



P-ISSN 2355-2794
E-ISSN 2461-0275

The Construction of Indonesian Nature and Culture in Tourism Videos Produced by Wonderful Indonesia

Ardiya*
Cece Sobarna
Rosaria Mita Amalia
Nani Darmayanti

Department of Linguistics, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Padjadjaran, Sumedang
45363, INDONESIA

Abstract

Wonderful Indonesia is the trademark of the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (Kementerian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif or Kemenparekraf), responsible for producing videos aimed at promoting tourism to national and international tourists. Consequently, this study seeks to examine the representation of identity in the construction of Indonesian nature and culture. Based on this perspective, the selected video for analysis was 'Wonderful Indonesia Challenge: Borobudur', and the use of the multimodal discourse analysis showed that Indonesian nature and culture were constructed uniquely in this video. Additionally, the selected video represented nature in diverse tourist destinations as exotic, beautiful, friendly, comfortable, and pleasant. Traditional culture was also portrayed as preserved by the local community, even in daily activities. The glorification of locality was increasingly felt when tourists were proven to be actively engaged and happy. Simultaneously, local people in the video were shown to be passive but friendly. However, this video did not portray traditional culture as being close to tourists. The entire scenario was relatively open, enjoyable, and experienced, and even recorded by tourists, despite the sacred nature of the ritual performed. This condition gave the impression that Indonesian nature and culture were exotic, beautiful, unrestricted, comfortable, safe, and enjoyable.

Keywords: Construction of Indonesian culture, Indonesian tourism, multimodal discourse analysis, Wonderful Indonesia.

* Corresponding author, email: ardiya20001@mail.unpad.ac.id

Citation in APA style: Ardiya, A., Sobarna, C., Amalia, R. M., & Darmayanti, N. (2025). The construction of Indonesian nature and culture in tourism videos produced by Wonderful Indonesia. *Studies in English Language and Education*, 12(3), 1630-1644.

Received May 23, 2024; Revised July 10, 2025; Accepted August 6, 2025; Published Online September 30, 2025

<https://doi.org/10.24815/siele.v12i3.38790>

Copyright © 2025 by Authors, published by *Studies in English Language and Education*. This is an open-access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

1. INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (*Kementerian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif* or Kemenparekraf) of Indonesia, through its trademark Wonderful Indonesia, is known for introducing and promoting tourism to the international community (Fahrizal et al., 2022). This trademark produces videos that are packaged to attract both foreign and domestic tourists (Petriana, 2017; Siregar & Wardhani, 2023). Moreover, the government's commitment to the promotion process is evident in the massive production of Kemenparekraf tourism videos, which are uploaded through the official YouTube channel.

The official website account, created on July 19, 2015, has uploaded 2,883 videos, with a total of 293,000 subscribers and 14,734,038 viewers, as of September 2, 2025. The growth of the tourism sector has increased significantly with the presence of these communication videos (Febriyantoro, 2020; Silaban et al., 2022; Yanti et al., 2023). Based on data from the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) in September 2018, Indonesia's tourism growth ranked ninth, third, and first fastest in the world, Asia, and Southeast Asia, respectively.

The Ministry is primarily focused on attracting foreign tourists, given the significant impact on the country's foreign exchange. This expectation became a reality, as data from the *Badan Pusat Statistik* or Central Bureau of Statistics (2019) show that the number of foreign tourists rose drastically between 2014 and 2018 by an average of 14%, compared to the previous period from 2009 to 2013, which averaged only 9%. As a result, tourism contributed the largest share of foreign exchange, amounting to USD 19.29 billion in 2018 (Safitri, 2022; Yusup et al., 2022). The government proclaimed this sector as the core economy of Indonesia in the following years (Rosyadi et al., 2022).

Several previous studies examined tourism videos (Dzulyana, 2019; Margaret & Sukendro, 2022; Wicaksono & Yunitasari, 2018), Kemenparekraf's marketing communication strategy (Azzahrani, 2018; Macaryus et al., 2020), including intercultural communication and nation branding (Amalia et al., 2024; Murti et al., 2023; Sugi & Putri, 2019). However, the majority of the analyzed videos produced by another Kemenparekraf trademark, namely Pesona Indonesia, were aimed at domestic tourists. This study focused on examining videos produced by Wonderful Indonesia, which were specifically aimed at promoting tourism to the international community using the multimodal discourse.

Several studies implemented multimodal analysis tools and discourse, demonstrating a significant presence in this area. This was evident from a multimodal discourse analysis of story texts, kindergarten designs, refugee paintings, news reports, and e-commerce advertisements (Catalani, 2021; Chen & Cheung, 2022; La Rose, 2012; Ranker, 2018; Wallace, 2021). Additionally, there were multimodal analyses of regimes and public figures (Motschenbacher, 2023), including women's clothing (Bouvier, 2017).

Based on the numerous studies mentioned earlier, none had examined the construction of Indonesianness in advertising videos produced by Wonderful Indonesia. The survey by Sugi and Putri (2019) had a relatively similar objective, which focused on the meaning of nation branding. However, it remained perplexing due to the concept that the nation was more of a practical instrument, far from theoretical and philosophical discourse. Prior studies related to Kemenparekraf's tourism videos tended to be descriptive, rather than critically examining the advertising process. These studies explained the reality that tourism was the appropriate space for introducing Indonesia to the world. Based on this perspective, the present study aims to fill the gap.

