

Social Criticism after the Pandemic Era on the Visual of the Truck Body

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Abstract. The purpose of this study is to find out the narrative of social criticism contained in the back of the body truck. Trucks are a means of transport to carry various needs in massive quantities. Many truck owners decorate the tailgate with various visuals. Most of the graphics on the back of the truck are in the form of a beautiful woman, but one of the trucks that is used as the object of research this time displays a visual of social criticism. In the post-pandemic era, social criticism on the back of a truck became interesting because many driver who had pass over and over again in the streets would see it. The method used in this research is Bahasa Rupa Primadi Tabrani to study the visual style, color and typography on the tailgate. Impact From this research, it is hoped that new insights will be obtained regarding visual styles and visual messages on truck bodies after the pandemic era.

Keyword: Truck body, visual, color, typography, social criticism

1. Introduction

After the pandemic era, people began to do activities outside the home, shopping areas started to get busy again, and schools started to conduct face-to-face learning. Social criticism can be conveyed in various media, the application of social criticism behind the back of a truck tailgate is effective because trucks travel to various places, sometimes long distances, especially after the pandemic era because people have resumed their activities outside the home.

In meeting the need to carry goods in massive or large quantities, humans need help to facilitate the process. At first time, humans used animals to help carry heavy and heavy items, but their numbers were still limited. After the invention of the wheel and the creation of the cart, the amount of luggage that could be transported increased.

After the discovery of engine technology, trucks are one type of vehicle that is widely used to carry large quantities of goods. In the Cambridge Dictionary, a truck is "a large road vehicle that is used for transporting large amounts of goods" [1]. Trucks are efficient because they can carry large quantities of goods at one time.

Due to transporting a lot of goods, the truck has a wide body. Sometimes, the wide body of the tailgate is given a visual, such as; company logos, advertisements, or various visuals desired by truck owners or drivers. According to Raharjo Sudjadi Tjipto, visuals on the back of a

truck body can increase the selling value of the truck, and also as an expression of communication between the owner or driver of the truck to the public [2].

Because the visuals on the back of the truck tailgate are used as a form of communication, the visuals displayed on the back of the truck are very diverse, according to the interests of the truck owner. The visuals discussed in this study are interesting to study because the visuals displayed are in the form of social criticism, where these visuals are rarely displayed on the back of a truck body tailgate.

2. Method

In the visual research on the back of the truck tailgate this time, the method used follows Creswell's steps [3] which uses the Primadi Tabrani Fine Language research method. The research process was carried out by observing and observing the visuals on the back of the truck tailgate which is the object of research, then collecting the visuals on the truck body and describing the visuals using the Primadi Tabrani Fine Language reference, as in Figure 1.

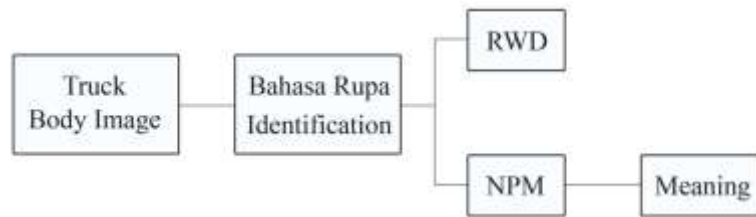


Figure 1. Primadi Tabrani Bahasa Rupa NPM analysis.

In the Bahasa Rupa Primadi Tabrani language method [4], it is divided into RWD and NPM. RWD is *Ruang-Waktu-Datar* (flat-space-time), this method is generally used on research objects that display various scenes in the same frame, very suitable for discussing prehistoric visual works. While NPM is naturalist-perspective-momentoname, generally used to conduct research on immovable visuals, there are limitations by frames that have dimensions of length, width, and height. This research uses the Primadi Tabrani Fine Language NPM method.

3. Results and Discussion

In almost every country in the world, visuals are widely applied to truck bodies, even in Japan, the visual decorations on trucks have their own characteristics. In Japan, decorations on trucks are known as Dekotora, which is short for decoration truck [5]. The truck is modified to have horns, made shiny or chromed, given lots of lights, and given a visual on the tailgate, like in Figure 2.



Figure 2. Dekotora trucks.

Source: <https://www.otosia.com/photo/read/4845698/dekatora-truk-truk-nyentrik-asal-jepang-part-1?page=10>

Visual placement on the truck body has actually been used as a company identifier for a long time, as in Figure 3, where the information on the name of the company Royal Mail as a State postal service is printed on the side of the body of the truck, in addition to that the logotype of the Bekins company as a freight forwarding service also shows the transfer of goods [6].



Figure 3. Royal Mail and Bekins Truck

Source: Trucks & Trucking p.8

Actually the visual placement of transport vehicles has existed since the Viking kingdom as shown in Figure 4, where the 5 meter wooden cart is given a visual carving of a story about the heroism of Norse mythology [7].



