

YOUTUBE CONTENT AS A FORM OF SOCIAL IDENTITY: ACTUALIZATION OF JAVANESE CULTURE OF MUSLIM DIASPORA IN EUROPE

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Abstract: *YouTube content is one media to transform knowledge about language, one of which is Javanese. The Javanese used in a particular country serves as a social identity that shows the group as a Muslim Diaspora. This research aims to know how an Indonesian Muslim maintains his local language and European identity. Indonesian Muslim Diaspora continues to adapt by negotiating two identities that interact with each other every day. They want to survive and mingle with European society but still maintain the social identity of the local language that they are proud of. The YouTube content thus becomes the unofficial association for the local language, so the actualization of Javanese culture is formed into a social identity. The researchers use a qualitative method reinforced by Hogg's social identity theory. This method reveals the meaning of one of the YouTube content created by the Muslim diaspora in a particular country. The contents showed the group's social identity that maintains the Javanese language even outside their native country.*

Keywords: YouTube content, social identity, Javanese culture, Muslim diaspora

INTRODUCTION

With the density of human mobility required to keep up with modern development, digital technology plays an essential role. Almost all human activities go hand in hand with social media, and YouTube is no exception. YouTube is a medium of information that presents a variety of knowledge, but it has also been transformed into the actualization of human language to channel their aspirations. In 2021, Hootsuite Indonesia recorded the development of internet and social media users. Of the 274.9 million Indonesian population, 202.6 million people use the internet, and 170 million are social media users (Riyanto, 2021). It can be interpreted that as much as 73.7% of the population has access to the internet. There is also an increase of 16% or 27 million internet users from the previous year (Handayani & Daulay, 2021).

YouTube has become a prima donna for all circles of society. Apart from being efficient and effective, YouTube also provides several advantages. First, it does not limit the video durations to allow users to express their ideas and opinions through video images or narrations. Second is the

accurate security system by not allowing illegal videos that contain ethnicity, religion, race, and inter-group relations (*Suku, Agama, Ras, dan Antar golongan - SARA*). It is provided with a question that the user must confirm before uploading the video. Third, YouTube users will get a payment to get at least 1000 viewers. Fourth, YouTube users can watch videos offline (no charge) by downloading the video first. Fifth, there is a simple editor to help, such as cropping videos, filtering colors, or adding video switching effects (Handayani & Daulay, 2021).

Apart from the ease of the YouTube users in contributing to the digital world, what is no less important is the language used by users when making videos uploaded to YouTube. Language is one of human's social identities in communicating with others. Language identifies an individual or group identity (Santoso, 2006). Language can also explain regional identity. People from different regions will vary in dialects even though the language used is the same. Meanwhile, language is used as a national identity and unifying society at the more significant territorial boundaries. A national identity can be socially constructed and defined through the direct struggle between the participation and reification of that society (Hermiasih, 2015).

This research aims to find out how far the Indonesian role abroad, especially in the European countries, in defending their Javanese identity and updating their cultural response through YouTube content. This study also aims at contributing to Indonesian society through its participation as active social media users through YouTube. This paper is based on research on various online libraries with an in-depth analysis of diverse literature in social media science, language, response culture, and Muslim diaspora.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

In writing this article, it certainly cannot be excluded from previous studies related to the discussion of this research. Handayani & Daulay (2021) discusses using YouTube as a communication medium for religious preaching. This study shows that the main attraction for preachers to create YouTube content is to spread *da'wah* and convey knowledge. With YouTube, lectures from preachers can be reached by the wider community anywhere and anytime.

Cahyono & Hassani (2019) discussed the development of YouTube, bringing new communication patterns for preachers and teachers. YouTube as the social media has contributed to the spreading of *da'wah* and the education of Islam. In this respect, YouTube's contribution gives a new aspiration to a learning model or material enrichment limited to textbooks.

Hermiasih (2015) discusses the diasporic gamelan musical communities in Britain. This research focuses explicitly on forming identity and community through Javanese gamelan music. The author explains that the members of the Javanese gamelan posit themselves as ambassadors for Indonesian culture. Apart from promoting Indonesia, they also provide an insight into Indonesian culture in Europe.

Sartini (2015) studies the language behavior of the Balinese diaspora in East Java. This study shows the involvement of three languages, Balinese, Javanese, and Indonesian, interchangeably to communicate in religion, family, customs, education, and friendship. This study also analyzes the existence of code-mixing and code-switching and the occurrence of language accommodation when the interaction is carried out. In this interaction, the Balinese people are more accommodated towards the Javanese language.

