

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In this modern era, Charms or amulets still exist and still gain popularity in our society. Some people believe that these charms attract good fortune and wealth to their homes or offices. In some Chinese or Japanese restaurant or stores we usually see such a charm. There are so many examples of charms that we usually see. For examples lucky bamboo with red ribbon tied around bamboo stalks or golden frog which sits on the bed of old Chinese coins. On this thesis, the writer will analyzed *Maneki Neko*, a statue of a cat of which paw is raised as beckoning good fortune. This charms comes from the land of the rising sun, Japan.

The writer already collected some data from interviewing some participants who owned stores at Semarang, Citraland mall and Semawis which had *Maneki Neko* in their stores. The writer selected 8 stores in Semawis and 4 stores in Citraland Mall

The followings are two tables presenting summaries of the data collected from my interviews with the informants. After providing the tables, the writer continues to discuss the research findings in more details. To answer the problem formulations, the writer did a qualitative research through interviews. The data were collected, and then transcribed after the interview process. The writer made the tables and then analyzed the data.

4.1 Table From Stores in Semawis

Stores	Name	Function	Colors meaning	Origin	Medium of Transmission
1	Goodluck cat (<i>Kucing pembawa keberuntungan</i>)	Brings customers and more successful	Gold: the color of luck	China	Father/ Parents
2	Goodluck cat (<i>Kucing pembawa keberuntungan</i>)	Bring good fortune	Gold: money	Japan	Parents
3	Goodluck cat (<i>Kucing keberuntungan</i>)	Bring good fortune	Gold: Gold as metal	China	Friends
4	Wealth bringer cat (<i>Kucing pemanggil harta</i>)	Bring money	Gold: Gold as metal	China	Friends
5	Goodluck cat (<i>Kucing keberuntungan</i>)	Bring fortune and customers	Gold: (Just like others stores) White: (She just like it)	China or Japan	Parents
6	Wealth bringer cat (<i>Kucing pemanggil harta</i>)	Makes the store become popular among customers	Gold: money	China	Knows long ago
7	Goodluck cat (<i>Kucing keberuntungan</i>)	Bring fortune	Gold: money	China	She saw it and there are so many people use it.
8	Goodluck cat (<i>Kucing keberuntungan</i>)	Bring fortune and customers	Gold: money and symbol of success	Japan	Knows long ago

From the table, it can be said that the first store say the name is Good luck cat and its function is to bring customers and more success, the colors which is gold means the color of luck, the origin was from China and the medium of

transmission is father or parents. The second store stated that the name is Good luck cat, and the function is to bring good fortune, the color is gold which means money, the origin was from Japan and the medium of transmission is parents. The third store stated that the name is Good luck cat and its function is to bring good fortune, colors meaning is gold as metal, origin from China and medium of transmission is friends.

The fourth store stated that the name is wealth bringer cat and the function is to bring money, colors meaning is gold as metal, origin from China and medium of transmission is friends. The fifth store stated that the name is Good luck cat, its function is to bring fortune and customers, colors meaning is gold and white, gold means money and white because she like it, origin from China or Japan and medium of transmission is parents.

The sixth store stated that the name is wealth bringer cat, is function is to make the store become popular among customers, colors meaning is gold as money, origin from China and medium of transmission knows long ago. The seventh store stated that the name is Good luck cat and its function to bring fortune, colors meaning is gold as money, origin from China and medium of transmission because she saw it there are so many people use it. The last store stated that the name is Good luck cat and the function is to bring fortune and customers, colors meaning is gold as money and symbol of success, origin from Japan and the medium of transmission is knows a long ago.

4.2 Table from Stores in Citraland Mall

Stores	Name	Function	Colors meaning	Origin	Medium of Transmission
1	Do not know the name	Bring fortune	Gold: the color of money	China	Friends and saw it on the other stores.
2	Welcoming cat (<i>Kucing selamat datang</i>)	Bring good fortune and invite customers.	White	China	Father
3	Welcoming cat or Goodluck cat (<i>Kucing selamat datang atau pembawa hoki</i>)	Bring good fortune and invite customers to come.	Gold: color of good fortune	Japan	Grandmother
4	Goodluck cat (<i>Kucing keberuntungan</i>)	Bring fortune and invite customers to come.	Gold: the color of wealth	Japan	Friends

From the table, it can be said that the first store in Citraland Mall stated she does not know the name, its function is to bring fortune, the color is gold which means the color of money, the origin was from China, the medium of

transmission is friend and saw it on the other stores. The second stores stated the name is welcoming cat and its function is to bring good fortune and invite customers, the color is white, the origin was from China, and the medium of transmission is from father.

