

# REDUCING THE RISK THROUGH EFFECTIVE USE OF VERBAL AND NON -VERBAL LANGUAGE TO PROMOTE SAFE SCHOOLS IN INDONESIA

**Wishnoebroto**

English Department, Faculty of Humanities, BINUS University  
Jln. Kemanggisian Ilir III No. 45, Kemanggisian-Palmerah, Jakarta Barat 11480  
wishnoe075@yahoo.com

## ABSTRACT

*As a country that is potential of natural disaster, Indonesia created the National Disaster Management Plan 2010-2014 to enable decision makers to take preventive actions before the disaster happens. One of the implementation is by establishing a safe school that can minimize the risk of injury when strong earthquake or landslide occurs. The department of Arts and Visual Communication and the Language Center of BINUS University has proposed a social campaign to promote natural disaster safe - school to people in disastrous areas. The campaign will be disseminated verbally and non-verbally through various media such as brochures, posters, animated movies, and public announcement services (PSA). This paper tries to show the different style of language and layouts in posters made by the government and Students of BINUS University in making people aware about living in disaster risk area in Indonesia.*

**Keywords:** *safe school, social campaign, natural disaster, verbal and non-verbal language*

## ABSTRAK

*Sebagai negara dengan potensi bencana alam, Indonesia menciptakan Rencana Penanggulangan Bencana Nasional 2010-2014 untuk memungkinkan pembuat keputusan mengambil tindakan pencegahan sebelum terjadi bencana. Salah satu implementasi adalah dengan mendirikan sekolah aman yang dapat meminimalkan risiko cedera ketika terjadi gempa kuat atau tanah longsor. Jurusan Seni dan Komunikasi Visual dan Pusat Bahasa BINUS University telah mengusulkan kampanye sosial untuk mempromosikan sekolah aman bencana alam untuk masyarakat di daerah bencana. Kampanye akan disebarluaskan secara verbal dan non-verbal melalui berbagai media seperti brosur, poster, film animasi, dan layanan pengumuman publik (PSA). Tulisan ini mencoba untuk menunjukkan gaya yang berbeda dari bahasa dan layout dalam poster yang dibuat oleh pemerintah dan Mahasiswa BINUS University untuk menggugah kesadaran tentang hidup di daerah risiko bencana di Indonesia.*

**Kata kunci:** *sekolah aman, kampanye social, bencana alam, bahasa verbal dan non-verbal*

## INTRODUCTION

When earthquake and tsunami happened in Aceh and Yogyakarta in 2004 and 2006, it was reported that 750 schools building were totally damaged or swept away by the wave. In Yogyakarta alone, it was reported that 2900 schools could not be used anymore. The most recent deadly earthquake happened in Padang in 2009. From the record, it was reported that no less than 1606 classroom of 241 schools were destroyed and 60 students lost their lives. In another place in Indonesia such as in the island of Mentawai, it was reported that 7 schools were destroyed (UNESCO, 2007).

The government of Indonesia is completely aware about this through the Medium-Term Development Plan for year of 2010-2014, which then developed into the National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction (NAP-DRR) for 2010-2012. The NAP-DRR can shift disaster management spending from *ex-post* (rehabilitation of damaged assets) to *ex-ante* (building resilience in regular investment program). This plan enables the decision makers to take necessary actions during disastrous events. From this plan, the National Agency for Disaster Management (BNPB) can initiate to make variety of preventive measures such as designing buildings or structure that can minimize the risk of injury when the strong earthquake, tsunami or landslides happen. This includes not only focused on structural and spatial capability, but also on how institutions react and prepared for the risk mitigation and managing the disasters.

Despite of the importance in improving physical aspects such as structural or architectural elements, it is important to consider about the method of information dissemination and network to build awareness among the community about their surroundings. The government of Indonesia is completely aware that information about safe-school has to be disseminated to the people who live in the disaster-risk areas. They made all the effort to create advertising such as flyers, posters, advertising through radio and manyothers. However, in the writer's opinion, the advertising made by the government is a typical work done by other government agencies, which is one direction from the government to the people. Therefore, this paper tries to analyze about the characteristic of the government made media while at the same time, the writer will propose a new kind of media that is consider better than those made by the government.

