



NCT life variety show as a persuasive media for Korean tourism promotion: Peirce's semiotic observation

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ABSTRACT

This research discussed signs in terms of icons, indexes, and symbols on the variety show named NCT Life: Hot and Young Seoul Trip using the semiotic theory of Charles Sanders Peirce. The purpose of this research is to describe icons, indexes, and symbols related to tourism and interpret these signs with contextual meaning. The reason for doing this research is to look for signs that refer to persuasive tourism promotion activities contained in the variety show. This research employed the descriptive qualitative design with the findings on each icon, index, symbol, and contextual meaning presented in the form of a description. The results of this study indicate that there are categories of icons, indexes, and symbols related to tourism promotion in Seoul, South Korea. Icon has three categories related to brand ambassadors, tourist attractions, and tourist activities. The index has four categories related to the background illustration for NCT members introduction, expressions of feelings, figurative expressions, and gestures. The symbol has three categories related to logos, slogans, and additional information related to activities and tourist attractions. Then, the contextual meaning of the signs found leads to several contexts, all of which also refer to tourism promotion activities delivered through the media of variety shows. On this basis, the research suggests that there is tourism promotion packaged in events through variety shows carried out by NCT members as performers by visiting or trying various tourist activities around Seoul and recommending them to the audience.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is an important sector for a country because it does not only provides benefits in the cultural field, but also in the economic, political, and social fields (Rianti, 2019). In Indonesia, the tourism sector looks promising to be developed because it has contributed the largest foreign exchange in the non-oil and gas sector as explained by Suwena & Widyatmaja in the book entitled *Pengetahuan "Dasar Ilmu Pariwisata (Basic Knowledge of Tourism Science)"* in 2017. In other countries such as South Korea, tourism is also a very promising sector because it is seen as an important sector for the survival of the country (Rianti, 2019).

To oversee the tourism sector, South Korea formed an organization called KTO (Korea Tourism Organization) under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism to handle promotions in the tourism sector. To introduce South Korean tourism to the international scene, the South Korean government is collaborating with well-known entertainment agencies in the country, including the collaboration between KTO (Korea Tourism Organization) and SM Entertainment in the form of K-pop concert performances in various countries with government assistance funds worth 3.3 billion rupiah (Hanifah as cited in Pramita & Harto in the research entitled "Pengaruh Hallyu terhadap minat masyarakat Indonesia untuk berwisata ke Korea Selatan (The effect of Hallyu on Indonesian people's interest in traveling to South Korea) in 2016). In 2016-2018, prominent idols such as Song Jong Ki, Lee Jong Suk, and boy group EXO (from SM Entertainment) became ambassadors for Korean tourism (Rianti, 2019). They were appointed as ambassadors for South Korean tourism at that time because the concept of today's idols ranges from famous actors and actresses to boy groups and they are expected to be able to attract tourists to visit South Korea (Rianti, 2019).

Based on that phenomenon, the urgency of this research is to examine one of the programs in South Korea, a variety show entitled *NCT Life: Hot & Young Seoul Trip* which has production support from the Seoul Metropolitan Government. It was broadcast through the Seoul tourism YouTube channel VisitSeoul TV. The host of the program came from outside South Korea, and they promote the slogan I.Seou.U as the slogan of Seoul's tourism campaign. The places visited were tourist attractions in the Seoul area, both very famous among tourists and new places that are rarely known. The variety show has twelve episodes starring SM Entertainment's famous boy group NCT. While Song Jong Ki, Lee Jong Suk, and the boy group EXO promoted Korean tourism with direct advertisements, NCT promoted Korean tourism through variety shows, where the tourism promotion activities carried out are not delivered directly so that further research is necessary. Therefore, some of these factors underlie this research to reveal signs related to tourism promotion in which the process of delivering goals and invitations is not directly expressed as in the form of advertisements but is packaged in the form of variety shows.

Beeton (2010) argues that screen tourism literature has a somewhat business-oriented focus on issues such as goal marketing, public image and economic impact and lacks collaboration and cross-disciplinary understanding to further develop the field (in Kim Sangkyun and Wang Hua 2012). Get out of the way. Crouch et al. (2005: 1) suggests that 'there are many relationships, overlaps, and disjunction between tourism and the media and equally between the disciplines of tourism and media studies'. As screen tourism phenomena present complex social, cultural, and tourism practices and intersects around various forms of popular media, it is also possible to see a wide range of social, cultural, and tourism practices. There is an inherent need for tourism researchers to look beyond their own disciplines such as investigating relevant bodies of literature from media and communication studies including television, audience acceptance and film studies (in Kim Sangkyun and Wang Hua 2012).

The theory used in this study is the semiotic theory of Charles Sanders Peirce. He divides the sign into three parts: 1) icon (a sign that describes the similarity with the designated meaning); 2) index (a sign that has a causal relationship with what is being signified); 3) symbol (arbitrarily between signs that have a meaningful relationship) with what it signifies) Muhibbudin in the research entitled “Analisis Struktural dan Semiotik pada Lirik Lagu Comment Vivre Sans Toi Karya Caroline Costa (Structural and Semiotic Analysis of Caroline Costa's Comment Vivre Sans Toi Song Lyrics)” in 2019). In addition to the theory related to semiotics, another theory used in this research is the theory related to contextual meaning by Pateda. He divides context in contextual meaning into several parts including personal context, situational context, goal context, formal or informal context of the speaker, speaker's or listener's mood context, time context, place context, object context, context of completeness, linguistic context, and the context of the language used (Pateda as cited in Palimbong, 2015).

Research related to semiotics in an advertisement has been studied by Karang (2016) and Seok Hwayoon and Nam Yoonjae (2018). Karang (2016) in his journal examines the structure of Japanese hotel advertisements, the use of signs in Japanese hotel advertisements, and Japanese tourist perceptions of Japanese hotel advertisements contained in print media. These sections were examined to find out the reasons for the non-verbal and verbal elements of some advertisements being unrelated. Seok Hwayoon and Nam Yoonjae (2018) researched the values and tourism culture contained in airline advertisements in South Korea which were divided into five time periods: 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010. The advertising strategy implemented by South Korean aviation services is in accordance with changes in tourism values and culture that occur among consumers.