Marnita (2011) discusses the language choice and language attitude of the Minangkabau people. The researcher also examines the socio-cultural factors that motivate the choice and the attitude. The study results that the language choice has a different pattern due to age difference, with the adolescents speaking more Indonesian than other age members.

The first four articles explore YouTube as one social media used for religious or educational benefits. On the other hand, research on the diasporic response by the Indonesians is still rare. Thus, this article serves as additional reading on the diasporic response. The last article was written to give an image of the social identity of a language, the language of a region that in some parts of Europe is still maintained by its owner - either for affection for their local language or the spread of language answers through YouTube content which is then made as an acceleration of culture and social identity.

Social identity is generally seen as an analysis of relationships and inter-group relationships between social categories on a large scale. Besides, social identity is also described as forming the cognitive concept of social groups and members of groups. More simply, social identity is self-awareness given explicitly to the relationship between groups and individuals. The formation of social cognition is much influenced by the meeting between individual members in the group, individual role orientation, and individual participation in social groups. The situation, then, forms social identity through three stages: social categorization, prototyping, and depersonalization.

Social categorization

Social categorization affects self-definition, behavior, and perception of prototypes that explain and determine behavior. When this identity is undetermined, the concept of self and society is also unclear. Prototypes can also be a spotlight for social groups. Giving too many prototypes to the group makes the other group's assessment bad. Stereotypes can be a hinder in conditions like this. A stereotype emerged from one group against another group outside of it. People will cognitively represent the prototyped group. Besides, attributes describe similarities and structural relationships in groups. It is done to distinguish and determine the group's membership (Baron & Byrne, 2003).

Prototype

A prototype is a cognitively formed social construction adapted to the maximum extent and differences possessed by other groups. It is done to stand out the superiority of the group. The group's interest in forming a prototype represents the group in a broader social area. Usually, the prototype stands alone. It is not solely supported or obtained from the comparison between social groups. The processes in social groups are impossible to get out of this group. Please note that the prototype is constantly evolving from time to time. Prototypes can also be considered cognitive representations of group norms where the group norms are formed on social regulations that group members only limit. In this case, the most important thing is explaining the behavior and affirmation that someone belongs to a certain social group. Social norms are rules made by the agreement of group members. Social norms become the basis for thinking and moving groups. Then, the social norms do not become an explanation of social conditions. These social norms regulate how individuals in groups should behave and behave.

Depersonalization

Depersonalization is how individuals internalize a part of themselves or view themselves as examples of substitutable social categories rather than unique individuals (Hogg et al., 2004). Social identity is different from self-identity. Self-identity is owned by a person and only becomes that individual's identity. But social identity is owned by an individual and is also owned by other people, and they form a group—for example, the Javanese Diaspora community in Europe. A person from the Javanese tribe meets other Javanese in a particular place, forming a group. With the similarity of origin or ethnicity, there is a social identity.

Both self-identity and social identity come from the individual's self-awareness in forming his identity. Social identity emphasizes group identity and individual relationships with other

individuals in a group. Social identity in a group depends on the image created and attached to the group members. The image can be a positive image or a negative image. This image will distinguish one social group from another, and it will affect the social identity of a group in the eyes of the public. Therefore, Jakiem Asmowidjojo created YouTube content featuring Javanese diaspora from various countries, especially diaspora from Europe. So that his identity as a Javanese does not fade with the culture of the country he currently occupies. Social identity is generally seen as an analysis of inter-group relations between social categories on a large scale. It is also defined as the process of forming cognitive conceptions of social groups and group members.

Social identity is more simply self-awareness given explicitly to relationships between groups and individuals. The formation of social cognition is much influenced by the meeting between individual members in the group, individual role orientation, and individual participation in social groups.

METHOD

This study observes a YouTube channel named “Diaspora Jawa- Jakiem Asmowidjo.” This research is descriptive-qualitative by focusing on the content aspect of YouTube content as the primary source. It means that the data were taken from some of the content contained on the YouTube channel. The data collection technique is observing, transcribing the spoken expressions in the YouTube content, then translating and analyzing.

