

Digital Storytelling as a Communication Strategy of Virtual Peasant's Resistance

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Abstract

The high number of land conflicts will make farmers continue to carry out resistance movements. Now along with the development of technology, the activists of the peasant resistance movement use the internet to fight. This is what activists do. They help STTB Farmers (Serikat Tani Telukjambe Bersatu) in channeling their aspirations to reclaim land rights that have been snatched away by a corporation. The activist uploaded videos of the act of burying the STTB Farmer's self, which is a form of resistance to the dominant narrative. This activity of documenting and uploading it to an internet channel is called digital storytelling. The purpose of this study was to analyze digital storytelling which was used as a communication strategy for the STTB virtual farmer resistance. This research uses CMC (Computer Mediated Communication) theory with digital storytelling analysis. The results showed that there were a number of digital storytelling elements in the STTB farmer's self-burying video, namely Point of View, The Gift of Your Voice, and The Power of The Soundtrack. Even though this video of the STTB farmer's self-burying is made and presented in a simple way, it is precisely the simplicity that is its strength. This video is made naturally without any made-up scenes by the characters in this video, namely farmers and land conflict activists.

Keywords: *Digital Storytelling, Digital Era, Communication Strategy, Virtual Peasant Movement*

1. INTRODUCTION

As one of the most important things in human life, the existence of land needs to be given legal certainty for its rights holders, namely through legal land registration activities (Indrawati 2022). The illegality of the status of a land can trigger the birth of land conflicts, which in the next stage can lead to a peasant resistance movement (Pratiwi 2022).

Peasant's resistance movement in Indonesia will continue to occur along with the high number of land conflicts. Based on data from The Agrarian Reform Consortium (KPA), it was noted that the number of land conflicts in Indonesia has fluctuated. The KPA noted that throughout 2021 there were at least 207 land conflicts in Indonesia

(KPA 2021). This condition includes an ironic condition where in 2021 Indonesia is still hit by Covid-19.

One of the peasant resistance movements that was able to capture the attention of the national and international media was the resistance movement carried out by the United Serikat Tani Telukjambe Bersatu (STTB). STTB fights against claims made by PT Pertiwi Lestari on land that has been occupied by farmers. As a result, farmers have to be evicted from the land they have lived in for decades (Pratiwi et.al 2019 and 2020). The resistance movement carried out by STTB can be categorized as an extreme resistance movement. STTB farmers dared to confront heavy soil dredging equipment by using their bodies or bodies as shields. They are willing to take a walk of approximately 70 km on the Karawang-Jakarta route to meet the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Joko Widodo. In addition, STTB farmers carried out the act of burying themselves in front of the Indonesian State Palace in the hope that their demands were heard by President Joko Widodo (Pratiwi 2022).

Through their resistance, STTB, assisted by a number of activists, documented and shared their stories via the internet on digital channels such as Instagram (Pratiwi and Pangestu 2022) and Youtube. There are a number of videos about the collective actions carried out by STTB as a form of their resistance movement against the injustices experienced. These videos are uploaded not only to describe what is experienced by STTB farmers, but also against the dominant narrative. When farmers came into conflict with PT Pertiwi Lestari, researchers found that most of the mainstream media, such as online news, cornered STTB farmers, especially their leaders.

The activities carried out by a number of activists in documenting and sharing their stories via the internet on digital channels are a form of digital storytelling. Digital storytelling is nothing new. This concept was developed in the 1980s by Joe Lambert, co-founder of The Center for Digital Storytelling (CDS) in California USA. Ferarri and his colleagues later developed digital storytelling as three or five minute videos produced with a mix of voiceovers, music and images to convey first-person narration (Campbell in Servaes 2020).

Lambert (2010) explains that digital storytelling is a personal expression of important people, events, or places in our lives; about what we do; or about a personal journey of love, discovery, or recovery. He added that "we are made of stories", that humans are made of stories. Lambert's goal in producing a digital storytelling is to help storytellers find the stories they want or need to tell. Banaszewski (2005) explains, digital storytelling is the process of combining personal stories with images, audio and text (multimedia) with the aim of creating a short autobiography. Usually, digital storytelling is designed as a format for learning materials, persuasion, history or reflective activities.

