



# The Meaning of Bali Aesthetic Code in The Animated Film Si Uma

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the meaning of aesthetic code in the animated film "Si Uma." The animated film "Si Uma" needs to be investigated because the reanimated film shows Balinese culture's beauty and has a unique character shape. Visualization of Balinese culture in this animated film contains a meaningful message for the life of the universe hitch conveyed through the form of code. The problem is what is the meaning of the Balinese aesthetic code represented in the animated film "Si Uma." The method used in this research is qualitative with data collection techniques through observation, interviews, and documentation. The technique of determining the source of data in this study is the Snowball sampling technique. Data sources were collected through interviews with Ida Bagus Surya Manuba, I Nyoman Suci Rasika, and Gede Pasek Putra Adnyana Yasa. Data analysis was carried out through data reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing based on Ferdinand de Saussure's semiotic theory and Roland Barthes' postmodern aesthetic code. The results of this study indicate that the aesthetic code in the animated film "Si Uma" in the form of a semantic code is associated with a black and white patterned fabric sign (*poleng*) which contains the meaning of life balance in the universe; the cultural code is associated with a headband (*udeng*) containing meaning to concentrate thoughts or views (concentration) in every activity in Bali. In conclusion, the meaning of the aesthetic code in the animated film "Si Uma" is seen from two perspectives such as : the semantic code in the form of *Poleng* Cloth is ideological containing the meaning of balance in life in the universe; cultural code in the form of a headband (*udeng*) is connotative which means to focus attention/thought, aesthetic, and cultural identity in worship and daily activities.

## KEYWORDS

Code;  
Aesthetic  
Bali;  
Animated Film;  
Si Uma

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## 1. Introduction

Animation as an audio-video visual media developed from the ages that contain language in the form of verbal and non-verbal. Its existence is part of a culture of media communication that is no less in existence in all circles of society. After Indonesian independence was declared, in the early 1950's the effort to create an Indonesian animation ecosystem was conducted by sending an Indonesian artist to be an internship in Disney's studio. Soekarno, the former president, realized the power of animation to convey a message (Kusumawardhani and Daulay 2020). Its development in Indonesia since 1955, until now it is still used as a medium of visual communication and culture. The entertainment world is now using a lot of animated film media as entertainment and promotions that are seductive or seductive to consume even restrictions. During the ups and downs of the political turmoil in 1960-1970 and the transition of the government from Old Order to New Order, Indonesian animation developed its style and skills through some local artists (Kusumawardhani and Daulay 2020). Animation in Indonesia has increasingly developed, can be observed from the increasement in animated short films which locally created that developed in terms of quantity and quality (Prayogo, Saidi, and Murwonugroho 2018). Film Sensor Institutions recognize that film, as a work of cultural art, plays a critical role in strengthening national resilience through boosting the resilience of the nation's culture and the physical and spiritual well-being of its citizens. As a result, the government is in charge of advancing film that needs to be created and safeguarded by Indonesian cinema and films. (Hermanto and Adawiyah 2020). Motion-capture animation techniques are used to track a real actor's artistic performance and to replicate it on a computer-generated character (Kätsyri, Mäkäräinen, and Takala 2017). Cartoonish animated film characters will be evaluated as more eerie

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and less likable than semirealistic animated film characters (Kätsyri, Mäkäräinen, and Takala 2017). However, in this “Si Uma” character, a 3D-based computer application is used.