The third stores stated that the name is welcoming cat or good luck cat, its function is to bring good fortune and invite customers to come, the color is gold which means the color of good fortune, the origin was from Japan and the medium of transmission is from grandmother. The last stores in Citraland Mall stated that the name is Good luck cat, the function is to bring fortune and invite customers to come, the color is gold which is the color of wealth, the origin was from Japan and the medium of transmission are friends.

4.3 Function of *Maneki Neko*

In this part, the writer would answer the problem formulation number 1 that is the functions of *Maneki Neko* in some stores in Semarang. The writer chose this because there are many charms that can be used as good luck charm. We often see many good luck charm in our surroundings for example, bamboo with red ribbon tied around the stalks, laughing Buddha, golden frog with gold coin in its mouth and many else. Also there are lucky charms from all around the world that have become common traditions. Cuthbert explain that lucky charm is an item within cultures that can bring good luck (Cuthbert, 2015). Even though we live in this modern era, there are still many people believing this kind of things. People want to gain more wealth, love, business success or good luck, so they use charms to

achieve their goals (Marsh, 2001). The desire of what they want in their heart, makes them believe in lucky charms. Owning a good luck charm makes them feel confident that they have more luck on their side. They believe that the power within that charm can help them.

People have their own believe on something that can bring good luck to them; this can be concluded as superstitions. According to Vyse, superstitions are identified as a paranormal belief aimed at bringing good luck and avoiding bad luck (Vyse, 2013). They believe in something behind the statue of the cat, that the cat have power that carry positive energy that can bring good luck for them. This cannot be described in science or logic, it's out of it. Vyse quoted the descriptions of superstitions from The Random House Dictionary of The English Language, that superstition is a belief or notion it's not based on reason or knowledge. Also this kind of belief have some conditions and results just like Thomas A. Green stated, using *Maneki Neko* to get luck on their side (Green, 1997). Also this kind of "practice" was causal, because the participants used *Maneki Neko* in their stores to gain more luck, they did such an "offering" to buy *Maneki Neko* and use it.

From the interview with the participants, the writer found that 9 out of 12 the participants said that *Maneki Neko* could bring fortune for their stores. 6 out of 12 said that *Maneki Neko* could bring customers to their stores. 1 out of 12 said that *Maneki Neko* could bring money.

Maneki Neko is one of the most common lucky charms in Japan, designed to attract business and promote prosperity. Found frequently in shop windows, the

Maneki Neko sits with its paw raised and bent, beckoning customers to enter. There are many superstitions about cats in Japan (as there are in many other nations), assigning it either good or bad powers. Some Japanese believe that when a cat washes its face and paws in a *genkan* (traditional Japanese entryway for house), visitor's coming.

4.4.1 Fortune

Fortune is a word from Latin word *Fortuna*. *Fortuna* is the name of Roman goddess; she is the goddess of fortune and luck. Every mankind wishes to have some fortune in their lives, whether it's true or not, everybody likes if they have a lucky day. Sometimes we usually see on someone's status in social media that said "Wish me luck" when they will do something which they hope the result is what they hope for.

Most of the participants said that this cat, *Maneki Neko*, can bring fortune for them. One participant who owned a store in Citraland Mall said: "*Ya, katanya oran,g biar tokonya ramai... Saya juga nggak tau, tapi yang penting bawa hoki aja*" ["People said that it can attract customers... I'm not sure, but the important thing is it can bring fortune"] (Interview with Ms. Y, 11 November 2015)

This *Maneki Neko* is a charm that can bring good fortune for the owner. This is a common charm in our daily life, especially in some business world.

Good fortune and good luck are the same, both are the conditions where everything is good, it can be wealth, health, abundance, riches and etc. The participant wants to have good things in their daily lives or in the stores, so they put *Maneki Neko* in their stores and they believe that this cat can help them.