This research is related to Korean language science because it can increase knowledge in the form of literacy resources, especially those related to semiotics through the process of revealing signs contained in variety shows.

2. METHOD

This research employed the qualitative research design with descriptive methods used to describe symptoms, events, and current happenings as explained by Noor in the book entitled “Metodologi Penelitian: Sripsi, Tesis, Disertasi, dan Karya Ilmiah (Research Methodology: Essays, Theses, Dissertations, and Scientific Works)” in 2017. The design of this study was applied to examine data related to icons, indexes, and symbols presented in the form of words taken from data sources from the variety show *NCT Life: Hot & Young Seoul Trip* which consists of 12 episodes with a total broadcast duration approximately 3 hours 8 (average show duration 19 minutes).

The steps taken by the researchers to collect the data were visiting the VisitSeoul TV YouTube channel, downloading the variety show videos and translations, placing the downloaded videos in the same folder, watching variety show videos, and looking for image fragments containing icons, indexes, and symbols, placing pictures according to episodes, transcribing and translating dialogues related to icons, indexes, and symbols, describing scenes in each episode, analyzing icons, indexes, and symbols according to related theories, and describing contextual meanings in each episode contained in the sign found.

The data analysis procedure to be carried out in this study refers to the procedure of data analysis proposed by Miles and Huberman as cited in Siyoto & Sodik in the book entitled “Dasar Metodologi Penelitian (Basis of Research Methodology)” in 2015 which includes data

reduction, data presentation, and conclusions or verification. To prove the validity of the data, source triangulation was carried out to test the validity of the data through several sources and triangulation techniques were applied to test the validity of the data using the same source but different techniques (Sugiyono as cited in Zulmiyetri, Nurhastuti, & Safaruddin, 2020).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Variety Show *NCT Life: Hot & Young Seoul Trip* Overview

NCT Life: Hot & Young Seoul Trip is one of a series of the eighth season of the variety show *NCT Life* which aired from July 28, 2018, to August 17, 2018, with the shooting location in the capital city of South Korea, namely Seoul. Six of the eighteen NCT members were chosen to be presenters for the variety show. This variety show is a collaboration between SM Entertainment through the NCT Life program with the Seoul Metropolitan Government which intensifies I.Seoul.U as Seoul's tourism slogan and was broadcasted in the VisitSeoulTV YouTube channel which is the Seoul government's YouTube channel containing various advertisements for tourist attractions, tourist activities, as well as the introduction of Korean culture.

This variety show opened with the introduction of the names and countries of origin of the six NCT members, all of whom are foreign nationals. The six members were Johnny (United States), Yuta (Japan), Kun (China), Winwin (China), Lucas (Hong Kong, China), and Mark (Canada). All episodes of this variety show focused on introducing tourist attractions and tourist activities that could be done in Seoul. There were five districts visited by NCT members, namely Gangnam-gu (SMTOWN Coex Artium), Seodong-gu (Flying Bowl Egg Factory), Gwangjin-gu (Ttukseom Hangang Park), Jung-gu (Legend Heroes Sports, A First Hotel Myeong -dong, Mokmyeoksanbang, and N Seoul Tower), Jongno-gu (Gyeongbokgung Palace). The final part of this variety show was closed by conveying the impressions and messages of each participating NCT member using various languages: Korean, Mandarin, and English.

3.2 Icon, Index, and Symbol

1) Episode 1

There were two findings in episode 1. The first finding was related to the introductory footage of the participating NCT members. The icons, indexes, and symbols found were as follows.

a) Icon

The first icon were six NCT members namely Johnny, Yuta, Kun, Winwin, Lucas, and Mark who participated as brand ambassadors of the variety show.

b) Index

The first index was found in the introduction of NCT members that depicts Seoul's tourist attractions, namely the N Seoul Tower and Hangang River, which were in accordance to the variety show concept to introduce Seoul tourist places and activities.

c) Symbol

The first symbol was the logo of the event '*Hot & Young 서울 여행 SEOUL X NCT Life*' which shows the collaboration between variety show NCT Life with Seoul Metropolitan Government. Meanwhile, the broadcast channel logo '*VISIT SEOUL NET*' shows the broadcasting YouTube channel.

Furthermore, the second finding was related to the first tourist spot visited by NCT members. The icons, indexes, and symbols of the second finding were as follows.

a) Icon

The second icon was a tourist spot that sells K-pop accessories of SM Entertainment artist called SMTOWN 코엑스 아티움 (SM TOWN Koekseu Atium) or SMTOWN Coex Artium located in Gangnam-gu, Seoul.

b) Index

The second index was when Kun said “*jaega paenieosseodo dwaege johahaesseul geot gatayo*” (if I were a fan, I would’ve really liked it) which was said by Kun because it described the atmosphere at SMTOWN Coex Artium.

c) Symbol

The third symbol was the place logo ‘*SMTOWN@coexartium*’ as a sign of the name of the place visited and a statement ‘*NCT in Artium*’ which explains the location of the NCT members in that episode.

2) Episode 2

The findings in episode 2 were related to a restaurant as a tourist attraction. The icons, indexes, and symbols found were as follows.

a) Icon

The icon found in episode 2 was a tourist spot called 계란 공장 (*Gyeran Gongjang*) or Flying Bowl Egg Factory as a famous restaurant selling western food located in Seongsu-dong.

b) Index

The index in this episode was when Yuta said “*eum, wa jinjja gamdong badasseoyo. Igeo jinjja masisseoyo*” (Em, Wow, I’m really impressed with the taste. This taste real good) which refers to the taste of the delicious food Yuta ate. In addition, there was also an index related to expression when Lucas was surprised because the food tasted very good without exaggerating it.

c) Symbol

The symbol in episode 2 was a caption ‘*visiting delicious restaurant in Seongsu-dong*’ which provides information that NCT members are visiting a high-quality restaurant in Seongsu-dong area.

