

SATIRE HUMOR IN THE CHILDREN'S CARTOON SERIES SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS BY STEPHEN HILLENBURG

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ABSTRACT

The title of this is satirical humor in the children cartoon series Spongebob Squarepants. The purpose of this study is to show and explain the scenes containing satirical humor in this cartoon that has been shown to many underage audiences who do not understand what the humor means. In this study, researchers used a descriptive qualitative method and used an objective approach by focusing on the object itself, namely "Spongebob Squarepants" cartoon. Then in collecting data, the researcher uses the listening technique in which the author has watched and listened to this cartoon repeatedly so as to get what will be presented in this study. The results of this study show several scenes containing satirical humor in the Spongebob Squarepants cartoon, which are shown to underage audiences and also explain the depiction of the humor that has been found.

Keywords: Satirical Humor, Cartoon, Spongebob Squarepants

INTRODUCTION

Parents, of course, have different ways of educating their children in ways that are best for their children. One way to educate children is by providing education through children's literature education. In addition to using children's literature as education, children's literature can also be entertainment for children so that children will not be bored with what they are learning. The purpose of children's literature itself is to shape children's personalities from an early age so that parents can provide education to their children either through watching or reading. In everyday life it is not uncommon to find a lot of cartoons that appear on television layers or through other gadgets. As parents, of course, we must know what they are watching or reading, whether it is appropriate for their age or not because children must see something according to their age.

Cartoon animation is one of the ways used by parents to entertain and provide education for their children. In cartoons themselves there are various unique depictions so that children are able to

capture the material more easily and make children more interested in learning. *Secara umum film sangat baik dalam menjelaskan suatu proses dan dapat menjelaskan suatu keterampilan dalam Bahasa Indonesia* (Munadi, 2008, p. 117). Thus cartoons have a role that is expected to improve children's thinking skills and abilities. From this, many parents have unconsciously educated their children with literature from an early age. Most children can grasp new things faster than adults even if only by looking. Nowadays, watching cartoons to children has become a common thing done by parents so that their children do not fuss and stay calm while their parents are doing activities. However, cartoons themselves are now not only intended for children, there are also cartoons intended for adults such as Futurama, Family Guy, Rick and Morty, Sausage Party, and others.

In 1999, the Spongebob Squarepants cartoon appeared with its first episode entitled "Help Wanted" from this first episode many people were interested in one of the cartoons produced by Nickelodeon. The Spongebob Squarepants cartoon created by Stephen Hillenburg (1961-2018) has several unique characters that have their own characteristics where the main character in this cartoon is of course Spongebob Squarepants himself. Spongebob Squarepants is arguably a very popular cartoon, perhaps until now this cartoon is still popular among all ages. This cartoon first aired in Indonesia in 2004, when this cartoon aired many viewers felt entertained by this cartoon from children, teenagers to adults. The majority of this cartoon audience is of course children because this cartoon is intended for children. This cartoon is still airing on Indonesian television and can still entertain its audience. This cartoon has an entertaining story that both children and adults can enjoy. However, children may only watch this cartoon as a spectacle but adults are able to see that this cartoon is not just a spectacle, but has a scene where in this cartoon there is a lot of satirical humor that may only be understood by adults.

This Spongebob Squarepants cartoon itself tells about the daily life of the main character, Spongebob Squarepants, who has a witty and jolly nature. Spongebob himself has two friends and neighbors named Patrick Star who is cheerful and very innocent, then Squidward Tentacles the grumbling octopus and art connoisseur. Not forgetting to also present some side characters, namely Eugene Krabs the crab who likes money, Sandy Cheeks the smart squirrel from Texas, Sheldon J. Plankton the small but smart thief, and many other characters. In some episodes of the cartoon series "Spongebob Squarepants" there are one or two satirical humor tucked in there that even small children may not know about the humor presented or shown. Although this is often seen and watched by parents, this is not a problem because the important thing is that their children can be entertained by the series and they will provide direction if there is something that their children cannot understand.

This has been explained in a study conducted by Ezzel entitled "Humor and Satire on Contemporary Television" (2016) with a discourse analysis approach to find out the meaning of satire humor in cartoons. *Humor satire membutuhkan kepekaan konteks untuk mengetahui makna kritikan karena di dalamnya terdapat proses kognitif untuk memberikan sasaran yang tepat* (Ezell, 2016). *Satire adalah gaya bahasa yang dipakai dalam kesusastraan untuk menyatakan sindiran atau ejekan terhadap suatu keadaan atau seseorang* (Zoebazary, 2010). Therefore, the Spongebob cartoon itself actually has some satirical humor that satirizes and criticizes something that children themselves cannot understand.

DATA SOURCE

This research uses a children's cartoon series entitled *Spongebob Squarepants* by Stephen Hillenburg taken from season 9 episodes 1-8 and season 10 episodes 1-20. The author focuses on the satirical humor displayed by the characters in this *Spongebob Squarepants* cartoon.

