



Representation of the Indonesia Government in Handling COVID-19 Case on *Tempo* Magazine Cover

¹Yulia Anggraeni, ²Ypsi Soeria Soemantri, ³Lia Maulia Indrayani

Universitas Padjadjaran, Sumedang, West Java, Indonesia

yulia19003@mail.unpad.ac.id, ypsi.soerias@gmail.com, lia.maulia@unpad.ac.id

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Abstract*

The World Health Organization (WHO) officially announced the COVID-19 outbreak as a global pandemic. The efforts made by the government in handling this case are often discussed. Various media provide news about COVID-19. One of the media that provides news about the government's efforts in handling the COVID-19 is Tempo Magazine. In several editions, Tempo Magazine made COVID-19 topics as a magazine cover. The cover is the data in this study. This study aims to see how the Indonesian government is represented by Tempo Magazine in terms of handling COVID-19 using the action of signs theory by Charles Sanders Peirce. The results of this study are; (1) Tempo Magazine represents the government's difficulty to face a pandemic and the coordination between the president and Minister of Health is not good. This makes people panic; (2) The Tempo Magazine sees that the government only makes a small effort in terms of fighting coronavirus in Indonesia and does not have good strategies to face it; (3) Tempo Magazine seems to doubt the new normal proclaimed by the government.

1. Introduction

In the past few months, the world has been facing a pandemic, which is COVID-19 caused by a coronavirus. Cited from WHO on their website, they stated that coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. The coronavirus is a newly identified type that has caused a recent outbreak of respiratory illness now called COVID-19. As cited from hopkinsmedicine.org, the new coronavirus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes. So, coronavirus can spread very fast. As reported by kompas.com (2020), on Wednesday, March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) officially announced the COVID-19 outbreak as a global pandemic. Indonesia is one of the countries that also faces this pandemic. Almost all media in Indonesia provide news about COVID-19. The government's handling, in this case, has

also come under the spotlight of many media, one of the media that provides information about the government's handling in COVID-19 case is Tempo Magazine. In several editions, Tempo made the COVID-19 topics as a cover of the magazine. To see the Tempo magazine's representation of the Indonesia government in handling COVID-19, magazine cover made by Tempo can be analyzed used Charles S Peirce semiotic theory of ideas about signs

Several researchers are using Charles S Peirce's semiotic theory of ideas about signs to represent someone or something. Sarpavaara (2013) used some ideas from Charles S. Peirce's theory of signs to the analysis of counselor behaviors during motivational interviewing sessions in the probation service by focusing on the counselors' interpretations of their substance-abusing clients' change talk. The results show that the new features of client-counselor interaction that potentially relate to the treatment outcome can be found by applying Charles S Peirce's theory of signs. The other research used Charles S Peirce's theory of signs conducted by Dewi (2013) to see the representation of Muslim dress in *Wardah* cosmetics ad. The results of her study show that Muslim dress in *Wardah* Cosmetics ad represented through the use of clothing that covers the nakedness but still stylish and fashionable, so it reinforces the image of modern Islamic which was built by *Wardah*. Ramadhan *et al.* (2018) used Charles S Peirce's sign theory to find out the intent of sign in the picture that user Instagram shares and also analyzed pictures to find out the connotation. They found four words from the text in the pictures that including to energetic interpretant with the dynamical interpretant process and found four words from the text in the pictures that including to emotional interpretant with the dynamical interpretant process.

Charles S. Peirce became the basis for circumscribing an autonomous field of inquiry that sought to understand the structures that undergird both the production and interpretation of Signs (Sebeok, 2001). According to Yakin & Totu (2014), the main principles containing Peirce's theory are the human mind and sign boundaries, the three-dimensional system (triadic/trichotomy), and the relativity regarding the three typologies or taxonomies of signs (icon, index, and symbol). According to Charles S. Peirce as cited on Sarpavaara (2013), a Sign, or Representamen, is a First which stands in such a genuine triadic relation to a Second, called its Object, as to be capable of determining a Third, called its Interpretant, to assume the same triadic relation to its Object in which it stands itself to the same Object. Piliang in Dewi (2013) illustrated the triangle meaning by Peirce as in the figure below.