3) Episode 3

The findings in episode 3 were related to tourism activities in the form of water sports on the Hangang River. The icons, indexes, and symbols found were as follows.

a) Icon

The icon in episode 3 is a tourism product in the form of a water sport called Yacht Sailing carried out in 뚝섬 한강공원 (*Ttukseoum Hanganggongwon*) or Ttukseom Hangang Park located in Gwangjin-gu, Seoul.

b) Index

The index in episode 3 was when Mark said “*...jayeongwa gati umjikindaneun geu jachega neomu heunchi anhneun irigo wa daneun geoyeyo...*” (...having thought that I’m actually moving with nature was very unusual yet touching experience...) which is said when trying Yacht Sailing, the body is like moving with nature because the cool air that hits the body is very obvious coupled with the ship moving in the direction of the wind.

d) Symbol

The symbol in episode 3 is the caption *'Ttukseom Hangang Park Go! Go!'* which indicates NCT members are at Ttukseom Hangang Park.

4) Episode 4

The findings in episode 4 were related to other water sports activities on the Hangang River. The icons, indexes, and symbols found were as follows.

a) Icon

The icon in episode 4 was a water sport called Stand Up Paddle Board (paddling the surfboard by standing on the board).

b) Index

The index in episode 4 was when Yuta said *"...hangangeseoneun cheoemeuro gyeongjuhae bonikka gwangjanghi dareun seoulei maeryeokeul neukkyeottdeon geot gatayo"* (..today I experienced new things here in Hangang River I felt something different about Seoul, which was very attractive to me) which was said when Yuta tried the water sport and feel the atmosphere was not like the usual charm of Seoul, the hustle and bustle of urban life.

c) Symbol

The symbol in episode 4 was *'SUP Korea'* which was the logo of the activity and the description *'Enjoying Hangang River 2. Paddle Board'* indicating that the second water sport that NCT members tried was Stand Up Paddle Board.

5) Episode 5

The findings in episode 5 were also related to water sports activities on the Hangang River. The icons, indexes, and symbols found were as follows.

a) Icon

The icon in episode 5 was a water sport activity called 선셋 카약 (*Seonset Kayak*) or Sunset Kayak which was done by rowing a small boat with a capacity of two people when the sun was about to goes down.

b) Index

The index in episode 5 was when Winwin said *"bame ireon neukkim neomu joayo"* (Kayaking at night feels so good) which was said when Winwin felt the sunset atmosphere that was seen directly felt good.

c) Symbol

The symbol in episode 5 was the caption *'Enjoying Hangang River 4. Sunset Kayak'* indicating that NCT members tried Sunset Kayak to enjoy the atmosphere of the Hangang River when the sun went down.

6) Episode 6

The findings in episode 6 were related to tourist attractions in the form of lodging. The icons, indexes, and symbols found were as follows.

a) Icon

The icon in episode 6 was a tourism product in the form of a hotel called A 호텔 명동 (A Hotel Myeongdong) or A First Hotel Myeong-dong located in Myeong-dong area.

b) Index

The index in episode 6 was when Winwin said *"myeongdongdo jinjja ga bwattneunde geunde Myeongdongeseo kaempingeul hal su isseoseo neomu wa- yakhhan nollasseoyo"* (I've been to

Myeong-dong quite often, and I was very surprised that we could go camping in Myeong-dong) which was said because of Winwin's surprise that in Myeong-dong people could camp.

c) Symbol

The symbol in episode 6 was the logo of the place ‘*a FIRST Myeong-dong*’ indicating the name of the hotel visited and the caption ‘*Camping in the city, Rooftop glamping*’ indicating the activities done by NCT members in that episode.

7) Episode 7

The findings in episode 7 were related to indoor sports venues visited by NCT members. The icons, indexes, and symbols found were as follows.

a) Icon

The icon in episode 7 was a tourist spot called Legend Heroes Sports that turned outdoor sports into indoor sports located in Seoul.

b) Index

The index in episode 7 was when Winwin said “*sinaeeseo undongeul hal su isseoseo neomu daebakhage saenggakhaeyo. Yakhan 21 saegi*” (I think it’s really good that we could play sports indoor. Could feel the 21st century vibe) which Winwin said because of the sophistication of the facilities with the 21st century vibe.

c) Symbol

The symbol in episode 7 was the ‘*Legend Heroes Sports*’ logo signifying the name of the place and the caption ‘*스크린 스포츠 게임*’ (*Seukeurin Seupocheu Geim*) providing information that the sport being carried out was assisted by a large screen.

8) Episode 8

The findings in episode 8 were related to traditional restaurants. The icons, indexes, and symbols found were as follows.

a) Icon

The icon in episode 8 was a tourist spot in the form of a traditional restaurant named 목떡산방 (Mokmyeoksanbang).

b) Index

The index in episode 8 was when Mark said “...the food in your mouth is speaking, that it’s good, they make you say that” that Mark said because it tasted good and caused his mouth to tell itself that it tasted good. Then Winwin also said “*zhèyàng yī wéi xiàqù jiù zhèyàng zuǐ lǐmiàn kāile yī duǒ huā tèbié hào chī*” (when you have a bite, it is so delicious that it feels like a flower has bloom in my mouth) which was pronounced because of the delicious taste of the food there was a flower blooming in the mouth.

c) Symbol

The symbol in episode 8 was the logo ‘*목떡산방*’ (*Mokmyeoksanbang*) showing the name of the restaurant and the description ‘*Traditional Korean Food*’ indicating that the restaurant was a traditional restaurant in terms of building and food.

