

Naming *Paya Badau* at Taman Cadika Pramuka Medan: Semiotic Narrative Analysis

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Abstract. This study aimed to investigate and reveal the spoken myths and verbal stories conveyed by the locals and how such social phenomena have constructed the existing local wisdom at Taman Cadika Pramuka (TCP) Medan. A descriptive qualitative method with narrative semiotics was applied in this study as one of the semiotics approaches. It focused on the narrative in the form of myths and verbal stories (folklore). Therefore, the data were obtained through both fieldwork and library study. They were collected through observation, documents, and interviews about the raised question addressed to the name of Paya Badau. The applied narrative semiotic as one of the semiotic approaches has enabled the writer to find and reveal five existing myths and verbal stories of 'Paya Badau' attributed as the given name of the lake at Cadika park which has brought up some certain positive effects toward the sustainability of the ecosystem. The existence of TCP and its lake, called 'Danau Cadika' (Paya Badau) merely remains significant as a protective green open space (GOS), besides its other functions as one of the flood buffer zones, and seeding centre of rare plants and trees in Medan. Furthermore, the issue of 'Paya Badau' will turn out to be a critical 'sign' for the authorized officers in charge (government), when the water level of the lake raises or overflow after rain. The name has successfully built a harmonious bond of community awareness to protect and conserve TCP as one of the most worthy mutual assets among stakeholders (community, government, private, etc.).

Keywords: Naming, Semiotic narrative analysis, *Paya Badau*

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1 Introduction

Green Open Space (GOS) is essential as the lungs of the city, as metaphorical terminology. This valuable resource for the physical activities of the urban inhabitants makes the green trees and plants can absorb the carbon dioxide (CO₂), improve oxygen (O₂) quality, decrease the temperature to perfect moisture for the plants, create high water absorption, and ease the city's noises. According to the Center of Statistical Body (BPS), the population of Medan as the third largest capital city after Jakarta and Surabaya has reached more than 2,983,868 people. They are widely spread in 265.1 km², residing in 21 Kecamatan (sub-districts), and 151 Kelurahan (administrative villages). The city itself has been undergoing rapid developments, resulting in the increasing number of sky-scrappers, vehicles (motors and cars), industrial factories, etc.

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Those growing developments have significantly affected the city's air quality index and public health to be susceptible to potential chronic illnesses (Suryati, I., Khair, H. & Gusrianti, D, 2018). Referring to the above facts in terms of the city's population, the perfect number of existing GOS should have met the standard needs required, that is one GOS for each sub-district. According to article no. 1, paragraph 21, regulation of public housing, GOS is an elongated area or lane and clustered, in which the use of it intended to be open in nature where plants could grow naturally or be planted upon its needs, (Hasni, 2009). Furthermore, cited from the journal of 'Dynamic System Analysis of Green Open Space in Medan-Indonesia' (Parlaungan, et.al, 2019) stating that GOS can also be an urban forest, an urban garden, graveyard, a playing field, a green belt, a highway, a railway track and a river bed. The width of GOS must also be by article no. 26, 2007, stating that the needs of GOS should be at least 30% of the whole city's area in square. Nevertheless, this still might be too far to meet as the existing and accessible GOS are still a few in number. Some of those are; Taman Cadika Pramuka (TCP), Taman Ahmad Yani (TAY) Taman Beringin (TB), Lapangan Merdeka (LM), Lapangan Gajah Mada (LGM), Taman Teladan (TT), all are classified as the government-owned (PEMKO) parks, while Lapangan Benteng and Taman Cemara Asri, belong to non-government party (military and developer) concerned. Amongst all mentioned GOS above, TCP is the most representative one, obviously seen from the number of trees grown, area width, existing natural resources, e.g., the pond (lake), grassed and non- grassed fields. (DKP: 2015).

TCP has its particular history by tracing back the old-time of its previously given notorious name as 'Paya Badau'. The name itself is one of the type of signs (Sebeok, 2001), in which it refers to the big pond (lake) located inside TCP, widely stretching from the South to the Northside of the park, resembling the letter 'U'.

About the above-stated conditions, the sustainability of TCP in the context of its intact natures and virginity has become the prime priority of the government. It is no wonder that TCP receives such a concern due to its vital function too as one of the flood buffer zones of Medan (RTRW: 2019). Thus, some attempted revitalizations to keep it remains naturally magnificent and safe for the whole community are in continuous development [1]. The concerned parties and stakeholders are also playing their roles significantly, most importantly the urban as the frequent visitors and users of its existing facilities. TCP has also been the most favourite public gathering spot strategically located in Medan Johor as conveyed by the Head of Scout.

