



Social Critical Discourse Forms in the Wayang Beber Kota Suluk Banyu Story

Bobby Akhbar; Warto; Susanto

Master Program of Cultural Studies, Graduate School, Universitas Sebelas Maret, Indonesia

<http://dx.doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v11i1.5432>

Abstract

The wayang beber performance is one of the oldest traditional arts originating from East Java which is not very popular with the public, in fact not many modern people are even familiar with wayang beber. This causes the popularity of Wayang Beber to not exist. In 2006, the famous Wayang Beber Kota performance began which was initiated by Dani Iswardana, a wayang Beber artist from Surakarta City who lives on Jalan Sidoasih Timur No. 14, Mangkuyudan, Laweyan District, Surakarta. With all his creativity, in 2004 he produced quite innovative ideas, such as innovating the wayang beber show. From the expertise of the initiator of Wayang Beber Kota who innovated in the Wayang Beber Kota show, he succeeded in making the Wayang Beber show popular with audiences again. Wayang Beber focuses on current issues such as social, political, cultural, and environmental issues and composes and even tells jokes that are entertaining but full of criticism and social guidance. This scientific article aims to reveal how the puppeteer can package social critical discourse from the Wayang Beber Kota performance by Dani Iswardana entitled the play Suluk Banyu. Based on careful observation of social critical discourse, it can be seen that social critical discourse is communicated mainly through the characters in the story. So it can be seen that the packaging form of social critical discourse presented in the Wayang Beber Kota performance includes parables, allusions in the form of allusions, and proverbs.

Keywords: *Wayang Beber Kota Show; Social Critical Discourse; Suluk Banyu*

Introduction

Wayang is a traditional Javanese art product that over the centuries has undergone a process of cultural change and development (Dharsono, 2013: 109). This is indicated by the many different types of wayang, such as wayang golek, wayang wong, wayang krucil, wayang suluh, wayang beber and so on which have appeared and are known to the public. Of the several types of wayang, there is one type of wayang that can be said to be the oldest type of wayang and has its uniqueness from other types of wayang. This refers to a library by Primadi Tabrani entitled Bahasa Rupa (2005), starting in 778 AD where reliefs were discovered at Borobudur Temple. More specifically, when the Ancient Mataram kingdom was ruled by King Syailendra, there were stone puppet reliefs. The uniqueness of wayang beber lies in the form of performance, such as in the form of a display of images that are spread out (dibeber) and not in the form of shadows (shadow play) like in wayang kulit. It is called wayang beber because it is made in the form of long sheets on which characters are depicted, arranged scene by scene based on the

sequence of the story. Wayang beber is a type of theatrical performance through which objects are narrated images or images that are narrated by presenting story narratives (such as storytelling) as well as staging reels of images that are revealed (Subandi, 2011:2).

Wayang Beber performances are not only known as a medium that functions for entertainment but are also full of guidance. This wayang beber performance aims to be a medium of da'wah used by the Guardians to spread religious teachings. Every story written in Wayang Beber's performances is said to be a metaphor, simulation, and symbolization. Wayang performances contain valuable messages for society which are conveyed orally through narrative, including conversations between the characters in the story told by the puppeteer. The form of conveying the message is often inserted with humor from the characters featured in the story and also contains the message contained therein. It could be said that Wayang's performances are quite effective in conveying messages, especially in terms of the use of language through narration, conversation, characters, or variations in the presentation of the performance.

The Wayang Beber performance, which was originally only a medium for preaching to spread religious teachings, has turned into a medium for criticism to channel complaints and messages to the government and society. As was done by one of the artists from the city of Solo who developed Wayang Beber. With all his creativity and expertise, he created wayang beber by giving it a different touch from the traditional wayang beber, such as that it is not based on the text of the Panji story but refers to current or contemporary phenomena which include social, cultural, environmental, political and other issues. The Wayang Beber Kota show was able to draw back the public's attention to Wayang Beber because, with all its skill, every dialogue presented in each form of performance was quite interesting to listen to. This has been quite successful in overcoming global challenges so far, such as that the Wayang Beber show, which was almost abandoned by the audience, is still in demand and has a special place in the hearts of the people. So as time goes by, many artists are starting to pay attention to the preservation of wayang beber with various efforts, both individually and in collaboration.

Efforts were made solely to meet the taste demands of the public (audience) so that they would not feel bored or bored when enjoying wayang beber performances, transformed to adapt to the times by creating contemporary wayang beber, until finally in 2004 with all its unique creative power. a wayang beber preservation artist named Dani Iswardana done a transformation, such as composing wayang beber to be more innovative by creating the name Wayang Beber Kota. The Wayang Beber Kota performance of the play Suluk Banyu was chosen as the object in the topic of this study. Each title of a wayang performance story can be said to be an emphasis on the story's content, function and social meaning through the everyday language of the conversations of the characters in a story. This is also in line with the discussions of experts that the basic objectives of language (bilingualism) are oriented towards text terms. In this way, the language in a story is constructed from the presentation of sentences from the conversations of the characters in the story.

