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WHEN THE WALL SPEAKS: SOCIAL SEMIOTICS ANALYSIS OF (COVID-19)-THEMED MURALS IN INDONESIA

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Abstract
This study aims at analyzing how the meaning-making of semiotic signs is manifested on (Covid-19)-themed murals in Indonesia. Four murals with covid-19 themes derived from different sources on the Indonesian website were used as the main data for this study. Drawing on Kress and van Leeuwen's representational, interactive, and compositional function of social semiotics, the analysis reveals that (1) the murals adopt the four processes in narrative representation, (2) the gazes are categorized as offers images and the use of long shot in the images suggest objectivity and social distance, (3) the messages are delivered in given-new and real-ideal pattern and the absence of frames in the murals indicating that the visual and verbal modes lock together to create the sense of unity between the image and written modes to construct and deliver the message by integrating the existing knowledge to reinforce new information. Thus, the current study contributes to the multimodal studies of how visual and written expression construct the meaning-making process.

Keywords: compositional, covid-19, image, interactive, murals, representational

Introduction

> *"There are many other modes of meaning, in any culture, which are outside the realm of language"*- Halliday

Wall paintings used by the artist to express their emotions are believed to be one of the oldest forms of art that are only "a short step from the caves of Lascaux" (Kordic, 2015, para 1). Etymologically, murals are derived from the Latin word *murus* meaning wall. Mural, this study refers to a large painting done on the outside wall of the building that is usually incorporated into many public spaces (Heidenry, 2014). From the prehistoric cave paintings at Lascaux Grotte in France depicting life in the Old Stone Age era to the modern form of murals in today's society, wall paintings or murals are the signature of the artist's cultural expression to weave their artistic skills and depict life activities, scenery, religious traditions, social or political related issue during the period when these cultural artifacts are produced (ibid, 2015).

Murals, as one example of public art, use imagery that can improve public space as well as the community's sense of belonging while disclosing social, political, and cultural issues that might exist in a particular community (Stevenson, 2016). The function of arts after all is to reflect the reality of interaction between people and their social environment (Sanabria, 2013). As a form of public art, murals produce images with a decipherable verbal message that is inclusively present for public consumption (McAuliffe & Iveson, 2011). Mural making, therefore, is designed by incorporating the concepts of the public in its production (Young, 2014). As such what is happening in society can be a source of inspiration for artists and their work is produced to respond to what happens in their society (Courage, 2017). As such, art functions as a means of interaction among people and a media to adopt the changes that took place in society or the environment (Arbuto, 2009).

The existing studies on murals range from describing the benefit of murals to society (e.g., Bengtsen & Arvidsson, 2014; Drescher, 2009) to how murals are perceived as a means to promote socio-economic development (e.g., Lees & Melhuish, 2015; Markusen & Gadwa, 2010). Other studies conducted on the issues of murals as an avenue for the artists' aesthetic cultural expression (Halsey and Pederick, 2010); local subculture self-expression (Halsey and Young, 2006), artists or public political expression (e.g., Delgado and Barton, 1998; Howze, 2008; Skinner and Jolliffe, 2017); a reflection of cultural identity (Fletcha, et al. 2017); means to control identity and social relations as well as to appease community (Merriam, 2011). The complexities of murals' existence and their relationship with the public domain also become of topics in previous studies. Among the few are the tension of ownership between public and private (Young, 2013); the protection of murals (Hansen & Young, 2018), and the mural-related policies (Shwartz & Mualam, 2020). These studies are salient in providing the benchmark to understand, describe, and address some murals-related issues.

Murals are believed to be the expression of a society that acts as a reminder of the existential message about what is happening during a particular time (Nora, 1997). In the pandemic era, murals have become a significant communication mode within public life to express what is happening in society (McEwan et al., 2022). As such, murals that are created to respond to the pandemic can be a means to increase public awareness and encourage them to change their behaviors (Tasamba, 2020). Murals are, therefore, a powerful mode of a campaign to reduce the effect of the pandemic (Pleyers, 2020).