This study uses a qualitative approach with library research or literature research. This study aims to reveal the problem under study by explaining the state of the subject or object of research, producing descriptive data in written or spoken words from people, and observed behavior. The subjects in this study were videos on Jakiem Asmowidjojo’s YouTube channel. At the same time, the object as a reference in this study is the video content of Javanese diaspora activities abroad. The data extracted in this study can be divided into two groups: primary data related to the research problem, namely YouTube content from Jakiem Asmowidjojo, and secondary data indirectly from the field, in documents and journals, and other reading materials. the data were analyzed from the results of observations and documentation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Each ethnic group has a character and cultural identity according to their respective regions and geographical conditions. Thus, cultural identity cannot be separated from the concept of ethnicity or regionalism born in each ethnic group, which integrates socially and can exist in their new place of residence. Identity is an ideal construction of our thinking, formed based on assumptions and structures of something we know and the extent to which we can recognize it and respond to it as reality. Cultural identity is a feeling of belonging, belonging to a particular group, a personal conception and perception, and related to nationality, ethnicity, religion, social class, generation, localism, or social groups with their cultural characteristics. So in this context, cultural identity is a breakdown of individual characteristics and the characteristics of groups with cultural similarities (Ennaji, 2005). It can be seen when compared to the cultural aspects of individuals and groups that are considered capable of representing the characteristics of a country and its entire society and visible when compared to the national cultural identity of other countries.

Indonesia was rich in diversity, language, ethnicity, religion, and customs. In the struggle for independence era, the nation's founders realized the potential conflict if the differences were not accommodated well, which impacted the independence in mind and became more challenging to achieve. Therefore, ideas emerged to unite the differences summarized in *Sumpah Pemuda* (Youth Pledge) and served as a turning point in the birth of nationalism and unity among the Indonesians. Today, the feeling as part of one nation remains to exist.

When the Indonesians stay in a foreign country, they seek to contribute to the nation through the diaspora associations. In Europe, the Indonesian diaspora is spread to various countries, especially in the Netherlands. They generally have different backgrounds, such as international students, experts, and professional workers. In these countries, the Indonesian diaspora usually gathers in various communities. Generally, the formation of diaspora communities is based on ethnicity, regional origin, occupation, or hobby. These communities are considered capable of accommodating, nurturing, and representing the existence of the Indonesian diaspora in the foreign country. Each community has its peculiarities as part of the characteristics they try to maintain. One of the Indonesian diaspora communities well known in Europe is Javanese Community in Amsterdam (*Javanen in Amsterdam Zuid Oost (JAZ) - Kumpulan wong Jawa ing Amsterdam*). At first, this community was formed by the Javanese diaspora, who had long settled in the Netherlands as a place to gather (*silaturahmi*) and efforts to preserve Javanese art and culture in Europe.

*“Aku ndek kene kepetuk kabeh konco, bungah banget...
Dino iki dino kanggo pengeling-eling kanggo bopo biyung jaman biyen” (0:29-0:32)*
(“I can meet all of my friends here, makes me very happy...
This day is to remember my parents in the past.”) (Asmowidjojo, 2019b)

Over time, the members of this community increased, but the development of the organization and the heterogeneity of its members focused on efforts to preserve and develop Javanese cultural art. The members currently vary from Indonesians and native Dutch. Every week, the community holds regular gatherings and rehearsals together. They bring Javanese cuisine or other Indonesian regions, but they also get Dutch cuisine.

“awak dewe iki diajari wong tuwo rukun bebarengan, dadi karo bangsa liya yo perlu bebarengan. Iki adate wong Jawa ojo dilalekke.” (2:32-2:42)
(“Our parents educate us to get along together, so with other people we should also get along well. It is the Javanese customs that we cannot not forget.”)

Iki pecel, Mas. Iki kancane kabeh sing padha teka dina iki padha gawa panganan dewe-dewe. Ana sing nggowo pitik, ana sing gawa pecel, ana sambal goreng tempe....” (2:53-3:03)
(This is *pecel*, Sir. Those who join us today bring the food. Some bring chicken, some bring *pecel*, *tempeh* with chili sauce...) (Asmowidjojo, 2019a)

At the community gathering, some families and children. At certain times, they hold dance festivals. Therefore, art exercises are sometimes conducted by members of the Javanese diaspora in the Netherlands. Usually, adult members practice advanced dance while children are taught basic dance. This way, they still love Indonesian art and culture even when their children have children. At each meeting, a typical Javanese event must be highlighted. For example, they have to communicate using the Javanese language when gathering. They sometimes eat with banana leaves instead of plates, eat by hand, and wrap the food using leaves. They do these little things to remember simple Javanese habits still and remain sustainable even though they are in other parts of the world. Each member brings a typical Indonesian food and then enjoys it together at the end of the event.