The Wayang Beber Kota performance with the play Suluk Banyu staged by Dani Iswardana Wibowo became an interesting object of study, thus encouraging the author to examine this research. Therefore, based on the background that has been described and paying attention to the title of this scientific article, this research aims to highlight the form of social critical discourse packaged by Wayang Beber Kota in the performance of the play Suluk Banyu.

Research Methods

The qualitative research method used a sociological approach that prioritizes the study of narrative discourse with a study paradigm regarding the form and function of social criticism. Then, so that this paradigm can be realized, an ethical and emic approach was needed, where ethics means analysis based on what was in the researcher's thinking, and emic means analysis based on people's understanding.

The study of narrative discourse (text) was also known as the theory of narratological structuralism. In terms of terminology, the word narratology comes from the word narration, meaning (stories, sayings, tales, and tales) and logy comes from the word logos, meaning science. Ratna (2004:128) said that both narratology and narrative discourse theory were concluded as a set of concepts about stories and storytelling.

The research object of this paper was a Wayang Beber Kota performance with the play Suluk Banyu. The play Suluk Banyu was chosen because it represents an appropriate depiction of the message of the play which was conveyed with a specific purpose. This research aims to reveal the form of social critical discourse in Wayang Beber Kota.

The data collection technique used the observation method as an observation step accompanied by recording the target object. The observation step was done by adjusting the recordings from the Wayang Beber Kota performance of the play Suluk Banyu while observing carefully and even repeatedly until finally producing written text as a source of data collection about social critical discourse. The results of the observations that had been made were then collected using recording techniques.

Results and Discussion

Understanding Critical Discourse

Foucault (1972:48-49) said that discourse is a comprehensive series of utterances done through regular and systematic acts of communication, containing ideas, concepts, or effects that are formed in a certain context. In the sense that every act of communication is part of discourse. Communication involves sending a message, the recipient of the message, and the message as well as the complete unity of meaning that needs to be conveyed.

The discourse discussed in this research concept originates from linguistic recordings or verbal narratives, story discourse, and storytelling that builds a unity of meaning done through acts of communication between the characters in the play communicated by the puppeteer Wayang Beber Kota.

Esten (1987:32) conveys the definition of criticism as considering the good and bad of a literary creation. In literary criticism there are two aspects, the first is describing and interpreting the literary creation being discussed and the second is the assessment given to the literary creation.

In this research, the meaning of social critical discourse is a series of social dialogues spoken by puppeteers which are displayed in their performances and provide an overview of the nuances of criticism. Through the performance of the play Suluk Banyu, a puppeteer indirectly has the power and freedom to convey criticism for later consumption by the audience.

Definition of Wayang Beber

Wayang Beber can be said to be an original noble work of art from Indonesia which is quite developed in Java and Bali. Is one of the Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity which was approved by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) on November 7, 2003. Wayang beber is understood as a type of Javanese theater performance, but the theater is still presented in the form of a theater pictorial. Epistemologically, the meaning of the word "beber" comes from a verb in Javanese which means to describe doing work, stretching, and spreading. Usually intended for folded or rolled cloth or objects that are thin and wide (Bagyo Suharyono, 1986:28). This is why it is called wayang beber because the long sheets are made of Javanese paper (dluwang) on which characters are scratched or drawn, then arranged in sequence scene by scene based on the order of the story, then for the performance to take place the scrolls must be spread out first.

Wayang beber relies more on speech techniques, in contrast to wayang kulit which is more varied. In this way, Wayang Beber is said to be a speech art performance based on the object of the picture being told, more simply the pictures are told by the sequence of the story. The purpose of this explanation is to explain and communicate the wayang beber story or play to the audience. In Wayang Beber performances, story narration is prioritized, as is the case with storytelling while demonstrating the images that are being revealed (Subandi et al, 2011:2). This means that when the performance is held, the story or play can be staged, the puppeteer tells the story using a voice that is spoken verbally according to the painting of the wayang characters printed on the scroll or paper that is being unfolded.