9) Episode 9

The findings in episode 9 were related to the observatory at N Seoul Tower. The icons, indexes, and symbols found were as follows.

a) Icon

The icon in episode 9 was the observatory at the top of N Seoul Tower named 남산 서울 타워 전망대 (*Namsan Seoul Tawo Jeonmangdae*) or N Seoul Tower Observatory.

b) Index

The index in episode 9 was when Yuta said “...*yeoreobundeuri wonhaneun Seoule yeppeugo areumdaun geongchireul bosil su isseumnida...*” (...you can see beautiful scenery of Seoul...) which was said because the view from the observatory looked beautiful.

c) Symbol

The symbol in episode 9 was the 'N Seoul Tower' logo on the ground floor of the elevator leading to the observatory indicating that the observatory was at the top of N Seoul Tower.

10) Episode 10

There are three findings in episode 10 were related to other places around N Seoul Tower. The icons, indexes, and symbols in the first finding were as follows.

a) Icon

The first icon in this episode was a tourist spot named 남산 서울 타워 한복 문화 체험관 (*Namsan Seoul Tawo Hanbok Munhwa Cheheomgwan*) or N Seoul Tower Hanbok Culture Experience Center that provides hanbok to borrow and there were royal-themed photo spots.

b) Index

The first index was when Johnny said “...*chwaegoeui gyeongheomijyo*” (...it was the best experience) indicating that the experience Johnny had in that place was a good one.

c) Symbol

The first symbol was the logo ‘남산 서울 타워 한복 문화 체험관’ (*Namsan Seoul Tawo Hanbok Munhwa Cheheomgwan*) indicating the name of the place visited by Johnny and Mark as well as the statement ‘N Seoul Tower Sightseeing’ informing about the sightseeing activities of NCT members around the N Seoul Tower.

Furthermore, the icons, indexes, and symbols in the second finding were as follows.

a) Icon

The second icon in this episode was a tourist spot named 남산 서울 타워 VR 투어 체험관 (*Namsan Seoul Tawo VR Tueo Cheheomgwan*) or N Seoul Tower VR Tour Experience Center providing facilities for conducting virtual tours.

b) Index

The second index in episode 10 was when Lucas said "wow" repeatedly as an illustration of the excitement of the activities carried out when trying virtual tours in the form of paragliding.

c) Symbol

The second symbol in episode 10 was the logo ‘남산 서울 타워 VR 투어 체험관’ (*Namsan Seoul Tawo VR Tueo Cheheomgwan*) as the name of the place visited by Kun and Lucas.

Lastly, the third icons, indexes, and symbols in episode 10 were as follows.

a) Icon

The third icon was 남산 서울 타워 자물쇠 (*Namsan Seoul Tawo Jamulswae*) or N Seoul Tower Padlock which was a place to hang a lock with a beautiful view of Seoul.

b) Indeks

The third index was when Yuta said “*nega saenggakhaettdeon bodaga ddo joha*” (this was better than I imagined) indicating that the scene that Yuta saw right in front of his eyes was more beautiful than imagined.

c) Symbol

The third symbol was three heart’s logo found in the N Seoul Padlock indicating that in that place was the N Seoul Tower Padlock.

11) Episode 11

There are three findings in episode 11 were related to restaurants in Seoungsu-dong. The icons, indexes, and symbols in the first finding were as follows.

a) Icon

The first icon in this episode was 익동정육점 Butcher and Bistro (*Ikdongjeongyukjeom Butcher and Bistro*) or Ikdong Butcher and Bistro as a restaurant selling western food.

b) Index

The first index in this episode was when Kun showed a thumbs-up gesture, indicating that the food he ate tasted good.

c) Symbol

The first symbol in this episode was the description ‘*Yuta & Kun Steak*’ as information that the steak eaten by Kun and Yuta could be obtained at Ikdong Butcher and Bistro.

Furthermore, the icons, indexes, and symbols in the second finding were as follows.

a) Icon

The second icon found in this episode was 살라땡 방콕 (*Salladaeng Bangkok*) or Sala Daeng Bangkok as a restaurant that sold Thai food.

b) Index

The second index found in this episode was when Lucas said “*dànshì zhēn de hào chī*” (by the way it’s so delicious) indicating that the food that Lucas ate tasted really good.

c) Symbol

The second symbol found in this episode was the statement ‘*Winwin & Lucas Thai Food*’ informing that the Thai food eaten by Winwin and Lucas could be obtained at Sala Daeng Bangkok.

Lastly, the icons, indexes, and symbols in the third finding were as follows.

a) Icon

The third icon found in this episode was Simple Tokyo as a restaurant that sold Japanese food.

b) Index

The third index was when Johnny said “*joheun hyuganeun masittneun ge isseoya dwae*” (good vacations should have good food) which indirectly indicated that the Japanese food at the restaurant according to Johnny tasted good.

c) Symbol

The third symbol was the ‘*Simple Tokyo*’ logo indicating the restaurant that was visited while the words ‘*Johnny & Mark’s fusion Japanese food*’ meant that if the Japanese food that Johnny and Mark enjoyed could be obtained at Simple Tokyo.

12) Episode 12

There were two findings in episode 12 regarding the last places visited by NCT and vacation reviews in Seoul. The icons, indexes, and symbols in the first finding were as follows.

a) Icon

The first icon in this episode was 경복궁 (*Gyeongbokgung*) or Gyeongbokgung Palace which was a historical heritage palace.

b) Index

The first index found in this episode was when Johnny said “*jinjja neomu nangmanjeokgesseo. Neomuna areumdaun biuittgo*” (it was very romantic. It was a wonderful view) which was said based on the scenery he saw did look romantic and beautiful. Then Yuta also said “*...gyeongchireul bogo nae naeum sokeuro ddak jeojanghago sipeosseoyo*” (I saw the view I wanted to save in my mind) that Yuta said because the scenery he saw was too beautiful.

c) Symbol

The first symbol in this episode was ‘*Gyeongbokgung Palace special nighttime tour*’ indicating that NCT members came to the palace at night with a special atmosphere.