Storytelling is a method that is widely used in various fields, including education (Bin As 2016; Khodabandeh 2018; Hambali et.al; 2021; and Handrayani 2022) and advertising (Kang et.al 2018; Lindawati 2018; and Agustina 2020). Storytelling or

storytelling has also been used for social change. The use of storytelling or storytelling in social change is an old idea. This is because storytelling is a tradition used by many cultures in the world to transmit knowledge (Wheeler et al., quoted from Sarvaes 2018). As part of social change, social movements have also used storytelling as a strategy to change people's opinions and fight dominant narratives (Polleta and Chen 2012).

In Indonesia, the storytelling strategy has actually been carried out for a long time as a strategy to recruit members in a movement. As in the peasant resistance movement carried out by farmers in the era of colonialism. In that era, farmers strongly believed in the story of the presence of a fair queen who would become a savior for the farmers (Imadudin 2015 and Kartodirdjo 2015). The communication medium used in the colonialism era peasant resistance movement was face-to-face. At that time, recitation activities both at the mosque and at home became the location for mobilizing farmers (Halwany and Chudari 2011).

Now in the era of technology, computers and electronic networks have revolutionized communication one can reach not only cities or national, but international boundaries. Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) drastically changed organizational communication, leading to the emergence of what Sproull and Kiesler (1991) refer to as networked organizations, both small and large. Organizations that use computer-mediated communication are used to carry out activities as diverse as group problem solving and forecasting, consensus building, coordination and operation of group projects, sharing ideas and gossip, and mobilizing organizational action in specialized forums or interest groups (Siegel, Dubrovsky, Kiesler & McGuire 1986).

The digital era makes storytellers of social movements (activists) touch digital media as a tool to tell their stories, which is called digital storytelling. Activists document their members' stories, rallies, signing petitions and others using digital tools and share them on the internet (Canella 2017).

Researchers conducted a review of a number of previous research literature related to digital storytelling. So far, digital storytelling has been carried out to analyze the management of social media in universities (Cahyani and WIdyaningsih 2020); digital literacy in elementary school children (Pranata et.al 2016 and Anwar and Ramdani 2021); and da'wah through WhatsApp Group (Praselanova and Syafii 2021). This study offers a different point of view, namely analyzing digital storytelling which is used as a communication strategy for peasant's virtual resistance.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses qualitative methods with digital storytelling analysis. The data collection method in this research is Digital Storytelling. Digital Storytelling can be used as a data collection method that focuses on the stories presented, not on the technology used (Campbell in Servaes 2020). This study analyzed the video documentation of the action of STTB farmers' self-burying uploaded on Riza Dwi Wardhana's Youtube channel. The selection of this Youtube channel was to answer the

research objective, which was to analyze digital storytelling which is used as a communication strategy for the virtual resistance of STTB farmers.

There are a number of elements in digital storytelling as revealed by Bull & Kajder (2004), namely: 1). Point of View, which is the point of view of the digital storytelling maker. The content of digital storytelling depends on the perspective of the content creator. Usually, the creators of digital storytelling focus on what they want or need to tell. 2). Dramatic Question. Drama questions will be answered at the end of the story, generally in the form of a conclusion from the whole story from beginning to end. 3). Emotional Content. Usually, the content in a digital storytelling is emotive and persuasive. 4). The Gift of Your Voice is the way in which the narrator/narrator tells the story well so that the audience understands what he wants to convey. 5). The Power of The Soundtrack. This element is an additional element, which is in the form of music or sound that supports the atmosphere in the video. 6). Economy (Economy Level). Good digital storytelling is simple and not overwhelming. The effectiveness of the message is needed here so that the audience does not feel bored. This effectiveness is also related to the length of the video. 7). Pacing (Speed Level). The purpose of pacing is almost similar to economy, namely so that the audience does not feel bored. In this pacing, the novelty displayed by the narrator is emphasized so that the audience does not get bored.

In this study, the author uses storytelling elements, namely the narrator and plot to analyze the video of the Telukjambe farmer's self-burying action. In addition, body language, non-verbal behavior captured in gestures/body styles, facial expressions and high and low voice are also added.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Narrator as Witness of STTB Farmer's Resistance

A narrator is a someone who tells a story in a text. Narrators are divided into two types, namely: 1) narrators as narrators of their own experiences or life stories, in which the narrator refers to himself as 'I'; and 2) the narrator only has a role as a story teller and a witness to the story of the main character (Pradopo 2011).