The success of Kemenparekraf, realized through Wonderful Indonesia, raised questions about the construction of Indonesian identity represented in the videos. In addition, this present study viewed tourism videos through the framework of Kress and van Leeuwen's multimodal discourse analysis. This was adopted to analyze the language, signs, and symbols in the videos (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Based on the explanation, this study addressed the following question:

1. How is Indonesian identity represented through the construction of nature and culture in the *Wonderful Indonesia Challenge: Borobudur*?

The analysis portrayed the verbal and visual metafunction in the video, including the construction of the represented Indonesian identity. Borobudur was chosen as the focus because it is one of Indonesia's most iconic heritage sites, symbolizing the nation's cultural richness and historical depth, recognized worldwide. Examining Borobudur allows the study to explore how national identity is visually and linguistically constructed through a globally recognizable cultural landmark.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Multimodal Discourse Analysis in Media and Tourism

The concept of multimodal discourse analysis was developed in the last two decades to address the various sources adopted in the meaningful expression of communication. The terminology refers to an approach that understands communication and representation beyond the meaning delivered through verbal language. Additionally, multimodality is an approach that understands communication and representation beyond the mere use of language. This includes all forms of communication, as well as the relationship between specific uses, gestures, gaze, and posture (Jewitt, 2009).

In general, newspapers, magazines, computers, and mass media have created multimodal texts when combined with video, audio, and written texts, aiming to amplify, complexify, embellish, or produce different meanings from spoken language. Multimodal discourse analysis is a method used to explore visual and verbal dimensions, or even a combination of both. This analytical tool was considered the most relevant method for evaluating objects characterized by visual and verbal elements. Furthermore, multimodal discourse analysis was initiated (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006) from Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), which analyzes verbal meaning through three metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal, and textual (Halliday, 2004).

Previous studies have reported that the visual metafunction of each component was introduced through multimodal discourse analysis (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). Ideational metafunction examined how reality was portrayed in videos. Meanwhile, interpersonal and textual metafunctions assessed participants' interactions in videos and how messages were delivered through a thematic system, respectively. These three metafunctions in metadiscourse analysis are shown in Figure 1.

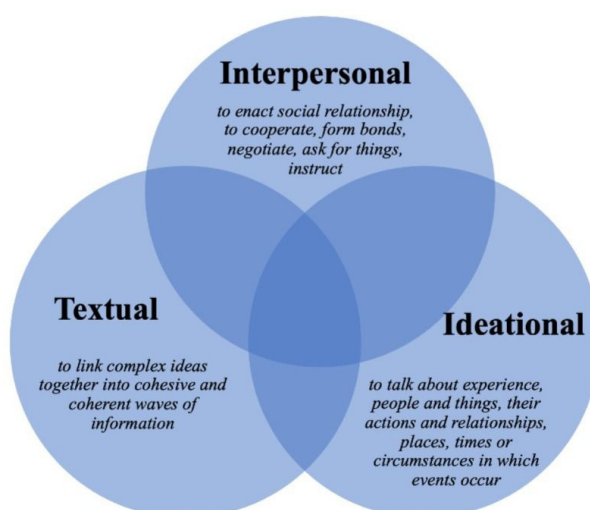


Figure 1. Three metafunctions in multimodal discourse analysis by Halliday (1985, p. 30).

The theory of multimodal discourse analysis examines in detail the meanings conveyed through verbal and visual metafunctions, including elements such as color, expression, art,

poetry, and text. This was used to interpret and construe the intent and meaning of language, words, or utterances contained in the visual space (Hermawan, 2013). Moreover, the concept enabled the analysis of various visual communications, writing, art, typography, drawing, graphic design, illustration, and color in the delivery process (Hermawan, 2013). Jewitt (2009) reported that there were five lines of inquiry in multimodal discourse studies:

1. Meaningful analysis focused on describing semiotic resources such as visual images, colors, and sounds.
2. Exploring intersemiotic resources, i.e., the relationships across and between modes in multimodal texts, including images and written language.
3. Multimodal texts and technology, where the proposed study provided mutual coherence. It examined how computer-enabled multimodal discourse configurations impacted the dimensions of design, text production, and interpretation.
4. The focus on knowledge, pedagogy, literacy, and the analysis of meaning-making processes generated by multimodal discourse in different curriculum areas, namely math, science, and others.
5. Practical identity analysis, which centered on how language meaning was articulated in educational contexts through multimodal texts.

In this context, multimodal discourse serves as a tool for understanding language use in multiple forms, including verbal and visual modes of communication. For example, in public communication, different modes often appear simultaneously, where verbal text is combined with specific images. This shows that multimodal texts integrate various semiotic modes (sign systems), such as language, images, gestures, typography, graphics, and icons.

2.2 Representations of Nature and Culture in Tourism Discourse

The discourse on tourism has primarily focused on how nature and culture were represented. The use of language metafunction enables representations to outline certain aspects while excluding others. Tourism discourse also tends to portray nature as a consumable resource for experiencing diversity (Isti'anah & Suhandano, 2022; Isti'anah et al., 2024). Furthermore, tourism discourse was often carried out through marketing procedures, using brochures, websites, and advertisements. Previous studies have emphasized that the representation of nature and culture must be understood as a language metafunction that is inherently social (Halliday, 1978; Sinar, 2018).