Other related studies on the relationship between murals and the pandemic are the role of street art during the pandemic (McEwan et al., 2022); the production of street art database responding to covid-19 (Shirey & Lawrence, 2021); the UK street art and mask-wearing (McEwan et al., 2022). Nonetheless, the study on (Covid-19)- themed murals in the Indonesian context are still rare. This study is expected to fill this gap and investigate the meaning-making of murals produced during the covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia. The central concern of this study is to discover the answer to how the meaning-making process is ascribed to the murals and how the interactive and compositional meanings are constructed in them. What distinguishes the murals in this present study from other murals in different studies is that the selected murals here are produced in a particular cultural background (Indonesia). Murals, as Irvine (2012) argues are place specific. They depict the

situation of a particular place and therefore the model and design are related to that specific site.

Thus, the present study uses the following research questions as guidelines to organize the discussion:

1. How are the semiotic modes used in the (Covid-19) themed murals in Indonesia to construct their meaning?
2. How are the interactive meanings constructed in the murals?
3. How are the compositional meanings represented in the murals?

Literature Review

Existing literature on murals

As there are many forms of street art including murals and graffiti that somehow seem interchangeable, the distinction between murals and graffiti should be made. Murals are generally considered as a form of street art due to the granted consent from the property owner (Collins, 2018) where the murals are painted or scribbled directly on the wall (Soedarjo, 2022). Unlike mural that has legal permission for their creation, graffiti is associated with vandalism (Mollinel & Clavelm 2016) as a form of resistance to reject the mainstream culture or to express political resistance to challenge the hierarchal system taking place in public spaces (Farnia, 2014). In the absence of legal permission, graffiti tends to be associated with illegal marking on the private or public sphere (Ten Eyck, 2016), in the form of "tagging" or "throw up" that usually uses ink or aerosol that is sprayed on public space (Ferrell, 1993). Consistent with the difference between murals and graffiti discussed by these previous studies, the investigated- murals in this study are created legally as part of the Indonesian government's efforts to raise awareness about the danger of covid-19 and to encourage Indonesian to follow the health measures to flatten up and avoid covid-19 infection (Projo, 2021).

The present study differs from its predecessor in the way that it tries to unfold the meaning-making of covid-19-based murals in Indonesia. The murals under the present study were created during the covid-19 pandemic which affect the life of Indonesian people. As such, it might be worth saying that murals could be understood as a cultural expression to express community feelings towards a certain issue, it is interesting to discover how the murals under the present study are used to depict the social reality of Indonesia in responding to the global pandemic.

Kress and van Leeuwen' social semiotic

Kress and van Leeuwen's visual grammar discusses different "multimodal" groups and argues that a particular modal is a source of interpretation that is influenced socially and culturally. As Kress and van Leeuwen argue, Multimodal is a text that involves "various semiotic modes in the design of a semiotic product or event along with a certain manner in which these modes are combined" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p.25). Thus, to obtain meaning, the incorporation of various semiotic elements including the visual and verbal characteristics in a text is needed as they create potential meaning within a specific social setting (Jewitt & Oyama, 2001).

Visual Grammar of Kress and van Leeuwen emerged from Hallidayan's social semiotics on *Systemic Functional Grammar* (SFG). In his SFG, Halliday proposes the idea that language functions as a social semiotic, and its role is to

"make sense of our experience and act out our relationship. (Halliday, 2004, p.23). Hence, SFG views that "a language is a source for meaning making and meaning resides in a systemic pattern of choices" (ibid, p.23). In SFG, Halliday introduced three meta-functions of language and defined them as ideational, interpretational, and textual. Inspired by Halliday's framework, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) develop three meta-functions of images, which are: representational, interactive, and compositional. The present study aims to investigate the representational, interactive, and compositional meaning of the selected murals adopted in the study.