This regular meeting aims to maintain communication so that their children do not lose their sense of Javanese cultural roots. The Javanese diaspora has the same vision: to preserve the richness of Javanese art and culture that they love and introduce it to the European community. They also actively try to promote Indonesian tourism through various cultural performance activities. The Javanese diaspora has an essential role in the efforts of Indonesian cultural

diplomacy and tourism, especially the Javanese in the international sphere. In addition, the awareness as part of the Indonesian nation makes the Javanese diaspora united in maintaining their social identity, which is then passed down to their children. The extensibility of the Javanese diaspora spread throughout the world is often a reference for the development of Indonesian arts and culture abroad, especially in Europe. In a new place, the Javanese diaspora always maintained the cultural values they inherited from their origin, which they then reconstructed together.

Aku neng kene kepethuk pada kanca bungah banget. Sing pindo aku ngelingi bapa biyung ku biyen sing di gawa ing suriname. Saiki aku ing kene, dina iki dina pangeleng eleng kanggo bapa biyung jaman biyen. (0:29-0:47)

(“Here I can meet my friends and I’m delighted. Secondly, I remember when my parents were brought to Suriname. Now, I am here. This day was remembered as a day with my father in the past.)

Tegese aku asli wong Jawa sing saking Indonesia sing dikontrak ing Suriname. Yo isih keturunan Jawa asli, trus melestarikan Jawa, budaya lan warisan iku adate wong Jawa. Sing bener, aja lali, kudu eling tata krama lan waspada, ngono wae. (0:51-1:25)

Obviously, I am a Javanese, coming from Indonesia to work in Suriname. I’m still native Javanese, then preserve the Javanese cultural heritage is our customs. Most importantly, we cannot forget to keep out manners and be aware of that. That’s it.) (Asmowidjojo, 2019b).

The Indonesian diaspora always strives to maintain their social identity in various ways, including in arts and cultural activities. They regularly hold various meetings according to their geographical region to maintain a sense of brotherhood. In addition, they also actively participate in various public activities. Europeans sometimes attend these meetings even though they do not belong to the diaspora community. Concerns about the fading of social identity in generations of the Javanese diaspora can be minimized through various activities that require the active involvement of the diaspora and their families (Narottama & Arianty, 2017).

Linguistic Aspect

Long before the government of the Republic of Indonesia officially sent Indonesian workers (TKI = *Tenaga Kerja Indonesia*) abroad, between 1890-1939, the Dutch royal government, which at that time colonized Indonesia, had succeeded in sending and employing 32,956 Indonesian migrant workers from Java to Suriname, South America. The purpose of sending the workers is to make up for the labor shortage in several plantations in Suriname. The labor shortage resulted from the abolition of slavery on July 1, 1863. The abolition caused many plantations to become

neglected, even abandoned. As a result, the Surinamese economy, which initially relied heavily on plantation products, fell drastically (FIB, 2018).

Although these Indonesians have lived in Suriname for 128 years, they still have Javanese habits, like having festivals of leather puppets (*wayang kulit*), dance drama (*wayang wong*), and Javanese theatrical performance (*ludruk*), and *Remo* dance. Another effort is to prevent the Javanese language from deteriorating, which is not easy for the diasporas. They live far from their native land, and the local community does not use the Javanese language. This situation drives Jakiem Asmowidjojo to make YouTube content to spread the Javanese language. He does so to prevent the Javanese language from extinction. The local language represents the national language. It reflects the local values, like manners, view of life, or ethics. Javanese also has a language level that works to respect the speech partners.

Language acquisition is needed for family and community communication to preserve the Javanese language in the diaspora. The community holds cultural art festivals that embrace the Javanese society, thus, updating the linguistic activity. These activities are a form of human harmony responsive to the people in their lands, and they can also adapt to local customs and cultures. Jakiem Asmowidjojo also supports the movement of *Bela Budaya dan Bahasa yang Bertanggung Jawab* (Responsible culture and language defense) through his YouTube channel. On one occasion, Asmowidjojo held a meeting with Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwono X (Asmowidjojo, 2019c). The Javanese diaspora formed a community, held a meeting, and spread it through YouTube content because they wanted to contribute to the development of national culture. Even though they are out of Java, they keep the social identity of their relationship.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper examined the actualization of the social identity among Javanese people and the Javanese diaspora in Europe. It further argues that the Javanese language shall not be limited to the action of the Javanese people but to include also the expression of the Javanese diaspora in Europe. The affection for their local language expressed through the YouTube content serves as an acceleration of culture and social identity. The YouTube content finds out how far the Indonesian population in the European territory defends Java and updates their response culture. The formation of diaspora communities is based on ethnicity, regional origin, occupation, or hobby. The Javanese diaspora has an essential role in the efforts of Indonesian cultural diplomacy

and tourism, especially the Javanese in the international scope. The YouTube content succeeds in showing the social identity of a group that still maintains the Javanese language even though they are outside their native country.

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