Based on this perspective, Halliday proposed six definitions of language as a social system (Halliday, 1978). First, language is closely tied to the immediate environment. People use it as a medium of communication in diverse social contexts (both physical and environmental) to understand one another. As a result, humans transmit language depending on their respective attitudes toward the environment, culture, beliefs, and community values. Second, intra- and inter-organism communication, specifically related to human interaction, operates within two dimensions: psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic. Third, language plays an important role in child development, as it is transmitted through the family, community, environment, and culture. Fourth, language is analogous to the social system of society, and vice versa. Fifth, language is bound by the situation, both when spoken and written, forcing the subject to participate in certain situations. Sixth, the concept of meaning in language is arbitrary and found in its social context; therefore, the meaning is never fixed (Sinar, 2018, pp. 19-23). Based on the six frameworks, prior studies by Halliday (1978), Streeck (1995) further formulated the metafunctions of language, characterized by three functions: ideational, interpersonal, and textual.

Halliday divided language metafunctions into three categories: ideational, interpersonal, and textual. Each piece of language, he argued, simultaneously performs all three functions. Building on this framework, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) expanded the scope to include both verbal and visual metafunctions. In the discourse of tourism, these metafunctions work together to shape representations of nature and culture. The integration of verbal and visual metafunctions plays a crucial role in constructing the uniqueness of natural landscapes, community social life,

and the promotion of tourist destinations, while also shaping tourists' perceptions of these destinations.

2.3 Tourism Campaigns and National Identity in the Indonesian Context

The Indonesian government, through Kemenparekraf, has worked tirelessly to promote tourism worldwide. This effort was realized through the adoption of the Wonderful Indonesia trademark, which consistently produces tourism promotion videos. In line with this initiative, the campaign has proven effective. Data obtained from the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) in September 2018 showed that Indonesia's tourism growth ranked 9th globally, 3rd in Asia, and 1st in Southeast Asia (Sofia, 2018).

The tourism campaign under the "Wonderful Indonesia" trademark has played a significant role in shaping the country's national identity and global image. At present, Kemenparekraf manages three official channels: Kemenparekraf, Wonderful Indonesia, and Indonesia Travel. Since the launch of the Kemenparekraf channel on July 19, 2015, up until September 2, 2025, it has uploaded 2,883 videos, with a total of 293,000 subscribers and 14,734,038 viewers. In this context, national identity is often misunderstood as a discourse imagined by local communities and specific groups for a common purpose (Anderson, 2016; Dewojati & Arifin, 2024). However, Indonesian identity was constructed through the government's narrative and imagination.

In line with the description above, the campaign promoted the country's natural beauty and culture, serving as an effective public diplomacy tool in attracting tourists and investment (Fahrizal et al., 2022). International tourists were the primary target, with their numbers increasing significantly between 2014 and 2018, averaging 14% growth compared to only 9% in the previous period (2009–2013). As a result, tourism emerged as the largest foreign exchange earner in 2018, contributing USD 19.29 billion (Safitri, 2022; Yusup et al., 2022). The government had designated tourism as the economic pillar of Indonesia in subsequent years (Rosyadi et al., 2022).

3. METHODS

3.1 Design of Study

This study employed Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA), which integrates various communicative modes within a text. The framework was used to examine the verbal and visual metafunctions in the tourism video of *Wonderful Indonesia Challenge: Borobudur*, focusing on how these elements construct Indonesian identity. The analysis targeted selected clips featuring natural landscapes and cultural elements to reveal aspects of nature and culture representation that might be overlooked in the complete video.

3.2 Source of Data

The video analyzed, *Wonderful Indonesia Challenge: Borobudur*, was uploaded on November 13, 2018. It was chosen for its rich depiction of Indonesian landscapes and cultural elements, offering a strong basis for examining the representation of national and ethnic identities. The video also functions as a medium for presenting these identities to an international audience (Sukma, 2021). Additionally, it features Borobudur, internationally recognized as one of the world's wonders and a super-premium tourist destination. This makes it an ideal case for examining how tourism media construct and communicate Indonesian identity, particularly through diplomacy and cultural representation (Seraphine et al., 2018).

3.3 Technique of Data Collection and Analysis

The video was viewed repeatedly until the researchers captured all its details accurately. The data analysis process consisted of two main stages. The first involved a detailed examination

of the video's visual and verbal components, exploring how images, text, and sound interacted to convey meaningful representations of culture and identity (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). The second stage focused on interpreting these findings to understand how Indonesian identity was constructed in the videos. The structural analysis of these components demonstrated how digital media, particularly tourism promotional videos, communicate national identity in the digital age. This approach, consistent with the principles of MDA (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006), provided a rigorous framework for analyzing the complexity of contemporary media communication.

4. RESULTS

The video *Wonderful Indonesia Challenge: Borobudur* has a duration of 5 minutes and 3 seconds. Various verbal texts were used to provide context for the visual images in the video. The actors were primarily YouTubers invited by Wonderful Indonesia to explore the tourist destination of Borobudur and its surrounding areas. These YouTubers were also given four challenges, including the Batik Painting, Sandboarding, Batik Shopping, and Batik of the Day Challenges. They came from different countries, namely the Ryka Twins from Australia, Hanggini from Indonesia, Changyong from Malaysia, and Sylvia (NOC) and Grace from Singapore. All verbal texts in the video are delivered in English.

