

An Interdisciplinary Approach: Identity Design Of “Indonesia Cultural” Art Studio

Sri Wahyuning Septarina, Jessica Irena Ridwan

Departement of Art, Institut Seni Indonesia Denpasar
septarinagading@gmail.com

Department of Management, Trisakti School Of Management
jessica0997.ji@gmail.com

Identity is a personality that shapes the distinguishing traits of the subjects. Multicultural Indonesians have their cultural value as their identity. Indonesian cultural diversity has been rooted deep down and has become a foundation in the life of its society. Indonesian cultural art consists of five categories: dance, music, theatre, visual art, and literature. The purposes of this research are 1. developing the value of Indonesian cultural identity; 2, providing the space of intertwined culture and identity through an interdisciplinary approach; 3, integrating Indonesia cultural arts as a national identity that would unite our country. The descriptive quantitative method is used to elaborate the fundamental elements of visual identity design with the literature-based data collecting techniques. Data will be processed with visual communication theories and an interdisciplinary approach to attaining the concept of Indonesian cultural studio identity designs. The designs are adopted from daily artistic activities that have contributed to preserving Indonesian culture and collaborated with nationalism characteristics.

Keywords: visual identity, Indonesian culture, visual communication

INTRODUCTION

Indonesian cultural diversity is the wealth of the nation. Each specific region has its cultural characteristics, ones that can be represented as an identity to be proud of. This was confirmed by the Speaker of the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR) quoted from the national online newspaper *sindonews.com* on February 12, 2021, with the title ‘Chairman of the DPR: Diversity is the Taman Sari of Indonesia’. Puan Maharani also emphasized that diversity is Indonesia’s wealth and strength that must be preserved. Culture can be a symbol or identity of a country (Wira Syafutra, 2012). Culture is directly correlated with history because of its interconnectedness. Culture can be used as a benchmark in order to understand a country more deeply. In the ‘Academic Papers on the Draft Law on Republic of Indonesia Culture’ in 2011, it is stated that there are four problems of contemporary Indonesian culture, namely (1) economic development, which has not been followed with the development of national character (2) nonoptimal in managing cultural diversity, (3) declining national identity, and (4) nonoptimal in the commitment to the management of cultural wealth (Amri: 2014:251-265). Indonesia’s cultural diversity is very diverse, but unfortunately, it is still not optimal in its delivery, so the appreciation of cultural arts is not optimal.

“Meanwhile, why do we tend to forget our own valuable potentials, our own cultural and social—and even lately turns into economic—assets? The answer is simple: it is because we sadly lack awareness and consideration for our own excellence. We often tend to easily admire and celebrate foreign influences that come with all of their glitz and glamour.”
(Nalan, 2017: 27)

Therefore, the author seeks to unite and bridge the diversity of Indonesia into an integrated archipelago identity. The form of identity in question is in the form of a logo. Interdisciplinary work in other fields such as history and sociology is needed to obtain a critical theory that is able to describe effective design (Baldwin and Roberts, 2006:34). Therefore, the approach used in this study is an interdisciplinary approach, because interdisciplinary is a “combination of several fields of study” (Stember, 1991:4). Repko (2008: 26) divides the word ‘interdisciplinary’ into two parts: the prefix ‘inter’ means “between, among, in the midst;” disciplinary means “of or relating to a particular field of study” or specialization. So a starting point for the definition of “interdisciplinary” is “between fields of study”.

METHOD

A descriptive qualitative method with an interdisciplinary approach was used in this study. The selection of the qualitative method was chosen because it will help to answer the problem of designing the identity of the ‘Indonesian culture’ studio, which is a combination of elements of art and culture. The data collecting method in this qualitative research includes observation techniques and literature data from related journals and books. Unstructured observations are observations made without observation guidelines so that researchers develop their observations based on developments that occur in the field (Bungin, 2007: 115-117). Furthermore, according to Ratna in Karmini’s article (2019: 9), qualitative research focuses on messages and prioritizes processes over research results so that meanings can change because they are natural in their respective socio-cultural contexts.