Representational function

The narrative and conceptual process in representational function differs in the way that the two structures investigate how the relationship between the participants of a single image is associated with each other. The conceptual process shows static traits and characterizes " the stable, generalized, and timeless essence of participants (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 59). The narrative process, on the other hand, describes the "unfolding actions and events, the process of change, transitory spatial arrangements" (ibid). In the narrative process, there are "represented participants" that shows the relationship between components of the image. Represented participants (RPs) can be people, places, or things that are connected by a vector, an imaginary line shaped by components in the image function as an action verb in the language. The vector is created by the (RPs) which is called an "actor". The one that the vector is done is termed the "goal" (ibid).

There are four processes in narrative representation which are actional, reactional, verbal and mental, and conversion process. The actional process shows the acts that are done by the actor. On the other hand, the reactional process is created by the direction of represented participants' glances. While the verbal and mental process is shaped by thought balloons and bubbles. Lastly, the conversion process includes the transformation of the (RP)s circumstances in the image (Feng & Espindola, 2013).

Interactive function

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) propose two different types of participants related to the interaction taking place between them in visual communication which is (RPs) (the individual, places, and things/ issues portrayed in texts or images) and interactive participants (the producers of the image and the viewers). In interactive participants, they use images or any kind of visual to communicate. Some of the communication in interactive participants take place directly when the producer and the viewer are physically present and engage in in-person communication. However, some communications involve indirect interaction where both the viewers and the producers are absent from each other (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Therefore, the social meanings are encoded by the producers and the viewers decode them by analyzing the angle from which they can see the RPs, social distance, and point of view. The image act can be investigated from the RPs gaze direction whether the gaze is directed at the viewers (*demand)* or not (*offer)*. The second dimension of interactive function is the social distance that is influenced by different sizes of framing: close-up, medium, or long. Lastly, the interactive function is related to the point of view that consists of two types: subjective, where

the image has a central perspective, and objective, the image without a central perspective (Kress & van Leeuwen, p. 114-130).

Compositional function

The compositional function has framing, information value, and salience as its three main features to investigate the meaning of composition (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 181). Information value is associated with three main areas: the placement of elements to the right or left; top and bottom; and center and margin. The left side means the given information, something that the viewer is familiar with and accepts as the point of departure for the message. The right side, on the other hand, is the new information. It is something unfamiliar to the viewer, therefore it needs special attention (ibid, pp. 179-185). The next important dimension is salience. This dimension creates differences among elements because it makes some elements presented as more attractive or significant than others. Size, sharpness of focus, color, or cultural aspects are features that indicate salience (ibid, pp. 201-203). Finally, framing is the last thing that connects the representational and interactive meanings. When there is framing, the viewers and the image are disconnected from each other. Whereas the absence of framing is an indication of involvement between the image and the viewers (ibid, pp. 203-204).

As a theory that focuses on the relationship between image and its social function, Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) is a suitable method to investigate the combination of image and written text in the selected murals to reveal the meaning-making of the mural's creation and its social implications within the Indonesian context. Thus, the purpose of this study can be achieved.

Method

Data collection

This study is qualitative in design to investigate the meaning-making of (covid-19)- themed murals in Indonesia. The data adopted for this study are murals with covid-19 themes in Indonesia. The selected murals were derived from different websites in Indonesia by using google image search and covid-19 murals in Indonesia as the keywords.

The murals were chosen based on the criteria that they consist of visual images and written expressions to explore the relationship between signs and meanings they depicted. There are 40 murals with covid-19 theme collected within two and a half hours of search. As some of the collected images either have overlapping messages or only depict visual expressions, four are selected to be used in this study. The source of each mural in this study is written under each mural to make it easy for the readers to access the website where the murals were obtained.

The four selected murals were chosen simply on my native understanding of the Indonesian context related to the issue of education and cultural beliefs that integrated into the covid-19 related issues such as mask-wearing, social distancing, stay-at-home encouragement, and issues related to online school as a result of lockdown due to the pandemic.

