

Research Article

Volt Comic Character in Scott Mccloud's Superheroes Concept

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Abstract.

In early 2012, the phenomenon of the birth of a new Indonesian superhero character named “Volt” enlivened Indonesian superhero comics. Almost 10 years since it first appeared, this comic has been able to survive amidst the competition for comics originating from the west such as DC Comics and superheroes made by Marvel. This study will analyze the comic character Volt, whose physical visual depiction is heavily influenced by Western comic visuals and is well-received by comic fans in Indonesia, although this character is originally from Indonesia. The research method used is a qualitative descriptive model with an analysis of the concept of a good superhero according to Scott McCloud including character, visual, and expressive. The results show that the presence of the character “Volt” is able to meet the tastes of the Indonesian comic reader market. While the character “Volt” is based on Scott McCloud’s drawing concept, it shows that there is an adaptation of both the character’s form, visuals, and expressions that can be accepted by Indonesian comic fans.

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1. Introduction

In 2012, the world of comics was enlivened by the emergence of a superhero character by the name Volt, who was created by Marcelino Lefrandt, an Indonesian musician who is also a reliable comic artist, assisted Aswin Siregar, a talented comic artist as well. To market the presence of this comic, Marcelino Lefrandt and several colleagues created Skylar Comics, an independent comic publisher franchise that produces and publishes this comic. Skylar Comics also gave birth to another comic character named Valentine whose presence was equally welcomed by comic fans. The When this comic was launched presence of Volt is an interesting phenomenon, where when this comic was launched it was able to win over the hearts of comic lovers behind the massive superhero characters which are mostly dominated by Marvel and DC Comic publishers.



So, the statement of this research is how is the shape of the character and concept of the superhero Volt so that it can be accepted by the community?

Based on previous research, several similar articles were found in journal form, for example, the journal Senoaji [1] with the title "*Komik Kontemporer: Akulturasi Budaya pada Penokohan Karakter Komik Volt*". Furthermore, research was made by Musnur [2] with the study "*Analisis Penyajian Karakter Dan Alur Cerita Pada Komik Vulcaman-Z*". Specifically, Senoaji's writing regarding will be used as a reference source and becomes a research gap that the author will conduct.

Research gaps are gaps or problems that have not been answered by previous research or research. If Senoaji's research focuses on the problem of cultural acculturation in the characterization of the Volt comic character, then the research conducted by the author will focus on how the concept of Volt character formation is created. With the explanation above, the writer will examine how the process of the presence of the new superhero Volt starts from the characters, characterizations, stories, and form adaptations. Then what are the factors that make this superhero able to compete with old Indonesian superheroes and the massive presence of manga comics and comics with superheroes from the West.

The purpose of this study is to find out how the superhero image fits with Scott McCloud's superhero character concept whereas it is known the comic character Volt can be well received by society. The importance of this research is related to the relevance of the comic industry where the industry is inseparable from the business economy which involves many parties, from creative actors, publishers, and publications to sellers to comic retailers. So that, the results of this study can become a reference for encouraging the creative economy as one of the solutions for achieving Indonesia's 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The new findings or novelty art from the research are expected to help creators, especially comic artists, to create new creations that can improve the economy of actors and the wider community.

2. Research Methods

This study will use a qualitative method that allows researchers to interpret and describe what the superhero character "Volt" to be like. To obtain research data, researchers conducted data triangulation, namely an effort to understand data through various sources, research subjects, methods, and time [3]. The object to be studied is the concept of

the superhero character “Volt” based on the main characteristics of a good character according to Scott McCloud, namely character psychology, visual characteristics and, expressiveness. The objects or data in this study are data sourced from writings in newspapers or magazines, articles, and journals as well as being primary data. While, secondary data is a literature study in the form of reference books, data that obtained from various supporting literature, such as papers and research articles.

Data was obtained through literature study, direct observation of the superhero comic series “Volt”, and secondary data was used to determine the use of a good superhero concept according to Scott McCloud including character, visual, and expressiveness. The object analysis steps are by reviewing the visual style of the superhero character “Volt”, directly from several editions of the comic by observing the story panels that depict the actions of this character. The visual for the superhero character “Volt” in several editions are selected for a visual depiction that is closest to the author’s vision to analyze the main characteristics of a good character according to Scott McCloud, namely character psychology, visual characteristics, and expressiveness. Furthermore, the visual examples or samples of the superhero Volt character are interpreted based on the main characteristics of a good character according to Scott McCloud. In addition, these characteristics are interpreted based on the author’s insight and knowledge which originates from existing theories.

3. Result And Discussion

3.1. Volt Character Psyche

According to Scott McCloud [4] in his book “*Memahami Komik*” there are three concepts for forming a good superhero, namely character psychology, visuals, and expression. As for understanding a superhero character, comics are pictures and symbols side by side with a certain sequence. In other words, character psychology according to McCloud is the main thing in the formation of a superhero character. If you read McCloud’s concept of psychological character, then Volt’s character form can be analyzed. The Volt character is a work of creativity and imagination and fantasy from a child named Ruben. Ruben is a child who accidentally collides with a divine power that descended to earth thousands of years ago. When it descends to earth, the god’s power is in suspended animation and can only be resurrected by someone whose heart is clean and whose is pure. It

turned out that Ruben had requirements as a person with a clean heart and pure soul. So that he could stimulate the birth of this god's power again.

