

DESIGNING VISUAL ELEMENTS OF CHARACTERS OF GAJAH MADA AND TRIBHUWANA TUNGGADEWI AS REPRESENTATION OF HISTORICAL FIGURES IN VISUAL NOVEL

MENDESAIN ELEMEN VISUAL KARAKTER GAJAH MADA DAN TRIBHUWANA TUNGGADEWI SEBAGAI REPRESENTASI FIGUR SEJARAH DALAM VISUAL NOVEL

Dendi Pratama¹, Winny Gunarti Widya Wardani² & Taufiq Akbar³

^{1, 2, 3} Visual Communication Design

Faculty of Language and Art, University of Indraprasta PGRI

Jl. Nangka No. 58, Tanjung Barat, Jakarta Selatan 12530, Indonesia

Email: dendi.pratama@unindra.ac.id

Submitted: 2018-03-04

Published: 2018-03-22

DOI: 10.24036/humanus.v17i1.9824

Accepted: 2018-03-21

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.24036/humanus.v17i1.9824>

Abstract

Gajah Mada and Tribhuwana Tunggaladewi are two historical figures of the Majapahit Kingdom. Both of them had great influence in expanding the power of Majapahit Kingdom. These two historical figures can be presented as visual novel characters that educate, especially representing it through an interactive media that appeals to teenagers. Currently, there are not many visual novels featuring Indonesian history setting. This study creates visual novel characters of Gajah Mada and Tribhuwana Tunggaladewi in the context of visual communication design. The discussion about these characters of visual novel uses a qualitative approach with structural semiotics method that is designing messages through visual elements of lines, shapes, textures, and colors. This study shows that the costume design on the character as a representation of the informational meaning about the influential figure in the kingdom. Accessory design as a representation of the symbolic meaning of the royalty. Facial design and posture as a representation of elegance and strength figure in the meaning of images. The character design results are expected to give a picture of the historical figure in the kingdom of Majapahit for teenagers.

Keyword: *visual elements, character, visual novel, structural semiotic*

Abstrak

Gajah Mada dan Tribhuwana Tunggaladewi adalah dua tokoh sejarah Kerajaan Majapahit. Keduanya memiliki pengaruh besar dalam memperluas kekuatan Kerajaan Majapahit. Kedua tokoh sejarah ini bisa disajikan sebagai karakter permainan dalam visual novel yang mendidik, terutama merepresentasikannya melalui media interaktif yang menarik bagi remaja. Saat ini, tidak banyak visual

novel yang menampilkan latar sejarah Indonesia. Studi ini menciptakan karakter Gajah Mada dan Tribhuwana Tunggaladewi dalam konteks desain komunikasi visual. Pembahasan tentang karakter visual novel ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode semiotika struktural, yaitu mendesain pesan melalui elemen visual garis, bentuk, tekstur, dan warna. Studi ini menunjukkan bahwa desain kostum pada karakter sebagai representasi makna informasi tentang sosok yang berpengaruh di kerajaan. Desain aksesoris sebagai representasi makna simbolik tentang dolongan kebangsawanan. Desain wajah dan postur sebagai representasi elegansitas dan kekuatan karakter dalam makna imaji. Hasil desain karakter ini diharapkan bisa memberi gambaran tentang tokoh sejarah di Kerajaan Majapahit bagi remaja.

Kata kunci: elemen visual, karakter, visual novel, semiotika struktural

Introduction

Currently, Visual Novel Indonesia's production is facing tough competition, especially with visual novel from Japan which has already dominated the market. Based on the observation through the VN Project Indonesia website, Visual Novel Indonesia generally displays the visual character that is influenced by the Japanese anime visual style, especially from the depiction of manga-style visual characters through facial, body, and costume elements.

This phenomenon gives the assumption that the creation of Visual Novel Indonesia still gets a strong influence from the popularity of Visual Novel Japan. The visual style of Japanese anime and manga within the design elements becomes a powerful visual sign structure for building attraction through the creation of visual characters. This shows the importance of visual elements to be understood as the application of design in audio-visual media.