Data analysis

Once the selected murals are compiled, content analysis of the narrative representation, interactive dimension, and compositional function of Kress and van

Leeuwen (2006) is adopted to investigate how the meaning-making process of the selected murals is produced and to explore the interactive and compositional meaning of the murals within Indonesian society. A thick description of the process in this research including the data collection, how it is analyzed, and the acknowledgment of my background knowledge of Indonesian culture is expected to provide trustworthiness for this study.

Findings and Discussion

Analysis of semiotics modes in the (Covid-19) Themed Murals in Indonesia

This sub-section will present the construction of meaning-making on the selected murals under study. The semiotic codes used in this study's (Covid-19) themed murals are analyzed based on their representational meaning that can be derived from the analysis of the depicted action, the represented participants (RPs), and the multimodal used in the murals to deliver the meaning-making process. The following discussion of the four selected murals in this study is categorized based on the four representational meanings in the social semiotic theory of Kress and van Leeuwen.

Actional process

The following mural is found on the wall of "Bukit Duri", a village located on the outskirt of Jakarta. It depicts s a man with a mask and gloves holding a red and white shield trying to stop the coronavirus cells from attacking him. The caption says: "To protect is better than to cure", the literal meaning of the Indonesian proverb "Sedia payung sebelum hujan" that shares a similar meaning with the English proverb "An ounce of protection is worth a pound of cure" assists the viewer's imagination to decode the meaning of the man's action.



Figure.1.https://web.facebook.com/thebruneian.news/photos/a.384568341954695/925070281237829/?type=3&_rdc=1&_rdr

As explained earlier, the actional process portrays the action acts of the agent. The agent in this image is represented by a man with a mask, gloves, and holding a shield. Put differently, the man in figure 1 represents Indonesian as he puts a pin of the Indonesian flag on the right pocket of his shirt. Here, he is depicted in a state of defense as shown by the shield trying to stop the attack covid-19 cells. The way the

man squinted his eyes at the image sent a message that the man uses all his strength to fight the attack of coronavirus cells. Using his shield, he pushed the massive attack of coronavirus cells that accelerated at full speed as depicted by the white lines in the image. The shield itself could be interpreted as an umbrella, the metaphorical object "Sedia payung sebelum hujan" used in the proverb. Another worth noting point is that the lettering of the word "PROTECT", and "CURE" are capitalized to emphasize that protecting themselves from getting infected from covid-19 is better than curing them from getting covid-19. Therefore, the capitalization of protecting and cure is used to express the importance of the message to the viewers.

Reactional Process

Figure.2 is a mural created on the wall of a small road in "Cimahi", a city located in West Java, Indonesia. The mural emphasizes the significance of social distance and mask-wearing in preventing the spread of covid-19. The caption says: "WEAR YOUR MASK! KEEP SOCIAL DISTANCING" said by the coronavirus cell.



Figure 2. https://news.detik.com/foto-news/d-5234830/mural-edukasi-bahaya-covid-19-dan-dbd-di-cimahi/3

In the reactional process, the interactions are usually framed by demonstrating the "direction of the glance" by the (RPs). In this type of interaction, the reacters who perform the gaze "must necessarily be a person, or human-like animal, a creature with visible eyes having visible pupils, and capable of facial expression (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p.67). Here, the reacters are two popular types of Indonesian ghosts that look terrified and float away from the coronavirus cell that is personalized as a human-like creature with feet and hands glaring and yelling at the two ghosts. The two ghosts are the reacters who do the looking. They look at the angry-looking coronavirus cell that glares and yells at them for not wearing masks and keeping a social distance. The first ghost looks terrified which makes s/he tightly close his/her eyes so as not to see the cell again. The second ghost also looks panic-stricken and floats away from the coronavirus cell. Her eyes and mouth are widely open showing how scared she is that she is accidentally caught without a mask by the coronavirus cell.

The combination of all the elements in this mural reflects an implied meaning about the stubbornness of Indonesian who, despite knowing that social distancing and mask-wearing would help them from getting covid-19, yet they still being stubborn to do these two essential preventive measures. The symbolic message here is that people should keep social distancing and wear masks and not belittle the danger of coronavirus. When even ghosts who are not made of flesh and blood are afraid of coronavirus, this virus is, therefore, more dangerous for people. That is why they should wear masks and keep social distancing to avoid getting infected by the virus.