The naming of the Volt is generally known that the Volt is an internationally accepted unit of measurement for electricity. And as the name implies, Volt means that this superhero has abilities based on electricity. Volt's secret power is the ability to control and project electrical energy at adjustable levels [5]. According to Marcelino, the creator of the Volt comic, he is trying to create a superhero character native to Indonesia who can become a new figure or idol for children. Meanwhile, in terms of the story Volt, although the visual enrichment follows that of Western comics, the stories in this comic are full of educational values and a touch of Indonesian culture. In every story created, there is uniqueness and strength that displays many elements of local culture, making the Volt comic widely discussed and followed by Indonesian comic lovers. Moreover, in each edition, there are many attractions from all the characters that appear, both the heroes and the enemies, which makes this comic interesting and easy to enjoy for all ages.

This fascination with the various symbols of cultural attributes. As revealed by McCloud, superhero characters will intersect with other symbols. Based on Senoaji's research on symbols, it can be seen that the visual attributes used by each character have a specific purpose that supports the character's character and relates it to what he does in the story [5]. Volt in each of his stories will face opposite symbols where it will happen that truth will always triumph over evil. This symbol of victory can be seen in every issue of the Volt story. Where every time there is a problem or a crime, Volt will appear as an intermediary or exterminator of the crime. It was concluded that the psychological character possessed by Volt is a good psyche, wherein he is embedded in the nature of helping and helping and even protecting which are the characteristics of the symbol of a superhero hero.

3.2. Volt's Visual Characteristics

According to Scott McCloud, the second superhero formation concept is visual. What made Volt survive and be in demand, as McCloud said, one of them is the strength of this superhero character. Volt was created with a more dynamic and modern appearance. The adaptation of the Volt character from the previous superhero character can be seen from the changes in line drawing, anatomical structure & body gestures to the perspective form or point of view by comparing Indonesian superhero characters from

several generations. The following is a study on the visuals of superhero characters from the generation of heroes born in the 70s and 90s, namely Gundala and Caroq. Gundala is a fictional character created by Harya Suraminata (Hasmi) in the 70s while Caroq was created by Ahmad Thoriq in the 90s.

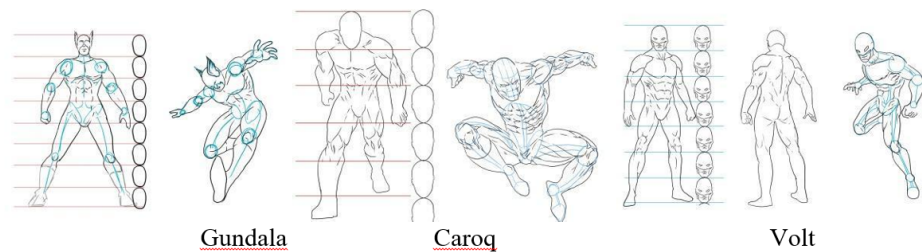


Figure 1: Comparative Study of Gundala, Caroq and Volt Superhero Anatomy.

By directly studying the visual lines, it can be seen that the visual style of the Gundala character is quite simple, in terms of anatomy, structure, gestures, and point of view. The manufacturing technique is done traditionally, namely by drawing directly using a drawing tool with ink on paper. Meanwhile, in the visual study of Caroq's character, anatomy, structure, gestures and a more detailed point of view can be seen with a touch of digital effects on the coloring. Unlike Gundala's character creation, which uses traditional media to create this superhero character, Caroq is created with a digital touch. Digital effects can be seen from the color gradation elements whose coloring is assisted by special software on the computer. In the study of the Volt character, the elements of anatomy, structure, gestures, and taking a more modern point of view from the comic characters of the 90s. The depiction of the Volt character in plain view resembles Western superhero characters, this is a common form of adaptation of similar characters today. The conclusion from Volt's visuals in this comic is based on the lines, colors, and other depictions in accordance with current developments, namely being able to adapt to following Western comic styles.

3.3. Expressive Attitude VOLT

The third superhero formation concept according to Scott McCloud is an expressive attitude or expression of the soul. In Accordance with to Scott McCloud [4], the idea that images can arouse emotional arousal or suit the reader is very important in comic art. Things that are not visible can be depicted both from the panel and within the panel. The emotional design is generally in the form of expression. Various universal expressions such as anger, disgust, fear, joy, sadness, or surprise are the primary expressions.

Based on the opinion that McCloud stated, primary expressions can be mixed with other expressions to create many expressions [4]. In superhero characters, the form of expression is very important to highlight because it is another way to touch the reader's heart to get his emotions. In a study of Volt's facial expressions in each issue, Volt's emotions are revealed when he is angry, sad, or emotional. but that expression appears in the form of a soul expression with its super abilities. Volt's various abilities in dealing with problems or various situations, including Volt can utilize electrical energy to survive (in the form of a shield), and summon lightning whose level can be controlled so that it flies at speeds of up to 1000 km/hour. In terms of physical expression, Volt also has super stamina and strength, a genius intellectual. While Volt's other invisible abilities include having "*prana*" or vision to read and analyze the energy of living things and energy to heal.

4. Conclusion

The results of the discussion above using the superhero model approach according to Scott McCloud show that the formation of the character "Volt" is able to meet the tastes of the Indonesian comic reader market. This is marked by the fulfillment of the 3 elements of a good superhero concept including character, visuals, and expression. First, the psychological character possessed by Volt is a good mentality, in which he is embedded in the nature of helping and helping and even protecting which are the characteristics of the symbol of a superhero hero. Second, based on the visuals of Volt's character in this comic are based on the lines, colors, and other depictions by current developments, namely being able to adapt to following Western comic styles. And finally, the third element in Scott McCloud's superhero concept regarding expression is that 2 elements that make Volt acceptable, namely the expression of the soul through the appearance of a mask that only covers one face from head to nose, then the other two elements of expression based on Volt's strength.

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