In this paper, the writer will analyze printed media in the form of poster and to analyze about their effectiveness in delivering messages to its audiences by using semiotics theories. The method of analysis is by applying the theories into the posters being analyzed and compared them in how texts and images can relate each other to become another way of communication to create meanings. This paper will also propose the readers about the importance of applying the semiotic and visual communications theories in designing visual media such as posters, flyers animations and public service announcement.

Finally, the writer believed that this research is important for readers as a way to keep up with the fast growth of media culture, which has developed into many different such as internet culture that open possibilities for a new kind of visual communication media which is mass, efficient, and cost-effective. The application of theories will provide a perfect example of how effective visual communications media should be to ensure the effectiveness of the message delivered to the audience.

### **Definition of Term: Safe School**

A safe school is a loosely translated term from Indonesian language: *Sekolah Aman*. The goal for a safe school is to provide a safer place for students and community when disaster occurs. The Inter Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) and Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) at the World Bank are in collaboration with the Coalition for

Global School Safety and Disaster Prevention Education the IASC Education Cluster and the International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction have published the guidance for a constructing safer school in Indonesia.

The need of a safe school as mentioned in the guidance is very crucial because of several reasons: safe school will reduce physical constraint by giving more room for students to learn during teaching - learning activities; it can be used as the center of community activity, which is very important to fight poverty and illiteracy, and to create a healthy environment for the community; it can be functioned as community center when disaster happens; it can act as a protective shelter for people in the school and the community.

The guidance provides the manual and examples of how to construct a safer school for variety of areas in the world (Inter Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) & Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), 2009). However, there is a crucial need for the community and especially students to be aware about the existence and functions of this school. Therefore, a social campaign is needed to reach the targeted community to make sure the information delivered successfully and applied. The social campaign is conducted to achieve these objectives: a) to ensure that all people in the area have access to the school without any discrimination; b) to develop a community school committee that have responsibility to protect and assist disaster victims including performing necessary mitigation actions; c) to provide continuous exposure for school administrators about disaster risk reduction and to ensure physical and emotional wellness of students by providing comprehensive, thorough, and focused information; d) to design a system of integrated preventive measures by designing evacuation plan and school readiness; e) to identify early warning and to conduct necessary actions when disaster happens; f) to include natural disaster reduction theme into the curriculum; and, g) to assist students conducting proper and effective action through examples, and safety rehearsal.

### **Semiotic Theory in Visual Communication**

Sless (1981) in *Learning and Visual Communication* stated that learning through visual is more effective compared to a text based because visual ability cannot be separated from the brain. When the eye received an image, it triggers the brain to process and store it as a memory (Sless, 1981). That is why, brain can retain picture longer in the memory rather than text.

In line with Sless opinion, the power of visual communication is now developed into variety of products such as printed materials (posters, stickers, flyers or brochures) animation, public service advertisement, or short movies. And to ensure the effectiveness of the message to the audience, the products are designed based on the concept of AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire and Action) to reveal the semiotic codes necessary to reveal the connection between the sign and the message to be conveyed.

Watts (2004) in his research used the concept of AIDA to create a template for designing effective visual communication materials. The template is using semiotic approach to ensure the message delivered is related to the represented picture. Semiotic is a term proposed by Ferdinand de Saussure referring to the connection between sign in a society is a part of social and general psychology. Therefore, semiotics mostly refers to anything that may express meaning (Watts, 2004).

The application of semiotics approach in producing an effective visual image is very effective in visual communication. Watts (2004) added in his analysis that in delivering a message, a picture can create its own narrative that can be used to show ideology, class and other meaning which may signify codes acceptable to the target viewer.

Ferdinand de Saussure, a well-known linguist from Switzerland (1858-1913) stresses the importance of the relationship between the signifier (sound-image) and the signified (concept), which in the end determines the effectiveness of the message delivered. On the other hand, Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914), and Stuart Hall agree on the effectiveness of sign in delivering message to viewer. While Peirce focused on three elements of signs, which are iconic dimension, indexes and symbols, Hall focused on a method to analyze how visual representations able to deliver its meanings. In its application, these theories are used in many different kind of sign interpretation on many objects such as advertising, flyers, poster, and any other visual work in popular culture.