Unlike figure 1 which adapts a shield that might make the viewers associate it with the captain America shield, figure 2 uses a pure image that belongs to Indonesian society. The two images used in figure 2 are "pocong" and "kuntilanak", two famous ghosts in Indonesia. The decision of the mural's creator in figure 2 shows that the creator is aware of how to deliver a message by integrating the existing cultural background shared by Indonesians. Parodying how the coronavirus cell yelling at the two ghosts for not wearing masks and keeping social distancing, the mural tries to encourage Indonesian society not to forget to practice social distancing and putting on their mask.

Speech process and mental process

The following mural is created in Jakarta and can be categorized in speech and mental processes where the verbal and mental processes are created through "bubble and balloon thoughts" that connect the thinker or speaker to what is going on in their mind. However, the dialogue and thought balloon's content is not directly embodied but facilitated by a "reactor" or "senser" (in the case of a thought bubble) or a speaker (in the case of a dialogue bubble) (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 68).



Figure 3. https://www.tvanouvelles.ca/2021/08/06/en-direct--les-derniers-developpements-sur-le-coronavirus.

As can be seen from figure 3, the mural portrays a student sitting alone and being bored for not being able to study on-site due to the lockdown. The caption in the bubble says: "I'M TIRED OF ONLINE CLASS!!!". The caption in this mural plays a crucial role in delivering the implied meaning of the mural. The verbal text, as Barthes argues anchored the polysemous nature of the image in the mural. When

the text is absent, the meaning from the image boring schoolboy sitting alone; supporting his chin with the palm of his left hand; tired eyes gazing somewhere without focus and his right hand resting on his lap would be hard to decipher. The viewers would have a diverse understanding as the image opens to different interpretations. Thanks to the message that it helps the viewers to "fix the floating chain of the signified" (Barthes, 1997, p. 39).

The text enables the viewers to understand the intended possible meaning of the image in the mural. Some symbols of equations in Math are written on the caption which strengthens the difficulties of studying online. Math is used in the mural as Math is one of the scariest subjects for most Indonesian students. The lettering is capitalized with modification of peace symbols inserted in the "A" and "O" probably saying that an online class is never as peaceful as an onsite class since most Indonesian students cannot afford the resources they need to study online. For an online class, students need two main assets: gadgets and the internet. These two facilities are not a problem for school children from upper-middle-class urban families. Unfortunately, students in rural or remote areas find that gadgets and the internet needed for an online class are luxuries that they do not necessarily have or afford. The visual information of a bored schoolboy is anchored by the caption saying he is bored with the online school reflecting the huge gap between the social economy and access to education in Indonesia during the pandemic.

Conversion process

The conversion process accommodates the transformation of the RPs within the image. Figure 4 below describes the conversion concept. Figure 4 was created in Depok, a landlocked city in West Java that is located within Jakarta metropolitan area when a comprehensive curfew was initiated in April 2020.



Figure 4. https://news.detik.com/foto-news/d-4977881/mural-pejuang-medis-melawan-viruscorona

Here, the conversion process depicted in the image of coronavirus from being a microscopic cell at 0.1- 0.5 µm size into a fireballs size visible to the naked eye attacking the earth's atmosphere. Whereas medical worker is symbolized by a regular job curing sick people into war hero with an angel's wing fighting the meteoroid attack of coronavirus cell in their full 'armor', the personal protective equipment (PPE) to shield themselves from getting infected when they fight with

the attack and save lives at the same time. The caption says: "THANK YOU WARRIOR!" addressed to the medical workers having a direct war with the virus attack, and the second caption is intended to a general citizen to "Fight covid-19 by staying at home".