4.4.2 Bring Customers

Some participants said that *Maneki Neko* could bring customers to their stores and do business with them. One participant said: “*Ya konon katanya untuk membawa keberuntungan sih. Untuk menarik pelanggan atau untuk supaya laris.*”[“They say that it can bring luck to attract customers or the sale went well”] (Interview with Ms. S, 11 November 2015)

Also they believe that this cat can make the customers come again and again. *Maneki Neko* indeed is a lucky charm, bringing customers to their stores. The gesture of the *Maneki Neko* is also a gesture of beckoning people to come in. For Japanese, calling people to come is the palm facing outward, but for western is the palm facing inwards. For Japanese people, they believe that cats have a special power. When a cat wash its face, it's like beckoning people to come (Brown & Brown, 2006). In the legend of *Maneki Neko*, a cat owned by a bhikkhu, a Buddhism monk, brings good fortune to the monastery. Waving its hand, Tama, the cat, calls Ii Naotaka to come closer so that the latter escapes from the lightning strike. Ii Naoaka expressed his gratefulness by supporting the life of

the monks. The monastery, Gotokuji, still exists to the present, and is well known as the house of *Maneki Neko* and the burial sites of Ii.

One participant, who has store in Semawis have *Maneki Neko* that can not wave it's hand, its form is a porcelain statue. But still she believe that this cat can bring her customers, even though this cat can not wave.



Figure 1: Maneki Neko statues

From the research in field, all the participants have *Maneki Neko* with the left paw raised. Lior said that *Maneki Neko* with left paw raised is believed to bring luck in the form of beckoning people, such as guests and more customers (Lior, 2012).

4.4.3 Money

One participant, the owner of the store in Semawis said that *Maneki Neko* could bring money. She said “*Mungkin karena tangan nya itu, bawa uang, sama melambai-lambai gitu, seperti memanggil uang datang.*” [“Maybe it's hand brings money and the gestures are like beckoning, just like beckoning money to come”] (Interview with Ms. D, 13 January 2016)

Luck or fortune can be something what the person desire the most. It can be health, money, or maybe just some lucky feeling, what they do become success. Because this lucky charm is popular in business area, its functions is related to the business. She hopes that this cat makes what she sell popular and most of customers like it. If her merchandise becomes best seller, then she will get much money. She believed that this cat can help her, especially with gold color. Moreover Semawis is the famous place in Semarang when to celebrate Chinese New Year. She also has *Maneki Neko* in her house as well, actually she liked *Maneki Neko*, and she said that *Maneki Neko* is cute. Rosy said that besides *Maneki Neko* as charm, *Maneki Neko* can be as a home or office decorating. Moreover her home is also her office besides the store, she usually work in home and her employee is in the store.

From this belief it can be concluded in the “Cycle of Life” which is Wayland D. Hand formulated. *Maneki Neko* is a cat statue, which is concluded in number 11, animals. *Maneki Neko* was used for economic necessary, which is concluded in number 4, economic.

4.4 People Understanding of *Maneki Neko*

Problem formulation number two is what they know about *Maneki Neko*. Knowledge of participants also becomes the main data for this thesis. Whether they know well this charm or they just used it because they like it. In this part the

writer will divided in to three categories, the name, the origin and the color of *Maneki Neko*.

4.4.1 Name

From the table it can be concluded that 8 out of 12 participants said that the name is Good luck cat. 2 out of 12 participants said that the name is wealth bringer cat. 2 out of 12 participants said that the name is welcoming cat. 1 participant does not know the name of this cat.

4.4.1.1 Good luck cat (*Kucing keberuntungan*)

Most of the participants said that the cat's name is Good luck cat. For example one participant in Semawis said "*Setahu saya sih ini kucing pembawa keberuntungan.*" ["As far as I know this is a Good luck cat"] (Interview witch Ms. S. 5 December 2015)

The participants called it a Good luck cat because they believed that this cat can bring them good luck. It is true that this cat can be called a fortune cat or good luck cat, and moreover this is a good luck charm. Also the origin name from Japan, *Maneki Neko* means lucky cat. So this can be used to bring good spirit to the owner or in the stores. If the stores filled with good spirit, so the people who come feels comfortable.

4.4.1.2 Wealth Bringer cat (*Kucing Pembawa Harta*)

Two participants said that this cat is a wealth bringer cat. This cat can bring wealth to them. Actually it is the same idea with the good luck cat, but they interpreted it to wealth. The function of this cat is the same with the participants who said that this cat can bring money. They believed that this cat can makes customers come and buy something. Also the customers can come again and again. Wealth is related with money and prosperous.