The focus of this research location was in the Special Capital Region of Jakarta for some time. Data collection was also carried out through online interviews with several art studios, such as the Metta Budaya Dance Studio, Reog Singo Barong Studio, Sarai Sarumpun Art Studio, Gito Maron Dance Studio, and several other cultural arts studios. The research model which will be used in the study is as follows:



Figure 1. Research Model
(Source: Personal Document, 2021)

This research is called an interdisciplinary field between visual communication and cultural arts to produce cultural identity. We are moving on from Indonesian culture and history, which is conveyed through visual communication using aspects of cultural arts (covering the arts of music, theatre arts, fine arts, dance arts, literary arts). Semiotics is used to process the merging of all the above aspects to adjust the diversity values into a logo or sign. Finally, the resulting logo can be used to convey the cultural identity of Indonesia as a nation universally.

Visual Communication

Visual communication broadly includes all kinds of communication using the sense of sight. Visual communication affects people using social and psychological factors (Aiello and Parry, 2020: 26).

However, the author will focus specifically on visual communication in the form of a logo or sign.

The true meaning of an artefact or object will only become real when it is communicated and consumed by people. Meaning is not only created where it’s made, but also when it is reshaped when it is consumed. This is what we know as ‘Popular Culture’ (Baldwin and Roberts, 2006: 34). Therefore, it is necessary to have visual communication to represent the cultural diversity of the Indonesian in order to be able to convey its values and meanings in their entirety. The definition of communication in ‘Popular Culture’ according to Baldwin and Roberts in the view of *postmodernism* is that there is no difference between ‘high’ and ‘low’, which means that there is no dominating culture. *Postmodernism* includes the ‘fusion’ of various cultures, such as national and ethnic diversity. In this study, the identity created in this study includes the view of postmodernism, which is conveyed using a combination of traditional and contemporary art.

Cultural Arts

Below is the cultural arts category according to National Assessment for Education Progress Framework:

Core Context For Arts and Humanities Assessment

	Humanities			APPRECIATION
	CREATING	PERFORMING	RESPONDING	
Dance				
Music				
Theatre	For theatre, most creating and performing is integrated in theatre activities			
Visual Arts	For the visual arts, performing behaviors are found the the creating category			
Literature	For literature, responding to a variety of authors and genres provide a greater understanding and appreciation for the social, cultural and historical contents that influence great-writes.			

(Adapted from the National Assessment For Education Progress Framework)

Figure 2. Cultural Arts Category
(Source: Kentucky Department of Education Arts and Humanities, September 1999)

According to arts and humanities, cultural arts are divided into five parts, namely as follows:

Music

Music can be regarded as the art of sound that is captured through the sense of hearing (Bahari, 2008:55). Semiotics requires real objects to convey meaning, so the part that will be taken from the art of music to represent the identity is specific to Indonesian musical instruments. In this case, the chosen musical instrument is the gamelan for several reasons.

‘Everything is connected to a manifestation of God and to the dualism of life. This is also the duty of gamelan.’
(Tjokorda Raka Swastika)

Gamelan represents a sense of inner collectiveness, which affects all life, for individuals and for society. In gamelan music, written scores to guide the players are not needed, thus strengthening the collectivity. Everything is learned by ear and memory, so all musicians know the composition and its various parts, without having to read the score. (Angelo, 2012: 197).

Theater

Theatre arts or performing arts have three main elements, namely: 1) Performance as an event, for example, place, time, participants, rules. 2) As a social interaction, the physical presence of event actors in a certain physical space. 3) Events directed at the appearance, skills, and abilities of the self, physical, spiritual, or both. In addition, the *audience* in a show is very important. Performance events must involve players or *performers*, as well as the audience or *audience*. (Simatupang, 2000: 7-8).

According to Tadeusz Kozwan (Aston & Savona, 1991: 105) in theatre arts, there are 13 sign systems, namely word signs, tones, expressions, gestures, movements, makeup, hairstyles, costumes, props, *settings*, lighting, music, and sound effects.

These thirteen signs are an intersection of other cultural arts. Therefore, in this research, the object chosen as the focus that represents theater art in national identity is the social interaction between the *audience* and *performers*.

Dance

In general, theatrical dance in Indonesia could be divided into two types: 1) Traditional dance and 2) Contemporary dance. The traditional dance will be used as a representation of the identity of the Indonesian nation, specifically the choreography and dance movements.

Traditional dance is not only performed as a form of self-actualization, expression, and behavior, but also appears as an element that gives attributes to the history of the nation (Reyes, Aida-Yarra. et. al. 2021: 10)

This paper will focus specifically on a dance movement that represents the art of dance. This is the result of a combination of several traditional Indonesian dances. The author collects data on various kinds of traditional dance movements, then takes a movement that is owned by the majority of Indonesian traditional dances.