Discourse on Social Criticism of Wayang Beber Kota Suluk Banyu

Talking about social criticism discourse, in the previous sub-chapter it was mentioned that what is meant by social criticism discourse in the context of this research are some of the dialogues that contain nuances of criticism communicated by the Wayang Beber Kota puppeteers. Regarding the discourse of social criticism, this study will take the play Suluk Banyu. This research begins by presenting a synopsis of the plays as well as the characters and their characterizations based on the concepts studied. Through this, it is then stated that the discussion of social criticism is communicated through: dialogue between a young person and a leader, and dialogue between a young person and a businessman.

In the play Suluk Banyu there are many characteristics of characters and characterizations that can provide various criticisms through the dialogue. The packaging forms of social critical discourse communicated through dialogues in the play include parables and puns.

Referring to the context of this research, we will use Tzevetan Todorov's narrative discourse analysis through three channels which include will, communication, and participation. In discourse analysis, you must at least consider syntactic aspects, semantic aspects, and verbal aspects.

Wayang Beber Kota can be said to be a wayang Beber performance that is refreshing and always missed. Even though it is not as popular as Wayang Kulit in various regions, Wayang Beber Kota is at least able to answer the challenges of the times. Apart from serving as public entertainment, the stories presented also have a certain message which is packaged and presented in a performance.

Parable

As a performing art that relies on speech techniques, a puppeteer must have excellent language skills, and be straightforward and interesting. The skills of the Wayang Beber puppeteer as a communicator require him to be clever at playing and expressing his heart's content with his unique style of composition, to attract the attention of the audience. In the play Suluk Banyu there is a dialogue between a young man and a leader who uses a type of parable.

Dialog 1

<i>Lurah Karso</i>	<i>: If you are a smart person, what is one plus one??</i>
<i>Ganjar</i>	<i>: One plus one yes two</i>
<i>Lurah Karso</i>	<i>: That means you are stupid, siji plus siji can be six, can be seven</i>
<i>Ganjar</i>	<i>: Well, how can that be, Mr Lurah?</i>
<i>Lurah Karso</i>	<i>: Yes, of course, you can, I'm a smart person</i>
<i>Ganjar</i>	<i>: Wooo, The village head is crazy and unhealthy</i>

Dialog 2

Adam: So leaders must be able to protect the people, uphold justice, and truth, and fight for the people. People who behave well can be role models, for example, the number one leader.

Yu Ponirah : Oh yes, yesterday Mr. Karso was the leader of the Terawih prayers, he was great, especially as his voice made the mind cool.

Adam: Yu is right, he said that a leader must be able to be an imam, it's fine to lead prayers, let alone lead people in the same village.

It can be seen in the first dialogue when Lurah Karso says to a young man named Ganjar "Yen siji plus siji iku iso enem, iso pitu" The sentence spoken by Lurah Karso suggests that he has the character of someone who is always greedy-minded and craves greed and always prioritizes materialistic needs. The meaning contained in Lurah Karso's dialogue with Ganjar is that if a leader has thoughts like that, then he is not capable and unfit to be a leader who is trustworthy towards his people. Society will suffer and not get justice from a leader who has such thinking principles.

Then in the second dialogue, Adam's character says "Wong sing tumindake sae, definitely sadi dadi tauladan, geh leader no siji iku". The meaning of this sentence provides advice by giving an example of someone who acts well and will become a role model for his people. Followed by a sentence expressed by the character Yu Ponirah "Oh yes, Pak Karso's wingi is leading the Terawih prayer well, is it cool for the mind?" The meaning contained in the conversation as spoken by the Dalang is likened to the image of the people who are longing for a leader who is good, trustworthy and able to protect the community.

Sarcasm

Talking about sarcasm is part of a form of sarcasm. It should be noted that satire can be said to be a form of criticism (rebuke, ridicule, etc.) towards someone that is not expressed directly or frankly (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1996: 944). In the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) satire is a word in the form of a statement or image that is intended to ridicule someone or indirectly ridicule or criticize. Judging from the type of language style, there are various types of satire language styles which are collected into five, including satire, sarcasm, cynicism, irony, and innuendo.

In the performance of the play Suluk Banyu there is a satirical style of language spoken by the puppeteer Wayang Beber Kota. It is worth recognizing the skill of the Wayang Beber Kota puppeteer in using satirical language as an expression of freedom of expression used to criticize problematic situations that occur in society. The satirical language style spoken by the puppeteer is a satirical language style in the form of sarcasm. Sarcasm is a style of satirical language that is harsher than irony and cynicism, leading to a bitter sense of reproach, although it can be ironic or not, the style of satirical language in the form of sarcasm always hurts the heart and feels unethical to hear (Keraf, 1991: 144).

Dialog 1

Lurah Karso: That means you are stupid, so siji plus siji can be six or seven

Ganjar : Woooo..... The village head is crazy and unhealthy!