As a basis for how to make animations such as bouncing a ball. Animating the ball as it bounces gives the impression of weight. To make the ball look real, the animator uses the principle of “solid drawing” by paying attention to the shape of the ball in three-dimensional space and using geometry of light and shadow. (Jones and Moore-Russo 2019). By 2010, computer animation had made leaps and bounds, but still problem spots remained especially in the simulation of hair and cloth. Both require particle system connected by a spring system (Au 2014). In medicine, contemporary 3-D medical animation and visualization currently functions in three areas: biomedical animation, biomedical documentary, and 3-D visualization in medicine. 3-D digital visualization techniques, such as those used in clinical imaging, continue to have an almost exclusively diagnostic or scientific focus (McGhee 2010). The use of a computer for 3D on the Image or the object is manipulated to display a moving image in a dynamic medium known as Animation. In traditional media images are drawn by hand on cells to be photographed and exhibited on film. Currently, most of the animation is made with computer-generated imager (CGI) (Abhilash et al. 2018). Visual communication media are strengthened with creative ideas that involve elements of local wisdom. But not all local values can be used as points in visual works. As stated (Budiman, 2011), indeed not all local aspects can be interesting to be appointed as a point of interest and ability to create strong stopping power. Particularly in animated films, many involve elements of local pharaoh/culture in Indonesia that reflect the power of audio-visual video work in the global film world. Animated films that are able to popularize Nusantara culture on international and national television screens such as: Battle of Surabaya, Night Kris, Adit & Sopo Jarwo, and many other animated films have made the culture of the archipelago the best.

Many animated films flourished and mushroomed throughout the archipelago. According to Cahya Daulay, it is true that positive developments in the Indonesian animation industry but that development seems to occur only in the internal sphere (Ardaya Okky W., 2008). The development of the animation industry in Bali has shown various types of animated films, both two dimensions (2D) and three dimensions (3D). Bali itself has human resources (HR) engaged in international and national animated films. Animated films that have been produced in Bali include Doraemon, Bul, Magic Crocodile, Crying Stone, Origins of Bukit Catu, Si Uma, and many others. "Si Uma," tells about a ghost who lives in a big tree. "Si Uma" itself is taken from the word "Uma" in the pronunciation of the Balinese language "Ume," which means rice. "Si Uma" is a supernatural character who lives in a large tree in the film's story. Its uniqueness is in the form of a creature with a head, body, hands, but has no legs, only the tail is wrapped in a black and white cloth patterned box (*poleng*) and the head is decorated with a headband (*udeng*). *Poleng* cloth and *udeng* are part of the symbol of Balinese culture used in rituals and other traditional activities. The relationship between symbols and objects is denotative and connotative (Sitompul 2013). In addition to *poleng* and *udeng* fabrics, there is also a text that reads "ketut" which is the identity of the Balinese and the walls and gates of the office sharpen the geography in the visual story of the animated film. All of these identities, as imitations, conveyed to the audience. This encouragement is the basis for the study of the meaning of Balinese culture.

Several animated films as a reference to the character Dhul from the animated series Upin & Ipin are used, namely the height that is the same age as a child but accompanied by an adult face, this method has been used in various animations to attract the attention of all people and all ages. (Bayu Pratama, Pramono, and Samudro 2020). Balinese culture elements displayed in the animated film are codes of information that are communicated through visual language (non-verbal) in their lifestyle. Balinese culture, in its various aspects, currently has a spiral change direction by using the logic of "adoption and adaptation" of the values of traditional values towards scientific values, so that their development is in harmony with the lifestyle of the Balinese people. Cultural codes make the audience familiar with the visual language displayed. The visual language makes the film more interesting and has the power of local wisdom full of interpretation of meaning. Something similar the visual element is the basic tool of film in communication, so it is a significant factor in distinguishing fiction films and so-called "literary" forms of fiction and drama. This film is fascinated by visual narrators, as a form of value that develops in Balinese society. Film art is a form of designation in which there are various tastes (tastes) of information conveyed. Based on the description above, the animated film "Si Uma" needs to be examined in terms of aesthetic code which has various interpretations of meaning.

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The problem revealed in this paper is about what is the meaning of the Balinese aesthetic code which has the connotation of the message in the animated film. The aim is to analyze the meaning of the Balinese aesthetic code and the meaning that is communicated as a message in the animated film "Si Uma".