Visual Arts

Color has become one of the most important attributes in the history of art (Lam, NW, 2015: 273) . The 'visual art' part of this research model uses traditional color as a form of identity design. These specific colorings need a strong historical trace in Indonesia. A tropical plant that is often used to produce basic colors in traditional Indonesian art (such as batik) is secang (*Caesalpinia* sp.), indigo (*Indigofera tinctoria*) and sensitive plants (*Mimosa*

pubica). Plants used as natural dyes are turmeric (*Curcuma domestica*), rambutan (*Nephelium lappaceum*), mango (*Mangifera indica*), jengkol (*Pithecellobium jiringa*), avocado (*Persea Americana*), noni (*Morinda citrifolia*), Angsana (*Pterocarpus indicus*), ketapang (*Terminalia catappa*), tengar (*Cerriops candolliana*) and kesumba rivet (*Bixa Orellana*). (Hidayat and Fatmahwaty, 2014: 137). The color that will be taken is a composition of 5 colors from the majority of natural dyes that are most often used in Indonesia.

Literature

Indonesian literature is an element of national culture (Yudiono, 2010: 11). Teeuw (2003: 21) states that literature is a tool for teaching, manuals, instruction books or teaching. The object used as a medium for delivering scripts in Indonesia can be in the form of books or manuscripts. Books or manuscripts have special characteristics in terms of the presentation model, the substance of the message, and the use of language that is in accordance with the cultural communication system of the local community. The manuscript can be a special instrument to convey the thoughts of the Indonesian people, which can still be applied today. Therefore, Indonesian literary identity can be in the form of books or manuscript.

Semiotics

Semiotics is used as an instrument to communicate the identity that characterizes Indonesia. According to Shannon and Weaver, communication is a linear process with the aim of conveying a message. However, in semiotic theory, communication is not a mere process but also the creation of meaning itself. Semiotics is a very important part of visual communication (Baldwin and Roberts, 2006: 34). The following is the definition of semiotics according to Seel (1999: 2):

"... semiotics aims at bringing together those scientists of different disciplines who are interested or engaged in the investigation of the use and manipulation of signs in different settings such as communication and instruction."

Therefore, semiotics is very suitable to be applied in this research through the interdisciplinary approach. There are two traditions in semiotics: according to Ferdinand de Saussure, semiotics is a structure (structuralism), while Charles Peirce, semiotics is a social process.

In this study, the definition of semiotics used is Charles Peirce's view (semiotics as a social process) because the national identity communicated through semiotics comes from the obvious social processes of society, in the form of history, culture, and cultural arts in Indonesian society. Peirce's social conception is also known as the semiotic triangle, depicted in the following diagram:

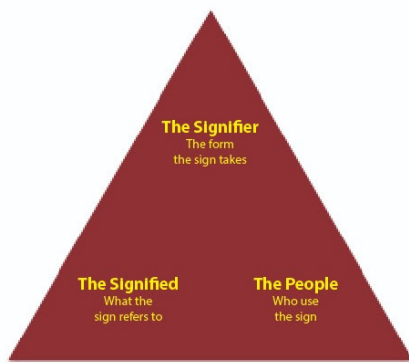


Figure 3. Peirce’s Social Semiotic Conception (Source: Baldwin and Roberts, 2006: 36)

The semiotic triangle above is used to categorize the subjects as follows:

The Signifier

The signifier is the embodiment or symbolization of a value. The signifier must be an object, not just a concept. Visual signs such as logos and images are signifiers (Baldwin and Roberts, 2006: 36).

In this study, what is included in The Signifier is a logo that is used as visual communication of cultural identity.

The Signified

The signified referred to by the mark. The thing that is marked must communicate something outside of itself, such as the color red which signifies love. In this study, Indonesian culture and arts is included in *The Signified*.

The People Who Use The Sign

The signs should be understood by anyone who uses it to communicate. Usually, this includes a particular culture or society, and signs are used as a social code to communicate. In this study, included in *The People Who Use The Sign* are Indonesian people who are involved in cultural arts activities. I.e., curators, cultural enthusiasts, artists, supporters of art preservation.