4.1 Verbal and Visual Metafunctions

The *Wonderful Indonesia Challenge: Borobudur* video showed visuals of the Borobudur Temple and nearby tourist sites. Understanding visual modality is crucial to interpreting its meanings as produced by Kemenparekraf through Wonderful Indonesia. The following section analyzes the visual metafunctions of ideational, interpersonal, and textual.

4.1.1 Ideational

The form of ideational meaning in verbal metafunction was understood in a clause. This was used to investigate the representation of phenomena, experiences, states, and time through language. Ideational meaning refers to the representation of experiences and ideas within a clause, realized through transitivity processes. The types of transitivity processes include material, mental, relational, behavioral, and existential.

a. Material process

The material process, in this case, depicts the process of doing, which consists of actors and goals. Both tend to manifest in groups or nominal elements. Therefore, this process identifies how an actor performs or impacts another entity. The clause in the video classified as a material process is "Wonderful Indonesia invited YouTubers from Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Australia to explore Borobudur and to complete several challenges".



Figure 2. Visualization of the material process in *Wonderful Indonesia Challenge: Borobudur*.

A clause from the video highlights Wonderful Indonesia's role in constructing representation. Here, Wonderful Indonesia functions as the actor in a material process, inviting beneficiaries, namely, "YouTubers from Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Australia..." The objective of the material process was "to explore Borobudur and to complete several challenges." This illustrated how Wonderful Indonesia positioned itself as a promoter of Indonesian culture.

b. Relational process

The relational process was depicted in the video to provide descriptive and identifying information. This was often expressed through sentences or nominal clauses clarifying related conditions. In the video's seventh text, a relational process appears in the clause "Borobudur is a 9th-century Mahayana Buddhist temple in Magelang Regency, Central Java, Indonesia".



Figure 3. Visualization of the relational process in *Wonderful Indonesia Challenge: Borobudur*.

The text included in the relational process was categorized as a nominal sentence to explain Borobudur, using pictures of the temples at the site. Furthermore, there was another text with a different relational process regarding Borobudur, which read, "It's the world's largest Buddhist temple". This clause informed viewers about the historical and cultural significance of Borobudur, strengthening its role as a symbol of Indonesia's national identity.

c. Verbal process

The verbal process involves expressing a speaker's utterance directly and includes three participants: the speaker, the receiver, and the verbiage. In the video, Hangyong, a YouTuber from Malaysia, exemplifies this process when he addresses the camera before playing on the Elo River, saying, "So we are going to play on the boat in the Elo River".



Figure 4. Visualization of the verbal process in *Wonderful Indonesia Challenge: Borobudur*.

4.1.2 Interpersonal

In systemic functional linguistics, metafunctions provide a different perspective for analyzing meaningful texts. Interpersonal metafunction focused on articulation in interactions

between participants. Therefore, the concept is closely related to the mood system, which consists of subjects and finite. This could be analyzed as conversational functions in speech, including declarative, imperative, and interrogative moods.

a. Statement (declarative mood)

Statements are used to provide information, make assertions, and express ideas. Declarative statements in the video conveyed the functional meaning of speech in a broad sense, often informing the audience about the intentions and activities of the YouTubers. Similar to the interpersonal metafunction, the text demonstrated the relationship between the actors and the audience. The following utterance by Changyong, a YouTuber from Malaysia, exemplifies the declarative mood: “Because yesterday, October 2nd, is National Batik Day. Therefore, currently we are here to buy *batiks*.” This clause is declarative as it conveys factual information rather than a question or command, maintaining an informative, interactive tone.



Figure 5. Visualization statement (declarative mood) in *Wonderful Indonesia Challenge: Borobudur*.

b. Command (imperative mood)

The next is a statement of invitation spoken by Changyong to the audience. He continues to say, “Let’s go to buy *batik* right away”. The clause is included in the imperative form of an invitation or command, which generally contains only a predicator. Imperative clause structure is included in a mood that had a subject but lacked a finite verb. In mood types, imperatives lacked both subjects and finites, though some showed exceptions.

c. Gaze or contact

A key visual element in the multimodal analysis was gaze. Most actors used indirect gazes, providing shared experience and inviting viewers to join the journey, while occasional direct gazes, especially from Changyong, created moments of personal connection, balancing collective and individual engagement.



Figure 6. Visualization of gaze or contact in *Wonderful Indonesia Challenge: Borobudur*.

d. Frame size or social distance

Another important visual element analyzed in the video was the use of frame sizes. The display of various frame sizes allowed the video to show the conditions and activities of YouTubers as they explored tourist destinations. The use of frame sizes was chronologically quite random and diverse. However, these were not displayed sequentially, such as from a close shot, continuing to a medium shot, and then to a long shot. This variation created a lively visual rhythm that maintained audience engagement and highlighted different aspects of the travel experience.

e. Viewpoint or angle

Viewpoint illustrates how the image's appearance can influence the viewer's perspective and the object of the photo. There are two types of viewpoints or angles, namely vertical and horizontal. Based on this perspective, the horizontal angle dominated the images presented because the video was uploaded to a YouTube channel. This dominance of horizontal angles aligns with the platform's viewing format, creating a sense of familiarity and accessibility for the audience, which in turn makes the content more relatable.