The RPs in this mural reflect how Indonesian people change the concept of the virus from being dangerous to great danger as it attacks as fast as a meteoroid and spreads at extreme speed. In addition to that, Indonesian people have changed their perception of medical workers who before the pandemic times are considered regular people who work at hospitals curing patients into a warrior on the front-line fighting coronavirus attack. For Indonesian, warriors are mostly interpreted as people who have passed away fighting for Indonesia's independence at the time of the Dutch or Japanese colonialization. At the time of the covid-19 pandemic, however, the warrior has been used to refer to medical workers as they are believed is in a war with the virus. Just like the warriors in the time of the war with the Dutch, the medical workers are also in the war fighting with covid-19.

Another point to add is the victim of covid-19 that lays helplessly on the medical worker's lap. This image is as if saying that the best thing to do for regular people in the war with coronavirus is to stay at home. Otherwise, they would be infected and made the work of the 'warrior' harder. The last significant point is how the medical worker is depicted with the angel wing. One possible explanation of the conversion from a regular worker into a warrior with an angel wing is the sacrifice that the 'warrior' must go through in defending their country. They must be away from their family to fulfill their job that might take their own life. Thus, only people with angel hearts can disregard their life and give their best in their duty.

Analysis of interpretative meaning

The previous sub-chapter has discussed the representation of the interaction between the people, things, and places depicted in the selected murals to explore how the meaning-making of the murals is constructed. This sub-chapter would discuss the interaction between the producers and the viewers to investigate the construction of interactive meaning by participants. Here, the interactive meaning will be analyzed through the gaze, social distance, and point of view.

The gaze

In Figures 1, 2, 3, and 4 the (RPs) address us, the viewers indirectly. In this case, as Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) argue, the (RPs) are the object of the viewer's inspection where the role of the viewers is of "invisible onlooker". When an image does not have personal or "quasi-human" participants who directly look at the audience, it means that the image is 'offer'. Therefore, the (RPs)in figures 1, 2, 3, and 4 are offered by the producers to the viewers for them to find information or contemplate.

The four murals in this study show that all the RPs are detached away from the viewers, and eye contact between them is absent. The RPs direct their eyes on something other than the viewers. The RPs in figure 1, squinting his eyes in the direction of his shield and the coronavirus cells attacking him. A similar interpretation can be made in the RPs in the second figure. They disengaged from the viewers as they directed their gaze at the yelling human-like coronavirus cell.

Nonetheless, the RPs in figures 1 and 2 direct the viewers into something that the viewers can see which is the coronavirus cells. The RPs offer information about the danger of the virus.

Figures 3 and 4, however, show RPs whose gaze looks at something that the viewers cannot see. In figure 3, the schoolboy's eyes look tired and half-open gazing far away outside the frame. A similar issue can be found in figure 4. As can be seen from the image, the RPs look like s/he indirectly looking at something that the viewers cannot see. His/her eyes are wide open but without any clues that make the viewers cannot follow where the gaze leads to. Unlike the gaze of the RPs in figures 1 and 2 which provide the viewers with an opportunity to look at the direction of their gaze, the represented participants in figures 3 and 4's gaze do not give anything to see but contemplation on what might happen to the RPs. Nonetheless, their gaze at something else other than the viewers gives the viewers chance to look at the direction of their gaze, believing that the RPs do not know that they are being looked at. Therefore, the RPs in the four figures could be considered offering themselves as an object that the viewers could scrutiny carefully to extract the meanings of the image.

Social distance

The RPs in the selected data are presented in a long shot. Figures 2 and 3 are shown in long shots as they are mostly shown in a full figures. Therefore, the viewers can see the RPs as approximately life-size as if they are in their real size in the real world. As can be seen from Figures 2 and 3, RPs (the schoolboy and the two ghosts) are depicted in their full body where their head is positioned near the top of the frame and their feet are near the bottom of the frame.

Although figure.1 and 3 looks somehow depicted in medium shots, the viewers still can perceive the images as full-size images. This long-shot presentation might imply objectivity and some social distance between the RPs and the viewers. It goes hand in hand with the meaning conveyed by the RPs gaze which offers images as previously discussed in the gaze dimension. These four figures might signify that the RPs are in their world separated from the world of the viewers. In the offer image, the RPs are detached from the viewers and this message is reinforced by the long-shot presentation that also implies objectivity and social distance.