METHODS

The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative method, *dalam penelitian yang bersifat deskriptif, data yang dianalisis berupa kata-kata, kalimat-kalimat, konsep-konsep dan bukan angka, sehingga laporan berisi kutipan-kutipan untuk memberi gambaran penyajian laporan tersebut*, Moeleng (in Nurhayati, Sukmawaty, & Hestiana, 2021, p. 3). Descriptive data referred to in this study are in the form of words, sentences or paragraphs. This descriptive method itself is carried out to describe how the behavior of several characters who are doing satirical humor in this cartoon. This will be described based on the scenes that the characters play in Stephen Hillenburg's *Spongebob Squarepants* cartoon.

The approach that the author uses in this research is an objective *pendekatan objektif merupakan pendekatan yang terpenting sebab apapun yang dilakukan pada dasarnya bertumpu atas karya sastra itu sendiri* (Ratna, 2004, p. 73). The literary work in question here is the *Spongebob Squarepants* cartoon itself.

The data collection technique used is the listening technique. *Teknik simak merupakan proses pengumpulan data setelah melakukan penyimakan data penggunaan bahasa* Sudayanto in (Eky, Syahril, & Diana, 2020). Note technique is an advanced technique that is carried out when applying the listening method with the advanced techniques above, thus the author collects data from the *Spongebob Squarepants* cartoon by watching and listening repeatedly until he understands which scenes have elements of satirical humor then the author records the data. The author limits the data collection to Season 9 episodes 01-08 and Season 10 episodes 01-20 of this cartoon series only.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Plot

Plot is a series in a story that relates to events and cause and effect. This is in line with Stanton's opinion that *alur adalah cerita yang mengandung rangkaian peristiwa, tetapi setiap peristiwa hanya berhubungan sebab-akibat, dengan peristiwa yang satu menyebabkan atau menyebabkan terjadinya peristiwa yang lain* (Nurdiyantoro, 1995, p. 113).

Stanton and Kenny in (Nurdiyantoro, 2015, p. 167) suggest that *alur adalah cerita yang berisi urutan kejadian, namun setiap kejadian itu hanya dihubungkan secara sebab akibat, peristiwa yang disebabkan atau menyebabkan terjadinya peristiwa lain*.

Scenes

A scene is a short segment that can show an action performed by a character. *Adegan adalah salah satu segmen pendek dari keseluruhan cerita yang memperlihatkan satu aksi berkesinambungan yang diikat oleh ruang, waktu, isi (cerita), tema, karakter atau motif. Satu adegan umumnya terdiri dari beberapa shoot yang saling berhubungan* (Pratista, 2008, pp. 29–30).

Adegan merupakan bagian dari babak, sebuah adegan hanya menggambarkan satu suasana, pergantian adegan tidak selalu disertai dengan pergantian setting atau latar, satu babak dapat terdiri atas beberapa adegan (Wiyanto, 2002, p. 9). Therefore, this research focuses on the plot and scenes in Stephen Hillenburg's *Spongebob Squarepants* cartoon to analyze the satirical humor in the *Spongebob Squarepants* children's cartoon series.

Satire Humor

Humor satire yang terdapat dalam kartun dibuat dengan disruptsi logika berpikir (Dadlez, 2011). So that the satire humor in cartoons has continuity in the logic of thinking which for minors is still less able to understand the logic of thinking contained in the satire humor conveyed. In addition, *satire merupakan gaya bahasa yang digunakan untuk menertawakan atau menolak sesuatu* (Gilbert, 2015). Which is a style of language to laugh at and in another sense criticize something using humor. So that satire humor is more likely to be critical but can still make people laugh and it is still allowed to be appropriate.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, researchers used Stephen Hillenburg's *Spongebob Squarepants* cartoon as the object of research with a focus on satirical humor contained in scenes in this cartoon series, which may not be understood by minors, and explained why it could be called satirical humor.

Data 1



Figure 1. *Spongebob Squarepants* Season 9 Episode 01 (03.37)

In this scene, Spongebob and Patrick want to join and want to do "Extreme Sports" activities, but one of the characters named Johny Krill seems to belittle and make fun of Spongebob and Patrick even though the things they did before were already extreme. But actually this character is showing that stupid people can be easily fooled so easily, this is like fooling a new employee who doesn't know anything.

Data 2

Figure 2. Spongebob Squarepants Season 9 Episode 03 (04.59)

In this scene Mr. Krabs is seen with his eyes widening seeing a piece of money that fell on the road even though at that time he was helping a grandmother cross and carry her luggage. After that, the money that fell was even swept away by the wind and with no shame, Mr. Krabs returned the bag and left the grandmother in the middle of the road. Based on this, it can be seen that Mr. Krabs is more concerned with money than everything, this is like criticizing that humans can actually be blinded by money alone and can sacrifice something that is actually more important than money.

