

CHINESE CULTURE'S REPRESENTATION IN *FRESH OFF THE BOAT* (2015):

A JOHN FISKE SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS



An Undergraduate Thesis

**Submitted as a partial fulfillment of the requirements
for *Sarjana Sastra* Degree**

Dwi Gita Cahyani

2009010042

**ENGLISH LITERATURE STUDY PROGRAM
FACULTY OF CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION SCIENCES
UNIVERSITAS MUHAMMADIYAH PURWOKERTO
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2025

APPROVAL SHEET

This is to certify that this graduating thesis entitled **"Chinese Culture's Representation In *Fresh Off the Boat* (2015): A John Fiske Semiotic Analysis"** by **Dwi Gita Cahyani** have been approved by the advisor(s) and the Head of the English Department to the examined by the Board of Examiners

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Purwokerto, 24 June 2025
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CHINESE CULTURE'S REPRESENTATION IN *FRESH OFF THE BOAT* (2015): A JOHN FISKE SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS

An Undergraduate Thesis

By

Dwi Gita Cahyani

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Has been examined and approved by the Board of examiners as one of the requirements for Sarjana Sastra Degree on July 2, 2025

THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS

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Second Examiner



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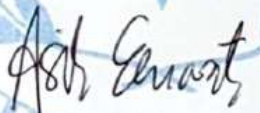
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STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

Nama : Dwi Gita Cahyani

Student Number : 2009010042

I am the undersigned researcher of the undergraduate entitled "Chinese Culture's Representation In *Fresh Off The Boat (2015): A John Fiske Semiotic Analysis*" hereby attest and affirm that the material in this thesis has not been previously submitted and published for a degree in any universities, and to the best of my knowledge, any referenced- quotations are shown in the arrangement of citations and bibliography. If later it can be revealed that this undergraduate thesis contains partly or wholly plagiarized pieces of other intellectual works of any kind, the researcher will be ready to accept the sanction.

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MOTTO

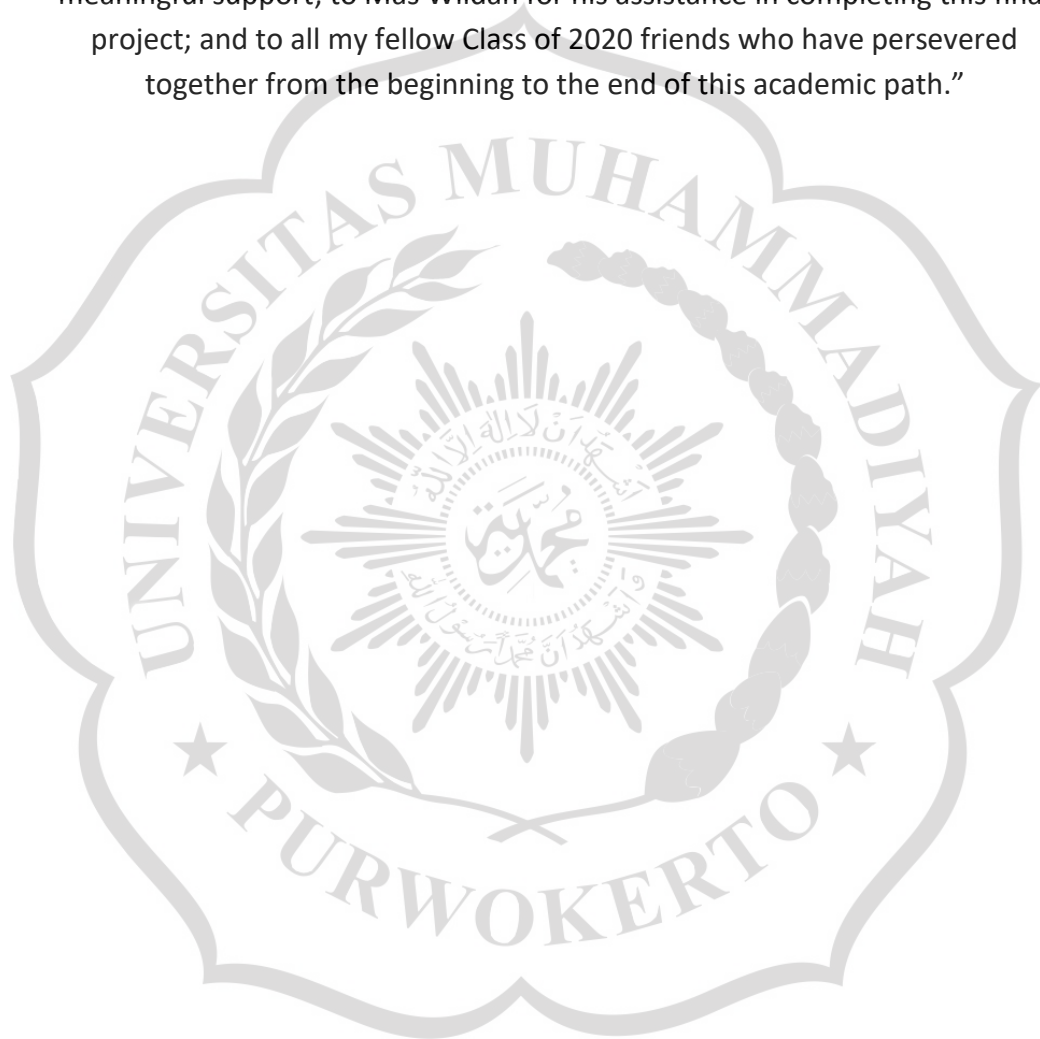
“Make your own way, all roads have a finish time.”