Social interactions, family gatherings, peers hangouts, and small events, may be possible to hold at TCP. Besides, there are some prevailing local beliefs and rules to comply with by everyone. Some of those are no swimming, littering to the lake, logging of any trees, brawls, blackmails committed, etc. They have unconsciously formed the local wisdom that has brought-up positive effects for the locals and outsiders not to break them. Therefore, this paper is aimed at seeking and revealing the spoken myths and verbal stories conveyed by the locals and how such social phenomena have constructed the existing local wisdom at TCP from the narrative semiotics

perspective, as one of the approaches of Semiotics. They describe the phenomenon that deliberate indexicality due to its relationship to the context [2].

2. Literature Review

Local Wisdom

The knowledge and experience of life in a community. According to Law No 32/2009, on the Protection and Environmental Management Chapter I Article 1, point 30; Local wisdom was defined as the noble values that are applicable in the governance of public life to protect and manage the environment sustainably [3]. Those values may be thoughtful and full of wisdom, advisory utterances, slogans or resolved acts embedded and followed by the people. Speaking about local wisdom or local knowledge, local wisdom acting as the body of knowledge acquired from a series of activities, such as observing, analyzing, interpreting, and reaching conclusions [4]. Furthermore, this definition is related to the local (area, place/local), then the local wisdom is nothing but a collection of knowledge as a result of thoughts and actions done by people in a place (area) or location.

Valence

The word valence itself is derived from the Latin word 'Valentia', meaning strength or capacity. The Strength itself is a combination of one element. Based on Merriam Webster dictionary, valence deals with referring to the capacity of one person or thing to react with or affect another in some special way, as by attraction or the facilitation of a function or activity. In particular sense with this paper, the word valence can be associated with 'Paya Badau' that is the attributed name to TCP, affecting the whole area in the form of myths and the verbal story told, becoming a worth sign to be researched with narrative semiotics approach [5].

Narrative Semiotics

The roots of narrative semiotics and narratology lie in the study of folklore and mythology. Also explained a similar thing that narrative semiotics which study signs system in the narrative in the forms of myths and verbal story (folklore). Many semiotic models and terms were developed in an attempt to trace common patterns in myths and folktales to understand the 'grammar' of universal narrative [6].

Their main point was to throw light on the processes humans use to make sense of, and interact with, their environment. Charles Sander Peirce understood how humans applied their senses finally brought him to believe that humans use their thoughts within signs. Semiotics for him was synonymous with logic, in which he also affirmed that 'we only think in signs', and they are an element in communication. For the signs and their denotatum, Pierce focuses on three aspects, namely; Icon, Index and Symbol. The sign will always refer to something else (denotatum), to refer to meaning that to represent or to replace [7]. A sign can only work or

function if it is interpreted by the recipient's mind through the interpretant (the understanding of appeared meanings in the recipient's mind).

3. Methodology

This study applied the descriptive qualitative method with narrative semiotics as one of the semiotics approaches, focusing on the narrative in the form of myths and verbal stories (folklore) [8]. Qualitative analysis is built upon natural ways of thinking, thus, it is linear with the definition of the methodology itself, which is about a way of thinking and studying social phenomena. Whilst, the methods are meant as the techniques and procedures for gathering and analyzing data. Yet importantly to bear in mind that qualitative research begins with a broad question and often no pre-identified concepts (Corbin & Strauss), in which the identification of the concept itself is accomplished from data construction. Therefore, the data were obtained through both field and library studies [9].

The data were collected through observation, documents, and interviews related to the notorious name of Paya Badau attributed to the existence of today's TCP [10]. The explicitly explained that an icon is a sign that is made to resemble, simulate, or reproduce in some way, e.g., photographs regarded iconic, as it is visual to reproduce their referent.

