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Between the Documentary Voices and the Storytelling Methods of Four Indonesian Biographical Documentaries

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Abstract: This article examines the correlation between the voices of documentary films and the storytelling methods of four Indonesian biographical documentaries as the objects of analysis. They are *Mendengar Si Bisu Bernyanyi: Biografi Pramoedya Ananta Toer* (Srikaton, 1995), *Ki Hadjar Dewantara: Mata Air Kebangsaan* (Anshoriy, 2017), *Bapak Komik Indonesia: Biografi R.A. Kosasih* (Ahdan, 2019), *Melawan Lupa: Polisi Jujur itu Bernama Hoegeng* (Taharani, 2020). The documentary voice suggests the perspective, argument, or position of the filmmakers expressed in their works. As to the scope of storytelling includes elements of documentary narrative style, modes and power of documentary storytelling, modes of documentary presentation, and montage editing. With these two aspects – the voices and the storytelling methods – the audience has better access to gain insights from the documentaries. The analysis is carried out by making use of the filmic close reading and note-taking method through cinematic observation and interpretation. The finding suggests that the voices of the films are ideationally and aesthetically articulated through their storytelling methods. The documentary voices and their storytelling methods play a crucial part in helping the films build their credibility in line with the evidence employed.

Key words: documentary voice, storytelling, biographical documentary, credibility

Abstrak: Artikel ini mengkaji korelasi antara suara film dokumenter dan metode penceritaan empat film dokumenter biografi Indonesia sebagai objek analisis. Mereka adalah *Mendengar Si Bisu Bernyanyi: Biografi Pramoedya Ananta Toer* (Srikaton, 1995), *Ki Hadjar*

Dewantara: Mata Air Kebangsaan (Anshoriy, 2017), Bapak Komik Indonesia: Biografi R.A. Kosasih (Ahdan, 2019), Melawan Lupa: Polisi Jujur itu Bernama Hoegeng (Taharani, 2020). Suara dokumenter menunjukkan perspektif, argumen, atau posisi pembuat film yang diekspresikan dalam karya mereka. Adapun ruang lingkup penceritaan meliputi unsur gaya naratif dokumenter, mode dan kekuatan penceritaan dokumenter, mode penyajian dokumenter, dan penyuntingan montase. Dengan dua aspek ini – suara dan metode penceritaan – penonton memiliki akses yang lebih baik untuk mendapatkan wawasan dari film dokumenter. Analisis dilakukan dengan menggunakan metode membaca dekat filmis dan mencatat melalui observasi dan interpretasi sinematik. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa suara film diartikulasikan secara idealis dan estetik melalui metode penceritaannya. Suara dokumenter dan metode penceritaannya memainkan peran penting dalam membantu film membangun kredibilitasnya sejalan dengan bukti yang digunakan.

Kata kunci: sudut pandang/suara film, penceritaan, dokumenter biografi, kredibilitas

INTRODUCTION

A biographical documentary is a sub-genre of documentary film. It exposes a subject's life wholly or partly that is framed within the documentary voice. It usually features a person's life being significant in a particular or reputable field (Freeman & Smith, 2019; Nichols, 2017). This neither concerns the humble origin nor the distinguished one of the subjects being filmed. What matters most in a biographical documentary is its voice about the person. Such a concern is crucially related to how the subject of the film is narrated (Corner, 2002).

The documentary voice relates to the filmmaker's opinion, perspective, or argument regarding the subject matter, from a particular viewpoint. This argument indicates the filmmakers' position towards the subject matter (Nichols, 2017). The storytelling method in this article deals with the ways the filmmaker organizes and presents Factual events and information to the audience in particular forms (Bernard, 2007; Bordwell & Thompson, 2013; Nichols, 2017). The use of factual events and information is inseparable in documentary filmmaking. John Grierson, the British pioneer of documentary filmmaking, first proposed the concept of documentary film in the 1930s. He called it "the creative treatment of actuality [factual event and information]"

(McLane, 2012, p. 6). By employing factual events and information, a sense of credibility or reliability in a documentary film's sources is achieved (Nichols, 2016; Platinga, 2015).

With the above framing in mind, the article, thus, provides an examination of four Indonesian biographical documentaries. They are *Mendengar Si Bisu Bernyanyi: Biografi Pramoedya Ananta Toer* (Srikaton, 1995), *Ki Hadjar Dewantara: Mata Air Kebangsaan* (Anshoriy, 2017), *Bapak Komik Indonesia: Biografi R.A. Kosasih* (Ahdan, 2019), *Melawan Lupa: Polisi Jujur itu Bernama Hoegeng* (Taharani, 2020). The writer uses the words "documentary film, film, and documentary" interchangeably in this article for the sake of practicality and avoiding boredom.