- Penulis -



DEDICATION

“This thesis is dedicated to my parents, sister, aunt, uncle, and two cousins for their unwavering support, prayers, and sacrifices throughout my academic journey. Without them, this achievement would not have been possible. I also extend my sincere gratitude to Shofwan Hadi for the affection, care, and meaningful support; to Mas Wildan for his assistance in completing this final project; and to all my fellow Class of 2020 friends who have persevered together from the beginning to the end of this academic path.”



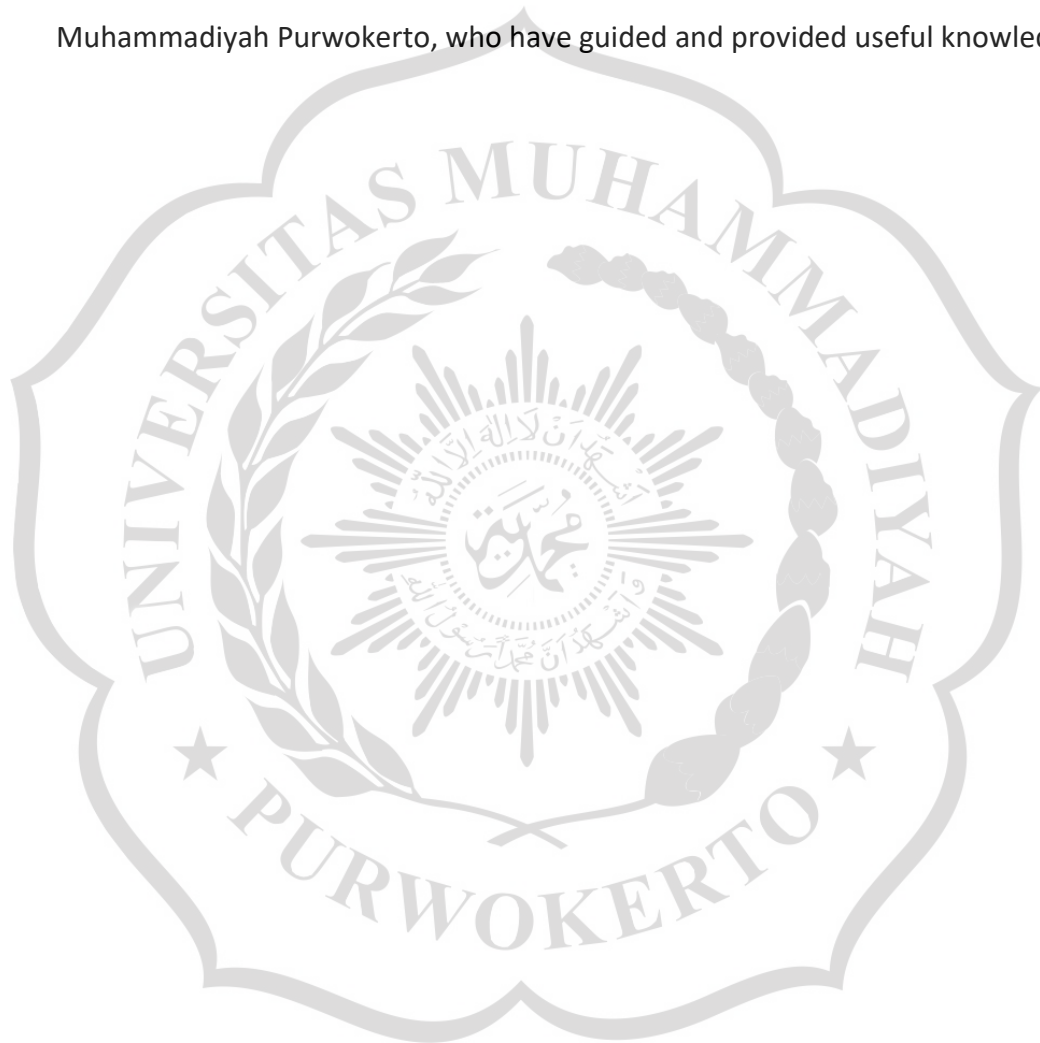
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The implementation of research and the preparation of this thesis can be completed by researchers, of course, thanks to the services, guidance, support, direction, and cooperation of various parties. So, on this occasion, the researcher expressed his gratitude to:

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ABSTRACT

Cahyani, Dwi Gita, 2009010042. 2025: Chinese Culture's Representation in *Fresh Off the Boat (2015)*: a John Fiske Semiotic Analysis. Undergraduate Thesis for Sarjana Sastra Degree, English Department, Faculty of Cultural Sciences and Communication, Universitas Muhammadiyah Purwokerto.

This study analyzes the representation of Chinese culture through the character Jessica Huang in the television series *Fresh Off the Boat (2015)*, using John Fiske's semiotics. Movies, as a reflection of society, have the power to shape cultural understanding. The series, which follows a Taiwanese-American immigrant family in 1990s Orlando, highlights Jessica Huang as the central character who represents cultural adaptation and stereotypes.

The purpose of the study is to identify and analyze Chinese cultural signs and their meanings attached to Jessica Huang. Using descriptive qualitative methods and Fiske's semiotic framework, data were collected through observation of Jessica Huang's scenes in selected episodes, focusing on cultural aspects such as the use of traditional cutlery, traditional costumes, symbolic traditions, beliefs, language and communication, and her frugal behavior.

Results show that Jessica Huang represents various aspects of Chinese culture, both accurately and through stereotypes, which are then communicated to audiences. This study reveals the role of media in reflecting and shaping cultural perceptions through characterization, and demonstrates the effectiveness of semiotics in unraveling its meaning.

Keywords: *Chinese culture, Fresh Off the Boat, representation, John Fiske, semiotic*

INTISARI

Cahyani, Dwi Gita, 2009010042. 2025: Representasi Budaya Tionghoa dalam Serial *Fresh Off the Boat* (2015): Analisis Semiotika John Fiske. Skripsi Sarjana Sastra, Program Studi Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Ilmu Budaya dan Komunikasi, Universitas Muhammadiyah Purwokerto.

Penelitian ini menganalisis representasi budaya Tiongkok melalui karakter Jessica Huang dalam serial televisi *Fresh Off the Boat* (2015), menggunakan semiotika John Fiske. Film, sebagai cerminan masyarakat, memiliki kekuatan membentuk pemahaman budaya. Serial ini, yang mengisahkan keluarga imigran Taiwan-Amerika di Orlando era 1990-an, menyoroti Jessica Huang sebagai tokoh sentral yang merepresentasikan adaptasi budaya dan stereotip.

Tujuan penelitian adalah mengidentifikasi dan menganalisis tanda-tanda budaya Tiongkok serta maknanya yang melekat pada Jessica Huang. Menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif dan kerangka semiotika Fiske, data dikumpulkan melalui observasi adegan-adegan Jessica Huang dalam episode terpilih, fokus pada aspek budaya seperti penggunaan peralatan makan tradisional, pakaian adat, tradisi simbolik, kepercayaan, bahasa dan komunikasi, serta perilaku hematnya.

Hasil menunjukkan Jessica Huang merepresentasikan berbagai aspek budaya Tiongkok, baik akurat maupun melalui stereotip, yang kemudian dikomunikasikan kepada khalayak. Studi ini mengungkap peran media dalam merefleksikan dan membentuk persepsi budaya melalui karakterisasi, serta menunjukkan efektivitas semiotika dalam mengurai maknanya.

Keywords: *Budaya Tiongkok, Fresh Off the Boat, representasi, John Fiske, Semiotik*

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