The narrator in this research is Riza Dwi Wardhana's Youtube channel. Through this channel, Riza plays a role in conveying the stories experienced by STTB farmers during their act of burying themselves in 2017. As the narrator, Riza Dwi Wardhana uses video as a medium for delivering messages and then uploads it on his Youtube channel entitled 'Action of Burying the Telukjambe Farmer's Self'. This video consists of six episodes, which is a six-day journey of burying Telukjambe farmers.

As the narrator who tells the story, Riza does not tell the story of the Telukjambe farmer's burying himself with voice narration. He uses written texts as can be seen in Figure 1 below. In this picture, the first text narration appears in the Telukjambe Farmer's Burial Action - Day 1. The written narrative reads: "a testament to the determination of the Telukjambe farmers...a proof of a real struggle...a proof that we are not yet independent". Through this narrative, the narrator wants to convey to viewers that farmers as small people must fight for their own rights and find justice. As

a small group, farmers do not get the attention of the public and the media in conveying their aspirations. So, they are forced to do something extreme in order to get the desired attention, namely through the act of burying themselves.

Based on the digital storytelling elements of Bull & Kajder's (2004) version, what Riza did was called The Gift of Your Voice. In this video, Riza tries to narrate the act of burying STTB farmers using a natural and simple point of view. Text narration is used to help viewers understand the message that farmers want to convey.

As a communication strategy, Riza Dwi Wardhana's Youtube channel can be categorized as a communicator in this digital storytelling. As explained by several communication experts that the communicator is the messenger. In this video, Riza Dwi Wardhana's Youtube channel helps document the actions of Telukjambe farmers and edits them in such a way that they are packaged into a message that voices the aspirations of the Telukjambe farmers who have not been channeled.

Riza Dwi Wardhana's Youtube channel is a self-representation of the owner of the account, namely Riza Dwi Wardhana. This can be seen from the videos uploaded by Riza Dwi Wardhana on his Youtube channel. Through the videos she uploads on her Youtube channel, it can be seen that Riza is someone who likes philosophy and has critical thinking. He once uploaded a video discussing critical philosopher figures. In addition, most of the videos on his Youtube channel are videos of the Telukjambe farmers' land conflicts. The narrator's background can relate to one of the elements of Digital Storytelling, namely the Point of View. Riza as the narrator focuses on the critical attitude of the lack of attention from the local government, the central government and its staff towards farmers.

Figure 1. The text narration that appears in the video of the Telukjambe Farmer's Self Burial Day 1 (0:18-0:45)



Source: [\(4\) Aksi Kubur Diri Petani Telukjambe - Hari ke-1 - YouTube](#)

Like other land conflict activists who move digitally, social media platforms are chosen to be used as media to spread messages. As has been done by JDA (Jogja Emergency Agraria) (Pratiwi et.al 2019) and Akmisocial (Pratiwi and Pangestu 2022). The two digital activists use Instagram as a medium for spreading messages of partiality to farmers. This is different from the case with this study which chose the Youtube platform as a medium for delivering messages about the struggle of the peasants. As a medium, Instagram and Youtube have their respective advantages. Instagram itself has advantages from various and unique aspects of its features, including Feed (upload photos and videos), Instagram Live, and Direct Message (DM). While the advantages of Youtube, as quoted from Faiqah et.al (2016), which other social media do not have is that it does not have a duration limit for uploading videos.

The Storyline of the Burial of the Telukjambe Farmer's Self

In this study, identification was made on the plot or storyline in the video 'Action of Burying Farmer Telukjambe's self'. This video has six episodes with different durations for each episode.

Identification of the plots was made based on the analysis of the six videos 'Action on Burial of Telukjambe Farmers'. The plots in these six videos have the same pattern, namely:

1. Preparations made by STTB farmers to carry out the act of burying themselves
2. The act of burying the farmers of Telukjambe
3. The limp condition of the farmers who carry out the action of burying themselves all day.