Furthermore, the second finding was related to Seoul as a city visited by NCT. The icons, indexes, and symbols in the second finding were as follows.

a) Icon

The second icon was the city of Seoul as a place that had a variety of activities and interesting tourist attractions.

b) Index

The second index was when Winwin said “*..wǒ juédé dàjiā lái dào shǒu nǐ dehuà yīnggāi yě huì gǎndào gēn wǒ yīyàng gǎndào fēicháng de xīndòng juédé fēicháng yǒuyìsi*” (if you come to Seoul then you will enjoy and have fun just like me) based on Winwin's experience was fun. Then Lucas said “*yīgè hěn hǎo de jīhuì kěyǐ gěi shìjiè de péngyǒumen gèngjiā qù liǎojiě'a yuánlái shǒu'ěr a yǒu zhèyàng de dōngxī kěyǐ qù wán' jiùshì tǐng hǎo de yīgè jīhuì gěi dàjiā kàn...*” (I think this trip gave many people around the world good opportunities to learn more about Seoul...) because with this vacation, viewers can gain valuable knowledge regarding Seoul tourism. Besides, Mark also said “...Seoul is the location where 1+1 turn into a perfect whole..” which indicates that Seoul is a manifestation of perfection. Last, Johnny said “Seoul is Seoul” which signifies that there is no place that can be compared to Seoul because Seoul is second to none.

c) Symbol

The second symbol found in this episode was the slogan ‘*I.Seoul.U*’ which was the slogan of Seoul tourism and the collaboration logo ‘제작지원 Seoul Metropolitan Government’ indicating that the event had received production support from the Seoul Metropolitan Government.

The results of research on the variety show *NCT Life: Hot & Young Seoul Trip* using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory revealed icons, indexes, and symbols spread throughout the twelve episodes. The number of these parts can be seen in table 1 below.

Table 1.

Number of Icons, Indexes and Symbols Finds

Text No	Semiotic Sign	Total	Percentage (%)
1	Icon	18	26.1%
2	Index	24	34.8%
3	Symbol	27	39.1%
	Total	69	100%

The first finding data were icons, which accounted for 18 data (26.1%). This finding is in accordance with the theory of Charles Sanders Peirce as cited in Asriningsari & Umayana in the book entitled “*Semiotika Teori dan Aplikasi pada Karya Sastra (Semiotics Theory and Application to Literary Works)*” in 2012 which states that an icon is a sign that has similarities with the object being marked. This similarity can be seen in brand ambassadors, tourist attractions, and tourist activities introduced in the variety show according to their referents. The first icon related to brand ambassadors is in line with Dewi’s (2013) research because the selected brand ambassadors can reveal the image of the product and add plus value by conveying a certain message on the promoted product. This is also in line with the opinion of Zhou et al. (2021), about a promotion carried out in collaboration with idols being effective to influence tourist behavior. The selection of NCT as a brand ambassador is part of the realization of the Korean government's strategy of involving today's idols as part of promotions such as what the government did in 2016-2018 involving Song Jong Ki, Lee Jong Sun, or the boy group EXO as ambassadors for Korean tourism (Riani, 2019). Furthermore, the second and third icons related to tourist attractions and tourist activities as products introduced in variety shows are in line with Liani and Wienanda’s (2019) research with the conclusion that icons in promotions carried out through a medium can be identified from the promoted products. This is also in line with Ship’s as explained by Brahim in the book entitled “*Produk Kreatif dan Kewirausahaan Akuntansi dan Keuangan Lembaga SMK/MAK Kelas XI Semester 2. Bidang Keahlian Bisnis dan Manajemen. Program Keahlian Akuntansi dan Keuangan. Kompetensi Keahlian Akuntansi dan Keuangan Lembaga (Creative Products and Accounting and Financial Entrepreneurship of SMK/MAK Class XI 2 Semester Institution. Business and management expertise. Accounting and Finance Proficiency Program. Accounting and Financial Expertise Competencies of Institutions)*” in 2021 theory which states that one of the promotional functions is to provide information related to new products and their features, benefits, image, and product manufacturing companies.

The second mode of sign is index, which accounted for 24 data (34.8%). Overall, the index found in this study is in accordance with the theory of Charles Sanders Peirce’s (as cited in Asriningsari & Umayana in the book entitled “*Semiotika Teori dan Aplikasi pada Karya Sastra (Semiotics Theory and Application to Literary Works)*” , in 2012 which states that the index is a sign that has a connection between the signifier and its signified object. This relationship is reflected in the causal connection between the use of illustrations, expressions of feelings, figurative expressions, and gestures with activities taking place in the variety show. The results of this study are in line with the research conducted by Liani and Wienanda (2019) and Dewi (2013). Liani and Wienanda (2019) concluded that images, colors, expressions, and gestures contained in a promotion emphasize product characteristics. Meanwhile, Dewi (2013) concludes

that the accompanying information can represent the uses and advantages of a product. Communication through these forms according to Zhou et al. (2021) is a common way for a fan to have a strong bond with an idol. Fans feel connected to the idols by using products or going to places visited by their idols.

The third finding is symbols, which accounted for the highest with 27 data (39.1%). This result is in accordance with the theory of Charles Sanders Peirce (as cited in Ariningsari & Umaya, 2012) which states that a symbol is a sign that has nothing in common with the signified object. Wibowo in the book entitled "Semiotika Komunikasi (Semiotics of Communication)" in 2013 added that symbols are signs that exist as a form of societal convention. This convention is reflected in the form of a logo as a symbol of events, broadcast channels, forms of cooperation, tourist attractions, tourist activities, and restaurants to attract the attention of the audience. Then there is also a slogan which is a symbol of Seoul tourism and tourism information. The results of this study are in line with several related studies. Liani and Wienanda (2019) concluded that the logo of a product, the logo of the company that produces it, and the slogan that accompanies a promotion can convince the public that the product produced is from a trusted company and the slogan represents the special characteristics of the product being introduced. Furthermore, Karang (2016) states that the logo in an advertisement can be categorized as a symbol because it can represent the characteristics of the product that you want to introduce to the public. Then, Dewi (2013) also concluded in her research that the information listed and related to the product can represent the image of the introduced product. Lastly, Tjandradipura (2017) added that a logo of cooperation is also a symbol because it indicates that the product being promoted has an established collaboration with a particular company or institution.

