

Understanding The Element of Humor in Japanese Strip Comic without Text through Semiotics Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This research is about the style of humor, in the Japanese comic strip without text. I took 5 comic strips or in Japanese called 'yon koma manga' and was published by title Kariage-kun by Masashi Ueda (1992). Through the semiotic communication base on theory of Charles Sanders Peirce, the process of semiosis will guide us to analyze one by one the phenomena that occur in the comic story. The message itself according to Morison (2013: 88) is something that is conveyed to other parties, by designing and using strategies that are in accordance with the social conditions of the community. While the theory of visual communication will be important to analyze how the results of image visualization can convey a message to the reader. Theory of humor will be used when searching for humor elements from the results of visualizing comic images, to find out the punch line of the comic story. The general aim of this study is to find elements of humor in the Japanese comic strip (yonkoma manga) without text, as a form of social communication. The specific purpose of this study is find out how the unsure of semiotic as a representement objects and interpretan used to produce humor in the Japanese strip comic without text on data analysis.

Keywords: yonkoma manga, semiotic, visual communication, humor, Japanese culture.

I. Preface

The development of the comic world in Japan began when Osamu Tezuka (1928-1989) succeeded in popularizing his work entitled *Tetsuwan Atom*. In Indonesia, the name changed to Astro Boy. The popularity of Japanese manga is no longer limited by national borders. People all over the world know manga, and love it.

This research aim is to find out how the unsure of semiotic as a representement objects and interpretan used to produce humor in the Japanese strip comic without text on data analysis. And, I wants to find out some reasons that whether only images without text readers as recipients of communication actions can still find humorous elements in comic strips that are used as data analysis.

Research on manga is not new thing. The researchers are interested in looking at the messages contained in the *manga* display which consists of verbal elements, namely the words in the conversation balloon and non-verbal messages hidden in the pictures. Non-verbal communication consists of many elements, one of which is visual communication. This type of communication is a form of communication that uses images, graphics, symbols, or symbols to convey messages (Mulyana, 2007: 343). In my opinion, comics or *manga* is one of a contemporary culture containing verbal and no verbal communication unsure that has a bring influence the community about the things that they want to convey.

II .Research Metode

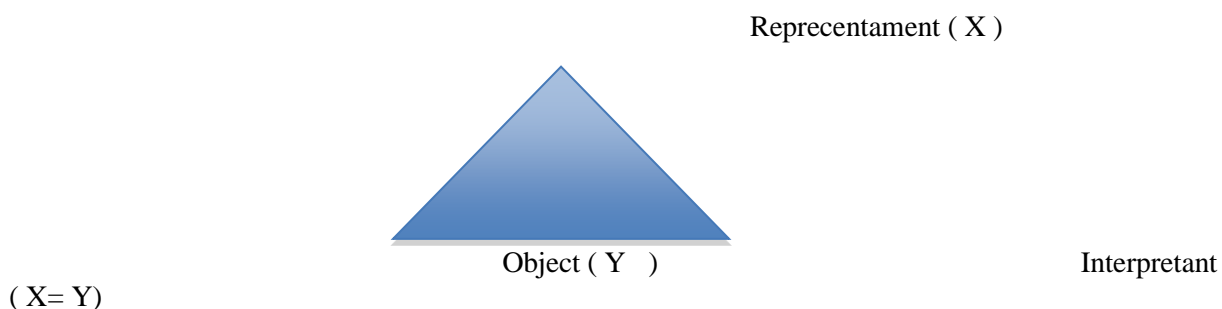
In a research the right method is needed to obtain the appropriate data. In this study the theory of the approach chosen is quantitative theory. Moloeng (20012: 6) says that qualitative research is research that intends to understand the phenomenon of what is experienced by the subject of research such as behavior, perceptions, motivations and actions etc. holistically and descriptively in words and languages in a specific natural context, and by utilizing various scientific method. This means that data collection is needed to be able to dig deeply into what is the purpose of the study. Besides that, I use descriptive

analytical method, to analyze research datas. Sugiyono (2015) said that analytical descriptive method is a method that aims to describe or give an illustration of the object of research examined through samples or data that have been collected and make generally accepted conclusions. The characteristics of analytical descriptive methods can be inferred as having accumulated data only, research rushes to draw images of phenomena, sometimes need to test hypotheses, used interview techniques to collect data, make predictions.