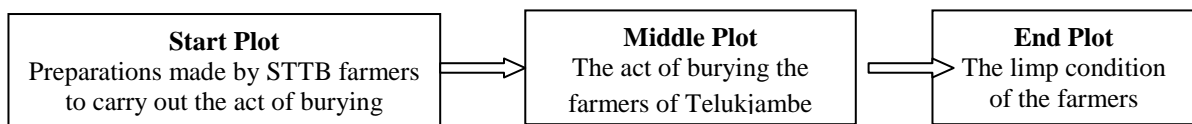


Figure 2. The Plot of the Telukjambe Farmer's Self Burial Action Video

Although the plots presented in these six videos seem monotonous and simple, this is where the specialty of this video lies. The cohesiveness and togetherness of the Telukjambe farmers shown in the initial plot scenes (Preparation of Farmers for Burial Action) gives a distinct impression to the audience. This is an implementation of The Gift of Your Voice in the digital storytelling elements that have been identified in this video. In each episode, a scene is shown of how the process of preparing for breast-feeding is carried out by Telukjambe farmers or STTB farmers. In this scene, it is shown how the cohesiveness of the STTB farmers starts from transporting the wood arranged into crates as well as soil and flowers as a complement.

In addition, the digital storytelling element that has been identified from the 6 videos of the STTB farmer's self-burying is the presence of The Power of The Soundtrack. In some scenes there is accompaniment music which can be categorized as sad instrument music. This sad accompaniment music appears in a number of scenes, including when the children of STTB farmers participate in expressing their aspirations

(in the middle plot of the 1st video) and the scene when the farmer who is burying himself is weak (in the final plot of the video 1-6).




1st Video






Title: Telukjambe Farmers Self Burial Action– Day 1

Duration: 8 minute 27 second

Time of Upload: 16th of May 2017

Table 1
Plot of the Story of the Burial of the Telukjambe Farmer's Self, Day 1

Plot	Event	Visual	Audio
Start Plot	1. Preparing to leave for the act of burying themselves		Original Voice
	2. Speech by the STTB Chair to encourage farmers		Original Voice
	3. Walk to the location of the grave, in front of the State Palace		Original Voice

Middle Plot	1. Arrive at location (in front of Istana Negara)		Original Voice
	2. The scene shows five wooden crates prepared by STTB farmers to carry out the act of burying themselves		Original Voice
	3. Orations made by women farmers who voiced their aspirations and encouraged STTB farmers		Female farmer's speech
	4. The children of the STTB farmers joined in expressing their aspirations by wearing farmer hats and wearing placards that read: "give us back our house"; 'I want to help father farming'		Oration by one of the STTB farmers with sad background music
End Plot	1. The scene shows a farmer and volunteer opening one of the chests, the farmer inside is already weak.		The sound of an ambulance with sad background music

	<p>2. The farmer are taken to the ambulance for assistance.</p>		<p>The sound of an ambulance with sad background music</p>
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Source: researcher process of identification

*identification was also carried out on 5 other videos

Another element contained in this research is Emotional Content. Emotive and persuasive content was identified in these six videos. Emotive content was found when farmers and activists delivered orations to voice their aspirations and encourage STTB farmers. In the scene when one of the female farmers of Telukjambe gives a speech (middle plot of the 1st video), it is shown how the farmer gets carried away when he retells the struggles that he and his fellow STTB farmers have fought for their rights. While the persuasive scenes found in this study are scenes of children participating in the act of burying themselves and the condition of farmers who experience a lack of oxygen due to the act of burying themselves. This scene is found at the end of the video in each episode.

Based on the digital storytelling elements contained in the videos uploaded by Riza Dwi Wardhana, it can be seen how he tries to combine images, audio and text into a quite dramatic story of the struggle of STTB farmers. Through these videos, Riza Dwi Wardhana seems to want to make the story of the Telukjambe farmer's struggle a historic event, not only for Telukjambe farmers themselves, but also for other farmers, and farmer activists. He also seems to want to persuade his audience so that they can learn from the struggle and resistance of the STTB farmers to reclaim their rights. This is in line with what was stated by Banaszewski (2005) that digital storytelling is indeed designed for learning activities, persuasion, and as documentation of historically valuable activities.

Through this research, it can also be seen that content creators or content creators can not only develop content about education (Yumna and Huda 2021; Achmad et.al 2021), but can also develop content about the struggle of farmers by emphasizing the emotive and persuasive side.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that Youtube can also be used as a medium of choice in virtual peasant resistance. Although Youtube doesn't have many features, this platform can be relied on as a medium for activists who are interested in voicing farmers' aspirations by using videos. It is hoped that other researchers will conduct a more in-depth analysis of videos or documentaries made by peasant resistance activists as alternative media for farmers and others.

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