## 2. Method

This animated film is very interesting to be the object of the art research because the form of visual design contains aesthetic code elements. Therefore, this research was conducted with qualitative methods with data collection techniques of observation, interviews, and documentation. Determination of data sources with Snowball sampling technique. Data analysis through the stages of reduction, presentation, and drawing conclusions based on Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotics theory and postmodern aesthetic code theory of Roland Barthes. The meaning of the aesthetic code of Bali is analyzed by landsan postmodern aesthetic code theory Roland Barthes. Barthes is based on Ferdinand de Saussure's semiotics which distinguishes signs into two levels, denotation and connotation (myth), and then is developed into quotations in the form of code-shaped lexia. Five codes Semiotik Roland Barthes for determining the various kinds of significance/ semantics: a) The Hermeneutic Code, b) The Proairetic Code, 3) The Semantic Code, 4) The Symbolic Code and 5) The Cultural Code (Vivek 2019). Among the five codes, the Semantic code and culture as an approach in analyzing the system of markers, a marker in the animated film "Si Uma". Semantic Code is a code that is in the area of signifiers, that is, special markers that have connotations, or markers whose materiality itself without a chain of signs at the ideological level already offers connotation meaning. The cultural code is the code that 'everyone knows' what the author means of established and authoritative cultural forms. Therefore, the cultural code is the code that is taken from the authoritative cultures which are known by everyone (Tarmila and H, n.d.). The relevance of this theory as the approach of code analysis and interpretation of meaning in the animated film "Si Uma".

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1. The Meaning of *Poleng* Fabric Code

Black-and-white patterned fabric is a fabric that we usually find in Balinese cultural life (*poleng*). Both for rituals and for customs events, commonly referred to as Banjar. *Poleng* cloth which is called on a big tree, is a reference to Hindu culture in Bali as a symbol of gratitude for the balance of life between human relations and the universe. According to the results of an interview with Mr. Ida Bagus Surya Manuaba, ST (45) a cleric in the Griya City of Gianyar said that;

"... *Poleng* is two very contradictory colors, namely black and white. The concept in Bali is called the Ruwa Bhineda concept, there is goodness, there is celebration, there is morning, there is night, there is drowning, there is birth, there is death, that is the concept of the balance of Persian Bali. There is Akasa (cloud universe) there is a state (land occupied). So, the concept of black and white katin is the concept of Ruwa Bhineda, the balance of nature, because Bali plays in a position of balance called the zero position. Zero is brought by the Hindu religion, windu is empty but full. So God created the concept of Ruwa Bhineda in Bali, every birth there is death, every good there is no good, it's balance. There is dewe, bute or blind nature. All complement each other in accordance with their respective functions, balance means perfection. We play in Windu, in the zero position but full. Therefore the black and white cloth represents the balance in Bali. The placement of *poleng* cloth is usually placed in trees, temples, and is usually used in cloth or Kamben. Because in Bali familiar with the term Nawe Sange "nine corners of the compass". Most in Bali for *poleng* cloth is usually associated with the supernatural (bute nature) "(Interview, 19 October 2019), Figure 1.



**Fig. 1.** *Poleng* Fabric Image Source: Animated movie screen print "Si Uma"

Meanwhile, according to Mr. Mangku I Nyoman Suci Rasika (55th) in an interview (October 22, 2019) stated that: "... *poleng* cloth that is usually worn is usually requested big, as a sign or symbol of our gratitude for the life bestowed by Hyang Widi to us, there is good and some bad, there is left there is right, there is birth and there is death like that is the life we live in this world." *Poleng* cloth as a sign in Balinese culture whose connotation is a symbol of gratitude for the balance in life in the universe. Semantics, (SEM) code, according to Roland Barthes operates like a theme in literary analysis. Barthes stated that from this the "...we just show them—without, in other words, trying to relate them to characters (or places or objects) or arrange them in a particular order so as to form one thematic grouping..." It has the basic principles of a certain group of signs which contain the connotation of forms to the impression or quality of a certain character. This character description is central to the exploitation of this code. In the strictest literary sense, semantics denotes and modifies character and setting (Robinson 2019). That code, as information that is conveyed through animated film media which is the same culture / geography. Animation media applies cultural elements as symbols which are interpreted as reality. Art as a result of human creativity is a symbolic process to interpret reality. In interpreting reality, artistic reactivity is largely determined by social changes in society (Seramasara 2017). *Poleng* fabric, known as grid pattern and black and white, has a unique visual as a symbolic creativity and full of meaning. This cloth is usually interpreted as gratitude for the balance of living this life. *Poleng* cloth in the animated film "Si Uma" as a code or sign whose connotation is to inform an aesthetic message both from visuals and meanings. The connotation of *poleng* cloth in the animated film visualizes a perfect balance, both with real life and not real.