3.3 Contextual Meaning

1) Episode 1

The first contextual meaning was found in the introduction of NCT members. The first member is '미국, 잭니' (Miguk, Jyani) - '잔 가이드' (Jyan, Gaideu). Meaning: Johnny, United States - Guide Johnny. Second '일본, 유타' (Ilbon, Yuta) - '사랑둥이 감성 유타' (Sarangdungui Gamseong Yuta). Meaning: Yuta, Japan - lovable, emotional boy Yuta. Third, '중국, 쿤' (Jungguk, Kun) - '멀티 쿤 플레이어' (Meolti Kun Pelleieo). Meaning: Kun, China - multi Kun player. Fourth, '중국, 윈윈' (Jungguk, Winwin) - '4 차원 윈요미' (Sachawon Winyomi). Meaning: Winwin, China - wonderfully weird, cutie Winwin. Fifth, '중국 홍콩, 루카스' (Jungguk Hongkong, Rukaseu) - '예측불가 비글' (Yecheukbulga Bigel). Meaning: Lucas, Hong Kong China - unpredictable beagle. Sixth, '캐나다, 마크' (Kaenada, Makeu) - '홍부자 편집 요정' (Heungbuja Pyeonjib Yojeong). Meaning: Mark, Canada - high tension, edit fairy. The introduction of NCT members including names, countries of origin, and roles in variety shows, all of which are personal contexts, while the characteristics described are linguistic contexts because the characteristics that are written are only depictions in the variety show.

Furthermore, the contextual meaning of the second finding relates to the first tourist spot visited. Kun said "SM 아티스트 선배님들이 의 과고부터 다 볼 수 있어서 만약에 제가 팬이었어도 되게 좋아했을 것 같아요" (*SMatiseu seonbaenimdeuriei gwagobuteo da bol su isseoseo manyake jaega paeniosseodo dwaeye johahaesseul geot gatayo*) which means that by being in that place Kun can know the whole story about SM artists since time immemorial and if he becomes a fan maybe Kun will feel happy. The context is a mood context as Kun stated that he 'might feel happy' if he becomes one of the fans.

2) Episode 2

The contextual meaning of episode 2 was related to a restaurant selling western food located in Seongsu-dong. Yuta said “음, 와 진짜 감동 받았어요. 이거 진짜 맛있어” (*Eum, wa jinjja gamdong badasseoyo. Igeo jinjja masisseoyo*), which meant that Yuta was 'touched' and the food tasted really good. The 'touched' context in Yuta's sentence does not refer to bad events or events that make him feel sad, but the 'touched' context that Yuta said refers to the taste of the food that is too good and make his heart touched by the taste. The context is one of mood context category.

3) Episode 3

The contextual meaning of episode 3 was related to water sports activities carried out on the Hangang River called Yacht Sailing. Mark said “...자연과 같이 움직인다는 그 자체가 너무 흔치 않은 일이고 와 닿는 거예요” (...*jayeongwa gati umjikindaneun geu jachega neomu heunchi anhneun irigo wa daneun geoyeyo*), which means that Mark feels 'moving with nature' and the experience is an unusual one. The context of 'moving with nature' does not show that Mark really moves in line with the movement of nature but by sailing in a small boat he is riding accompanied by the wind that controls the speed of the boat and the sunny weather that supports Mark feels like he is moving along with the movement of nature. The context is one of the situation contexts.

4) Episode 4

The contextual meaning of episode 4 was related to the second water sport activity called Stand Up Paddle Board. Yuta said “한강에서는 처음으로 경주해 보니까 굉장히 다른 서울의 매력을 느꼈던 것 같아요”(Hangangeseoneun cheoeumeuro gyeongjuhae bonikka gwangjanghi dareun seoulei maeryeokeul neukkyeottdeon geot gatayo), which means that on that day Yuta 'got a new experience on the Hangang River that felt different from the usual Seoul'. Yuta's statement refers to the context that Yuta's new experience by doing water sports activities on the Hangang River makes Yuta sees a different side of Seoul that is different from the usual image of the city. The context is one of the situation contexts.

5) Episode 5

The contextual meaning of episode 5 was related to the third water sport activity called Sunset Kayak. Winwin said “밤에 이런 느낌 너무 좋아요” (*Bame ireon neukkim neomu joayo*) which means that 'the atmosphere is pleasant at night'. Winwin's words included situation context because he spoke about the surrounding situation when trying Sunset Kayak, especially when he was in the middle of the Hangang River, the atmosphere was pleasant, especially when the sky was getting late.

6) Episode 6

The contextual meaning in episode 6 was related to the hotel that provides rooftop glamping facilities. Winwin said that “... 명동에서 캠핑을 할 수 있어서 너무 와- 약간 놀랐어요” (...*Myeongdongeseo kaempingeul hal su iseseo neomu wa- yakhan nollasseoyo*) which means that he was 'surprised' to be able to camp in Myeong-dong. Winwin's surprise was not because he was 'shocked' but he was amazed by the fact that in the midst of the crowds of Myeong-dong, there is

a hotel that provides facilities for tourists to enjoy the atmosphere as well as camping with special food menus such as barbecue. Winwin's words in describing something are included in the mood context.

7) Episode 7

The contextual meaning of episode 7 was related to an outdoor sports venue that is turned into an indoor sport with the help of a virtual large screen. Winwin appreciated the innovation related to the place by saying “시내에서 운동을 할 수 있어서 너무 대단하게 생각해요. 약간 21 세기”(Sinaeeseo undongeul hal su isseoseo neomu daebakhage saenggakhaeyo. Yakhan 21 saegi) which means that Winwin finds indoor sports very cool and 'feels like the 21st century'. The context of Winwin's speech refers to the existence of Legend Heroes Sports which reflects the ease of everything including outdoor sports that can be done indoors in the 21st century. This context belongs to the situation context.