III. Approach Theory

To find the message implied in the comic strip without text, I use the semiotic communication theory one of branch semiotic theory By Peirce (1839-1914), a scientist who gave a large distribution to the development of semiotics. Peirce's concept of signs is often used as a reference to interpret all signs in the world. According to Peirce (Pateda, 2001:44) Signs is something which stand to somebody for something in some respect or capacity. This sign makes us think, communicate with other individuals, and give meaning to what the universe displays. Peirce calls signs as representement, while concepts, objects and ideas and so on are objects. While the meanings (impressions, cogitations, feelings and so on) that we get from a sign are termed interpretant.

Scheme 2.1 Semiotica Peircean Triadic structure of Peirce



The above scheme of Pierce, produces a series of relationships that can continue, meaning that one sign can produce another sign, and so on. So that it forms an unlimited relationship or can be called a semiosis relationship. This semiosis process by Peirce is called significance. According to Peirce the types of signs in the image included in semiotics are icons, index and symbols. Icon is a relationship between a sign and an object that shows similarity. And index is a sign that indicates a natural relationship between a sign and signifier that is causal or a sign that leads directly to reality. Symbol is the sign that the repress refers to a particular object.

Communication semiotics itself is emphasizes the theory of sign production, one of which assumes six factors in communication (sender, receiver, message, channel and reference). While significance semiotics puts pressure on sign theory and its understanding in a particular context (Sobur, 2004: 15).

To get a deeper understanding the culture behind the story of strip comic coming from Japan, I need the theory which have ability to be a bridge to give me understanding about Intercultural communication. This theory takes place in many different situations, which range from the variety of interactions between people who share the same dominant culture, but have different subcultures and subgroups .

Basic Assumptions for the Emergence of Intercultural Communication are , (1) Barriers to intercultural communication often appear in the form of differences in perceptions of cultural norms, patterns - patterns of thinking, cultural structures, and cultural systems . (2)The content and meaning of the form of communication are two things that cannot be separated, what is needed is a relationship between communicators. (3)different styles of communication (Sihabudin, 2013:12-13).

Meanwhile, Because comics are a form of visualization of phenomenon that occur in the community, the visual communication theory is needed to obtain meaning from the representation of

illustrations in Japanese comics that become research data. Visual Communication which consists of two morphemes namely visual and communication can be interpreted as an image containing a message. According to Kincaid (in Cangara 2007,20) defines communication as follows "Communication is a process where two or more people form or exchange information with each other, which in turn will arrived at deep mutual understanding. This theory is support by Shannon dan weaver (in Cangara, 2007, 20) that communication is conveying a message (stimulus) that can be either verbal or nonverbal formed through a process involving two people or more. Where each other has a role in making messages, changing content and meaning, respond to these messages / stimuli. With the purpose of the message recipient (communicant) can receive signals or messages sent by message sender (communicator) . Visual itself is communication using visual language, where the basic elements of visual language are everything that can seen and can be used to convey meaning, meant, or message.

For the humor theory the author uses the humor theory from Raskin in Nomura (1995). According to Raskin in Nomura (1995: 62-63) said that to generate humor elements in a story requires one of the following 2 factors, namely (1) the story is built in two frames in part or all of the story. (2) There are 2 frame contradictions. The description of the frame is seen in the table below.