Although Saussure, Peirce and Hall theories are different in their way to understand visual signs, both underline the importance of signs as a method to deliver message regardless of their background or culture. Specifically, Peirce states that culture could cross culture through three faces: the sign itself, material aspect such as letter, image, and shape. Gorny (1995) in his paper: *What is Semiotics?* Rephrase Peirce opinion about meaning, which is based on a particular agreement or social convention commonly called symbols. So, every phenomenon that exists in the society such as an object, behavior, or even a thought, is also considered as symbols that 'represent' or 'refer to' a particular meaning outside/beyond the sign itself. (Gorny, 1995)

Representation of certain symbol such as color, for example can be transferred across culture such as the color of traffic light, which is mutually shared by people around the world. As an individual object, red does not mean anything, except to the fact that it is a color like any other color known by human. However, if the color takes part as in a cultural context such as the stop sign (lamp) of a car, then it represent as " Stop" which is commonly understood in human cognition. This is a result of social convention accepted by human. (Chandler, 2012)

Unlike Saussure, Peirce does not define the sign as the smallest unit of signification. Anything or phenomenon, no matter how complex, may be considered as a sign from the moment it enters into a process of *Semiosis*. The process of Semiosis consists of three relationship between a sign or *representamen* (a first), an object (a second) and an *interpretant* (a third). (Desmedt, 2011)

The *representamen* is a thing that represents another thing. Whereas the object is what the sign represents. The sign can only represent the object and it can express something about it, which is an object with which the interpreter is already familiar from previous observation (experience of the viewer from other signs) (Desmedt, 2011).

Furthermore, upon being interpreted, the *representamen* has the ability to trigger an *interpretant*, which in turn becomes a *representamen* by triggering another *interpretant* referring to the same object as the first *representamen*, which later allowing the first one to refer to the object. But in order to be understood, the definition itself requires a series of other *interpretants* (other definitions). Therefore, the process of *semiosis* is theoretically unlimited depend on the situation that determine the mutual understanding of the parties involved when the event occurred. (Desmedt, 2011)

## RESEARCH METHOD

The Semiotic theory in in this analysis is suitably applied into a qualitative method, where researcher conducts his analysis through his own subjective and personal interpretation of the subject. However, the writer thinks that the method of research in this paper is more appropriate if it is called as qualitative –interpretative approach, since it focuses on interpreting and decoding signs and texts. The possibility of subjectivity in this analysis is unavoidable since media is a complex material that mostly based on perception of the researchers. In semiotics theories, media is also as part of sign, which

represent ideas, situation, feelings, materials and condition beyond the sign themselves. Despite of that, the application of Semiotics theory will reduce the subjectivity factor since its analysis are conducted especially on how the relation between images, text, and meanings can deliver a message in the form of social messages, emotions, or any other expressions, which commonly shared by people.

In this research, the writer will discuss three kinds of media that promote safe – school in Indonesia. They are two sets of posters intended for natural-disaster education, one short animation movie and movie clip. All the images, text and messages included in this media are analyzed, decoded, and interpreted using Semiotics theory.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

In this research, the writer compares two posters created by the National Disaster Management Disaster (BNPB) with two posters with similar theme taken from poster projects made by students and teachers at BINUS University. The method used is comparative qualitative analysis using semiotic and media analysis theory based on visual and interpretation of the media being compared. The images are taken from the collection of posters and other materials from the BNPB website on <http://www.bnpb.go.id/website/asp/pub.asp?p=5>. The media are selected from printed and multimedia such as posters and videos, which is limited on natural disaster theme. Two samples were taken from each source and compared by using semiotics and visual communication theory.

The two posters made by the BNPB are arranged, based on the writer's opinion in terms of two major themes identified during the analysis of the typical government trend in disseminating information. These themes are defined as: patron – client pattern, and doctrine and political statement. The writer chooses two posters. One poster represents each of the above categories.

The posters above then compared with the proposed posters made by BINUS University students. The proposed posters are treated similarly and they are both analyzed using similar theories and research methods. The result of the analysis then presented in chronological order to make readers easily understand about the concept.

### **The Government Made Posters (Patron – Client Pattern)**

Analysis of the posters published by the BNPB reveals that it relies on a one way information dissemination technique that has been used by many authorities for many years. The pattern is considered one of the oldest communication systems that tells everybody what to do, while at the same time it uses the element of fear as the oppressing factors of the clients. Scott (1972) mentioned that this pattern happened in most part in Southeast Asia. In her paper, this pattern is used to preserve the power of the authority by using external threat such as communism to force social and political pressure of the people.