In addition, local game developers who produce Visual Novel Indonesia with historical background are still very limited, whereas it can also be an interesting educational media, and compete in the field of game creative industry. It says Newman (2004: 3), the importance of studying games because of the rapidly growing videogame industry, the popularity of videogames in a society that continues to encourage creativity, and the growing interaction between humans and computers.

In the context of character creation, Sloan (2015) mentions two important reasons for the creation of characters in a game, the character traits in unlimited computer media, and the potential of characters in building the imagination and involvement of the thoughts and emotions of its users. This fact is a challenge for creators or game designers, especially in creating characters in visual novels. For example, in visual novel titled "Twist Majapahit", the work of developer Kawamata Hiruma (Indonesian creators), the historical background features characters such as Gajah Mada and Tribhuwana Tunggaladewi represented in manga style. Twist Majapahit is a research work written by Kusnawi and R. Firmansyah from the University of AMIKOM Yogyakarta. The history of Majapahit Kingdom was created as an educational media to encourage interest in learning history (2015: 5.7-5).

Based on the results of interview with the visual novel creator Kawamata Hiruma in February 2017 at AMIK University Yogyakarta, the design of Twist Majapahit is actually

an opening part of the series of visual novels set in cultural history. It will complement the overall game episode. According to Kawamata, the design of the Twist Majapahit game tries to lift the character's design of the kings, combining the history of Majapahit with the manga style as part of its strategy to penetrate the global market, which is still dominated by Japanese gaming products. The Twist Majapahit also try to invite the players to interact and know more about the biography of the Kings of Majapahit (Pratama, Wardani, Akbar, 2017: 29).

Based on the visual novel "Twist Majapahit", this study then try to strengthen the values of Indonesian culture through the creation of two visual novel characters, namely Gajah Mada and Tribhuwana Tunggaladewi. The choice of these two figures is because they have a great influence in the expanding power of Majapahit Kingdom. The formulation of the problem is: How are the visual elements of the visual novel characters can represent the historical figure?

The limited production of local visual novel is due to the lack of knowledge and understanding of visual novels among designers. A study of 150 visual communication design students at Indraprasta University PGRI Jakarta showed that in terms of knowledge it indicates that only 38 percent know visual novel as an interactive game type, while 62 percent do not know it. Then in terms of understanding also shows only 21 percent who understand visual novel as an interactive game, while 17 percent do not understand it, and 62 percent say do not know. Most of them consider visual novels as novel stories graphically visualized, and do not see them as a game through audio visual media (Pratama, Wardani, and Akbar, 2017: 295). This research shows the importance of the study of novel visuals that can encourage the creativity of designers or creators

As a production of digital games, visual novel is a kind of game on audiovisual media that offers visual power through gameplay characters and narration. In Japanese, this game is called *bijuarunoberu*, a type of adventure game that features a choice of interactions, dialogs, and storylines containing mystery. The players can choose their own character they want to play. For each choice of character, it can affect the next scene. Each scene can produce its own mystery and storyline (Cavallaro, 2010:9).

Visual novel game is played using an audio-visual device that has a console. Visual novels can be played on personal computers using Windows, Mac, or Android. The early appearance of this type of game came from Japan. For beginners, visual novel creation can take months or even years. But in Japan, visual novel has been growing since ten years ago. The manga style of the Japanese comics inspired not only animated films, but also gave birth to various interactive games, such as visual novel. It is estimated that Japan is able to produce four creations of Visual Novel in one month (Kusnawi dan Firmansyah, 2015:5.7-5).