Point of view

Although the RPs in figures 1,2,3 and 4 are objective images as they are all portrayed in long shots, the point of view used in the four figures demonstrates that the RPs are closer to the viewers. The producer used a frontal angle in depicting the RPs in the four murals in this study. This frontal angle gives the viewers a sense of involvement with the RPs. The viewers are at the same level as the RPs as none of the RPs are seen from above or below. This indicates the absence of power difference between the RPs and the viewers.

That might be the reason why the producers use the frontal angle to depict the RPs to obtain maximum involvement from the viewers. The producers do this as their way to involve the viewers in the RPs' world. For instance, in figures 1 and 2, the RPs make the viewers feel the importance of protecting themselves against coronavirus by wearing a mask and keeping social distancing as protective acts are

better than curing them from getting infected. Finally, the image in the selected data presents the RPs at eye level, this strategy suggests that the relationship between the viewers and the RPs is equal. The producers want the viewers to feel that the RPs in the selected murals are part of themselves and that they are engaged in a similar situation and attitudes with the RPs. No matter what the viewers see in the RPs is inseparable from their world, something that they engaged with (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

Compositional meaning

Compositional meaning is derived from how the RPs are organized in the image where the organization includes the information dissemination, frame, and salience. The distribution of information would be discussed as the point of departure in analyzing the compositional meaning. The information that the producers intend to deliver to the viewers can be derived from the way they place the elements within the image where the viewers can find which information, they must pay attention to (Moebius, 1986). As the selected data in this study shows, the new given pattern is mostly used by the producers.

Three of the murals (Figures 1, 3, and 4) show how the new given pattern is adopted by the producers in delivering their message. Figures 1, 3, and 4 verbal expressions filled the space of Given whereas the visual images filled the space of New. The captions "TO PROTECT is better than TO CURE"; "I'M BORED OF ONLINE CLASS." and THANK YOU, MEDICAL WORKER WARRIOR. FIGHT COVID-19 stay at home" are presented as the point of departure of the message, as something that the Indonesians are familiar with. The proverb "an ounce of protection is worth a pound of cure" is a familiar concept within Indonesian society even before the global pandemic strikes in Indonesia. Therefore, using the proverb in the image as the given information would make the viewers digest the message easily.

The same analysis goes for the caption on the third and fourth data, the viewers already know that online class has become problematic in Indonesia and that the Indonesians has come up with a new vocabulary for medical workers. The images filled the space of new shows that are yet to be known to the viewers. The image showing a man with a mask and gloves using his shield to fight coronavirus cells and the image of the medical worker in their PPE with angel wings on their back is the thing that the viewers should pay attention to. As the New message, those images can be considered as the issue that deserves more attention from the viewers. As the nature of New is contestable, the viewers might have a different interpretation of the issue; whether they interpret that masks and gloves would protect them from covid-19; or whether the medical warriors are becoming angels capable of fighting the pandemic attack and saving lives at the same time.

Unlike figure 1, 3, and 4 which use the given new pattern in delivering their message to the viewers, figure 2 use a real ideal pattern in its presentation. The caption in figure 2 "WEAR YOUR MASK! KEEP SOCIAL DISTANCING!" is placed on the upper section and the visual images of two Indonesian ghosts are being yelled at by the human-like coronavirus cell in the lower section. This presentation reveals that ideally, people should follow and maintain health protocols such as wearing a mask and keeping social distancing but, many Indonesian people still violate the protocol, and this might lead them of getting

infected by the covid-19. Thus, the unity of visual and written expression (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006) makes the intended message from the mural's creator easily understood.