8) Episode 8

The contextual meaning of episode 8 was related to a traditional restaurant in Namsan. Mark said "... the food in your mouth is speaking, that it's good, they make you say that" which means that the food in your mouth 'talks' tastes good, that's what the food will say. The context of using the word 'talking food' does not mean that the food being eaten can speak like humans but refers to the taste of food that is too delicious. Then Winwin also said “这样一口下去就这样嘴里开了一朵花特别好吃”(zhèyàng yī wéi xiàqù jiù zhèyàng zuǐ lǐmiàn kāile yī duǒ huā tèbié hào chī) which means that when you try the bibimbab it tastes as good as a 'flower in the mouth'. The phrase 'flowers bloom in the mouth' does not mean that flowers can bloom in the mouth but refers to the context of the food that Winwin eats is too delicious so it feels like there are flowers blooming in his mouth. The context is one of linguistic context category.

9) Episode 9

The contextual meaning of episode 9 was related to the observatory at N Seoul Tower. Yuta said“도심 속 로맨틱 아일랜드에 오시면 여러분들이 원하는 서울의 예쁘고 아름다운 경치를 보실 수 있습니다”(Dosim sok romaentik aillaendeue osimyeon yeoreobundeuri wonhaneun Seoule yeppeugo areumdaun geongchireul bosil su isseumnida) which means that Yuta suggested to come to the place because the observatory N Seoul Tower is a 'romantic place' in the city as well as from where you can see the beautiful scenery of Seoul. Yuta's sentence is the goal context.

10) Episode 10

The contextual meaning of episode 10 was related to the places visited by NCT members around the N Seoul Tower. The first place is a place that provides hanbok and various traditional ornaments. Johnny said“사진의 남기도 너무 좋고 전통을 느끼기도 너무 좋고 그리고 무엇보다 너무 예쁜 것 같아”(Sajineui namgido neomu johgo jeontonggeul neukkigido neomu johgo geurigo mueotboda neomu yeppeun geot gata) which means in that place it is also possible to take pictures in a traditional atmosphere which overall looks beautiful so it feels fun. The context of the statement from Johnny includes the place context.

The second place visited is a place that provides virtual tourism. Once inside, Lucas immediately tried a virtual tour in the form of paragliding. While trying, Lucas repeatedly said the word "wow". The expression of the virtual tour in the form of paragliding shows the mood

context because Lucas expresses what he feels with the word 'wow' which refers to surprise as well as high enthusiasm.

The third place to visit is a place that provides views of Seoul from outside the observatory. Yuta said “네가 생각했던 보라도 또 좋아” (*Nega saenggakhaettdeon bodaga ddo joha*) which means that the place is more than imagined. What Yuta said includes place context because it describes N Seoul Tower Padlock as a very beautiful place and better than imagined.

11) Episode 11

The contextual meaning in episode 11 was related to various restaurants visited by NCT members in the Ikseon-dong area. The first restaurant selling western food was visited by Yuta and Kun. Kun said “진짜 맛있어요” (*Jinjja masisseoyo*) which means that the food tasted 'very good'. The context includes destination context because Kun expresses the taste of the food with the phrase 'very tasty' along with the thumb gesture.

The second restaurant sold a wide variety of Thai food which Winwin and Lucas went to. Lucas said “但是真的好吃” (*Dànshì zhēn de hào chī*) which means 'It's really delicious'. Phrases related to the taste of food that are 'very good', belong to the destination context because what is said about the taste in Chinese can influence the interest of the audience to visit the restaurant.

The third restaurant sold Japanese specialties which Johnny and Mark went to. Johnny said “좋은 휴가는 맛있는 게 있어야 돼” (*Joheun hyuganeun masittneun ge isseoya dwae*) which means that the definition of a great holiday must include 'good food'. Johnny's words refer to the object context because the focus of the conversation is on delicious food while on vacation which can describe the vacation situation in South Korea, especially when visiting Ikseon-dong area.

12) Episode 12

The contextual meaning of episode 12 dealt with the last place visited and Seoul as a whole. While gazing at the view of the palace at night, Johnny said “진짜 너무 낭만적겠어. 너무나 아름다운 비우있고” (*Jinjja neomu nangmanjeokgesseo. Neomuna areumdaun biuittgo*) which means that the scene Johnny saw was very 'romantic' and beautiful. The context of the use of the word 'romantic' spoken by Johnny does not refer to a love story but is aimed at the view of the palace building surrounded by a lake and accompanied by sparkling decorative lights around the building which looks very beautiful to Johnny so that it creates a romantic impression for him. Then Yuta also revealed “제가 거기서 말을 많이 안 했는데 진짜 그 경치를 보고 내 마음 속으로 딱 저장하고 싶었어요” (*Jega geogiseo mareul manhi an haettneunde jinjja gyeongchireul bogo nae naeum sokeuro ddak jeojanghago sipeosseoyo*) which means that in that place Yuta didn't talk much but what was clear was the sight he saw would be 'kept in heart'. The context of 'kept in the heart' spoken by Yuta does not refer to the statement of storing something in a safe place but refers to the statement that the scenery Yuta saw was so beautiful that it made him remember the memory forever. The meaning of Johnny and Yuta's words match the contextual meaning in the situation context.