4.1.3 Textual

The textual metafunction focuses on clauses organized as coherent messages and structures. This was depicted by the presence of theme elements. Moreover, the theme serves as the starting point for a message that presents the given perspective on general information. In this context, there are several types, namely topical, interpersonal, and textual themes.

a. Topical theme

A topical theme is an element that appears at the start of a clause. This element is divided into two, namely unmarked and marked themes. The unmarked theme dominated the topical theme in the video. Therefore, the topical theme in all texts presented in the video placed the subject as the first element in a clause or sentence. This was evident in the following sentence, Wonderful Indonesia invited YouTubers from Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Australia to explore Borobudur and complete several challenges. In this sentence, the topical theme was unmarked, which provided information that Wonderful Indonesia had an event, resulting in the invitation of YouTubers from various countries to explore Borobudur.

b. Interpersonal theme

An interpersonal theme was identified in the video when the YouTuber addressed the camera, explaining that they were about to play on a boat on the Elo River. The relevant verbal text is as follows: "So we are going to play on the boat in the Elo River." The word 'so' in this sentence represents an interpersonal theme, functioning specifically as a comment adjunct. This classification applies because 'so' is an adverbial expression that signals the speaker's attitude or conclusion, thereby engaging the audience in shared understanding.

c. Textual theme

Textual theme refers to the integration of clause relations within conjunctive and continuity contexts. The theme in the video was deciphered through the verbal text spoken by the YouTuber. The text reads, "Because yesterday, October 2nd, is National Batik Day. Therefore, currently we are here to buy *batiks*". The visual text that shows the context of what the actors were working on was the text that read "3rd Challenge: Batik Shopping Challenge". The element preceding the subject was categorized as a textual theme. This is because it contained words that established a

connection between the clause and the context of the YouTubers' intentions. In this case, the textual theme functions as a conjunctive adjunct, linking the clause to its broader context.

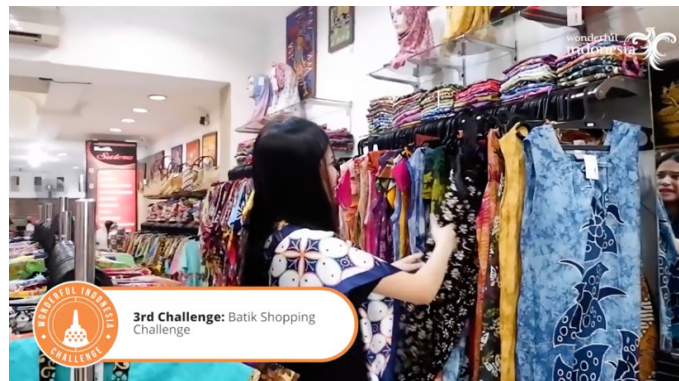


Figure 7. Visualization of textual theme in *Wonderful Indonesia Challenge: Borobudur*.

d. Information value

The objects in the image were arranged in three types of placement. First, the left and right placements depicted the given and new, respectively. Second, top and bottom placement indicated that an item positioned at the top represented the ideal, while an item placed at the bottom implied reality. Third, center and periphery placement showed that other supporting elements surrounded objects placed in the middle.



Figure 8. Visualization of information value in *Wonderful Indonesia Challenge: Borobudur*.

e. Salience

Salience distinguishes key elements in a visual image, emphasizing their importance. In Figure 9, contrast appears between insider and outsider: the uniformed coachman in dark *batik* contrasts with actors in bright casual attire, symbolizing a divide between the two.



Figure 9. Visualization of salience in *Wonderful Indonesia Challenge: Borobudur*.

f. Frame

Framing shows how the composition of the image was strongly or weakly enclosed when connected or disconnected from the elements. The stronger the framing of an aspect, the more it is presented as a separate unit of information. In the video, this aspect was evident through connection and separation. The separate framing was more dominant because tourists from various countries wore different bright-colored clothes. Meanwhile, local people or insiders were portrayed as calmer, wearing traditional clothes, avoiding the camera, and prioritizing their respective work.

4.2 Representation of Borobudur Temple and Its Surroundings

The video *Wonderful Indonesia Challenge: Borobudur* centered its narrative on Borobudur Temple as the main attraction while also featuring several nearby destinations. The YouTubers explored a range of sites surrounding the Borobudur area, including Punthuk Setumbu (Magelang), Wanurejo Tourism Village, the Elo River (Magelang), Parangkusumo Sand Dunes (Yogyakarta), Jalan Malioboro, and Pengger Pine Forest. These places were portrayed as integral parts of the Borobudur tourism experience, combining natural and cultural beauty. The video constructed two dominant forms of representation: the exotic natural landscape and the traditional cultural life. Both were juxtaposed with the presence of foreign YouTubers, highlighting a contrast between modern global visitors and the traditional local environment. This interaction not only reinforced Borobudur's image as a world-class destination but also reflected how Indonesia's tourism narrative negotiates between tradition and modernity.

4.2.1 Representation of Borobudur Temple and its surroundings

From the beginning, the title *Wonderful Indonesia Challenge: Borobudur* signaled the centrality of the Borobudur Temple as a symbol of Indonesian heritage. The video presented the temple through sweeping panoramic shots and close-up visuals of its intricate reliefs and stupas, emphasizing its grandeur, uniqueness, and well-preserved state. This visual treatment constructed Borobudur as both majestic and sacred, yet also accessible and welcoming to international visitors.

The surrounding tourist destinations, such as Punthuk Setumbu, known for its sunrise views of the temple, and the Elo River, used for rafting, were portrayed as complementary experiences that extended the meaning of Borobudur beyond a religious monument. These scenes represented the natural environment as exotic and vibrant, inviting viewers to appreciate the beauty and diversity of Central Java. In doing so, *Wonderful Indonesia* redefined Borobudur's appeal, situating it not only as a site of spiritual reverence but also as part of a broader landscape of leisure, adventure, and discovery.

