

**IDENTITY REPRESENTATION OF INDONESIAN SOCIETY IN INDONESIA  
TOURISM PROMOTION VIDEOS: A STUDY OF SEMIOTICS**

**Irwan Suswandi**

Master Student of Linguistics Department  
Universitas Indonesia, Indonesia.

**Abstract**

*Every society of a culture has its own identity and character. Likewise Indonesia, with its diverse cultural society, has a representation of a communal identity of Indonesian society. It was depicted in Indonesia tourism promotion videos issued in 2016 which contains cultural diversity by representing the identity of Indonesia society in each tourism destination video. In this research, the researcher aims to analyze the identity of Indonesia society that is represented in Indonesian tourism promotion videos. The method used in this research was interpretative qualitative with semiotic analysis approach from John Fiske (1987). The data source derived from 15 tourism destination videos that became main tourist destinations of Indonesia in 2016. Every video has the duration of 3 - 4 minutes. The analysis produced narrative quotations and location settings as well as the perspective of shooting in each video that became a sign in representing the identity of Indonesia society. From the analysis, the researcher concluded that in the 15 tourism promotion videos, Indonesia society has an identity as multicultural, religious, friendly, loyal, and caretaker society.*

**Keywords:** Identity, Indonesia, Representation, Semiotic, Tourism, Video

## IDENTITY REPRESENTATION OF INDONESIAN SOCIETY IN INDONESIA TOURISM PROMOTION VIDEOS: A STUDY OF SEMIOTICS

- Irwan Suswandi

### Introduction

#### Background

Each country has its own identity. That identity becomes a marker that distinguished them from other countries. Identity can simply be defined as *'the fact of being who or what a person or thing is'* (<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/identity>). More operational, Klap (Berger 215 in Ayun 17) said that identity is everything in a person who can legally and reliably declare about himself, such as his status, name, personality, and the past. Gudykunst (225 in Ayun 17) divided identity into four, namely *racial identity* (based on individual characteristics), *cultural identity* (based on when the person is in communication within a larger culture), *ethnic identity* (based on self-identification and knowledge about ethnic culture), and *social identity* (based on the knowledge of members of cultural groups).

It could be said that identity each country has specific and unique characteristics, which is the cultural richness of country concerned. Not infrequently, the identity is also an attraction for tourists to visit the country.

In the era of digital communications today, there are various media used to show the identity of a country society. Through those, people from outside of society will know and recognize the identity of that society. So even with Indonesia, through the media of tourism promotion issued by the government, it expects as an attraction to know more about Indonesia.

As the largest archipelago country in the world, with more than 17,000 islands, Indonesia has more than 1,300 ethnicities and more than 726 languages. Cultural diversity spread from Sabang to Merauke, and Mianggas Island and Rote Island became a huge potential for Indonesian tourism. Therefore, the government tries to show the diversity in various media made, one of them through tourism promotion video.

## Research Question

From the background presented, researcher formulates a research question, namely how identity representation of Indonesian society shown in the Indonesian tourism promotion video.

## Research Objective

The purpose of this research is to analyze the elements in Indonesian tourism promotion video containing the representation of Indonesian society identity.

## Research Methodology

The approach method used in this research is an interpretative qualitative method. The researcher noted the utterances that came from the video, along with visuals displayed in the video containing the forms of representation of Indonesian people. The sources of data in this study are tourism videos issued by Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Indonesia in 2016. The ministry officially published 15 videos of destinations that became the flagship of Indonesian tourism. The fifteen video destinations are Bali, West Papua, Yogyakarta, Jakarta, Labuan Bajo (Komodo National Park), Lombok (West Nusa Tenggara), North Sumatra, East Java, Manado (North Sulawesi), Toraja (South Sulawesi), Wakatobi, Flores - Kelimutu, Tanjung Puting - Palangkaraya, West Sumatra, and West Java. Each video is 3 to 4 minutes long.

The theory used is Semiotics theory from Fiske (1987). This Semiotics analyzes the facets of language and communication conveyed in narrative and setting forms, as the focus of this study.