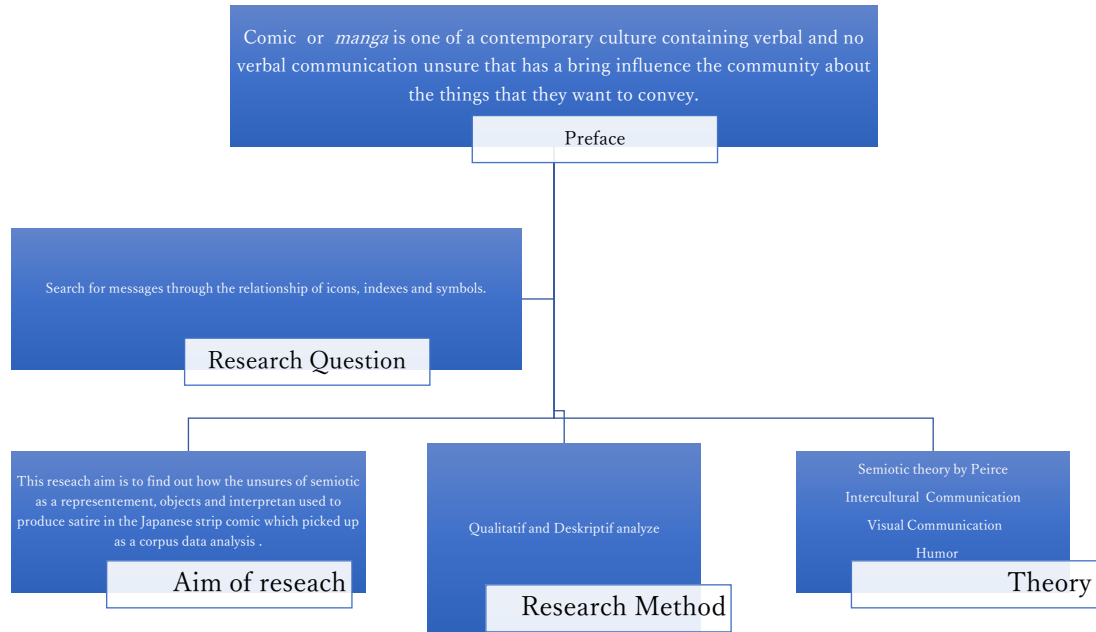
Table 2.2 Frame Contradiction in Humor

冗談で実際に起こる状態／冗談で呼び起こされた状態 <i>jyoudan de jissai ni okoru jyoutai / jyoudan de yobiokosareta jyoutai.</i> The situation really happened or was caused by jokes.		
現実／非現実 <i>Genjitsu/Higenjitsu</i> Real OR Not	正常／異常 <i>Seijyou/Ijyou</i> Normal/ Abnormal	あり得る／あり得な <i>arieru / arienai</i> May be/ Not
善／悪 <i>Zen / Aku</i> Good/Bad 生／死 <i>Sei/Shi</i> Live / Death 猥褻／猥褻ではない <i>Waisetsu/Waisetsu dewanai</i> Obscenity/Not 金持ち／貧乏 <i>Kanemochi/Bimbou</i> Rich / Poor 身分が高い／身分が低い <i>Mibun ga takai/Mibun ga hikui</i> High Status / Low Status		

(Raskin in Nomura Masaaki ,1995:63)

Before analyzing the data the author will first describe this research chart. Research data will be analyzed through a framework of thinking as below.

Chart 2.2 Research Mapping



IV. Data Analysis

Before analyzing the data, I will introduce the main comic strip characters who will be used as research data. The main character named Kariage-kun, an employee of a private company, who has an uncaring and ignorant nature.

Data 1

Kariage-kun

By : Masashi Ueda

Title: *Ana ake*

'Making a hole'

(3)

(1)



(4)

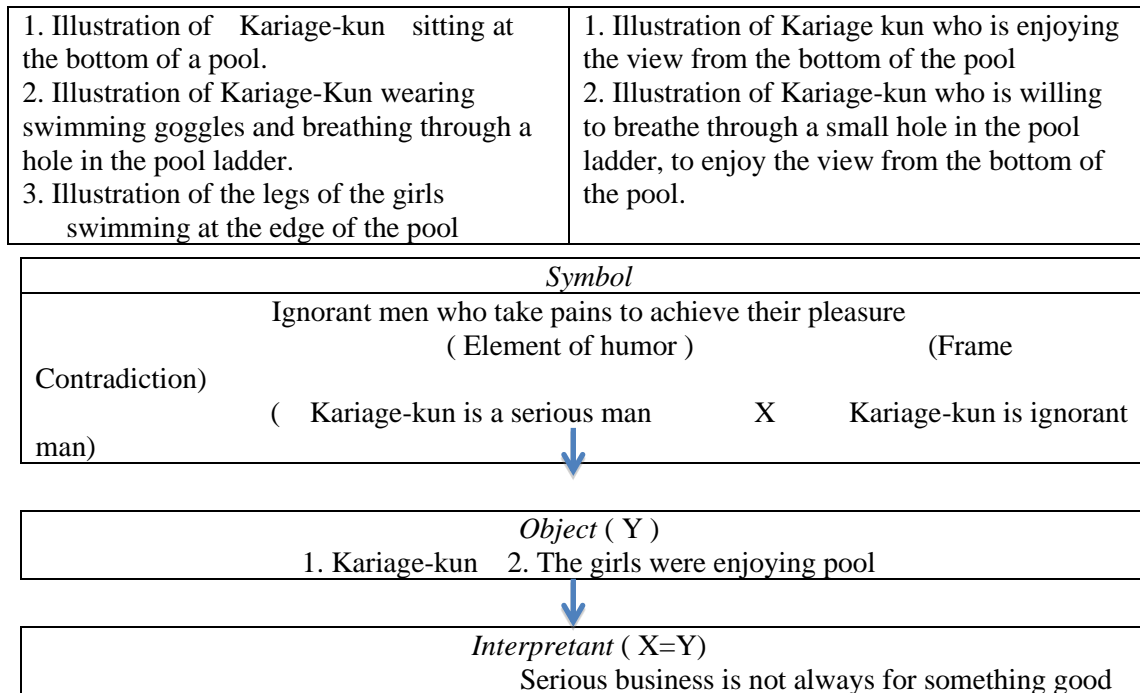
(2)