The local game developers now generally prefer popular themes such as romance, and only a few developers have the courage to create visual novel games with cultural content. Messages designed through visual novel characters can actually load cultural ideas and make them cultural symbolic products. Thus, the function of the game can basically be a medium of socio-cultural communication, one of them through the creation of characters that local cultural style. Visualization of characters in visual novel design is the result of illustrations or images that become an important element in character design. Kusrianto said (2007: 30), the illustration is able to describe the characters in a story. Illustrations or often referred to as "image" can provide images or

representations through the incorporation of line elements, shapes, textures and colors. Illustration with the visual style of the characters is also able to represent the idea of the cultural values of society. The representation in this study is defined as the number of processes in which tagging practices seem to represent objects or practices that occur in the "real" world, as a consequence of different sign systems that create meaning through difference. Therefore, research on culture is often considered parallel to the exploration of representational processes (Barker, 2014: 255). In this case, the creation of visual novel characters design as historical figures is included in the process of signifying that can be interpreted through the visual sign structure, ie design elements. The design of visual novel characters needs to refer to the shape of the proportion of the human body in general, by applying hand-drawn techniques with digital finishing as the final stage. The proportion of characters here no longer uses the manga style as applied to visual novel "Twist Majapahit", but rather a more realistic character design.

According to White (in Wardani, 2011: 44), the proportion to the physical appearance in the animated illustration reflects a particular character and can represent the desired character. Generally a short proportion with a large head, reflects an intelligent character. A large body proportion reflects less agile characters. Or a figure depicted broad-chested with square jaws, depicting a brave and actionful character.

The process of designing characters are based on the historical figure, the proportion of the human body, and combines it with those seen on statues, sculptures, or other artefacts that can help in the design process. The characterizations of characters design in visual novels are built through the physical appearance of body proportions (to reflect certain characters and personalities of a high, short, large, or small body shape). This study also based the accessory references used by the Javanese Kings from past Javanese royal relics, such as the Ancient Javanese gold accessory, the "Kirtimukha" Goldeners in Majapahit times, and also gold necklace at that time.

Based on the literature review that underlies the creation of the visual character, then the purpose of this study is to provide reference, inspiration, as well as encourage the development of digital creative products that promote local cultural values, including through the creation of visual novel characters.

Method

This study used a qualitative approach in the science of visual communication design, with structural semiotic method. This is due to the more priority analysis on reading the message through the design elements as a visual sign structure in the character design. Semiotics are used to give meaning to signs as a code or system that organizes signs, as well as how the culture in which the sign works (Fiske, 2007: 60-61). The analysis of messages in a structural semiotics perspective means discussing the sign elements as a system that combines lines, shapes, textures and colors within the text structure, which can visually mean writing or drawing. The sign elements in this study are the design elements used to create the characters of Gajah Mada and Tribhuwana Tunggaladewi.

Qualitatively, data were collected through literature studies, observations and interviews. References about the character of Gajah Mada and Tribhuwana Tunggaladewi are guided by the statues of the Majapahit kings and the accessory references used by the Javanese kings from the relics of the past Java empire.

The observations were conducted on Visual Novel Indonesia on VN Project Indonesia website, especially visual novel "Twist Majapahit" and interview with indie developer Kawamata Hiruma. Visual novel "Twist Majapahit" presents a narrative about the era of progress, decadence era, and the era of the destruction of Majapahit Kingdom. This visual novel was launched in 2013 telling about the history of Majapahit Kingdom, from the beginning of its founding to the cause of its destruction. The narrative is designed with a plot of 12 Kings of Majapahit. Based on the 12 kings, the researchers took two character samples to look at manga style characters, and then create new nonmanga characters. The choice of Gajah Mada and Tribhuwana Tunggaladewi characters are taken randomly based on the popularity of the two influential historical figures in the era of progress.

The visual elements of the characters can be a special attraction for game players who want to know the history of Majapahit in an entertaining way. Moreover, generally history lessons in schools delivered through textbooks that minimal visualization. Through the visualization of gameplay characters, the introduction of characters can be more easily accepted.

As an interactive game, the visual novel is not a simulation, but an adventure game with the interaction of dialogue from various characters in its branched storyline. To get a response from a character, players can choose the time and the gameplay character they want to interact with (Cavallaro, 2010:9).