Furthermore, as a form of closing the event, NCT members held an impression message session. Winwin in Chinese said “两天一夜的行程非常的充实也非常的精彩. 有很多我不知道的关于首尔的秘密 就是藏在这个地方” (*Liǎng tiān yī yè de xíngchéng fēicháng de chōngshí yě fēicháng de jīngcǎi. Yǒu hěnduō wǒ bù zhīdào de guānyú shǒu'ěr de mìmì jiùshì cáng zài zhège dìfāng*) which means that the two-day vacation trip feels 'solid' but also fun because there are so many 'hidden things' about Seoul that Winwin doesn't know. The dense context does not mean crowded

conditions but refers to NCT's activities while on vacation in Seoul because it is carried out from morning to night so that in one day it is filled with visiting tourist attractions. Then the context of 'hidden things' about Seoul does not describe something that is kept secret but hidden things that are worth looking for because with this search there are many Seoul tourist attractions with different nuances that can be recommended for new tourist destinations. The context belongs to the category of situation context. Besides Winwin, Lucas also conveyed his impression message in Chinese by saying “一个很好的机会可以给世界的朋友们 更加去了解'啊原来首尔啊有这样的东西可以去玩' 就是挺好的一个机会给大家看” (*yīgè hěn hǎo de jīhuì kěyǐ gěi shìjiè de péngyǒumen gèngjiā qù liǎojiě'a yuánlái shǒu'ěr a yǒu zhèyàng de dōngxī kěyǐ qù wán' jiùshì tǐng hǎo de yīgè jīhuì gěi dàjiā kàn*) which means that with these vacation trips people all over the world get a good chance to 'study Seoul' further. The context of 'studying Seoul' does not mean learning like in class but rather learning about tourist places and activities introduced through variety shows by NCT members. What Lucas said included the goal context. Then Mark also conveyed his impression in English by saying “I believe Seoul after this experience, I realized, Seoul, it isn't like the $1+1=2$ situation. Seoul is the location where $1+1$ turn into a perfect whole.” The context of Mark's speech is classified as a goal context because it indirectly informs the audience that by traveling to Seoul, the thing that is obtained is perfection. Lastly, Johnny said “Seoul is Seoul”. Seoul which is defined as Seoul has the context that Seoul is a place that does not imitate other places but Seoul stands alone to be beautiful with a variety of tourist attractions that make Seoul a place that is second to none. The context belongs to the place context.

The contextual meaning of the research results is related to several contexts, namely the context of the person, mood, situation, purpose, language, place, and object. The grouping of the research results is in accordance with the distribution of contexts categorized by Pateda (as cited in Palimbong, 2015) by dividing the context into several forms. Palimbong (2015) himself also applies various contexts in his research which can be concluded that the disclosure of contextual meaning can reveal clarity and interesting things that can be known from the marker based on the context of the person, situation, purpose, time, place, object, and language similarity.

The findings on contextual meaning are also in line with the example of Amilia and Anggraeni in the book entitled “Semantik Konsep dan Contoh Analisis (Semantics Concepts and Analysis Examples)” in 2017 who concluded that contextual meaning is depicted according to the situation in which it is used, such as the multiplication of ' $3 \times 4 = 12$ ' in the learning context, which is different from ' $3 \times 4 =$ four thousand rupiahs' in the context of printing photos. Mark's statement in episode 12 which states that Seoul is not as simple as ' $1+1 = 2$ ' because ' $1+1 =$ perfect thing' is in accordance with the imagery proposed by Amilia and Anggraeni in the book entitled “Semantik Konsep dan Contoh Analisis (Semantics Concepts and Analysis Examples)” in (2017 because Mark is not talking about mathematical addition but it has something to do with depiction of Seoul which has all aspects needed in life. In addition to Amilia and Anggraeni “Semantik Konsep dan Contoh Analisis (Semantics Concepts and Analysis Examples)” in (2017, the results of this study are also in line with the research by Pujiatna, Jaja, and Diana (2019) which concluded that contextual meaning is related to the situation and use of language as well as commercial values that invite people to do the same thing carried out by the figures in the promotional media. The context of the expressions conveyed by NCT members in various languages such as Korean, English, and Mandarin are expressions related to what they feel during their vacation in Seoul which all refer to the introduction of Seoul's tourist attractions. Hopefully, tourists will come to Seoul and explore the city to find other uniqueness to get the

best experience while in South Korea. The impressions and messages conveyed by NCT members also include everything that describes Seoul's tourism conditions that can lead viewers' opinions in a positive direction. This promotion method through conveying meanings in certain contexts not only affects the interest of the audience but also NCT fans because according to Zhou et al. (2021) in order to have a relationship with an idol, one of the things fans do is to come to a place that their idol has visited. By visiting the same place, fans have an emotional connection with the idol as well as change the opinion of fans regarding the tourist spot.

2. CONCLUSION

Icons, indexes, and symbols accounted for 18 data (26.1%), 24 data (34.8%), and 27 data (39.1%) respectively. In addition to the number and percentage, several categories of icons, indexes, and symbols were also found. First, the icon had three categories, namely (1) the brand ambassador of the variety show chosen is the boy group NCT, (2) the tourist attractions introduced to the audience include various places such as shopping centers for K-pop goods, traditional to modern restaurants, places outdoor recreation to indoors, hotels near the city center, as well as historical heritage palaces, and (3) tourist activities in the form of water sports carried out on the famous river in Seoul. Second, the index had four categories, namely (1) an index related to the background illustration of the introduction of NCT members featuring Seoul tourist attractions, (2) an index related to expressing feelings, (3) an index related to figurative expression, and (4) an index related to gestures. The index related to the expression of feelings, figurative expressions, and gestures has a connection with the places visited and the activities carried out. Third, symbols had three categories, namely (1) symbols related to the name of the event, broadcast channels, production support for events, tourist attractions, and tourist activities, (2) symbols related to Seoul tourism slogans, (3) symbols related to descriptions containing information on places and activities being carried out in each episode.

Furthermore, the contextual meaning of the research data relates to several contexts, namely (1) personal context related to the introduction of NCT members, (2) mood context related to the description of the feelings expressed by NCT members, (3) situation context related to the surrounding situation when NCT members did tourism activities, (4) destination context related to Seoul tourist attractions, (5) linguistic context related to the figurative expressions that connote additional layers of meaning from the utterances, (6) place context related to the description of tourist attractions, and (7) object context related to the focus of discussion about vacations.

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