Panel 3 Swimming pool has been filled with water and is starting to be crowded by visitors.	Panel 1 Kariage is making a hole at night
Panel 4 Finally we know what the hole was made for	Panel 2 That night apparently he was making a hole in the stairs in the pool. At that time the pool was not filled with water.

To be able to see clearly the semiotic process called *semiosis*, please note the table below:

Table 3.1 Semiosis Process of the Comic Strip Process "Ana ake"

<i>Representament</i>	
Icon	Index
<p>Panel 1</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Illustration of Kariage-kun 2. Illustration of a drill 3. Illustration of iron pole 4. Illustration of night time 	<p>Panel 1</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Illustration of how serious Kariage-kun made a hole at night time. 2. Illustration of noise by using onomatopoeia 'kyuinggg', represent sound that the drill mark collides with iron.
<p>Panel 2</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Illustration of Kariage-kun 2. Illustration of a drill 3. Illustration of ladder on swimming pool 	<p>Panel 2</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Illustration of how serious Kariage-kun made a hole at night time 2. Illustration of noise by using onomatopoeia 'kyuinggg', represent sound that the drill mark collides with swimming pool ladder.
<p>Panel 3</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Illustration of swimming pool full of teen age girls. 2. Illustration of swimming pool full of water 3. Illustration of swimming poll umbrella 4. Illustration of people as a shadow behind the teenage girls. 	<p>Panel 3</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Illustration of young girls who were happy to enjoy the pool. 2. Illustration of the other visitor fulfill the pool's area.
Penel 4	Panel 4



The icon and index build a good relationship, and made the formation of visual data communication 1, easy to determine the symbol. But because of the emergence of the element of humor, contradictions arise in the frame of the story, this is what causes the meaning of the interpretant not to be as expected. Sihabudin (2013,13-14) said that barriers to intercultural communication often appear in the form of differences in perceptions of cultural norms, patterns - patterns of thinking, cultural structures, and cultural systems . But on this research data, the problem of differences in perceptions of cultural norm do not appear. This is due to what is told is the unique nature of Kariage-kun, and not telling about the cultural differences. Besides that the simple storyline makes the pun line from the element of humor easy to understand.

Data 2

Kariage-kun

By : Masashi Ueda

Title: *Mizu Fuzoku*

‘Lack of Water ‘



<p>Panel 3 Kariage-kun boarded the train going somewhere while still carrying water in a bucket</p>	<p>Panel 1 Kariage-kun clean his room</p>
<p>Panel 4 The Kariage kun drains dirty water from the bucket he carries, in to a big dam.</p>	<p>Panel 2 When he finished he looked at the water in the bucket, and thought of something.</p>

To explain the semiotics process called *semiosis*, the author will use the table as below.