This reorientation aligned with the government's tourism strategy, which sought to revitalize Borobudur as a "super-priority destination." By presenting it through an entertaining and globally relatable lens, via international YouTubers, the video reframed Borobudur from a strictly sacred site into a lively, interactive space of cross-cultural engagement.

4.2.2 Representation of culture around the Borobudur Temple

The cultural representation surrounding Borobudur was equally significant. The video shows local traditions, such as batik-making and village tourism activities, emphasizing their authenticity and rootedness in everyday life. These depictions foregrounded the traditional culture of the region, contrasting it with the lifestyles of the visiting YouTubers. This juxtaposition highlighted how local identity is preserved and celebrated within Indonesia's global tourism narrative.

The cultural scenes were framed to show warm interactions between locals and visitors,

symbolizing hospitality and openness. This portrayal positioned Indonesian culture as both authentic and welcoming, reflecting the broader Wonderful Indonesia branding that stresses cultural pride and inclusivity. Through these representations, the video communicated a cohesive message: Indonesia's identity, as symbolized by Borobudur and its surroundings, is grounded in harmony between nature, tradition, and modern global engagement.

5. DISCUSSION

The findings reveal that *Wonderful Indonesia Challenge: Borobudur* constructs Indonesian identity through the interaction of verbal and visual metafunctions that promote a harmonious relationship between nature, culture, and modern tourism. The portrayal of Borobudur Temple and its surroundings as both exotic and accessible reinforces Halliday's (1985, 2004) ideational metafunction, which emphasizes how language represents experience. Consistent with Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) framework, the visual grammar employed, through gaze, framing, and information value, functions to shape viewers' perceptions of Indonesia as both sacred and welcoming. This duality mirrors findings by Sukma (2021), who argued that official tourism media strategically balance national authenticity with international appeal to foster a positive nation brand. The integration of verbal narration and visual storytelling in this study thus demonstrates how multimodal texts are deliberately designed to convey national identity in a persuasive and aesthetically appealing manner.

The reorientation of Borobudur from a religious monument to a global tourism attraction further reflects the role of multimodal discourse in redefining sacred spaces for contemporary consumption. This transformation aligns with Isti'anah and Suhandano's (2022) observation that tourism discourse often commodifies nature and culture as consumable experiences. In the Wonderful Indonesia video, the sacred and the spectacular coexist; religious symbolism is reframed within the context of leisure and international travel. The representation of Borobudur as a 'super-premium' destination exemplifies what Seraphin et al. (2018) described as 'heritage commodification', where cultural icons are rebranded to appeal to global audiences. By employing YouTubers from multiple countries, the campaign personalizes Indonesia's heritage through diverse perspectives, strengthening inclusivity and soft power diplomacy (Fahrizal et al., 2022).

The interpersonal metafunctions identified in the video, such as gaze, declarative and imperative moods, and direct address, illustrate how the video constructs relational meanings between the actors and viewers. The alternation between direct and indirect gazes, for instance, aligns with Jewitt's (2009) notion that multimodal resources generate engagement and intimacy in visual communication. These shifts encourage audiences to both observe and participate imaginatively in the tourism experience. Similarly, the frequent use of declarative clauses, such as statements describing destinations or cultural events, supports previous studies (Chen & Cheung, 2022; Ranker, 2018) showing that multimodal discourse in advertising tends to favor informative and invitational language to establish trust and credibility. Consequently, the interpersonal elements in the Wonderful Indonesia campaign are not merely stylistic but strategic tools for creating affective proximity between Indonesia and its global audience.

Finally, the textual metafunctions, through cohesive themes and conjunctive adjuncts like *so* and *because*, show how verbal and visual messages are intertwined to form coherent narratives of national identity. This coherence corresponds to Halliday's (1978) concept of language as a social semiotic system that organizes experience and interaction within cultural contexts. The correlation of theme and information structure in the video mirrors what Hermawan (2013) described as the 'visual syntax' of multimodal texts, where meaning emerges from the interaction of linguistic and visual cues. These findings confirm that Wonderful Indonesia successfully uses multimodal discourse to articulate Indonesianness as a blend of natural beauty, cultural authenticity, and global openness, resonating with prior research on tourism branding as nation-building (Amalia et al., 2024; Sugi & Putri, 2019).

6. CONCLUSION

This study examined how *Wonderful Indonesia Challenge: Borobudur*, produced by Kemenparekraf, constructs Indonesian identity through the interplay of visual and verbal metafunctions. The findings indicate that the video presents nature as exotic, comfortable, and harmonious, while depicting culture as authentic, preserved, and inclusive. These representations align with the multimodal discourse framework, revealing that Indonesian identity is mediated through both linguistic and visual design to communicate harmony between tradition and modernity. The portrayal of Borobudur and its surrounding destinations positions Indonesia as a vibrant, welcoming nation that celebrates diversity while remaining rooted in cultural heritage. This construction also reflects the government's effort to promote Indonesia internationally as a symbol of unity in diversity (or known as *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*), strengthening its nation brand through creative digital media.