## Theoretical Review

Before talk about Fiske's theory, we should first briefly explain the Semiotics theory. In general, Semiotics defined as a science of signs (Noth 3). In Saussure (1916b: 16 in Noth 57) explained in more detail that Semiotics derived from the word *semeion* (Greek, meaning 'sign'), and defined as the science that studies the life of signs within society.

In the history of its development, Semiotics divided into two streams, namely Structural Semiotics and Pragmatic Semiotics. Although in the end, both streams joined in the same roof. Both streams can combine each other in a Semiotics analyzer.

Structural Semiotics introduced by Ferdinand de Saussure, also called "Father of Modern Linguistics". Because of the core of this stream are signified and signifier, the Saussure Structural Semiotics is also referred to as dichotomous. The Pragmatic Semiotics popularized by Charles Sander Peirce. The main characteristic of this genre that distinguishes it from Structural Semiotics is a process that involves cognition in

signification and interpretation. Semiosis is the process of forming a sign that departs from representamen who is spontaneously related to the object in human cognition and then given certain interpretation by the human being as interpretant (Hoed, 2014: 9). Therefore, through three stages in the signification, the theory of Peirce is referred to as a tricotomical theory, and since initially the semiosis based on a concrete thing it called Pragmatic Semiotics.

After the two prominent figures of Semiotics, then appeared other Semiotics experts who made the science more functional by combining it with other science fields. One of them who developed Semiotics in communication is John Fiske.

In his book, "Television Culture", Fiske introduced codes in the drawings contained on television that became semiotic or a signifier of communication. According to him, the code is a rule-governed system of signs, whose rules and conventions shared among members of a culture, and which used to generate and circulate meanings in and for that culture (Fiske 7). Furthermore, he explained that the codes connected the producers, the text, and the audiences, and at the same time become agents to interpret related texts in a signed network. There are three levels of code that exposed, the first level; reality, second level; representation, and third level; ideology, all of which exist in a television or video.

At reality level, those codes encoded electronically by technical codes, such as appearance, dress, makeup, environment, speech, gesture, sound, expression, and so on. At this level, television lifts things into the realities that exist in people's lives. Furthermore, at the level of representation, the codes of conventional representations transmitted to form representations that seem to bring back the reality. Elements at this level are narrative, dialogue, setting, lighting, music, and so on. At the highest level, ideological level, codes structured to have coherence and social acceptability. The ideologies that taken as examples are ideology materialism, patriarchy, individualism, capitalism, et cetera. From the three levels of John Fiske's Semiotic analysis, the researcher focuses on the second level, namely representation. How the codes that are in the promotion video of Indonesian tourism represent the real Indonesian people, with elements of the video representation it has.

## Analysis

Of the fifteen videos that serve as data sources, there are 12 videos that contain representation of Indonesian identity, e.i West Papua, Yogyakarta, Jakarta, Labuan Bajo (Komodo National Park), Lombok (West Nusa Tenggara), North Sumatra, East Java, Manado (North Sulawesi), Toraja (South Sulawesi), Wakatobi, Flores - Kelimutu, and Tanjung Puting - Palangkaraya. The following are the identities of Indonesian society represented in the videos.

- **Multicultural**

Destination videos that present this identity are Jakarta and North Sumatra video. The elements in the video that play an important role in representing the identity are *narrative* and *setting*. In Jakarta video, the *narrative* has a clear representation of multicultural, namely “...Wajah warga kota, multikultur masa kini”. The word “multikultur” which juxtaposed with word “wajah” becomes a reflection that Jakarta people are society consisting of various cultures and ethnicities. Nevertheless, the diversity remains in the face of Jakarta to “masa kini” ‘till nowsaday’. *Narrative* on the duration of 01.26 - 01.30 is accompanied by a *setting* that displays the activities of Betawi and Chinese people who became strong elements of multicultural identity.