Figure 1, the first poster designed by the BNPB, best illustrates this theme. This poster presents an active volcano as the background to make the point. The poster attempts to drag the attention of the viewer to realize about the power of an active volcano. And the way to present this is by putting a picture of an active volcano that covers almost half of the entire page. Also, it presents the condition caused by a volcanic eruption, which was arid and devastating. Although there is a picture of living plants, which possibly suggest a positive impression of hope, the poster is still dominated by the volcano in its active condition.

The text of this picture starts with English word “Living Harmony with Risk” [sic] in white and located in the middle of the picture. This arrangement suggests that the information is made by the government (in this case BNPB) to tell the readers that people can live in harmony in the natural disaster areas. The headline uses a broken type of font that strongly indicates disaster, which creates negative feeling. The sharp color contrast between the font and the background also suggest a clear difference between the positive and negative mood created by the picture.

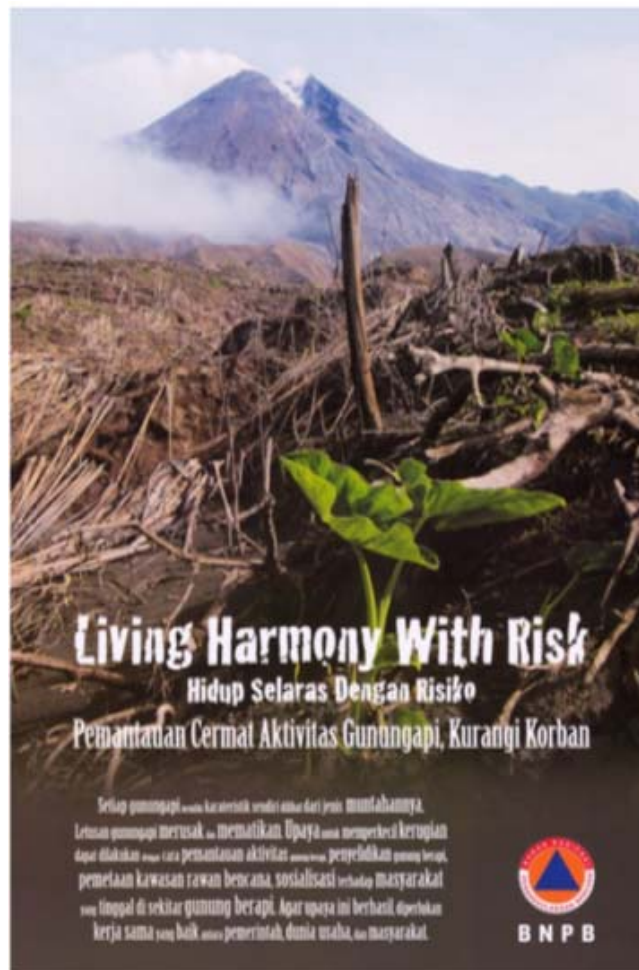


Figure 1 an Example of Patron – Client Pattern

Another reason why this Poster can be included into patron – client type, is based on the fact that it is a typical one – way kind of communication pattern. The Government, in this case the BNPB, has implemented the element of threat in the wordings and phrases of the poster as mentioned in the following figure.



Figure 2 The Wordings and Phrases of The Poster

The sentences in the poster highlight some words and verbs that can create negative mood towards the readers:

*“Setiap **GUNUNG API** memiliki karakteristik sendiri dari jenis **MUNTAHANNYA**. Letusan gunung api **MERUSAK** dan **MEMATIKAN**. **UPAYA** untuk memperkecil **KERUGIAN** dapat dilakukan dengan cara **PEMANTAUAN AKTIVITAS** gunung berapi **PENYELIDIKAN** gunung berapi, **PEMETAAN KAWASAN RAWAN BENCANA**, **SOSIALISASI** terhadap **MASYAKARAT** yang **TINGGAL DI SEKITAR GUNUNG BERAPI**. Agar upaya ini berhasil, diperlukan **KERJASAMA** yang baik antara **PEMERINTAH**, **DUNIA USAHA** dan **MASYARAKAT**.”*

Translation:

All **VOLCANOES** have its own characteristics based on the kinds of its **ERUPTIONS**. Any volcanic eruption is **DESTRUCTIVE** and **DEADLY**. The efforts to reduce the **LOSS** can be done through volcano **SURVEILLANCE ACTIVITY**, volcano **STUDY**, **MAPPING THE POTENTIALLY DESTRUCTED AREA**, **INFORMATION** dissemination to the **PEOPLE** in the **SURROUNDING AREA**. To make it happen, it needs good **COLLABORATION** between the **GOVERNMENT**, **BUSINESS** and the **PEOPLE**.