Visual Elements of Characters

Character design can be built through the design elements of lines, shapes, textures, and colors. Elements of lines and shapes can present the personality, emotion, expression, and represent identity such as gender, social class, and cultural values through the illustrations of her clothes. According to Sloan (2015: 26-27), the line is responsible not only for describing the shape in character design, but also taking into account line thickness, line orientation, line position and line type.

While the visual element of the form can also be used to determine the internal elements of the character. Shapes can not only produce a characteristic appearance of character, but also the connotation of character types and personality, such as the development of circles, triangles and squares (Sloan, 2015:28).

Furthermore, the texture design element is a physical state of a material surface that can be felt with the sense of touch or can be felt through the sense of sight as texture of see. Texture can be seen as a pseudo texture because of the nature of its existence which is the result of 2D images (Irawan dan Tamara, 2013:25-27).

While the color design element is the effect of a sign that can be used to represent whatever is judged appropriate. Semiotically, the color of the visual sign is used for connotative purposes. There are sensory and emotional meanings attached to the colors. In other words, through color, one can perceive color much more than a phenomenon that involves visual perception alone. Especially in the culture of society, color plays a very important function in the area of symbolism. Color elements can be important significations to bring messages and meaning (Danesi, 2011:85).

Structural Semiotic

According to Roland Barthes (in Fiske, 2007: 61), semiotics is used to give meaning to different signs, codes and systems that organize signs, and how the culture in which codes and signs work, so the focus of attention is more on the text. To read the structure of the sign on the design of characters in the perspective of structural semiotics means to analyze the text structure of the design elements.

Based on the description of the design elements and the proportions in the characters, the study refers to the development of the visualization of human dimension as an object of illustration which can be seen through the structure of lines, shapes, textures, and colors. In character design, design elements become presentational signs conveyed through postural messages, namely visualization of body proportions, including messages conveyed through the look of clothing and accessories, as a whole of representational message interactions.

To read the sign structures of visual novel characters, the structural semiotics approach in this study is used to discuss the appearance of characters in visual novel "Twist Majapahit" and compare them with the creation of characters that more represent the values of Indonesian history and culture. The reading of sign structures can be analyzed according to informational meaning, in particular through the costumes or relation between the characters, then symbolic meanings, in the form of commonly known symbols, and the meaning of images, namely the sign that gives rise to interpretation (Barthes, 2010:42-44). The method of analysis as follows:

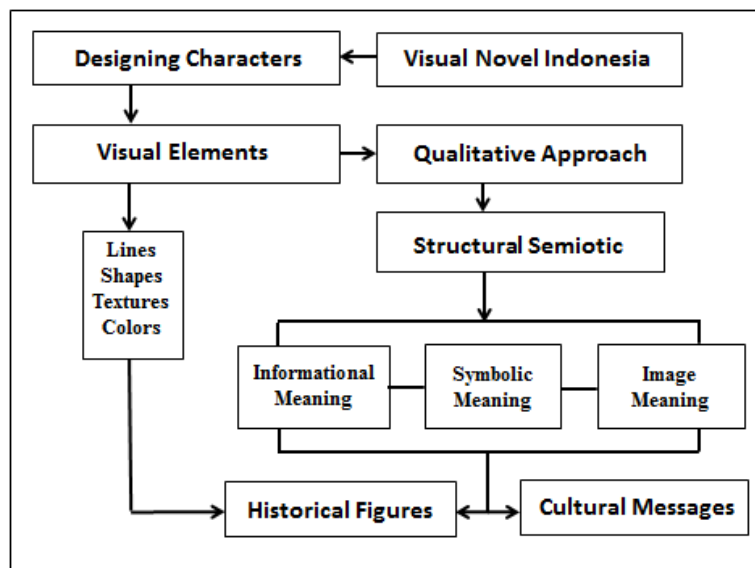


Figure 1. Method of Analysis

Result and Discussion

Historically, the character of Gajah Mada and Tribhuwana Tungadewi are related. Tribhuwana Tungadewi is the figure behind the success of Gajah Mada. Since becoming a member of Majapahit warriors, Tribhuwana already knows the extraordinary abilities possessed by Gajah Mada. So when the Tribhuwana was

appointed as Queen Kahuripan, Gajah Mada was proposed to be the governor of Kahuripan. Thus, these two historical figures can be visualized through visual elements that are also related to each other, whether in the appearance of clothing and accessories.