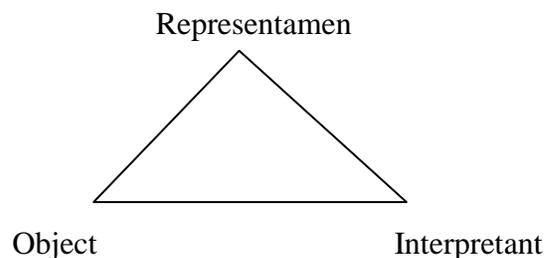


Figure. 1: Triangle Meaning Charles Sanders Peirce

There is three-division according to Peirce, they are; The first division focuses on the sign which are qualisigns, sinsigns, and legisigns. The second division focuses the reference of signs to objects which are icons, indexes, and symbols. The third division focuses on the interpretation of signs or on the effects of signs on interpreters which are rhemes, dicents, and arguments (CP 2.2432.250; Liszka 1996 cited in Sarpavaara, 2013).

This study focuses on the second division. Therefore, the researchers analyzed the icon, index, and symbol on The cover in *Tempo* Magazine. A sign that is made to resemble, simulate, or reproduce its referent in some way is called an icon. An example of an icon is a photograph

because they can be seen to reproduce their referents visually. Meanwhile, A sign that refers to something or someone in terms of its existence or location in time or space, or in relation to something or someone else is called an index. The example of an index is Smoke of fire pointing out where the fire is; a cough is an index of a cold; and so on (Sebeok, 2001). Dewi (2013) stated that On the index sign then the relationship the sign with the object is estimated. The last focus in the second division is a symbol. The example of a symbol is the language because language is an arbitrary thing. It is in line with the definition of symbol according to (Sebeok, 2001) that stated a sign that stands for its referent in an arbitrary, conventional way.

Based on the background above, this study aims to analyze the cover of the magazine to see the representation of the Indonesian Government in handling the pandemic in *Tempo* Magazine using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory of ideas about signs. *Tempo* Magazine is a weekly Indonesian news magazine that covers news and politics. This magazine is the first magazine that has no relationship with the government. Regarding the COVID-19 issue, there are three cover editions of *Tempo* Magazine that use topics about the Indonesian government in handling the COVID-19. They are March 07, 2020 edition; March 14, 2020 edition; May 30, 2020 edition.

2. Research Methods

This study used a qualitative descriptive. Bogdan and Taylor cited in Moleong (2004) stated that in descriptive qualitative research, the data investigated by the researchers are in the form of oral or written words. According to Wayan & Tista (2020), the Qualitative is used to investigate, discover, describe, and explain the quality or features of social influence that cannot be explained, measured, or described through a quantitative approach. This research is qualitative since it is concerned with non-numerical data and describing the facts of the analysis systematically based on actually they are. The instrument of this research is document. According to Creswell (2012), documents consist of public and private records that qualitative researchers obtain about a site or participants in research, and they can include newspapers, minutes of meetings, personal journals, and letters. The data of this study are the covers in *Tempo* Magazine that related to topics about the Indonesian government in dealing with the COVID-19. The researchers selected three covers as data to be analyzed in this study; they are March 07, 2020 edition of *Tempo* Magazine cover; March 14, 2020 edition of *Tempo* Magazine cover; May 30, 2020 edition of *Tempo* Magazine cover. After selected the data, the researchers analyzed the data using Charles S Peirce's theory. After finish analyzed the data, the researchers provide results and discussion.

3. Discussions

The covers of the magazine consist of a collection of signs which can be separated into two part, namely visual (picture) and verbal (words). The visual and verbal on the covers are analyzed using Charles S. Peirce's second division that focuses on the reference of signs to objects which are icon, index, and symbol. The sign identification of the covers is shown in the table below.