Taman Cadika Pramuka (TCP) and Medan Johor

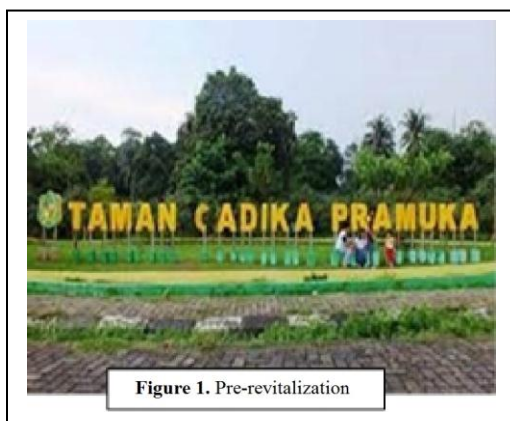
TCP possesses some strategic potentials seen from the aspects of its functions, economy, society and culture. Located in Kecamatan Medan Johor, making the whole area is legally protected by the regulation as a water buffer zone of Medan. The western border is Medan Tuntungan, the gate to Karo highland known as mountainous area, in the Eastern part is Medan Amplas, the gate to Sumatran highway, whilst in the Southern and North are Deli Serdang regency, and Medan Polonia, as the Air Force military based (ex-civil airport). The Hajj dormitory of Pangkalan Mansyur with thousands of pilgrims staying overnight before leaving for Mecca has contributed and lifted the local's incomes significantly, as 11% of the population earning the living as traders, referring to the following chart. Multi-dimensional social interactions and cultures of the people, residing in Medan Johor, has formed a resolved commitment to keep the whole area safe and away from any conflicts and distractions; brawls, looting, youth's organization (OKP), religion, etc. Once, the youth's conflict of interest occurred and was triggered by personal business, provoking the locals to stand by the line, protecting their area (source: www.antaraneews.com 2019).

Overview of Taman Cadika Pramuka (TCP)

TCP was taken over by the government (PEMKO) in 1994, handed by the Scout organization (PRAMUKA). The name of Cadika was derived from the phrase of Kawah Candra Dimuka, meaning the place for resiliency, leadership and survival training intended for scout members, being forged to be able to lead the community. In 1995, TCP was closed for the public until

2011 due to the conflict of interest between governments with some people claiming it as the inheritance of their family. In 2011, it was reopened but with limited facilities and access for the public. It is known as 'a non-active park', meaning that the open-access starts at 7 am to 6 pm, and it is still prevailing today. This policy is done so as a preventive attempt to secure the park and avoid any undesirable events. Then in 2017, the revitalization of TCP began with some other existing city parks in Medan. The most magnificent view that people can enjoy at Cadika Lake (Paya Badau), with the width of approximately 1002 squares per meter, and depths ranging from 2 meters by the edge, to 8-10 meters, by the centre, filled with thick muds sedimentation at the bottom, making this lake not a perfect and safe place for swimmers.

4. Result and Discussion



Myths and Locals' Belief

Based on the gained information from some locals, it is said that the first settlers or indigenous ethnic, living in Medan Johor were Javanese. Dated back in 1960–1970, where most Javanese settlers possessed the lands to cultivate for farming. They then sold their lands property to many Karonese and Batakese cheaply. This is equivalent to the data source from (BPS, 2020), of the total population of approximately, 151.755 people, as the following breakdown.

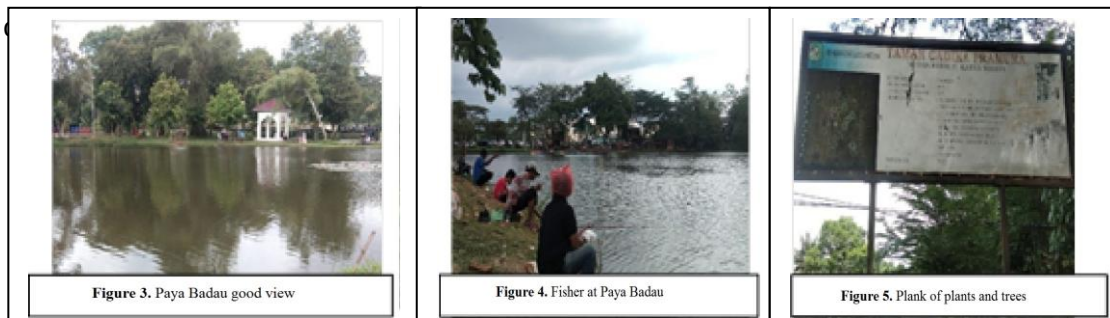
Table 1. Composition in Medan Johor

No	Sex	Population	Percentage
1	Male	75.660 people	49.86%
2	Female	76.096 people	50.14%
Dominant composition aged 14-15 years old: 106.956 People (70.48%)			