The brief background of the two influential figures of the Majapahit Kingdom can be described as follows: Gajah Mada is depicted as a mahapatih figure with leadership qualities, some of which are "Ya Matriwira" (brave state defender) and "Satya Bhakti Aprabhu" (faithfully faithful to the state). While Tribhuwana Tunggaladewi as the 3rd Majapahit Queen known as the "Courage Queen" who was able to crush the rebellion in the area of Sadeng and Keta.

In the context of history and culture, the character possessed by Gajah Mada and Tribhuwana Tunggaladewi means pointing to human behavior. According to Wardani (2011: 22-23) in the environment of human life, people are always required to fight for his life more meaningful, both for himself and for others around him. Space and time where the human being is building meaning through the creation of objects (artifacts), and interacting with the people around, so that humans can perform its function as a cultural creature.

Characters of Gajah Mada dan Tribhuwana Tunggaladewi In Manga Style and Indonesian Culture Style

The visualization of Gajah Mada and Tribhuwana Tunggaladewi characters in visual novel "Twist Majapahit" is presented in the context of Indonesian history through the background of space and time, but it looks more to build the imagination about the character of people in Japanese culture. Acculturation is visible in the proportion of characters, such as visualization on hair style, facial expression, body shape, and clothing worn. The style of manga looks very prominent, especially since Japan does have the uniqueness of manga art that has been famous around the world. Visually, the Japanese are depicted in expressive characters. This is because in the social life of the Japanese people are more entrusted to the facial expressions, tone of voice, and posture in expressing thoughts and feelings (De Mentedalam Wardani, 2011: 102). Therefore, the postures of characters in anime or manga generally represent the character of an active, dynamic, and resilient Japanese society. This allows the acculturation of culture within the Indonesian visual novel product that combines the historical and cultural background of Indonesia with the identity of the character of the Japanese

The design elements that build characters in this game act as messengers. It is said by Sloan (2015: 28), the form not only can produce a characteristic appearance of character, but also the connotation of character types and personality, the connotation of circle forms that tend to describe youth and goodness, communicating ideas such as games, childishness, innocence, positive attitude, balance, unity, protection, and nature. Then connotations form triangles that communicate ideas about stability, strength, pressure, and instability. Its meanings can be grouped into energy categories and temperament categories in the form of expressions of patience, aggressiveness, hostility, and sexuality. Further connotation of the impressive, strongest and most impressive squares form as masculinity, security, rationality, orthodoxy, and purity.

Here is a brief description of the discussion through the table:

Gajah Mada Character in Manga Style and Indonesian Culture Style



Fig. 1. Gajah Mada Character in Manga Style (Kawamata Hiruma Creation) and Indonesian Culture Style

TABLE 1. GAJAH MADA CHARACTER IN MANGA STYLE AND INDOONESIAN CULTURE STYLE

Character	Visual Elements			
	Line	Shape	Texture	Color
Gajah Mada Manga Style	The face and body lines show the clarity of posture, character emphasis, high impression, balance, dynamic movement, strength, and energy	Body shape and face show youthfulness, goodness, communication, balance, stability, strength, energy, aggressiveness, masculinity	The texture of the clothing shows the texture look in the form of symbols of the knight.	Orange hair imaged hair style overseas. A combination of white and yellow clothing models overlay a dynamic active clothing
Gajah Mada Indonesian Culture Style	Facial and body lines show honesty, seriousness, steadiness, balance, interests, dynamic impression, movement, making connections between elements, consistency, more natural, energy, dynamic.	Body shape and face show maturity, ideas, positive attitude, unity, protection, union with nature, stability, strength, energy, power, stable, masculinity, security, rationality.	Texture of clothing shows texture look in the form of batik patterns and jewelry form of Ancient Java gold	The golden color of accessory visualization shows nobility. Black hair imitates Indonesian hairstyle. Brown color clothing imaged clothing tradition Javanese royalty.