Logo

A logo is a sign made by an interpretation that acts as a substitute for other signs that are synonymous; all signs that are not symbols are signals. (Morris, 1946: 100).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Design Concept

This research has produced the final result in the form of a logo of Indonesian cultural identity with a unified and integrated concept as taken from the concept of spatial planning in Java. Indonesian culture is the main space for the integration of visual arts, dance, music, theater and literature. According to Rustan (2010: 36), brainstorming is an activity carried out to obtain solutions to get ideas so


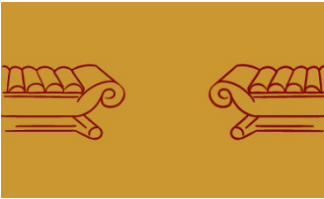

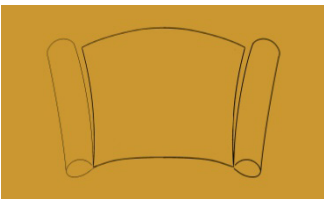
that they can be developed for the better. This process is used to obtain inspiration for better concept development. The visual design concept used in the design of the identity above is in the form of stylization.




Figure 3. Peirce’s Social Semiotic Conception (Source: Personal Document, 2021)

Visual Concept

Visual concepts are created by representing each of the cultural arts contained in the research model using one symbol from each art. The visual elements used to form the Indonesian Cultural Identity logo that was made include the selection of symbolic forms, which can be seen as follows:

Cultural Arts Categories	Image	Image Visual Representation	Symbolic Meaning
Dance		Dancer	<p>The dance pose depicted in the logo is a dance pose that can be found in almost all regional dances that are part of Indonesian culture. The meaning of the dance pose is that according to Peirce's analysis, (the triangle) is an icon of poses for human daily activities, harvesting and acrobatics (Blasius Suprapta, 2019: 295)</p>
Musical		One of the gamelan musical instruments (Peking)	<p>The musical instrument symbolizes one of the strengths of the rhythm and tone of music that is the controller of a series of gamelan music chosen from a series of Balinese gamelan to represent traditional music that has often been heard by the people of Indonesia and even abroad.</p>
Theatre		Audience	<p>The audience in theater art symbolizes the social interactions contained in an art performance. A show cannot be called theater if there is no audience. Therefore, the audience is a very important element in theater arts.</p>
Literature		Manuscript	<p>The form of manuscript paper rolls symbolizes a form of literary art. Manuscripts that have existed since antiquity indicate that the age of the manuscript is quite old. The manuscript that has been the guide so far also indicates that verbally and indirectly have contributed to preserving Indonesian culture.</p>

Visual		Color	<p>Color, which is one of the elements of art, has a philosophy of choosing color. The gold color symbolizes cultural diversity, which is part of the nation's invaluable wealth.</p> <p>The dark red color has a deep meaning of professionalism. The more we preserve Indonesian culture, the better, more affluent and wiser we become in maintaining and preserving the nation's culture.</p>
--------	---	-------	---

CONCLUSION

Starting from the elaboration of the cultural diversity of the Indonesian using interdisciplinary methods, then proceeding to use visual communication and semiotics as a means to convey the values and characteristics of Indonesian art and culture through a national identity logo design. Based on the theories described, it can be stated that many journals describe in detail the structure of interdisciplinary methods that underline the various types of different fields of study.

Future research should include the development of a cultural identity design in the form of the logo that has been created above. The development can be in the form of details of each of the fields of art and culture above in order to be unique and can be adjusted based on the needs of each art and culture studio, of course, it must contain the essence of the characteristics of the nation in each of these elements.

The precious ancient traditions of the archipelago have been passed down from generation to generation through many generations. As their heirs, we can pass them on through various expressions, not only in the form of journals and history books, but also in the form of art, object abstraction and symbols. The symbol can be used in any art studio or cultural location without compromising the aesthetic value or the tradition itself. In this article, the author has bridged the dynamics of Indonesia's cultural diversity through the artistic aspect so that it is expected to be able to contribute to cultural preservation in the future.

REFERENCES

Angelo, Elin. (2012). The Duty Of Gamelan, A Gamelan Pedagogue's Philosophy Of Work. *Nordic Research in Music Education*, Volume 14, 195-216.

Bahari, Nooryan. (2008). *Kritik Seni: Wacana Apresiasi Dan Kreasi*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.

