 21-40 year old, in both, informants are slightly lower than informants aged 41-60 and above 60 years.

This tendency is caused by fire incidents that become the content of SRSA has been very long happened, so the younger the audience, the more they are unfamiliar with SRSA. Technological advances widely used by the younger generation are also factors that affect the development of SRSA. Another factor is the *pendandang* or the singer or resource person who knows the SRSA has died, even the complete archive of SRSA has not been available so it is increasingly difficult to introduce to young people about SRSA, whether its history or lyrical content.

This finding is also in line with the results of the Fikri (2015) study entitled "Tradition of Story Telling and Character Education Values in Folklore of Mungka Sub-district of Lima Puluh Kota, in West Sumatera Province". Among the findings of this study is there is a decline since there are not many story tellers who tell and or teach it to the enthusiasts or future generations. Secondly, in the story-telling aspect, there is a shift from centering on local folklore and other areas in Minangkabau to local folktales in other provinces, even from abroad, as well as from the tradition of verbally telling by family members and teachers to study told by formal school teacher, reading material, and live performance.

With this tendency, it is reasonable to argue that the tradition of telling stories, including through the SRSA, will disappear from society. Conditions like this are very apprehensive. In one hand, SRSA is a wealth of Minangkabau culture, on other hand this kind of storytelling tradition is very potential as a source and learning media. Through watching SRSA, students have materials and models in storytelling.

Research conducted by Caminotti and Gray (2012) states that storytelling is effective for adult learners. Tanners' research (2016) concluded that telling and interpreting stories is a powerful way to make sense of experience, glean insight and contribute to knowledge. This is especially true in evaluating and understanding the complex work of teaching and learning.

Different from this study and the study conducted by Fikri (2015), the research results of Febrimawati et.al. (2012) indicates that there are differences in public perception in appreciating *saluang dangdut*. These differences can be influenced by one's talents and interests towards a work of art, but are still within from good to excellent range. The organizers have good judgment, neighbors/relatives have very good judgment, and the guests have excellent judgment to this art performance.

4 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of research and discussion, it can be concluded that firstly, each stanza of the SRSA contains semiotic signs: denotation, connotation, and / or myth. These semiotic signs are used by the author to convey the meaning of the suffering of people's lives due to a fire incident that struck one *nagari*. Secondly, the younger the age of the audience, the more unfamiliar they are with SRSA and vice versa the older the age of the audience, the more familiar they are with the SRSA. It is reasonable to assert that the tradition of telling stories, including through the SRSA, will disappear from society.

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