Tribhuwana Tunggadewi Character In Manga Style and Indonesian Culture Style



Fig. 2. Tribhuwana Tunggadewi Character In Manga Style (Kawamata Hiruma Creation) and Indonesian Culture Style

TABLE 2. TRIBHUWANA TUNGGADEWI CHARACTER IN MANGA STYLE AND INDONESIA CULTURE STYLE

Character	Visual Elements			
	Line	Shape	Texture	Color
Tribhuwana Tunggadewi Manga Style	Facial and body lines show clarity, seriousness, steadiness, high impression, movement, consistency, energy, dynamic, sensuality	Body shape and face show youthfulness, kindness, positive attitude, balance, protection, strength, energy, aggressiveness, sexuality.	Clothing texture shows texture look in the form of symbols.	The black hair of the pony model imaged the modern female hairstyle. Purple, yellow, white, and blue combination clothing imaged luxury and nobility.
Tribhuwana Tunggadewi Indonesian Culture Style	The lines of the face and body show clarity, honesty, seriousness, balance, bringing metaphor, strength and consistency, naturalness, energy, femininity.	Body shape and face show goodness, innocence, positive attitude, balance, unity, protection, union with nature, stability, strength, rationality, purity.	Texture of clothing shows texture look in the form of batik patterns and jewelry form of Ancient Java gold	The golden color of accessory visualization shows nobility. Black hair extends to the back covered head accessories imaged royal women. Brown color clothing imaged clothing tradition Javanese royalty.

The Meaning of Sign Structures In Characters

Mahapatih Gajah Mada was known as a warlord in the 1313s. Gajah Mada accompanies Queen Tribhuwana Tunggaladewi during the Majapahit Kingdom period reached its peak. The interesting thing about Gajah Mada's character creation is that until now the real face of Gajah Mada is still a debate because there is no complete historical record of its existence and its activities. Gajah Mada is better known as his "Sumpah Palapa". However, the obscurity of Gajah Mada's face opens the opportunity for character development in visual novel based on Indonesian history, especially in Majapahit Kingdom era. Therefore, in visual novel "Twist Majapahit", Gajah Mada is presented with a visualization that is very much different from the image of the figure of Gajah Mada which has been in the literature.

Based on these facts, this study attempts to integrate the literature search results by referring to the public perception of the figure of Gajah Mada known to be tall and wide-faced, and authoritative. While Tribhuwana Tunggaladewi is the daughter of Raden Wijaya who became the third ruler of Majapahit Kingdom. As Queen Majapahit, Tribhuwana Tunggaladewi's face image is referenced through the statue of Dewi Parwati, one of the Goddesses in Hindu mythology. Tribhuwana Tunggaladewi's role in expanding the archipelago during the years 1328 to 1351, builds the public perception of the courageous, firm, authoritative queen character, and also has a beautiful face.

The social life of the people in the Majapahit Kingdom era was still familiar with social stratification, in accordance with the Hindu and Buddhist teachings of the time. The cultural background of Majapahit also influenced the creation of Gajah Mada and Tribhuwana Tunggaladewi's characters. According to Piliang (2012: 347) in semiotic, the influence of culture can be analyzed by placing it as text, which is a series of meaningful signs. In a broad sense, the text is defined as a message, both using verbal and visual signs, which produce verbal texts and visual texts. Illustration of character is a visual sign that can represent the meaning of culture. The use of structural semiotics to analyze cultural objects is to look at the structure of the sign, in this case, de Saussure (in Piliang, 2012: 349) said is a signifier field for explaining form or expression, and a signified field for explaining concepts or meanings.