4.4.1.3 Welcoming Cat (*Kucing Selamat Datang*)

Two participants said that this cat is a welcoming cat or inviting cat. one of them said “*Ini kucing selamat datang atau untuk pembawa hoki aja untuk toko saya.*” [“This is a welcoming cat to bring fortune for my store”] (Interview with Ms. V. 5 December 2015)

They see *Maneki Neko* can greet the customers welcome to their stores. Also this cat can invite customers to come to the stores. The writer mentions before that the gesture of this cat is like beckoning people. The participants believed that this also the gestures of welcoming customers, which is why they put it in the near front door or the front store.

One participant does not know the name of the cat, but she still believed that this cat can bring good luck or fortune for her. She heard it from her friends and also she often see it in other stores. She know that this cat is popular for business and can bring good luck or fortune, so she applies it in her store.

This cat is pretty famous as a lucky charm that even some people know this as a charm but do not know the name. Even for Non-Chinese people know about this cat too and they also know that this cat is a good luck charm.

Although it is often mistaken for a wave, this lucky cat is actually not waving. It's designed to be *beckoning*. The meaning of "*Maneki neko*" in Japanese is "beckoning cat". Some believe that the higher its paw, the more luck the cat beckons in.

4.4.2 Origin

The participants have different answers regarding the origin of Maneki Neko. Some of the participants say that it originates from China, while the rest claim it comes from Japan. One participant who owns a store in Semawis said "*Mungkin dari negara China ya*" ["Maybe it comes from China"] (Interview with Ms. S. 5 December 2015). Other participant said "*Mungkin dari Jepang ya, karena dulu pernah ke Jepang, terus disana banyak sekali toko yang jual kucing ini, dan banyak juga yang pakai simbol kucing ini.*" ["Maybe it comes from Japan. Because when I was in Japan and there were many stores used this cat and also there were many symbols of this cat"] (Interview with Ms. V. 5 December 2015)

In her blog on Red Lotus Letter, Katie Weber informs that even though Feng Shui originated in China, *Maneki Neko* originated in Japan (Weber, 2013). There are many bloggers or sources say that Maneki Neko is originated in Japan. Another source is from Tv shows Animal Planet, John Fulton as the host of "Must

Love Cats”, goes to Japan to finding out about *Maneki Neko*. He said that some part of Tokyo are decorated with this cat, on stores windows, restaurants, cars, and road signs (Fulton, 2012). Also Gotokuji temple in Tokyo is popular with *Maneki Neko* statues, which is fit with the legend of *Maneki Neko*.

But for the participants answer, most of them said it is from China. The writer also asks about this to culture expert in Semarang, this man is the activist on Chinese temples around Pecinan. He said that this is because most of the products in Indonesia are from China, and Japanese products are rare, because it's more expensive. Also, the ethnic of Chinese-Indonesian are much more major in Indonesia. Even some of them still use mandarin language for their conversations; we can see this around *Gang Baru* traditional market in Semarang. This can be a reason why the most of participants said that *Maneki Neko* is from Chinese. This cat is also popular among Chinese people and they called it *Jinmao* (Golden cat) or Chinese lucky cat. This can be confusing, because there is no valid trademark for this *Maneki Neko*. But most of the source said that this is originally from Japanese. Gotokuji temple can be the most evidence of the origin of this cat.

It is commonly believed that *Maneki Neko* originated in Tokyo (then named Edo), while some insist it was Kyoto. *Maneki Neko* first appeared during the Edo period in Japan (17th century to mid- 19th century) (Tse, 2013).

Beyond this the exact origins of *Maneki Neko* are uncertain, though several folktales offer explanations. Some people said that there are similarities between the *Maneki Neko*'s gesture and that of a cat washing its face. Its the

Japanese belief that a cat washing its face means a visitor will soon arrive. Cat is popular animal in superstition, also superstition is not scientific and old. It can be that China and Japan have the same opinion about cat.