Figure 4. Wooden Cart from Viking Era
Source: Library of Nations Scandinavia p.55

3.1 Visual on the Truck Tailgate in Indonesia

The history of visuals on the back of a truck tailgate in Indonesia, when was the application of visuals for the first time, where and what company was the first to be traced with certainty. According to Sudjadi, the visual placement on the truck body was initially used as a differentiator and a marker for the trucks he owned from trucks belonging to other people. Common visual themes on the tailgate are; famous figures, film characters, natural landscapes, animals, writing in the form of typography only, and animation and cartoon characters with airbrush techniques in their production [2], some visual examples of truck bodies found in Indonesia are shown in Figure 5



Figure 5. Some visuals on the back of a truck in Indonesia

Source: Sual Suil Komunikasi Visual Sebuah Kajian Budaya Visual p.2&5

Painting on the back of a truck cannot be said to be an exclusive visual art, because the visuals on the truck are flexible, in the sense that it will move according to the whereabouts of the truck during the journey, different from the works of art in the gallery. The visuals and writing on the back of the truck that support each other is interesting, because it can cause smiles, laughs, to annoyance to those who see it [8].

The existence of the tailgate community on the island of Java ultimately influences the visual style and typography of the tailgate. Generally, the visual theme displayed on the back of the truck is related to the daily life of truck drivers. The existence of digital printing technology also affects the visuals on the back of the truck, where the visuals on the back of the truck were originally done by artists, but recently it can be done by people who can operate computers, and the visuals displayed can be taken from the internet, without having to make it yourself [9].

3.2 Social Criticism of Truck Tailgate Visual

From various visuals on the back of a truck that are widely circulating on the streets, a new phenomenon emerged after the pandemic. The visuals on the back of the truck are starting to dare to show social criticism like in Figure 6. This photo was taken on September 21, 2022, when the truck was crossing Jalan Surapati, Bandung. In the photo it can be seen that the truck has the area code of the AE license plate, where the code comes from the Madiun, Magetan, Ngawi, Pacitan and Ponorogo areas.



Figure 6. Social Criticism on the Back of a Truck Tailgate

Where on the truck is placed the visual figure of Najwa Sihab, where the figure is a public figure, a presenter who often discusses issues in society that are often related to power, politics and injustice. On the back of the truck you can also see a quote from Najwa Sihab: “Keadilan Jadi Barang Sukar, Ketika Hukum Tegak Pada yang Bayar” or justice is a became hard, when the law is up to the one who pays.

3.3 Visual Analysis of Social Criticism on the Truck Tailgate

The visual analysis that will be discussed in this study relates to visual style, color, and typography, as shown in Figure 7. This is because the three of them form a unit that supports each other in the tailgate view of the truck.

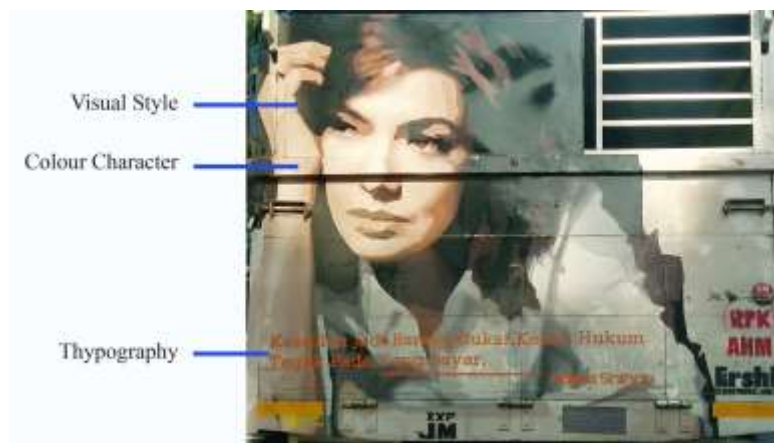


Figure 7. Visual Analysis on the Truck Body

The visual style applied to the Figure 7 truck body painting has a tendency of visual simplification, unlike the truck body paintings in Indonesia in general, which tend to be more realistic. The visual is more in the style of street art or urban art. In describing a character, visual

presentation can represent a value, identity, character possessed, and a motivation [10]. Based on observations, the visual processing technique on the truck uses a manual painting gradation technique with gradations for each block, each part changing color. This technique is still rarely found in truck body paintings, where most of them use airbrush workmanship techniques.

The colors used in the tailgate visuals have a tendency to use monochromatic colors. The color selection has the character of powerful colors, as in some of the examples in Figure 8. The character of the composition of powerful colors is widely used on propaganda posters, because they are classified as sanguine hues, these colors easily become the center of attention [11].



Figure 8. Contoh warna-warna Powerful
Source: Color Harmony Logos p.25

In graphic design, typography is something that is fundamental, in the work of graphic designers, fonts are almost something that is inseparable in design work. Many types of fonts have similarities, but when analyzed again, it turns out that there are many differences [12]. The font used on the tailgate of Figure 7, belongs to the Serif typeface family, which resembles typewriter letters. According to Fauzi A.N., the typeface used on the back of the truck tailgate is included in the Slab Serif typeface which has the characteristic that the serif size has the same thickness as the stroke size. This typeface is generally used as body text, because it gives a comfortable effect when read from each hook in the letter [13]. The font is colored orange to draw attention and has a high contrast with the visual background of Najwa Sihab's image.

4. Conclusion

From this research, it can be concluded that social criticism applied to the visuals of the back of a truck tailgate was rarely found before the pandemic era. The street art or urban visual style on the truck is very suitable in conveying criticism, the colors used have a tendency to have strong character colors. The typography used uses a Serif type, which to convey criticism, still doesn't seem to have strength, which generally uses a Sans Serif font type, but has a good level of comfort in reading because the words displayed are long.

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