Table 1.
The Sign Identification of Tempo Magazine Covers

<i>Tempo Magazine Cover Edition</i>	<i>Types of Sign</i>	<i>Sign Identification</i>
	March 07, 2020 edition Icon	1. Illustration picture of Jokowi (President of Indonesia) 2. Illustration picture of Terawan (Minister of Health of Indonesia)

		Index	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One mask used both by Jokowi and Terawan 2. A white shirt that used by Jokowi and Terawan
		Symbol	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Text of magazine's name: <i>TEMPO</i> 2. Text of magazine's tagline: <i>ENAK DIBACA DAN PERLU</i> 3. Text of headline: <i>TERGAGAP CORONA</i> 4. Text: <i>CARA PEMERINTAH MENANGANI WABAH COVID-19 MEMBUAT PUBLIK PANIK. KOORDINASI PRESIDEN JOKO WIDODO DAN MENTERI KESEHATAN TERAWAN BELEPOTAN</i>
March 14, 2020 edition		Icon	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Illustration picture of big coronavirus 2. Illustration picture of small coronavirus 3. Illustration picture of Jokowi (President of Indonesia)
		Index	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Illustration picture of Jokowi leans back on big coronavirus and his finger of the right withstand the big coronavirus
		Symbol	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Text of magazine's name: <i>TEMPO</i> 2. Text of magazine's tagline: <i>ENAK DIBACA DAN PERLU</i> 3. Text of headline: <i>COMPANG CAMPING CORONA</i> 4. Text: <i>WABAH COVID-19 MEMASUKI FASE KRITIS. STRATEGI MITIGASI PRESIDEN JOKOWI BISA MEMPERBURUK SITUASI</i>
May 30, 2020 edition		Icon	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Illustration picture of Jokowi (President of Indonesia) 2. Illustration picture of coronavirus 3. Barbershop background 4. Picture of a razor
		Index	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Illustration picture of Jokowi using a mask, face shield, and



Symbol	gloves 2. Illustration picture of Jokowi cuts part of coronavirus using a razor 1. Text of magazine's name: <i>TEMPO</i> 2. Text of magazine's tagline: <i>ENAK DIBACA DAN PERLU</i> 3. Text of headline: <i>SIMALAKAMA NORMAL BARU</i> 4. Text: <i>Para pengusaha gencar mendesak Presiden Joko Widodo mempersiapkan protokol tatanan baru. Mungkinkah roda bisnis bergerak tanpa mengundang gelombang kedua pandemi?</i>
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After the researchers identified the sign of the covers, the researchers analyzed to interpret the meaning of covers based on the icon, index, and symbol. The discussion of the analysis is shown below.

3.1 Interpretation Meaning Based on Icon Identification

Based on icon identification, two icons are found on the March 07, 2020 edition of *Tempo* Magazine cover. The first, illustration picture of Jokowi, who is the President of Indonesia. President Jokowi's figure in this cover illustrates Jokowi's position as the government. The second, illustration picture of Terawan, who is the Minister of Health of Indonesia. Because the COVID-19 is a problem in health, Terawan as the minister of health of Indonesia should address this COVID-19 problem.

Three icon identification are found on the March 14, 2020 edition of *Tempo* Magazine cover. The first icon is a picture of big coronavirus which is illustrating that coronavirus becomes a big problem in Indonesia. The second icon is a picture of a lot of small coronaviruses. This illustrates that coronavirus cases have occurred in Indonesia. The third icon is the illustration of the president of Indonesia. President Jokowi's figure in this cover illustrates Jokowi's position as the government.

On the May 30, 2020 edition of *Tempo* Magazine cover, the four icons are found. The first icon is illustrated by Indonesia's president that represents the government of Indonesia. The second icon is the illustration picture of coronavirus. The unusual size of the virus in this figure shows that this case is a big problem faced by Indonesia. The next icons that are found in this cover are barbershop as a background and a razor. Barbershop is a place where people cut their hair to get a new hairstyle look and razor is a tool used to cut hair. the illustration in the cover can be interpreted that the government is doing something about coronavirus and producing coronaviruses that will be viewed in different ways.