4.4.3 Colors

There are two colors for *Maneki Neko* that used by the participants; gold and white. Most of them choose gold color, because it's the color of luck, money and success. For example one participant said "*Karena buat orang tiong hua kan warna emas itu kan pembawa keberuntungan, misalnya imlek tahun baru China, kan selalu pakai warna merah dan emas. Maka dari itu saya pilih warna emas sebagai simbol keberuntungan.*" ["For Chinese people, gold means bringing good luck. For example Chinese New Year, they usually use red and gold. So, I choose gold color as a symbol of luck"] (Interview with Ms. S. 5 December 2015)

The other example said "*Ini kan warna emas ya, jadi seperti uang. Bawa harta masuk ke toko saya.*" ["The color is like money. So it can bring money to my store"] (Interview with Ms. D. 13 January 2016). Gold is the color of extravagance, prosperity, richness, prestige and elegance, so many people like gold color, not only for the Chinese people.

Some choose white color, just because they like the color. White is the color of purity, light, goodness, softness and many others. This color is soothing and neutral.



Figure 2: Right: White Maneki Neko, Left: Gold Maneki Neko

4.5 The Way of Transmission

In this part of analysis, the writer chose to analyze about where do these people know about Maneki Neko because, it's related to folklore. Jan Harold Brunvand mentions that folklore has been passed down from generation to generations (Brunvand, 2006). It can be introduced by social, because now we can access anything by internet from all over the world. So everyone can imitate anything which they like or what is mainstream in this era. Besides from media and family, culture can be passed or told by friends. Every family has their own culture, they can share it to their society, they can accept it or not.

From the interview, we can see that 5 out of 12 participants know from their parents. 4 out of 12 know from friends. 2 out of 12 participants know it long ago and 1 out of 12 said that she just saw it from other stores.

4.5.1 Family

From this answers the number of the participants who knows from the parents are the most higher. Some participants said that they know *Maneki Neko* from father or grand mother. For example, one participant said: "*Iya, ini memang di usulkan dari papa. Papa memang mengusulkan kalau buka usaha atau toko pakai kucing ini.*"["Yes, my father recommends me. My father says if I open a business or store I have to use this cat"] (Interview with Ms. S. 5 December 2015)

The other example: "*Saya tahu dari Ama(nenek) saya, dulu buka toko juga pakai kucing ini, jadi saya ya pakai kucing ini.*"["I know this from grandma (Ama). She used to use this cat in her store. So I use this cat."] (Interview with Ms. V. 5 December 2015)

Because it is more easier to pass down a culture from family and family is the first we know since we are born. The belief or superstitions from family is stronger than the belief from outside the family. Tseng defined family is a basic sociocultural unit, it's the place where the individual person grow, the resource for social support, and the institution through which culture is transmitted (Tseng, 1991). So the family especially parents is the major medium transmission for *Maneki neko*

4.5.2 Friend

Second is from friend. After a family is a society. We know and learn something from outside of family world is from society, we knew much culture from different person or family. This cannot be stopped, we will always meet

someone else outside and this will continue until that person pass away, it is our everyday interactions. This can be a great lesson and even can build the manner of that person, besides family manner. So friend is the second rank that medium transmission of *Maneki neko*.

4.5.3 Other Stores

Third is the participants knows it a since long time ago. This can be introduced form family or society. *Maneki Neko* actually not a new culture, it's an old culture, so it can be known unconsciously. Sometimes in non-chinese stores the writer see *Maneki Neko*. *Maneki Neko* is not only popular among Chinese, but even in non-Chinese people they know about it.

The last one, the owner of the store in Semawis, know it from what she saw. She saw it from stores and imitates it. Imitating some culture can be a reason why they choose that culture and apply it to their lives. Watson citing Schwartz's book that the theme of "imitation" is endemic to modern culture (Watson, 2000). So, culture not only be passed down from parents or society, it can be passed by imitating another culture. Besides that, *Maneki Neko* is popular charm, there are many stores sell it and use it with many variant of *Maneki Neko*. Moreover, in this modern era, the form of *Maneki Neko* is more attractive with cute decoration and even *Maneki Neko* in Hello Kitty's form.

From the answers above, it can be concluded that the 3 types of folklore, as suggested by Sim and Stephens (2005), verbal, customary and material are found in this study. Verbal folklore is when the participants, parents or friends

must be inform them about *Maneki Neko* and suggested to use it. Customary folkloreis when the participants see *Maneki Neko* in other stores or their paretns or friends use it. Material folklore is in the form of the *Maneki Neko* statues.