Baldwin & Lucienne Roberts. (2006). *Visual Communication: From Theory to Practice*. United Kingdom: ACA Publishing.

Bungin, M. Burhan. (2007). *Penelitian Kualitatif: Komunikasi, Ekonomi, Kebijakan Publik, dan Ilmu Sosial Lainnya*. Jakarta: Kencana Prenada Media Grup.

Cahyono, Agus., Bintang Hanggoro., Hasan Bisri. (2016). Tanda dan Makna Teks Pertunjukan Barongsai. *Jurnal Mudra*, 31(1), 22-36.

Giorgia Aiello, Katy Parry. (2020). *Visual Communication: Understanding Image in Media Culture*. United Kingdom: SAGE Publications.

Hidayat and Fatmahwaty. (2014, July) The Art and Sustainable Aspects of Natural Dyeing in KANAWIDA Hand Drawn Batik (Green Batik). *Iptek Journal of Proceeding Series*, 1, 136-143.

Karmini, Ni Nyoman. (2019). Nilai-Nilai Budaya Dalam Tam Tam. *Jurnal Mudra*, 34(1), 8.18.

Kiswondari. (2021, Februari 12). *Keberagaman adalah Taman Sarnya Indonesia*. *sinonews.com*. Diakses dari <https://nasional.sinonews.com/read/333134/15/imlek-2021-ketua-dpr-keberagaman-adalah-taman-sarnya-indonesia-1613116935>.

Lam, NW. (2015). New Approach for The Teaching of Practical Color Theory. The 3rd International Conference on Creative Industry, Bali – Indonesia, 11 - 12 August 2015.

Marzali, Amri. (2014). Memajukan Kebudayaan Nasional Indonesia. *Jurnal Humaniora*, 26(2), 251-265.

Morris, CW. (1946). *Writings On The General Theory of Signs*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton.

Nalan, Arthur. (2017). *Creativity And Indonesian Performing Arts*. International Conference on Arts and Culture, Bandung: ISBI Bandung.

Repko, A.F. (2008). *Interdisciplinary Research Process And Theory*. 2nd ed. (2011, December). *References & Research Book News*, 26(6).

Reyes, Aida Yarira., Simpong Derweanna., Bintang Handayani., Ruzanifah Kosnin. (2021). *The Presentation Of Indonesian's Traditional Dance: A Study Of Saman Tari (Aceh) And Kecak Tari (Bali)*. *Turismo Estudos And Practice*, 1(1), 1-15.

Seel, NM. (1999). *Semiotics And Structural Learning Theory*. *Journal of Structural Learning Intelligent System*, 26(2), 403-427.

Simatupang, GR. Lono Lastoro. (2000). *Culture as Strategic Culture ini Global Local Indonesiam Performing Arts Journal*. Bandung: MSPI, 10(1), 1-19.

Stember, M. (1991). *Advancing The Social Sciences Through The Interdisciplinary Enterprise*. *The Social Science Journal*, 28(1), 1-14.

Suprpta, Blasius. (1996). *Lukisan Dinding Gua Di Daerah Pangkep: Suatu Kajian Tentang Makna Lukisan Dalam Kehidupan Mesolitik*. Thesis.

Syafura, Wira. (2012, 20 December). *Apa itu Identitas Kebudayaan Nasional Indonesia*. [kompasiana.com. https://www.kompasiana.com/wira.syafutra/551b0284a333119b20b65b7e/apa-itu-identitas-kebudayaan-nasional-indonesia](https://www.kompasiana.com/wira.syafutra/551b0284a333119b20b65b7e/apa-itu-identitas-kebudayaan-nasional-indonesia).

Teeuw. (2003). *Literature and Literature*. Jakarta: Pusaka Jaya.

Yudiono. (2007). *Introduction to the History of Indonesian Literature*. Jakarta: Grasindo.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author would like to thank the Denpasar Art Institute, Bali, which has organized the Bali Bhuwana Waskita International Seminar; the author would like to thank Prof. Dr I Wayan Adnyana, S.Sn., M.Sn (chancellor) for sharing knowledge, the author would like to thank Prof. Dr. I Wayan Dibia, SST., MA as reviewer and lecturer, Dr. AA Gede Rai Remawa and Dr. Drs. I Gusti Ngurah Seramasara, M.Hum for sharing knowledge, guidance and support.