Of the table above, today's generation in Medan Johor, aged 14-15y, is assumed to be the third generation, meaning that their parents (2nd generation, aged around 30–40), and the first generation (predecessors) are assumed to be around 60s-70s. Most of today's settlers in Medan Johor are not local indigenous according to Simamora. This obvious information would bridge up a logical sequence with the existing myths and beliefs at TCP, which were also part of the Javanese' life, even today. Therefore, in its early time, none of the locals dared enough to sneak

into the park (TCP) to peep or play around, for they knew that the TCP was notorious for three reasons:

- a. Due to the existence of Paya Badau (*Latin: Channa Striata*), locally known as *Ikan Gabus/Badau*. Yet, there has not been any revealed evidence of this story, but many of the locals who go fishing at lake Cadika (*notoriously known as Paya Badau*) quite often caught big fishes like *gold fish (Latin: Cyprinus carpio)*.
- b. TCP had notoriously been believed as the place of the resident spirits of a three-headed snake with a crown. That spirits were believed as the guardians of the lake from any external distractions, or bad acts committed in the area (*Satris, 2021*).
- c. The grown trees like durian (*Durio ziberthinus*), rambung (*ficus elastica*), jambu bol (*Syzygium malaccense*) were also believed to have some guardian spirit residing in each of them. Apart from the above three myths believed by the locals, such those stories have been in the particular transformation to be typical utterances made by the locals and widely spread across the area, indirectly creating some prevailing dos and don'ts at TCP.



Wild Flora in Conservation

The following plants and flowers can be found at TCP as they are being in conservation through persistent attempts of DKP (*department of cleanliness and Landscape*), socializing to visiting students (*primary, junior*), led by the teachers in charge. A protective fence was built with a warning notice not to distract the referred floras, as they are few in number.

Table 2. List of Existing Flora TCP

No	Flora	Latin	Benefit	Status & Number
1	Mahoni	Swietenia-Mahoni	Flavonoids in mahogany seeds are useful in improving blood circulation to blood blockages, overcoming Hypertension.	CONSERVED
2	Trembesi	Samana Saman (Rain Tree)	Trembesi trees also help absorb carbon dioxide and water. The trembesi tree is also known as the rain tree.	CONSERVED
3	Ketapang Kencana	Terminalia- mantaly	The main benefit of the Ketapang Kencana tree is that it absorbs pollution so that air quality is maintained.	CONSERVED

4	Nolina Flower	Beaucarnea	Usually, these ornamental plants are useful as eye-catching flowers, as well as a beauty room décor and accessory.	CONSERVED
5	Asam Kranji	Indum dialium	Body pain killer Effective for the spur effective for digestion Effective for bleeding gums Effective for bad cholesterol.	CONSERVED A FEW & MASSIVELY SOCIALIZED

Source: *Taman Cadika Pramuka (TCP)*

The tradition of Fang Shen at TCP

The Name of ‘Paya Badau’, means 'swamp' while, 'Badau' refers to a kind of predator fish, often found in the mud of a swamp, or river with mud sedimentation which is known as Snakehead fish (Latin: *Channa Striata*). Thus, the interpretation of 'Paya Badau' can be referred to as 'the swamp of where the Snakehead fish lived'.

The spoken myths about Paya Badau, Three-headed snakes, and Resident evil trees at TCP have been the particular belief of the locals and frequent visitors as an anticipative warning to protect the TCP itself. The form of such protections has been in practice by not committing any bad deeds that might distract the peace or tranquillity at TCP. Referring to such existing phenomena, one logical thought of sequence arisen regarding the name of Paya Badau could be as follows:

Fang-sheng as Wisdom Entity

By the fact, the Southern side of the TCP is bordered with luxurious housing of Citra Wisata, where some of the residents living in the complex are the Sumatera born Chinese (Tinghoa), whose religions are Buddhism, and Fang Sheng is one of their Buddhist traditions. Fang in Mandarin, meaning 'to release' and Sheng refers to 'living creature'. Therefore, Fang Sheng interpreted it as to release the living creature, back to their habitats (cited from Haryati, 2020, Meaning and Function of Fang Sheng). The purpose is to release the sentient beings back into the wild. Those who want to do Fang Sheng, Are obliged to buy fish, birds, reptiles, any kinds of suffered animals for they are to be slaughtered, or caged, they must be released, sending them back into their habitat instead of being in misery (source: www.tinghoa.info and informant).