Based on the description, the *poleng* cloth is indeed symbolic as a balance in life. However, if brought closer to the psychological theory of color, then the meaning of black and white cloth can be the same or different from Balinese Hindu mythology. White symbolizes light, purity, purity, childishness, honesty, sincerity, peace, tranquility, truth, politeness, innocence, subtlety, tenderness, femininity, cleanliness, simple, honor. Whereas black symbolizes sadness, doom, gloom, gloom, darkness, even death, terror, crime, wickedness, sorrow, error, cruelty, decay, secrets, strength, sexuality, unhappiness, deep remorse, anger, sorrow (sorrow), wickedness, guilt, error, cruelty, decay, secrets, strength, sexuality, unhappiness, deep remorse, anger, sorrow (sorrow) (Sanyoto, 2010). Hindu mythology in Bali interprets black and white patterned cloth (*Poleng*) as a symbol of balance. If it is closer to the meaning of color theory, then the meaning can be correct. The meaning of black and white on *Poleng* fabric has a difference like white symbolizes light while black is darkness. This difference, has to do with the balance of asymmetry. Through these differences, in different meanings / disputes with the gray neutralization approach, it can obscure disputes into a unified whole that has an aesthetic appeal. The existence of a visual code in the form of a checkered cloth in black and white or in Balinese language is called *Poleng*. When approached with a postmodern aesthetic view, the semantics of *poleng* cloth fall into the category of Pastiche idioms. According to Umberto Eco in (Piliang, 2012), calling pastiche as one of the patronizations of reconstruction realism, namely pure replicas or duplications of past cultures. The meaning of the aesthetic code of the *poleng* fabric, which is included in the animated film "Si Uma" as a reconstruction of Balinese culture. The cloth, in Hindu mythology in Bali as a symbol of life in the universe. This cloth, too, is usually used as a lower cloth

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or called a camben and is also felt as a place of worship and tied to large trees that have a mystical aura. The advantages of using associated *poleng* fabric lead to a difference that attracts attention. Through a cursory look through these differences, there is an element of gray as a neutralizer, so as to form a unified whole which shows an aesthetic appeal. While the drawbacks can cause unfocused, because the pattern is always repetitive. These strengths and weaknesses are the basis for the consumption of *Poleng* fabric symbolization, giving rise to a balanced impression both visually and in meaning in mythology itself.

### 3.2. The meaning of the *Udeng* Code

*Udeng* is also a cultural representation in Bali which has an aesthetic and meaningful form. *Udeng* (Figure 2) is usually used by Balinese men who will go to temples or meetings in the village (*Banjar*). In the animated "Si Uma" scene Uma's character itself has a complete outfit/accessories that symbolize Balinese culture. According to Yasa (34th) as an academic in the field of animation said:



**Fig. 2.** Headband (*udeng*), Image Source: Animated movie screen print "Si Uma"

"The complete clothing and accessories of Uma characters in the animated film " Si Uma "include *udeng*, jepun flowers (frangipani flowers) in the ears and cloth that covers the underside of the uma character (*poleng*). *Poleng* is a checkered fabric resembling a black, white and gray chessboard that is used to cover the lower body from the waist down "in an interview (02 October 2019). Headbands (*udeng*) have interpretations of meaning that make the focus (focus the mind) focused. As said by Mr. Ida Bagus Surya Manuaba, ST (45 years) that:

"... For *udeng* it is usually used on the head. The goal is to bind our minds to what we are aiming for, for example Hindus when going to the temple usually use *udeng*, tied their heads so that the focus is to deal with God, if it is used for adat, for example, in the future to focus on the forum in accordance with what is discussed. Focusing so that the mind is not wild is actually the meaning of the visualization of the *udeng* "(Interview, 19 October 2019).