From semiotic point of view, this poster fits the description of the patron – client pattern. The layouts and how the picture and the words are positioned made the posters not only striking but also creates fear instead of awareness. The first four words in the poster: **GUNUNG API** (volcanoes), **MUNTAHANNYA** (eruptions), **MERUSAK** (destructive), **MEMATIKAN** (deadly), and **KERUGIAN** (loss), creates an uneasy feeling for the readers, especially these words are written in bigger fonts compared to the other. Although the creator might be considered it as a way to make the reader aware, the writer believes that there must be other way than creating a feeling of unsecure toward the reader

Final analysis about this poster is the arrangement of objects and the contrast between the object in the poster. The poster is positioned in a landscape format, which means that the reader is expected to read it from the top to the bottom. This arrangement made the reader notice about the

smoking volcano in the background. As the reader move their sight to the bottom, they will see the devastating land, which is suggested from the picture, that it is caused by the volcano eruption. As mentioned by Peirce, the process of Semiosis, which consists of three relationship between a sign or *representamen* (a first), an object (a second) and an *interpretant* (a third) is clearly presented in the poster.

As the *representamen*, it is clear that the smoking volcano is a thing that represents danger. While the arid land and the dry lifeless surroundings represent nothing more than the cause of the danger. The living and green leave in the middle of the devastated land, can be generally interpreted as life or hope. This creates a certain flow of ideas that the danger is there and nothing we can do about it. The volcano that dominates half of the poster in the background suggests that the power of nature is beyond the power of human being. But instead of being afraid, people needs to understand and believe there is always hope. From this point, this poster has successfully reached its goal.

### The Doctrine and Political Statement

As it can be seen in figure 3, the aim of this poster is for the reader to provide information by giving sets of information. The title of the poster is: “*Strategi Mewujudkan Ketangguhan Bangsa dari Bencana.*” (Loose translation: strategy to disclose country toughness from disaster) suggests that the readers will be given a set of information related to the program made by the government. The fact about this is true. The poster is dominated by words which are directed to the readers, which are suggested to be the common people. The people are represented by a farmer, which is easily distinguished by his outfit and straw hat (traditionally called as *caping*). The layout of the poster however, is dominated by a picture of a smoke, which supposed to be coming from an active volcano in the background. Compared to the smoke from the volcano, the face of the farmer is not focused. It does not suggest the real feeling of the farmer. In fact, in the poster, although the picture of the farmer is in the middle of the poster and it becomes the foreground, the attention of the reader most likely be focused on the volcano rather than the human in front of it.



Figure 3 The Doctrine and Political Statement of the Poster



With this kind of arrangement, this picture is supposed to be able to inform the audience and it is obvious that the smoking volcano is the attention getter. What happens is, according to the writer, this poster creates a different mood to the readers. With the focus on the background, it creates a feeling that human is hopeless compared with the nature, which in this case is represented by the smoking volcano. By putting human as the foreground, the feeling of hopelessness is even bigger. The face of the farmer does not look at the volcano. Instead, the reader has the impression that he is walking away from the volcano. The sense of hopelessness of the farmer is even strengthened by the blurred face.

Despite the positive headlines, this poster has four other statements that supposed to support the whole meaning of the printed media. The statements are: *Jauhkan Masyarakat dari Bencana* (Keep People Away from Disaster), *Jauhkan Bencana dari Masyarakat* (Keep disasters away from the people), *Hidup Harmoni dengan Risiko Bencana* (Live in Harmony with the Risks of Disaster), and *Kembangkan Kearifan Lokal* (Develop the Local Wisdom). The first two statements suggest that the government wants the inhabitants to stay away from nature and do not live where there is any potential danger in the area. These two statements are in contradiction with the rest of the two lines, which obviously mentioned about living in harmony with the danger and using the local wisdom to cope with the potential danger. These statements can be quite confusing for some people who are not living in the area because the two contradictive meaning does not say clearly, what people can do with the natural danger. It even creates a confusion message where people are facing with two different statements that have opposite meaning.