The Chinese are known for their traditional prophecy upon any planning before committing an activity, e.g., based on effectiveness and efficiency. Regarding Fang Sheng, they may choose the nearest event venue to hold. Thus, Paya Badau (Cadika Lake), is the preferred location. This tradition itself has been in practice for years at TCP and has shaped the locals' mindset saying that 'anyone who catches any living creatures such as fish (Badau, gold, turtle, monitor lizard, bird) from TCP, shall they return it alive, or bad luck befall them' as believed by most of the locals. Fang Sheng can also be held somewhere else accessible by any means of transport, such as Lake Toba, Deli River, etc., depending on the resolved decision of the whole members in their community.

Non-Active City Park

TCP is classified as a 'non-active city park' meaning that it is only open in daylight and closed for the public in the evening until dawn (Satris, 2021). This is a mandatory regulation prevailed ruled by the government, and such a rule is considered effective and efficient to keep TCP safe, fully monitored, and comfortable from any external distractions committed by anyone, either by purpose or not.

Mutual Partnership to Conservation

Medan City government (PEMKO) through its authorized department (Kebersihan & Pertamanan) are bridging up a mutual attempt or a joint partnership with any third parties (private) to create and provide limited (not huge) of any educational and friendly (not damage the nature) games, vehicles, amusement, as the means of complementary facilities at TCP. This policy has been one of the efforts to maintain the formed multi-dimensional local wisdom at TCP, in which it does not belong to the government only as of the regulator but the whole stakeholders living in Medan Johor and other areas to keep TCP as the best GOS.

Of the spoken myths and utterances explained above, its significant roles have contributed to being one of the intangible forms of local wisdom through the community involvement themselves to conserve TCP. The awareness to keep the whole area of TCP safe, tranquil, and away from any either bad deeds committed by the locals or outsiders, is the proven valence of the 'Paya Badau' name. Among the old people, one of the most highlighted myths spoken is 'Never screw up at Paya Badau' (*Jangan coba-coba merusuh di Paya Badau*). Instead of conveying each daunting and tedious myth and verbal story to the young, spreading the name of 'Paya Badau' is mostly preferred. Once, when the old or anyone who knows better about TCP speaks it, it will automatically turn out to be a 'Sign' to comply with, unless for the impudent ones, it is believed that bad luck would befall them anytime.

On the other hand, the existing myths of Paya Badau at TCP do not withdraw much of the government's concern. The existence of TCP and its lake, so-called 'Danau Cadika' (Paya Badau) merely remains significant as a protective green open space (GOS), besides its other functions as one of the flood buffer zones, and seeding centre of rare plants and trees in Medan. Furthermore, the issue of 'Paya Badau' will turn out to be a critical 'sign' for the authorized officers in charge (government), when the water level of the lake raises or overflow after rain. Whatsoever, each obvious fact explained above has successfully built a harmonious bond of community awareness to protect and conserve TCP as one of the most worthy mutual assets among stakeholders (community, government, private, etc.).

5. Conclusion

The applied narrative semiotic as one of the semiotic approaches has enabled the writer to find and reveal five existing myths and verbal stories of 'Paya Badau' attributed as the given name of the lake at Cadika park which has brought up some certain positive effects toward the sustainability of the ecosystem. They are "Don't screw up at Paya Badau", "The lake has its guardian", "The trees are haunted", "Return any caught animals unless you're having bad luck",

"Many got possessed there". Of all the myths conveyed by the old locals, they are intended to protect the whole park safe for everyone, naturally intact and magnificent.

There are also three fundamental signs as finite entity researched and found, applying Charles Sander Pierce's early level interpretation of the semiotic; (a). The existence of Cadika name, featuring Baden Powell (founding father of Scout movement), (b) The existence of the lake itself, (c) The name of the lake itself, notoriously known as 'Paya Badau'. Each has its valence, upon the prevailing context from the object and interpretant's perspective, e.g., Cadika refers to the whole area of the park with all the spoken myths. Most young people either the locals or outsiders are familiar with the name intended. Meanwhile, the name of Paya Badau refers to the existing lake with all its unrevealed mysteries. Unfortunately, only the old people and their generations have been well familiar with it. Thus, some newcomers at TCP, knowing it as 'Danau Cadika', gradually become aware that the indigenous given name is 'Paya Badau'. Last but not least, the whole stakeholders (the people, government, private, etc) benefit from this phenomenon to achieve the mutual goal of the whole community "Conserve the nature, and Save the Future".

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