3.2 Interpretation Meaning Based on Index Identification

As discussed before, On the index sign then the relationship the sign with the object is an estimate. On the March 07, 2020 edition of *Tempo* Magazine cover, there is a mask used both by Jokowi and Terawan. Mask is a protective device recommended by WHO in terms of the prevention of coronavirus. But on the cover, Jokowi and Terawan use one mask for both, even

though they should use one mask for one person. Since COVID-19 has become a pandemic, masks are difficult to find, and mask prices are very expensive. Looking at the illustrations on the cover, it seems that the government is not able to protect every Indonesian people and the protective device that they able to provide is not enough for Indonesian people. This makes people panic in the face of a pandemic.

The index that was found on March 14, 2020 edition of *Tempo* Magazine cover is an illustration picture of Jokowi leans back on a big coronavirus and his finger of the right withstand a big coronavirus. The icon of Jokowi in this cover represents the government of Indonesia. Jokowi's position leaning on a big coronavirus shows a relaxed gesture, that can be interpreted that the government of Indonesia too laid-back in fighting the coronavirus case. The cover also shows Jokowi's illustration holding a big coronavirus with only his index finger. It can be interpreted that the government of Indonesia only makes a small effort in terms of fighting coronavirus in Indonesia.

There are two indexes found on the May 30, 2020 edition of *Tempo* Magazine cover. They are; illustration picture of Jokowi uses a mask, face shield, and gloves, and illustration picture of Jokowi cuts part of coronavirus using a razor. It can be interpreted that the Indonesian government is trying not to avoid coronavirus by using protective equipment and using a razor as weapons the government cut some parts of the coronavirus instead of destroying the virus. This condition is said to be *new normal* where people will start their activities again even though the COVID-19 case in Indonesia has not been finished.

3.3 Interpretation Meaning Based on Symbol Identification

Four symbols were found on March 07, 2020 edition of *Tempo* Magazine cover. The first symbol is the name of the magazine; *TEMPO*. The second is the tagline of the magazine; *ENAK DIBACA DAN PERLU*. The words *TEMPO* and *ENAK DIBACA DAN PERLU* are symbols which show that the cover was published by *Tempo* Magazine. The third symbol is the headline with the words “*TERGAGAP CORONA*” or in English is “Stuttered by Corona”. According to KBBI dictionary and Cambridge dictionary, the word “*Tergagap*” or “Stuttered” have the meaning as difficult to speak or say something, especially in the first part of a word. But on this cover, it is not about difficult to speak or say something, It is about the government who difficult to face a pandemic in the beginning. The next “*CARA PEMERINTAH MENANGANI WABAH COVID-19 MEMBUAT PUBLIK PANIK. KOORDINASI PRESIDEN JOKO WIDODO DAN MENTERI KESEHATAN TERAWAN BELEPOTAN*” which has meaning how the government handling COVID-19 makes the public panic. The coordination between President and Minister of Health is not good is a text that supports the icons sign and indexes sign that is found in this cover. The symbol of the March 07, 2020 edition of *Tempo* Magazine cover can be interpreted as the government has difficulty to face a pandemic, and the coordination between president and Minister of Health is not good. So, It makes people panic. In this cover, *Tempo* Magazine tries to show that the Indonesian government is not ready to face the pandemic and it makes people panic.

Four symbols were found on March 14, 2020 edition of *Tempo* Magazine cover. The first and second symbols are showing that the cover was published by *Tempo* Magazine. The third symbol is the words “*COMPANG CAMPING CORONA*” which has to mean badly torn (of cloth) in English. That can be interpreted that coronavirus has badly damaged Indonesia. The symbol in-text “*WABAH COVID-19 MEMASUKI FASE KRITIS. STRATEGI MITIGASI PRESIDEN JOKOWI BISA MEMPERBURUK SITUASI*” shows that the COVID-19 case in a critical phase, but the strategies made by Jokowi can make situation worst. From the icon, index, and symbol that has been analyzed in this cover, get through March 14, 2020 edition of *Tempo* Magazine

cover, *Tempo* Magazine sees that the COVID-19 Case becomes bigger but the government does not have good strategies to face it.