Table 3.2 Semiosis Process Strip Comic Process "Mizu Busoku"

<i>Representament</i>	
Icon	Index
<p>Panel 1</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Illustration of Kariage-kun 2. Illustration of shiny room 3. Illustration of shiny window 4. Illustration of the mop being squeezed 5. Illustration of a bucket of water 	<p>Panel 1</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Illustration of Kariage -kun seriously squeezed the mop. 2. Illustration of a clean shiny room that has been cleaned perfectly by Kariage-kun.
<p>Panel 2</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Illustration of Kariage-kun 2. Illustration of shiny room 3. Illustration of shiny window 3. Illustration the mop hold by Kariage-kun 4. Illustration a bucket of water 	<p>Panel 2</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Illustration of Kariage-kun holding the bucket of water 2. Illustration of Kariage-kun seriously staring at the water on the bucket
<p>Panel 3</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Illustration of Kariage-kun 2. Illustration of a bucket of water 3. Illustration of situation on the train 4. Illustration of many people sitting down 5. Illustration of man beside Kariage-kun 	<p>Panel 3</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Illustration of Kariage-kun seriously carying the bucket of water in the train 2. Illustration of a man beside Kariage-kun who's stare continuously at the bucket of water that carrying by Kariage – kun, with question in his head.
<p>Penel 4</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Illustration of Kariage-kun 2. Illustration of big dam 3. Illustration of the name of the dam 4. Illustration of full of water dam 	<p>Panel 4</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Illustration of Kariage-kun drains dirty water from the bucket he carries, in to a big dam. 2. Illustration of a dam full of water, and when the wind blows water it ripples by issuing a sound represented by an onomatopoeia "za-"

<i>Symbol</i>	
<p>. A man who thinks of a small problem with a high level of seriousness (Element of humor)</p>	<p>(Frame</p>
<p>Contradiction) (Kariage-kun is ignorant man X Kariagen-kun cares about the problem of lack of water)</p>	

<i>Object (Y)</i>
<p>1. Kariage-kun 2 Dirty water 3 Big dam</p>

Interpretant (X=Y)

Kariage kun is a person who is ignorant but has a concern for the environment to the extent that it does not need to be done.

Visual communication in the data above shows a story character who has a unique character, the person who is ignorant but cares about the environment to the extent that it does not need to be done. In this data there were no cases of cultural differences which resulted in misinterpreting the content of the story.

Data 3
Kariage-kun
Works: Masashi Ueda
Title: *Soushikigaeri*
Coming home from the last offices



Panel 1
 Kariage-kun and his colleague just attended a last offices, and are now walking back to their homes. Kariage's colleague still hold beads prayer after praying.

Panel 2
 When Kariage-kun's colleague entered his house, the person inside the house showered him with salt powder.

Panel 3
 And because kariage-kun live alone, when he entered the house...

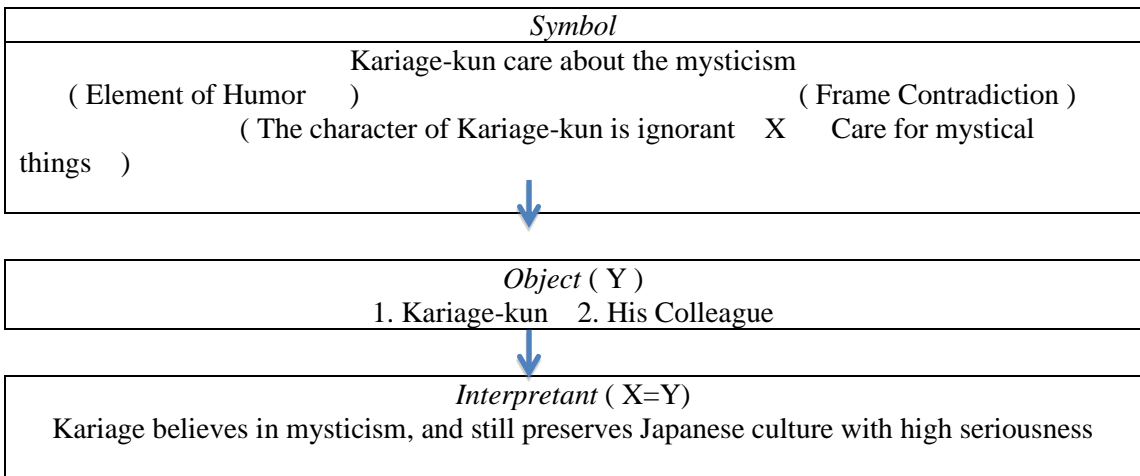
Panel 4
 He showered himself with salt that had been prepared beforehand by placing a salt container above the entrance, and constantly pulling the rope that had been connected with the salt container.

The analysis of semiosis process, as in the table below.