To understand this phenomenon, it is important to understand the culture and political view of Indonesian people in the government especially the Javanese politician. It has been widely known that traditionally, Indonesian politicians are using unclear message to blur the actual meaning. Alois Nugroho in Kompas Online wrote an article about the attitude of Indonesian politician after the *Reformasi* in 1998. He said that people in Indonesia still maintain the “unclear argument such as *“Ngono yo ngono ning ojo ngono”* (loosely translated: “well, you can do that, but don’t do that”) that is used to softly telling people what they can or cannot do without particular or logical reason (Nugroho, 1998). The ambiguity of the statement, which is seemed to be normal by most Indonesians, creates a state of passivity among the people. This image is strengthened by the image face of the farmer, which is blurred and out of focus, and looking away from the problem.

From the semiotics point of view, it is clear that the government fabricate the poster to send political message. The layout, the fonts and the pictures in this poster is designed to make readers understand about the issue being presented. Compared to the previous picture in Figure 1, this picture is a ‘soft’ way of sending political information about what and who should be responsible when natural disaster happen. The flow of ideas starting from the volcano, the paddy field and finally the farmer, clearly suggests that there is a kind of story that the government wants the people to do. The government as the authority puts themselves as the administrator while the people as the governed supposed to obey and follow the instructions.

### **Proposed Posters (Kenali Gempa Posters)**

After analyzing the posters made by the government, the writer thinks that there is an alternative way to disseminate ideas. In this era, there are many ways to make contact with the audience. In terms of printed materials, it will be easy for the audience to grasp the meaning if the material is easy to read, have a clear message and easily understood by audience of all ages. The figure 4 is made by students of visual communication department at BINUS University that deals at the same issue. In the poster, the designer is using a cartoon character of school students to make the point.

The first two figures deals with proposing ideas of what is an active volcano: the first figure is entitled: *“Yuk kita cari tahu!!”* (Let’s find out!!). This poster is a friendly reminder of the potential

danger of volcanic eruption in Indonesia. The sentence: *Kenali gempa!!* (know the earthquake) is placed on the top right of the poster suggesting that the poster is meant to tell people to understand about earthquakes.



Figure 4 Kenali Gempa Poster

The rest of the sentences that follow the title is using capital letters but it is more like a casual non-standard handwriting style, which is friendly and easy to read. The linguistic element such as vocabulary and choice of words is using colloquial, casual words such as using “*kenapa*” instead of “*mengapa*”, and “*sama-sama*” instead of “*bersama-sama*.” This choice of linguistic features made readers easy to read and enjoy the content. The ideas in the sentences are clearly represented with the picture of the earth holding a magnifying glass showing the red dots, which is supposed to be a potential place for volcanic earthquakes . The students, on the other hand, are looking curiously through it. In the writer’s opinion, this picture has successfully delivered the message even without reading the whole message written in the picture.

The second figure shows the message: *AWAS HINDARI BAHAYANYA!* (translated: Caution, avoid the danger!!). The fonts in this poster are very clear where the reader can see it from the distance, which made it easy to read. The bright red color in the background suggests danger. But instead of threatening the audience, this poster shows the audience to be aware of the danger. In fact, the poster also shows a positive attitude by providing solutions: “*Ayo kita sama-sama ikuti kegiatan kenali gempa di sekolah kita agar terhindar dari bahayanya.*” (Let’s follow the know your volcano activity in your school to make you safe).



Figure 5 Kenali Gempa Poster

In this figure, the designer uses another approach that is to send clear message of warning using the same characters. The red color is the common sign for warning, which is shared by many countries in the world. The affirmation sign that dominates almost whole section of the poster is very effective to get the attention of the audience to be aware of the danger of erupting volcano.

### The Merapi Poster

Another poster that is effective in delivering message about the danger of volcanic eruption is a poster that links the event with local culture.