At the level of meaning, the informational meaning can be read through the clothing worn by the characters. As seen in the illustrations, both Gajah Mada and Tribhuwana Tunggaladewi use Javanese fashion style. On the visual element of texture of clothing shows texture look in the form of batik patterns and jewelry form of Ancient Java gold. On the character of Gajah Mada using batik cloth combined with trousers. In Tribhuwana Tunggaladewi character using batik cloth with kemben. This dress gives meaning to the life of devotion as a royal servant. In the context of Javanese background, they generally regard themselves as servants, a small part of the universe.

Furthermore, in layers of symbolic meaning, the two characters of Indonesian-style equipped with accessories on body parts and clothing, the shoulder of gold, gold necklaces, crowns, gold belts, and other gold jewelry that cling to clothing. On the visual element of color of accessory, the golden color represents nobility. This accessory kit can give meaning to a person's degree. In this case, Gajah Mada is a trusted Commander in the Majapahit Kingdom, while Tribhuwana Tunggaladewi is a Queen of the Kingdom.

While the layers of the meaning of images can build interpretations of the two characters, the nature and personality that is owned. Perceptions about the nature and

personality of the characters become important, especially when the players have to interact with the character. In the character of Gajah Mada, the meaning of images can be awakened from the ferocity of facial expressions, as well as the strength and masculinity of posture. In the Tribhuwana Tunggaladewi character, the meaning of images can be awakened from the beauty and softness of facial expressions, as well as the elegance and femininity of posture. Broadly speaking, the description of the meaning of the structure of signs can be seen through the following table.

TABLE 3. THE MEANING OF SIGN STRUCTURES IN CHARACTERS

Character	Reading of Sign Structures		
	<i>Informational Meaning</i>	<i>Symbolic Meaning</i>	<i>Image Meaning</i>
Gajah Mada	The clothing that used to give meaning to his dedication as a royal servant, including as part of the universe.	Accessories such as gold shoulder straps, gold necklaces, and gold waist jewelry show the degree of Gajah Mada as a high commander in Majapahit Kingdom	The fierce facial expression, as well as the strength and courage of posture.
Tribhuwana Tunggaladewi	The clothing used gives meaning to its existence as the supreme ruler of power and influence.	Accessories such as crowns on the head, shoulders of gold, gold necklaces, and other gold jewelry embedded in the clothing show the degree of Tribhuwana Tunggaladewi as Queen Majapahit	The beauty and softness of facial expressions, as well as the elegance and femininity of posture

The above discussion shows that the visual elements of lines, shapes, textures and colors, can produce expressions, postures, costumes, and accessories that give a specific image to the visual character. In terms of the meaning of information, players can get a message about a beautiful figure, courageous and handsome in the life of Majapahit Kingdom. Visualization on accessories can also bring messages of status and nobility. While the character figure as a whole can cause the meaning of images in the minds of the players. In this study, the manga's visual style is completely abandoned, and the character's more dominant look refers to the evidence of a statue or historical literature.

Research on the creation of visual character of Gajah Mada in visual novel has also been done by Estidianti and Lakoro (2014: 50). The difference is that research produces the visual character of Gajah Mada which still refers to the Japanese manga style, featuring costumes referring to the historical element as an effort to bring up local Indonesian identity, including in its posture. Adjustments are referred to as romantic reimagination, ie postures and accessories altered according to the image and tastes of today's teenagers. The look of facial expressions is made more based on the character traits, not historical evidence, in an effort to present the more loveable visual character of Gajah Mada.

Conclusion

Characters design in visualnovels can encourage the development of characters that are more representative of historical figures and carry cultural messages. Design elements formed through lines, shapes, textures, and colors, are able to present three layers of meaning. First, the informational meaning that brings messages about the character of Gajah Mada and Tribhuwana Tunggaladewi as two influential figures who extend the power of Majapahit Kingdom. Second, the symbolic meaning, namely the message conveyed through the visualization of clothing and accessories according to the historical context of the period. Third, the meaning of images that build a certain perception about the personality of the character. In a game similar to Visual Novel, this layer of meaning images can build mystery and challenge for the players, when the player chooses to interact with the character. The character design of visual novel that represents the historical and cultural figures of Indonesia can also be developed as an informative, communicative, and entertaining educational tool.