Aside from underpinning Indonesia's national image, the study contributes to the growing body of multimodal discourse research by representing how tourism videos serve as powerful tools of cultural diplomacy. Through the representation of local traditions and international YouTubers, the video bridges global and local perspectives, inviting audiences to engage emotionally and experientially with Indonesian culture. However, this study is limited to a single video and thus cannot generalize the representation of Indonesian identity across all Wonderful Indonesia productions. Future research should extend the analysis to multiple videos or social media platforms, integrating audience reception studies to assess how global viewers interpret these multimodal messages. Expanding the scope to include gender, ethnicity, and regional diversity would also provide a more comprehensive understanding of how Indonesian identity is negotiated and projected through digital tourism discourse.

REFERENCES

- Amalia, R. M., Sujatna, E. T. S., Krisnawati, E., & Pamungkas, K. (2024). Savoring Sundanese food: A discourse analysis of Instagram's powerful promotion of Bandung's culture and culinary. *Studies in English Language and Education*, 11(1), 474-490. <https://doi.org/10.24815/siele.v11i1.29716>
- Anderson, B. (2016). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. Verso.
- Azzahrani, M. (2018). Strategi komunikasi pemasaran Kementerian Pariwisata Indonesia dalam Pesona Indonesia melalui YouTube [The Indonesian Ministry of Tourism's marketing communication strategy for the Pesona Indonesia via YouTube]. *Jurnal Manajemen Komunikasi*, 2(2), 144-161. <https://doi.org/10.24198/JMK.V2I2.12925>
- Bouvier, G. (2017). Clothing and meaning making: A multimodal approach to women's abayas. *Visual Communication*, 17(2), 187-207. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1470357217742340>
- Catalani, A. (2021). Refugee artists and memories of displacement: A visual semiotics analysis. *Visual Communication*, 20(2), 184-208. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1470357219859042>
- Central Bureau of Statistics. (2019). *Statistik Indonesia 2019* [Indonesian statistics 2019]. <https://www.bps.go.id/id/publication/2019/07/04/daac1ba18cae1e90706ee58a/statistik-indonesia-2019.html>
- Chen, Z. T., & Cheung, M. (2022). Consumption as extended carnival on Tmall in contemporary China: A social semiotic multimodal analysis of interactive banner ads. *Social Semiotics*, 32(2), 163-183. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10350330.2020.1720992>
- Dewojati, C., & Arifin, M. Z. (2024). From ethnic prejudice to ethnic solidarity: Representation of Muslim women in pre-independence Indonesian *Peranakan* Chinese literature. *GEMA Online® Journal of Language Studies*, 24(1), 153-172. <http://doi.org/10.17576/gema-2024-2401-09>
- Dzuliyana, M. A. (2019). *Analisis semiotika pesan makna pada iklan Pesona Indonesia versi Destinasi Pesona Indonesia 2017* [Semiotic analysis of the meaning of messages in the

- Pesona Indonesia advertisement on Destinasi Pesona Indonesia 2017 version] [Master's thesis, Universitas Mercu Buana Jakarta]. Mercu Buana University Institutional Repository. <https://repository.mercubuana.ac.id/49565/>
- Fahrizal, M., Sundari, R., Shiddiqi, M. A. A., & Rani, F. (2022). The strategy of the Indonesian government in implementing the Wonderful Indonesia digital diplomacy program. *KEMUDI: Jurnal Ilmu Pemerintahan*, 7(1), 47-65. <https://doi.org/10.31629/kemudi.v7i1.4814>
- Febriyantoro, M. T. (2020). Exploring YouTube Marketing Communication: Brand awareness, brand image and purchase intention in the millennial generation. *Cogent Business & Management*, 7(1), 1787733. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2020.1787733>
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1978). *Language as social semiotic: The social interpretation of language and meaning*. Edward Arnold.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1985). *An introduction to functional grammar*. Edward Arnold.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (2004). *An introduction to functional grammar* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Hermawan, B. (2013). Multimodality: Menafsir verbal, membaca gambar, dan memahami teks [Multimodality: Interpreting words, reading images, and understanding texts]. *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra*, 13(1), 19-28. https://doi.org/10.17509/bs_jpbsp.v13i1.756
- Isti'anah, A., & Suhandano, S. (2022). Appraisal patterns used on the Kalimantan tourism website: An ecolinguistics perspective. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 9(1), 2146928. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2022.2146928>
- Isti'anah, A., Suhandano, S., & Winarti, D. (2024). Quantifying nature in tourism discourse: A corpus-ecolinguistic perspective. *Jurnal Arbitrer*, 11(2), 172-185. <https://doi.org/10.25077/ar.11.2.172-185.2024>
- Jewitt, C. (Ed.). (2009). *The Routledge handbook of multimodal analysis*. Routledge.
- Kress, G. R., & van Leeuwen, T. (2001). *Multimodal discourse: The modes and media of contemporary communication*. Arnold Publishers.
- Kress, G., & van Leeuwen, T. (2006). *Reading images: The grammar of visual design*. Routledge.
- La Rose, T. (2012). Digital media stories through multimodal analysis: A case study of Erahoneybee's Song About a Child Welfare Agency. *Journal of Technology in Human Services*, 30(3-4), 299-311. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15228835.2012.745356>
- Macaryus, S., Wicaksono, Y. P., Sudirman, A., & Al Masjid, A. (2020). My life my adventure: Bahasa iklan pariwisata di era disrupsi [My life my adventure: The language of tourism advertising in the disruption era]. In H. S. P. Saputra, N. Anoegrajekti, T. Maslikatin, & Z. Umniyyah (Eds.), *Humaniora dan Era Disrupsi: E-Prosiding Seminar Nasional Pekan Chairil Anwar*. Jember University Press. <https://prosiding.jurnal.unej.ac.id/index.php/prosiding/article/view/19992>
- Margaret, M., & Sukendro, G. G. (2022). Kreativitas iklan Indomie di televisi dari masa ke masa (Tahun 1980-2000an) [The creativity of Indomie advertisements on television from time to time (1980s-2000s)]. *Kiwari*, 1(1), 91-99. <https://doi.org/10.24912/ki.v1i1.15538>
- Motschenbacher, H. (2023). Affective regimes on Wilton Drive: A multimodal analysis. *Social Semiotics*, 33(1), 168-187. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10350330.2020.1788823>
- Murti, D. C. W., Ratriyana, I. N., & Asmoro, I. D. (2023). "Dream now, travel tomorrow": Communicating the nation branding of Indonesia through tourism-based social media. *Howard Journal of Communications*, 34(3), 293-314. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10646175.2023.2169086>
- Petrian, B. (2017). *The perceived destination image of Indonesia: An assessment on travel blogs written by the industry's top markets* [Master's thesis, Te Herenga Waka-Victoria University of Wellington]. Open Access Te Herega Waka-Victoria University of Wellington. <https://doi.org/10.26686/wgtn.17060867.v1>
- Ranker, J. (2018). Uses of multimodal statements on the playground: A Foucaultian approach to multimodal discourse analysis. *Social Semiotics*, 28(2), 169-183. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10350330.2017.1278917>
- Rosyadi, S., Sabiq, A., Ahmad, A. A., & Nuryanti. (2022). The Indonesian government capacity in responding to the COVID-19 impacts on the creative economy sector. *Sage*