Data 3

Figure 3. Spongebob Squarepants Season 9 Episode 06

In this scene, it can be seen that Squidward who turned into a small child and was being carried by Spongebob looked very helpless like a small baby who was only a few months old, then in front of Spongebob, Mr. Krabs was seen scolding the two employees for being late and he told Spongebob and Squidward to work without caring about Squidward's condition. Thus it is clear that Mr. Krabs will do anything to get money even in any way, this certainly greatly illustrates that someone can boldly do anything to get what he wants even by exploiting someone or anything.

Data 4

Figure 4. Spongebob Squarepants Season 10 Episode 02 (03.06)

In this scene, Squidward is seen holding back a sneeze due to inhaling pepper powder, he did this with the aim of driving away his next-door neighbor, Spongebob. The scene might make small children laugh because of Squidward's expression, but in this scene it can be said that Squidward is very cynical and does not like Spongebob so he wants to get rid of Spongebob by any means. This illustrates someone who is very individualistic and does not like his neighbor even though his neighbor has always done good things to him. This is certainly not uncommon in real life, especially in Indonesia, sometimes we do good to our neighbors but our neighbors misunderstand what we do and judge us badly even though our own intentions are good.

Data 5



Figure 5. Spongebob Squarepants Season 10 Episode 04 (02.50)

In this scene, Spongebob is seen imitating Patrick with the intention of mocking Patrick who always looks stupid and slow in thinking, but because Patrick is stupid he is unable to understand the meaning of Spongebob's actions. Based on this, it illustrates that Patrick is a very stupid figure even though he is being mocked by others and is a person who is very easy to fool also sometimes it will harm himself cause of his action.

Data 6



Figure 6. Spongebob Squarepants Season 10 Episode 12 (02.08)

This scene shows a character named Plankton taking out a sophisticated tool that he will use to steal Mr. Krab's secret Krabby Patty recipe. Plankton's actions are clearly a crime but he himself is a genius who is able to make a lot of sophisticated equipment just to fulfill his goal of stealing a recipe. Based on this, it implies that geniuses are able to make everything but not all the things they make are created for the good of many people but can be a way to commit crimes.

Data 7

Figure 7. Spongebob Squarepants Season 10 Episode 15 (07.40)

In this scene, two characters, Sandy and Squidward, are seen here arguing about the match that Spongebob and Patrick had done before. Sandy was annoyed with Squidward for making the rules as he pleased and felt that the rules made by Squidward were not the real rules and seemed far-fetched. The rules that have been made by Squidward have caused Spongebob and Patrick to experience very heavy injuries. This illustrates that a leader who likes to make rules arbitrarily without thinking about the consequences of what will happen to his followers also does not hesitate to make his followers tormented by the rules he has made, and this is not uncommon in everyday life in real life.

Data 8

Figure 8. Spongebob Squarepants Season 9 Episode 07 (5.20)

This scene shows Squidward and a customer reading a book, but the book is Spongebob's diary. They both read the book without Spongebob's knowledge which can be said to be very disrespectful because it has violated the privacy rights of others and even worse they laugh at what Spongebob wrote in his diary. This illustrates someone who does not care about other people's privacy rights and makes it a joke that is very inappropriate to be imitated by anyone. The actions taken are not uncommon in everyday life, such as close friends who have the heart to leak their friends' secrets that should not be told to others.

Data 9



Figure 9. Spongebob Squarepants Season 9 Episode 03 (8.32)

In this scene shows Patrick wearing a hero costume pinching the face of a customer who wants to eat at Krusty Krab, Patrick did this because he thought the two customers were criminals. This of course made the two customers angry and made them lose their appetite because of Patrick's arbitrary actions and did not know ethics and manners. The action that has been done illustrates like a person who has authority or power who does arbitrary things because he thinks that he is a powerful person so he can/can do anything according to his heart's desire without paying attention to any aspect.

Data 10



Figure 10. Spongebob Squarepants Season 10 Episode 17 (2.06)

In this scene shows Mr. Krabs who opens the back of his shirt to reveal his back which reads "free" which means "Bebas". In this scene, Mr. Krabs is actually lifting Patrick who has a free ice cream coupon card using a carrier, it is clear that Mr. Krabs is very interested in things that smell "free" so he is willing to do anything, he does this because it is based on his miserly nature who thinks that something "free" is good for him. This illustrates that someone is always easily blinded by something that smells free and feels that everything that is free is good for him, but this is of course wrong because not always what is "free" is good for him, it can have a bad impact on him and others.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the data that has been analyzed, it can be concluded that season 9 episodes 1-8 and season 10 episodes 1-20 have one or two satirical humor inserted in several stories contained in the episodes mentioned. The satirical humor contained here tends to describe situations that often occur in real life, for example in the scene in data 7, the data describes a leader who does not rarely act like that, then in 6, namely a genius who has an evil brain, which in today's world there are many people with brains who can be said to be very smart and have a lot of expertise, instead they use it to do something bad. So actually the Spongebob cartoon contains a lot of criticism that is

implicitly conveyed by the creator, Stephen Hilleburg, but he is able to make the criticism into a humor that can be accepted by the public through a cartoon series that is famous throughout the world. The researcher also hopes that this research can provide some new insights for future researchers, especially for students who choose to major in literature.

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