The study of visual novel characters design can be a scientific reference for individual game developers and groups to be more confident to be creative and compete in the global market, while maintaining the values of Indonesian culture. The rapidly growing video gaming industry in the country should be a driving force for visualnovel game creators or designers to continue to improve their competitiveness while still exploring local cultural-valued content.

This study can be a scientific reference in the application of visual communication design, also useful for the national interest, especially for the development of character design in visual novel Indonesia with historical background. This study also offers a model character design of historical figures as a visual style reference for visualnovelIndonesia which represents the history and culture of Indonesia.

Acknowledgement

In the process, this study can be done well because of the facilitation and financial support of the Directorate General of Higher Education (Ditjen Dikti) scope of Kopertis Region III, and Institute for Research and Community Service (LP2M) Indraprasta University PGRI, Jakarta.

References

- Barker, C. (2014). *Kamus kajian budaya*. Yogyakarta: Penerbit PT. Kanisius.
- Barthes, R. (2010). *Imaji, musik, teks, analisis semiologi atas fotografi, iklan, film, musik, alkitab, penulisan dan pembacaan serta kritik sastra, esei-esei terpilih*. Yogyakarta: Jalasutra.
- Cavallaro, D. (2010). *Animeand the visual novel. narrative structure, design and play at the crossroads of animation and computer games*. North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc.
- Danesi, M. (2011). *Pesan, tanda, dan makna, buku teks dasar mengenai semiotika dan teori komunikasi*. Yogyakarta: Jalasutra.

- Estidianti, B. R. and Lakoro, R. (2014). *Perancangan karakter game visual novel "Tiktakavya" dengan konsep visual bishonen*. *Jurnal Sains dan Seni Pomits*, Vol. 3 No. 2. Page 49-54. Surabaya: ITS.
- Fiske, J. (2007). *Cultural and communication studies: Sebuah pengantar paling komprehensif*. Yogyakarta: Jalasutra.
- Irawan, B. and Tamara, P. (2013). *Dasar-dasar desain untuk arsitektur, interior-arsitektur, seni rupa, desain produk industri dan desain komunikasi visual*. Depok: Griya Kreasi.
- Kusnawi and Firmansyah, R. (2015). Game hybrid visual novel sejarah dengan metode sistem pakar "Twist Majapahit". *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Teknologi Informasi dan Multimedia 6-8 Februari 2015*, hal 5.7-5. Yogyakarta: STMIK AMIKOM.
- Kusrianto, A. (2009). *Pengantar desain komunikasi visual*. Yogyakarta: Penerbit Andi.
- Newman, J. (2004). *Video games*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Piliang, Y. A. (2012). *Semiotika dan hipersemiotika, kode, gaya, & matinya makna*. Yogyakarta: Jalasutra
- Pratama, D., Wardani, W.G.W., and Akbar T. (2017). Mendesain model visual novel Indonesia berlatar sejarah. Laporan Tahun Terakhir, Penelitian Produk Terapan, Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Tinggi Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan dan Universitas Indraprasta PGRI.
- Pratama, D., Wardani, W.G.W., and Akbar, T. (2017). Understanding visual novel as artwork of visual communication design. *MUDRA Journal of Art and Culture*, Vol. 32 No. 3, September 2017, page 291-298, Denpasar: ISI.
- Sloan, R. J. S. (2015). *Virtual character design for games and interactive media*. Boca Raton, London, New York: CRC Press, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Wardani, W. G. W. (2011). *Representasi manusia sebagai makhluk budaya dalam film animasi Jepang nonverbal "La Maison En Petits Cubes"*. Program Magister, FSRD, Jakarta: Universitas Trisakti.