The second aspect of compositional meaning is framing. The four selected murals in this study are presented without a frame. It means that the elements in the images are connected to present a "single unit of information" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). The absence of framing in the four selected data shows the involvement and the cooperation of visual images and verbal expressions that engage with each other to give a sense of connectedness or a sense of unity between the images and the written expression. One possible explanation for the absence of a frame is that frames can be interpreted either as concrete lines that border some objects where these lines can be easily seen by the naked eye or a mental frame where that resides within the mind of the viewers. This mental frame is what the sociologist defines as a setting or background of a situation "within which the interaction occurs" (Goffman & Berger, 1985, p. xiii). As such, the selected murals in this study would be interpreted easily by the viewers even though they do not employ any concrete lines that border the objects. This occurred as the producer of the selected murals apply covid-19 as the theme of their murals. As a result, when viewing the selected murals, the viewers find that covid-19 is the given frame that provides the viewers with "the main focus of attention" (Goffman, 1986, p. 201). They also incorporate the existing knowledge of Indonesian people to bring new understanding about covid-19 related issues to raise awareness about the danger of covid-19 and encourage Indonesian to stay vigilant and follow the covid-19 preventive measures to flatten the spread of the virus. Putting all together, the absence of a physical frame of the selected murals is replaced by covid-19 theme as the mental frame or setting of the mural connecting all the elements within the image and the viewers.

Another aspect to consider in compositional meaning is size. This feature argues that the bigger the RPs the more important they are. Whereas the smaller RPs are understood as less important (Nikolajeva and Scott, 2001). Based on the size of the RPs in the four selected murals in the study, it can be seen that the size of RPs has the power to draw the viewers' attention to the important message of the murals. Most of the RPs in the study are presented in a bigger size than other participants to show their importance. For instance, the man with the shield in figure 1 and the medical worker with his/her PPE in figure 4 are presented as bigger than the coronavirus cell to show that these RPs are more important than the coronavirus cell. In the same vein, the image of the bubble thought in figure 3 is presented as at least as big as the bored schoolboy as the written message in figure 3 is important and therefore needs special attention from the viewers.

Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate the meaning-making of (Covid-19)-themed murals in Indonesia by adopting Kress and van Leeuwen's concepts of compositional, interactive, and representational meaning. The previous discussion of the selected murals shows that the visual and verbal expression of the murals is incorporated to construct and deliver certain meanings to society. Each mural reflects certain knowledge that has existed within Indonesian society and this existing knowledge is used to reinforce new knowledge to raise people's awareness

about covid-19. In addition, the selected murals in this study are produced in public spaces that can be easily seen by society. A possible explanation of this strategy is that the (covid-19)-themed murals are created to 'tell' the Indonesians to change how they view and act in responding to the pandemic and its related issue. Three significant conclusions can be drawn from this study.

First, the findings and discussion of representational meaning show that the murals in the study are adopting the four-narrative process, actional, reactional, speech and mental process, and conversion process. Second, regarding the interactive function, the RPs in the four murals are all categorized in offers image. In this type of interaction, the RPs address the viewers by offering information, and the viewers are not required to accept or deny it. Regarding social distance, the murals are depicted in a long shot which suggests objectivity and social distance between the RPs and the viewers. Nonetheless, although the two devices of interactional meaning, the gaze, and social distance reveal that the RPs are distant from the viewers, the perspective/point of view is presented from a frontal angle. This strategy is used to create an involvement between the RPs and the viewers and suggests that there is no power difference between the RPs and the viewers. Third, regarding the compositional dimension, the message is structured in a given new pattern except for Figure. 2 which uses a real ideal pattern. The absence of frames in the selected murals demonstrates that the visual images and written expressions are linked with each other to provide a sense of connectedness between the image and the verbal expression. Putting all together, the integration of three aspects of meta functions in the (Covid-19) themed murals in this study is to create specific meaning for society.

The limitation of this study is it only descriptively analyses the meaning-making process of selected murals under the study based on the murals themselves. A more comprehensive study should be done by involving the 'real' viewers to elicit their perspectives about the meaning of the murals and how they perceive the construction of the meaning-making process in the murals. Finally, the findings of this study are expected to contribute to the study of multimodal and understanding of how meanings are constructed and delivered within the different means of communication.

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