In North Sumatra video, the part that represents the identity is in duration 02.48 - 03.16. The elements that play the role of multicultural representation are *narrative* and *setting*. The *narrative* is displayed, ie “...Kota yang hidup, bergerak, kiblat dari multikultur yang harmonis”. Just like Jakarta video, the existence of word “multikultur” is also a strong signifier that North Sumatra people live in diversity. The existence of phrase “kota yang hidup” and word “bergerak” indicate that the diversity actually makes North Sumatra people look more fun and vibrant. The *narrative* supported by video *setting*, featuring Malay culture, as well as Islamic religious rituals, and also featuring worshiping houses of Confucianism, Islam, and Christianity.

- **Religious**

The second identity that represented is a religious identity. There are two destination videos featuring representations, namely Flores - Kelimutu and Manado (North Sulawesi). These two videos also use *narrative* elements and *setting* in presenting the Indonesians identity. In Flores - Kelimutu video, precisely on duration 00.12 - 00.40, present *narrative*, “Flores, mistis, suci terpelihara, warisan yang turun temurun”. The word “mistik” is a sign that Flores people have sanctity in their beliefs. Although the majority of Flores people are Christians, they also keep up their pre-existing beliefs, while still performing local rituals.

Next, Manado (North Sulawesi) video, the emerging *narrative* is “...Manado, yang merangkul ajaran Kristiani, relungnya, mampu menjadi sebuah titik temu perhelatan dan pertukaran”. The word “merangkul” signifies that in the living of Manado people is always based on Christian values. This is because the majority of Manado people are Christian. Then from the *setting* element, on duration 00.57 - 01.13 displayed the *setting* where the statue of Christ, which became the largest statue of Christ in Indonesia, then also displayed the inside and outside of the church.

- **Friendly**

Friendly identity represented in the videos of Jakarta, Lombok (West Nusa Tenggara), West Papua, North Sumatra, and Manado (North Sulawesi). In Jakarta video, the *narrative* element displayed, which is “...*Temukan sisi Jakarta yang ramah*” on duration 02.48-02.51, with the *setting* of two women who are opening the door accompanied by a smile. The word “*temukan*” that followed the *setting* open the door, a sign that Jakarta has a side of hospitality and friendly in it, and could be found when others come and know Jakarta further.

The second video, Lombok (West Nusa Tenggara), represents an element of friendly representation on duration 01.17 - 01.19. In that duration, the *narrative* “...*terbuka ikut serta*” with the *setting* of a tourist, likened to the outsider of the area, who take part in making crafts together with the local people accompanied by a smile and laughter. Both of these elements represent that Lombok society is a society that is open to anyone, and always invite outsiders to mingle with them. Smiles and laughter are the main points that Lombok society is a society full of friendly and joy, even for foreigners.

The third destination video, West Papua, on duration 02.15 - 02.19, displayed *setting* of West Papua children swimming and playing in the sea with their joking laughter. The *setting* is accompanied by a *narrative* that reinforces the identity of West Papua people, which is “...*Papua, rumah bagi orang-orang yang ramah*”. The word “*rumah*” followed by clause “*bagi orang-orang yang ramah*” signifies that West Papua has a society that is entirely friendly to anyone who comes to his “West Papua” home.

In North Sumatra video, the representation is on duration 03.34 - 03.39 with a *narrative* element “...*Tanahnya, manusianya, keakrabannya*”. The words “*tanahnya*”, “*manusianya*”, and “*keakrabannya*”, become a unity that people who inhabit North Sumatra region, is a society that is easy to get along and friendly to anyone, both local and immigrant. Accompanied by the *setting* of people who smile, friendly identity is really owned by North Sumatra people.

The last destination video containing this identity is Manado (North Sulawesi). In duration 01.11 - 01.19, there is a *narrative* element “...*Manado adalah keramahan*” adjacent to the *setting* elements of a group of Manado people who wear traditional clothes of North Sulawesi who play *Kolintang*, a traditional musical instrument of North Sulawesi. From these two elements could see that Manado people, in particular, will be very friendly welcome, with the likes of *Kolintang* music, to anyone who wants to come and visit Manado.

**Loyal**

Loyal in this case is the attitude that owned by Indonesia society in maintaining and preserving all the wealth and local wisdom owned. Destination videos featuring this identity are Toraja (South Sulawesi), Wakatobi, Flores - Kelimutu, and West Java.