The symbol *TEMPO* and *ENAK DIBACA DAN PERLU* are shown that the cover is published by *Tempo* Magazine on May 30, 2020 edition of *Tempo* Magazine cover. The other symbol that is found in this cover is the words “*SIMALAKAMA NORMAL BARU*”. The word *Simalakama* is a kind of fruit that usually use in a proverb that has meaning as two things that are difficult to choose (jagokata.com). The symbol interpreted that the *new normal* will bring policies that difficult to be chosen. The last symbol that is found in this cover is the words “*Para pengusaha gencar mendesak Presiden Joko Widodo mempersiapkan protokol tatanan baru. Mungkinkah roda bisnis bergerak tanpa mengundang gelombang kedua pandemi?*” It can be interpreted that businessmen are urging the government to create a new protocol because *this new normal* cannot guarantee that the economy will run well. Based on the interpretation of the icons, indexes, and symbols found on May 30, 2020 edition of *Tempo* Magazine cover, *Tempo* Magazine seems to doubt the new normal proclaimed by the government.

Based on the three covers that have been analyzed above, *Tempo* Magazine represents that the Indonesian government is not ready to face the pandemic and it makes people panic. *Tempo* sees that the government doesn't have good strategies to face the big problem caused by a coronavirus. *Tempo* Magazine also doubts about the *new normal* proclaimed by the government. It means *Tempo* Magazine tends to raise people's voices instead of being on the government's side.

4. Conclusion

The COVID-19 case became a hot issue that was discussed in various news media. Efforts by the government in handling the COVID-19 case in Indonesia have also been widely discussed. That topic becomes the cover of three magazine editions, they are; March 07, 2020 edition of *Tempo* Magazine cover; March 14, 2020 edition of *Tempo* Magazine cover; May 30, 2020 edition of *Tempo* Magazine cover. This study aims to interpret the signs on the cover of the magazine using the action of signs theory by Charles Sanders Peirce. There is three-division discussed by Peirce, this research focuses on the second division. Thus, the researchers analyzed based on the icon, index, and symbol that contained on the cover. Based on sign identification, the researchers found; (1) two icons, two indexes, and four symbols on the March 07, 2020 edition of *Tempo* Magazine cover; (2) three icons, one index, and four symbols on the March 14, 2020 edition of *Tempo* Magazine cover; and (3) four icons, two indexes, and four symbols on the May 30, 2020 edition of *Tempo* Magazine cover.

From the icons contained in the three covers, *Tempo* Magazine uses Jokowi's figure to represents the government of Indonesia. On the March 14, 2020 edition of *Tempo* Magazine cover and the May 30, 2020 edition of *Tempo* Magazine cover, *Tempo* magazine made an illustration of the coronavirus in an unusual size. The size of this big virus shows that coronavirus is a big problem that is being faced by the Indonesian government. The indexes that found on the covers can be interpreted that the government is not able to protect every Indonesian people and protective device that they able to provide is not enough for Indonesian people, the government only makes a small effort in terms of fighting coronavirus in Indonesia, and the government is trying not to avoid coronavirus by using protective equipment and using a razor as weapons the government cut some parts of the coronavirus instead of destroying the virus.

The symbols in the form of words found in these covers make the icons and indexes in the covers clear. On the March 07, 2020 edition of *Tempo* Magazine cover, the symbol can be interpreted that as the government has difficulty to face a pandemic and the coordination between president and Minister of Health is not good. So, It makes people panic. The March 14, 2020

edition of *Tempo Magazine* cover shows that the coronavirus becomes bigger but the government does not have good strategies to face it. The last, on the May 30, 2020 edition of *Tempo Magazine* cover, *Tempo Magazine* seems to doubt the *new normal* proclaimed by the government. Thus, based on the analysis the researchers found that *Tempo Magazine* tends to raise people's voices instead of being on the government's side.

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Biography of Authors

	<p>Yulia Anggraeni, S.Pd Magister Degree Student of Linguistics Program at Universitas Padjadjaran, Sumedang, West Java</p>
	<p>Dr. Ypsi Soeria Soemantri, M.Hum. Linguistics Program, Faculty of Social Sciences, Universitas Padjadjaran, Sumedang, West Java</p>
	<p>Dr. Lia Maulia Indrayani, M.Hum. Linguistics Program, Faculty of Social Sciences, Universitas Padjadjaran, Sumedang, West Java</p>