*Udeng* as a code that implies Balinese culture. The purpose of using it is to focus the mind on worship and others. *Udeng* in the animated film "Si Uma" is used to strengthen the Balinese cultural code. In conclusion, cultural codes allow us to trace the transitions experienced by narrators from situations of gaining power through personal ties to current situations of gaining power through professional knowledge (Tohar et al. 2007). Thus the cultural code (cultural code) or referential code (reference code) that manifests as a kind of collective voice that is anonymous and authoritative; sourced from human experience, which represents or talks about something that he wants to establish as generally accepted knowledge or wisdom. In addition to representing the aesthetic code of Balinese culture, *Udeng* also represents the animator or director's gesture in interpreting visual language. The connotation of the message conveyed through *udeng*, to focus the mind that we live in nature is not alone, God created creatures there are perfect or imperfect. The aim is to focus our minds on understanding diverse traditions. In addition, *udeng* is also used as a head trimmer to make it look more beautiful. The *Udeng* used by the character "Si Uma" in this animated film is batik-style, implicitly helped develop the Nusantra culture that depicts Indonesian characteristics. Batik as an



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expression of the results of ideas that place symbolic codes in their motives. Therefore, batik is said to be part of the Nusantara culture which has been passed down from generation to generation. Culture is related to the symbolic system, thus the cultural system contains a symbolic code. Symbolic codes, which are similar to semantic codes but go beyond direct icons or stereotypes to refer to something greater. It is this structure of contrasting elements that structuralists see as fundamental to the way humans perceive and organize reality (Vivek 2019).

The culture code in the form of a headband or what is often referred to in Balinese language is *Udeng*, is associated with the Pastiche idiom in a postmodern aesthetic view. The Oxford English Dictionary definition of pastiche as “an artistic work in a style that imitates that of another work, artist, or period” comes from French. Similarly in Mikhail Bakhtin’s polyphonic theory of enunciation, pastiche and parody are effectively the same thing: the presence or imitation of another discourse in one’s own speech (Barbier 2012). This means that the *udeng* in the animated film “Si Uma” as an intertext means the combination of two elements of cultural code, namely *udeng* being part of Balinese culture while batik is part of the Nusantara culture. These two elements of culture form the meaning as the development of the archipelago culture through the application in the form of a headband (*undeng*). So the meaning of *udeng* is not only as a concentration of attention but as a headdress containing the aesthetic value of combining two cultural elements. The advantages of using *udeng* batik motifs as an element of the visual beauty of the animated film “Si Uma”. However, the shortcomings can lead to lack of concentration, because there are various kinds of symbols or motifs in it.

#### 4. Conclusion

Based on the results of the discussion above, it can be concluded that, the meaning of the Balinese aesthetic code contained in the animated film “Si Uma” is the result of visualization of Balinese culture applied by the animator in the animated film. Through the animated film animator (director) wants to convey a message through semantic codes such as: *poleng* cloth which has the connotation as the balance of life and balance is perfection. Perfection is a beautiful value (aesthetic), so it needs to be informed through sign messages / codes that have instructions in living this life. In addition to semantic codes, there are cultural codes like *udeng* that represent Balinese culture, because *udeng* is widely understood and agreed upon by many people (anonymously). *Udeng* also formalized the message conveyed by the animator of the animated film, to focus our attention and thoughts in the film and to concentrate that our life in nature is not alone, but there are creatures that are perfect or imperfect. Therefore, all of these codes can be said to have an aesthetic meaning, both in terms of visual and connotation of their meaning. Postmodern aesthetic view, the codes are included in the category of pastiche idioms, because they contain elements of culture that are reconstructed and the combination of two cultural elements into one unit in the form of *udeng*. The use of the code, not only gets a positive role as an impression of balance, but can also obscure the view or not focus. Likewise the combination of two cultural elements can give an aesthetic impression, but also can cause lack of concentration. The meaning found from research on the Balinese aesthetic code in the animated film “Si Uma” namely: the meaning of beauty, the meaning of concentration, and the meaning of cultural identity

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