Figure 5 Merapi Poster I

The poster depicts the character of “Hanoman” a monkey God, which is famous and widely known by most Javanese people. The character says: “*Merapi batuk!!! Selamatkan Diri!!!*” (Merapi is coughing!!! Save yourselves!!!). The mount Merapi, is an active volcano located in central Java. So, it can be assumed that the poster is made for people who live in the area. The designer is using the phrase: “Merapi is coughing” to reduce the elements of threats in the statements.

The color of the poster is dominated by white, bright red and soil brown to make a contrast. The red is used for giving the element of danger in the poster, which was put in contrast with soil brown. The effect of the combination of these two colors has given the impression of emergency, but not something to be afraid about, which in the writer’s opinion is able to attract the attention of the reader. Nonetheless, by putting the Hanoman character in the front, and also by exposing the face of the Hanoman clearly and face the audience, the sense that emerge in this combination of pictures is positive and less threatening compared to the one created by the BNPB.

The local figure used as the main character in the poster is pictured in which the head is bigger than the body. This makes the character easily to recognize especially the facial expression. The body language portrayed in the poster imitates a human who is shouting something to the others. This poster, in the writer’s opinion has successfully conveyed the message to the reader.



Figure 6 Merapi Poster II

The most interesting point about this poster is that it uses a contrastive element where the main characters (the eagle and the monkey) are posted in the foreground facing to the left with an erupting volcano in the background. The smile and positive facial expression represented by the characters reduced the frightening impression of the angry volcano. The poster is dominated by the color of soil brown and white, which is the same color with the monkey character. In Indonesia, the color of white is associated with clean, calmness, honesty, and sacred. While red on the other hand, represents courage, power and sometimes anger. This symbolic contrastive association is somewhat neutralized by the soil brown color, which represents earth. Culturally, Indonesian culture, especially the Javanese is a society that has full of ambiguity which is represented in many of its literature and cultural artifacts. Kumar, in her book *Java and Modern Europe* mentioned that throughout the colonial period the Western people find many ambiguities among Indonesian people. This ambiguity sometimes creates confusion for people outside the local culture (Kumar, 1997). However, although confusion sometimes happen, in the writer's opinion, most Indonesian understood the dialectic between different sides of culture since they are accustomed with the system due to the ruling of the New Order Soeharto eras that implement "Javanese style" political ideas for more than three decades.

The wording of the last poster also easy to understand: "*Saksikan Merapi Meletus Dari Tempat Yang Aman!!!*" (Watch the Eruption of Merapi from safe distance). The sentence suggests that although a volcanic eruption is dangerous, people can watch it safely from the distance. In other words, people should not be afraid of the erupting volcano. It is not a threat if they obey the rules and

always consider their safety. The least threatening phrase in the poster, in the writer's opinion" is very effective and could reduce the tension when the disaster happens.

Despite the potential ambiguity of the poster presented, the writer thinks that these last two posters have successfully conveyed the message to the audience. There are two factors from the semiotics point of view that determine the effectiveness of this picture. The first is the using of character familiar to the audience. Using familiar character can create close connection between the media and the reader. Even the children can easily understand the message due to the familiar, fable like character presented in the poster.

## CONCLUSION

After analyzing the posters, there is a significant difference in approach between the government made and the proposed posters made by students and teachers of BINUS University. Both parties have similar goal that is to deliver the message successfully to the readers. From semiotics point of view, the difference lays on the connection between the media with the readers. The government uses straightforward approach, which is quite common and can easily be found in the government mass media. The two approaches: patron-client and doctrine and political statement are the easiest way to categorize different types of government made media. The element of threat is a typical way for the government of Indonesia in particular in telling their audience. The layouts and the linguistic features applied in the posters also indicate a flow of ideas that tend to tell readers to do something instead of asking them to do it.

On the other hand, the proposed posters have different approach. Instead of using photos, they are using cartoon and using character familiar to the audience. The colorful sign that indicates danger also presented in both pictures but they are put in a different manner so that they do not create the feeling of threat and uneasy for the audience.

Finally, the writer may conclude that all genres of posters are effective in their own way. They are effective in delivering message and creating their own mood. It would not be easy to measure the effectiveness of the poster in the actual condition. As the initial purpose of this paper, the analysis using semiotics can capture the hidden intention of the media presented so that it will be to determine the appropriateness of these posters to be placed in public space.

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