Table 3.3 Semiosis Process Strip Comic Process "*Soushikigaeri*"

<i>Representament</i>	
Icon	Index
<p>Panel 1</p> <p>1. Illustration of Kariage-kun and his colleague.</p> <p>2. Illustration of Japanese special tent of</p>	<p>Panel 1</p> <p>1. Illustration of Kariage-kun and his colleague walking after praying at</p>

<p>pre-burial ceremony for the deceased. 3. Illustration of flower arrangement. 4. Illustration of shadow of some people behind .Kariage-kun and his colleague.</p>	<p>pre-burial ceremony for the deceased.. 2. Illustration of Kariage-kun colleague still hole the beads prayer after attend in pre-burial ceremony for the deceased. 3. Illustration of shadow of some people near the tent of ceremony that suppose to be the related people to the deceased.</p>
<p>Panel 2 1. Illustration of Kariage’s colleague entering his home 2. Illustration of kariage’s colleague got showered by something like powder 3. Illustration of somebodys at Kariage’s colleague showered him by something like powder. 4. Illustration of ‘genkan’, or entrance area at house.</p>	<p>Panel 2 1. Illustration of Kariage’s colleague got showered by something like powder when he entered his house, but he not got mad. 2. Illustration of somebody’s at Kariage’s colleague’s house who was showered him by something like powder. 3. Illustration of door that still open, when Kariage’s friend entering his house.</p>
<p>Panel 3 1. Illustration of Kariage-kun standing in front of the door. 2. Illustration of Kariage-kun hold door’s knob.</p>	<p>Panel 3 1. Illustration of kariage –kun coming home and he trying to open his house’s door.</p>
<p>Panel 4 1. Illustration of kariage-kun open the door 2. Illustration of Kariage kun were showered by something like powder 3. Illustration of container dropped something like powder. 4. Illustration of a rope that extends from the door handle to the upper door frame.</p>	<p>Panel 4 1. Illustration of Kariage-kun who’s open the door, and automatically something like powder showered him from above the entrance</p>



In research data above the element of humor that appears is very closely related to Japanese culture. In Japan there is a belief that after the ceremony before the funeral, when we go home before entering the body needs to be cleaned by salt so that the sorrow does not come into the house.

According to Koentjaraningrat (1992, 262), water and fire are important parts of the offerings to the gods. For this reason, the Japanese people offer water for a pilgrimage or expulsion of reinforcements. While salt is an object that is considered sacred, become part of everyday life, because it is considered effective in cleaning dirt and keeping away from the influence of evil spirits. Salt is also something that is trusted has the power to purify an object from impurities (Hartz 2009, 86).

If we do not understand Japanese culture, the element of humor from the data above will not be easy to capture. The cultural elements in the comic strip without the text above are (1) a special tent for the pre-burial ceremony for the deceased (2) prayer beads, used during the prayer ceremony to deliver the spirits of the deceased (3) cleanse themselves with salt before entering the house after returning from the ceremony to deliver the dead, so that grief does not enter the house.

In the table 3.3 above, in the Icon column and index column which is a phrase formed from the illustration of comic strip data 3, it appears there is no mention of salt, to purify ourselves when returning from the pre-burial ceremony. This happened because from the illustration of the strip comic itself (data 3) we could not catch what was thrown to the people who had just returned from the ceremony before the burial, because it was only like a powder. Sihabudin (2013, 12-13) said that, barriers to intercultural communication often appear in the form of differences in perceptions of cultural norms, patterns - patterns of thinking, cultural structures, and cultural systems . This statement can explain why the existence of salt in the comic strip above, can not be immediately understood, except by people who know Japanese culture. But the element of humor displayed by Kariage-kun, who made his own tricks to bathe himself with salt because he lives alone, has provided an understanding of the humorous aspects. Kariage kun who was very ignorant turned out to be very serious about thinking mystical things. I conclude that this section has smoothed back communication through good visuals between comic writers and readers.

Data 4

Kariage- kun

By : Masaki Ueda

Title: ' Sou ' Line '



<p>Panel 3 Kariage-kun is watching TV showing the Japanese prime minister.</p>	<p>Panel 1 Kariage- kun saw a fortune teller checking a woman's hand line to predict her fate.</p>
<p>Panel 4 Kariage-kun then predicts the PM's fortune through his neckline.</p>	<p>Panel 2 Kariage -kun saw a fortune teller checking a person's face line to predict the fate of that person.</p>

The semiosis process, as in the table below.