- Open*, 12(2), 21582440221105820. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440221105820>
- Safitri, L. (2022). The analysis of food quality, city image, and promotion of revisits in Bukittinggi city tourism West Sumatera with customer satisfaction as intervening variable. *Dinasti International Journal of Management Science*, 3(3), 578-591. <https://doi.org/10.31933/dijms.v3i3.1129>
- Seraphin, H., Yallop, A. C., Capatína, A., & Gowreesunkar, V. G. (2018). Heritage in tourism organisations' branding strategy: The case of a post-colonial, post-conflict and post-disaster destination. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 12(1), 89-105. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCTHR-05-2017-0057>
- Silaban, P. H., Chen, W. K., Nababan, T. S., Eunike, I. J., & Silalahi, A. D. K. (2022). How travel vlogs on YouTube influence consumer behavior: A use and gratification perspective and customer engagement. *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies*, 2022(1), 4432977. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2022/4432977>
- Sinar, T. S. (2018). *Analisis wacana multimodal: Teori linguistik sistemik fungsional* [Multimodal discourse analysis: A functional systemic linguistic theory]. Pers USU.
- Siregar, S. R., & Wardhani, T. (2023). The practice of internet marketing and nation brand towards Indonesian tourism sectors. *International Journal of Environmental, Sustainability, and Social Science*, 4(2), 482-506. <https://doi.org/10.38142/ijesss.v4i2.521>
- Sofia, H. (2018, October 23). Indonesia has world's ninth-fastest growing tourism sector. *Antara: Indonesian News Agency*. <https://en.antaranews.com/news/119808/indonesia-has-worlds-ninth-fastest-growing-tourism-sector>
- Streeck, J. (1995). On projection. In E. N. Goody (Ed.), *Social intelligence and interaction: Expressions and implications of the social bias in human intelligence* (pp. 87-110). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511621710.007>
- Sugi, S. P., & Putri, A. (2019). Pengaruh nation branding "Pesona Indonesia" terhadap preferensi tujuan wisata masyarakat Kota Bandung [The influence of the nation branding "Pesona Indonesia" on the tourist destination preferences of the people of Bandung City]. *Jurnal Akuntansi*, 11(1), 61-76. <https://doi.org/10.28932/jam.v11i1.1542>
- Sukma, B. P. (2021). Constructing and promoting national identity through tourism: A multimodal discourse analysis of Indonesian official tourism website. *Linguistik Indonesia*, 39(1), 63-77. <https://doi.org/10.26499/li.v39i1.197>
- Wallace, R. (2021). New reasons for forced displacement: A multimodal discourse analysis of the construction of refugee identity. *Journalism Practice*, 16(2-3), 244-261. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2021.1981153>
- Wicaksono, M. S., & Yunitasari, D. (2018). Efektivitas endorser dalam promosi pariwisata Indonesia [The effectiveness of endorsers in Indonesia's tourism promotion]. *Jurnal Gama Societa*, 1(1), 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.22146/jgs.34041>
- Yanti, D., Liyushiana, Dalimunthe, F. I., Prayogi, B., & Ismail, W. N. A. T. (2023). The effectiveness of digital media management by local governments in tourism marketing. *Planning Malaysia: Journal of the Malaysian Institute of Planners*, 21(6), 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.21837/pm.v21i30.1382>
- Yusup, M., Mas'ud, R., & Johari, M. (2022). Brand value and tourists' satisfaction in Lombok Indonesia as a halal tourism destination. *Shirkah: Journal of Economics and Business*, 7(1), 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.22515/shirkah.v7i1.403>