In Toraja (South Sulawesi) video, the loyal identity lies in duration 01.06 - 01.26 with a *narrative* element, i.g “...Desa tradisional yang murni tak tersentuh masa, yang meneruskan tradisi dengan hidmat dan setia, dari generasi ke generasi”. The *narrative* composed of linguistic units all of which have a meaning which leads to the loyal of Toraja people in maintaining the cultural traditions and local wisdom inherited from its predecessors. Tradition and wisdom are kept pure and then the purity is passing on to the next generation. The element of *setting* that supports the *narrative* is taking pictures of traditional villages with traditional houses *Tongkonan*, then some people are weaving sockets and carving timber. There is also a tradition of fighting buffalo fight that became one of Toraja, South Sulawesi culture.

The next video that has this identity representation is Wakatobi, in duration 01.14 - 01.18. The *narrative* element displayed, which is “...Tetap dalam perilaku tradisional yang menghangatkan hati” with video *setting* of resorts and snorkeling spots. The content of the representation is that although modernity and external influences are already prevalent in Wakatobi, the society still behaves in traditional “berperilaku tradisional”, because with that attitude their hearts stay warm despite modernity and outside influences approaching them.

The third video is Flores - Kelimutu destination on duration 01.36 - 02.10, with a *narrative* of “...Mengabdikan pada keseimbangan kehidupan, hormat pada budaya, dan sejarah besar bangsanya”. The *narrative* element indicates that Flores society is very obedient in carrying on life as inherited by before, namely “menjaga alam”, “hormat budaya”, and “sejarah bangsanya”. The *narrative* supported by a *setting* that features natural beauty of Flores, the traditional dance of Flores ‘Ja’i’, as well as the museums and historical monuments were there.

The last video is West Java, with a *narrative* “...Bandung, kota yang melestarikan tradisi, dengan gaya dan cita rasa” in duration 03.41 - 03.46. The language units in that *narrative* clearly display loyal identity representation of Bandung in clause “melestarikan tradisi dengan gaya dan cita rasa”. So even with the *setting* displayed in the form of *Barongan* dance and contemporary festival performances on the streets of Bandung.

- **Caretaker**

Another identity found in the Indonesian tourism promotion video is caretaker society identity. There are two videos that represent the identity, e.i Wakatobi and East

## Java videos.

In Wakatobi video, precisely on duration 02.14 - 02.22, there is a *narrative* element that represents that identity, “*...Surga laut yang lestari oleh penjaga yang setia, yang memelihara laut dan isinya, berkat cara bertahan hidup yang tak serakah*” and *setting* of a child who was fishing with a spear. Both elements show that the Wakatobi people who is close to marine life are a society that is not greedy, keeping the sea that makes the sea as a heaven that is able to give all its needs.

The second video, East Java, in duration 02.14 - 02.24 there is a *narrative* element of “*...Jawa timur, yang memiliki masa lampau dan masa depan, yang melangkah maju, merangkul tradisi*”. The clause “*memiliki masa lampau dan masa depan*” and “*melangkah maju*”, become a major signifier that East Java people always take care of what has been passed by the previous generation, which is then passed on to the next generation. That is the key to being East Java society is always “*melangkah maju*” in living life.

## Conclusion

From the discussion on identity representation of Indonesian society in Indonesian tourism promotion video, it concluded that from the fifteen video sources, there are twelve videos containing the identity representation i.e. West Papua, Yogyakarta, Jakarta, Labuan Bajo (Komodo National Park), Lombok (West Nusa Tenggara), North Sumatra, East Java, Manado (North Sulawesi), Toraja (South Sulawesi), Wakatobi, Flores - Kelimutu, and Tanjung Puting - Palangkaraya.

From *representation* level analysis element proposed by Fiske, the entire video used *narrative* and *settings* elements in presenting the identity representation of Indonesian society. The identities of Indonesian society represented in the videos, namely identity as multicultural, religious, friendly, loyal, and caretaker society.

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