Table 3.4 Semiosis Process in Strip Comic "Sou "

<i>Representament</i>	
Icon	Index
<p>Panel 1</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Illustration of Kariage-kun 2. Illustration of a fortune teller 3. illustration of a girl who was fortune-telling through her hand 4. Illustration of a people shadow 5. Kanji writing 「手相」 'Tesou' or 'hand line' 	<p>Panel 1</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Illustration of Kariage-kun who was seriously paying attention to a hand-line fortune teller 2. Illustration of a women who wants to know about her fate from the hand line. 3. Illustration of a fortune teller who was reading a women fate from her hand line.
<p>Panel 2</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Illustration of Kariage-kun 2. Illustration of a fortune teller 3. Illustration of a man who was fortune telling through his face line. 	<p>Panel 2</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Illustration of Kariage-kun who was seriously paying attention to a face line fortune teller. 2. Illustration of a man who wants to know

4.Kanji Writing 「人相」 'Ninsou' or 'face line'	about his fate from the face line. 3. Illustration of a fortune teller who was reading a man fate from his face line.
Panel 3 1.Illustration of Kariage-kun 2. Illustration of a television 3. Illustration of Japan Prime Minister 4. Kanji writing 「首相」 'shushou' or 'Prime minister'	Panel 3 1. Illustration of kariage-kun who was seriously paying attention to TV's monitor showing Japanese Prime Minister. 2. Illustration of Prime Minister who is speaking about something on the TV.
Panel 4 1. Illustration of Kariage -kun 2. Illustration of magnifying glass 3. Illustration of Japanese PM neck	Panel 4 1. Illustration of Kariage-kun hold a magnifying glass and try to fortune teller Japanese PM for his neck line.

<i>Symbol</i>	
Kariage kun likes to explore things that are not necessary (Element of humor)	(Frame Contradintion)
(Kariage-kun have interest in fortune teller	X Kariage-kun have interest to explore kanji)

<i>Object (Y)</i>		
1. Kariage -kun	2 Fortune Teller	3. Similar kanji

<i>Interpretant (X=Y)</i>	
Kariage-kun wants to know whether the fate of a PM can be seen from his neckline	

In the fourth data, story content is related to Japanese letters, which is certainly part of Japanese culture. Of course for those who do not understand Kanji it is rather difficult to capture humorous elements from this comic strip.

According to Ueda (2013: 34) says that the type of forecast through lines from Asian Area is face Line, hand line, foot sole line, finger Print line, *Kuroku* line, grave yard line, family line, letter phase (written fortune telling), line of Sword, seal phase, first and last name judgment, feng Shui, ink color. As we see fortune teller is never use neck line to tell about the fate.

Kariage-kun tried to read the stroke of the prime minister because the kanji for the prime minister in Japanese was in the form of 「首相」、consisting of 2 kanji namely 「首」 'kubi' or 'neck' and 「相」 'sou' which according to kojien's dictionary online means (1). 外見特に人の *gaiken tokuni hito no* 'means'. external appearance, especially humans (2) 向かい合う関係、いっしょに、互いに *mukaiaikankei, isshoni, tagai ni* 'means ' face to face, together, mutually '. One of the kanji used in the prime minister's words, 「相」 is also used for 「手相」 '*tesou* ' which means ' hand line ' and 「人相」 '*ninsou* ' or ' face line '. Because of that reason, Kariage draws his own conclusion that the kanji in the form of 「首相」 because it consists of 「首」 which means the neck 「相」 and 'sou' which are also used on the hand line and face line, then 「首相」 means neckline . So immediately he brought a magnifying glass to observe the prime minister's neck.

V. Conclusion

After analyzing 4 comic strip data entitled Kariage-kun, the author concluded that even though comic strips without text, humorous elements can still be found easily. Especially for those who already know the ignorant Kariage-kun character, don't care about the surroundings, but are serious about doing unnecessary things. But when it comes to Japanese culture, the humor factor will be found after a little thought first. This does not happen if the understanding of Japanese culture has been mastered by readers of the above work. Semiotic analysis through icons, indexes and symbols makes it easy to get objects so that the interpretation stage does not fail.

For further research, it can be developed in the direction of what percentage of readers can understand the whole of the comic story without text, whether they have experience with Japanese culture or not.

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