The context of the satire is what happened in the quoted sentence during the conversation between a young man named Ganjar and the Head of Karso Village, the village leader. The Ganjar figure asked the Karso Village Head to clarify and cancel his actions which he felt could harm the people. Ganjar expressed his frustration by going to the Karso Village Head's office so that he could cancel his action plan to sell the spring water.

As presented in the dialogue between Lurah Karso and Ganjar in the play *Suluk Banyu*, the satirical language style in the form of sarcasm spoken by the puppeteer can be found in the quote from the sentence uttered by Lurah Karso "That means your crew is stupid" to a young man named Ganjar and the quote from the sentence spoken by Ganjar "Wooo, you lurang gendeng is not healthy!". These two sentence quotes contain the meaning of words that tend to hurt someone's feelings. The direction of the dialogue between the Karso Village Head and Ganjar, narrated by the puppeteer, reveals an expression that there is a phenomenon of injustice and dishonesty committed by a leader towards his people.

Proverb

Proverb is a type of expression in the Javanese language whose sentence has a figurative meaning, is fixed, and contains a presupposition or simile which has a connotative meaning. "*proverb*" is one of the parts of proverbs that takes the form of Javanese expressions, the content tends to contain similes (Padmosoekotjo, 1958:57). Usually it is a comparison of someone's condition and behavior. "*Bebasan*" is still related to Proverbs and Saloka. From the past until now, in the development of Javanese literature from generation to generation, "*bebasan*" has been included as oral folklore which is often used by Javanese people to spice up chats or conversations in Javanese so that it feels more aesthetic and interesting to listen to. From careful repeated observations of the discourse on social criticism, in the Wayang Beber Kota performance of the play *Suluk Banyu*, there are several quoted sentences containing (proverb) narrated by the puppeteer which are presented in the following dialogue:

Dialog 1

Ganjar: They say the government requires 12 years of schooling, but for me, it's not mandatory to go to school, because I don't have any money. If I were rich, I would like those people, but what else could my fate be like? The government is just Lambe's big brother, it works a lot but it eats itself.

In the context of the direction of the discussion presented in the dialogue, Ganjar expressed a picture of the state of government behavior which is full of sweet promises to its people with a Javanese word of freedom (proverb) which reads "abang-abang lambe". The meaning of freedom mentioned by the character Ganjar contains the meaning of just rouge lips that only speak sweet words full of rhetoric without having to have any obligation to prove it.

Conclusion

Through his creativity, Dani Iswardana makes the Wayang Beber Kota performance a medium for social criticism of current issues. The dialogue discourses spoken by the Wayang Beber Kota puppeteers in their performances are packaged neatly and intelligently so that it becomes an entertaining spectacle and is full of guidance. What is even more interesting is that the performance of the play *Suluk Banyu* is full of critical discourse narratives spoken by the puppeteers, packaged in the form of parables, sarcasm, and free speech (proverbs).

References

- Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan. (1996). *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia: Edisi Kedua*. Jakarta: Balai Pustaka.
- Dharsono, Sony Kartika. (2013). *Seni Rupa Modern: Edisi Revisi*. Bandung: Rekayasa Sains.
- Esten, Mursal. (1987). *Kesusastraan: Pengantar Teori dan Sejarah*. Bandung: Angkasa.
- Fokkema, D.W. *et all.* (1977). *Theories of Literature in the Twentieth Century*. London: C Hurs Company.
- Foucault, Michael. (1972). *The Archeology of Knowledge and The Discourse on Language*. London: Tavistock Publication.
- Keraf, Gorys. (1991). *Diksi dan Gaya Bahasa Komposisi Lanjutan*. Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama.
- Padmosoekotjo, S. (1958). *Ngrenggengan Kasusastran Djawa*. Jogjakarta: Hien Hoo Sing.
- Ratna, Nyoman Kutha. (2004). *Teori, Metode, dan Teknik Penelitian Sastra dari Strukturalisme Hingga Postrukturalisme*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Subandi.*et all.* (2011). *Wayang Beber Remeng Mangunjaya Gelaran Wonosari dan Wayang Beber Jaka Kembang Kuning Karangtalun Pacitan Serta Persebarannya di Seputar Surakarta*. Surakarta: ISI Press.
- Suharyono, Bagyo. (1986). *Wayang Beber Wonosari*. Wonogiri: Bina Citra Pustaka.
- Soehardjo. (1990). *Pendidikan Seni Rupa*. Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan.
- Tabrani, Primadi. (2005). *Bahasa Rupa*. Bandung: Penerbit Kelir.
- Dani Iswardana (50 tahun). *Seniman Wayang Beber Kota*. Jalan Sidoasih Timur No 14 Mangkuyudan Laweyan Surakarta.

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).