The four documentaries are selected on the basis of their films' subjects delineating the past prominence figures in Indonesia. The first documentary unravels the life of Pramoedya Ananta Toer. He is a preeminent post-Indonesian independence prose writer, novelist, and short story writer (Pletcher, 2023). The second film represents the fundamental contribution of Ki Hadjar Dewantara or R.M. Soewardi Soerjaningrat to the newly independent Indonesia. He is a pre-Indonesian independence journalist, politician, educator, and the founder of Taman Siswa educational movement (Wiryopranoto et al., 2017). The third documentary features the legacy of R.A. Kosasih. He is the first comic creator of Indonesian superheroine, *Sri Asih* (Lent, 2014). The last film describes the stoic principles and life of Hoegeng Iman Santoso. He is regarded the most straightforward and dedicated chief of the Indonesian Police Force ever (Santoso et al., 2009).

With these great figures be the films' subjects, it is worthy to examine the way the documentaries represent them to the audience. The urgency to assess the voices of the films and their storytelling methods resides in the notion that biographical documentaries with such exceptional figures are expected to portray them fitly to their fame. By "fitly" here suggests that the documentary voices and their storytelling methods can make the films ideationally and aesthetically credible. Aspect of credibility in a documentary film production is linked to the use of accurate evidence (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013; Nichols, 2016; Platinga, 2015). The use of evidence is essential as it helps raise the stake of the documentary's subject matter (Bernard, 2007). This evidence could be obtained through various sources, such as stock footages, photographs, testimonies, and interviews with witnesses (Ellis, 2012; Nichols, 2017; Platinga, 2015). Yet, evidence is not everything in a documentary film. The ways the filmmakers present or tell the evidence

through a suitable storytelling methods to the audience even matter most (Bernard, 2007; Corner, 2002; Nichols, 2016). About this, the writer perceives that the four biographical documentaries ideationally and aesthetically exhibit the coherence of their documentary voices and storytelling methods, which can further enhance the credibility of the films.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Some theoretical frameworks are employed in examining the relevance of the documentary voices and their storytelling methods. They are the elements of documentary narrative style (Önen, 2021), the narrative or non-narrative forms of documentary storytelling (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013), the narrative power of documentary storytelling (Bernard, 2007), the modes of documentary presentation (Nichols, 2017), dan the montage classification (Eisenstein, 1977). These frameworks are applied because they provide parameters by which the relevance of the documentary voices and their storytelling methods can be described and examined.

About the elements of documentary narrative style, Ufuk Önen, (2021), a film producer, sound designer and educator at Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey, highlights six crucial elements. They are the storytelling following a subject of the film; the way film is narrated; the presence of a narrator on or off screen; the involvement of the filmmaker with the subject; the presence or absence of the filmmaker on the screen; and the documentary voice (Önen, 2021).

As to the forms of documentary storytelling, David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson (2013), the leading scholars of film studies, mention that a documentary film may adopt narrative and non-narrative forms of storytelling. Should a documentary follows a narrative form, then the principles of chronology and cause-and-effect work. A documentary may also apply a non-narrative form in its storytelling. This formal patterning is about the way the filmmaker conveys the subject matter of the film. The subject matter can be presented based on categorized information (the categorical form) or based on a particular argument of the filmmakers about the subject matter (the rhetorical form). With this type of form, the audience is expected to be persuaded, convinced, and then taking a particular action out of it (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013).

Regarding the narrative power of documentary storytelling, Sheila Curran Bernard (2007), an Emmy and Peabody Award-winning filmmaker, writer, and educator, underscores two essential qualities. They are the stake of the story, and the degree of accurate (high-medium-low) facts employed in a documentary (Bernard, 2007). The accurate facts in this case do not necessarily mean journalistic-like accuracy. What does it mean? It means that the filmmakers creatively have a certain freedom to manipulate the factual evidence of events or any-given social histories to be a cinematic work. The effect is that viewers internalize any given-evidence or information in the film, and experience the story for themselves as if they were there (Bernard, 2007). These are the tools that enable a documentary film give the audience emotional engagement and a sense of participation.

About the modes of documentary presentation, Bill Nichols (2017), a prominent American film critic and scholar, proposes six modes of documentary representation. They are expository, poetic, observational, participatory, reflexive, and performative modes. Modes relate to how the filmmaker represents actualities through specific cinematic qualities used to construct a documentary film. The specific cinematic qualities here deal with arrangement of sounds and images in a specific way using particular aesthetic and rhetorical techniques (Nichols, 2017).

An expository documentary is a documentary characterized by an exposition, an explanatory technique where the film represents fragments of actualities or historical world in a more rhetorical or narratorial frame than an aesthetic or poetic one. This expository mode advances an argument or proposes a perspective (Nichols, 2017). A poetic documentary gives weight more on associations and patterns of actualities or historical world rather than displays of factual knowledge and a rhetorical persuasion. In a poetic documentary, the expressive quality of the film is what matters most, and it is expressed through mood and tone of any raw materials (people, events and objects) intended to be shown in the film (Nichols, 2017). An observational documentary is a film featured by a close observation of the social actors or any subjects undergoing their lives. The viewers of this documentary know everything of the subjects from camera as if it were not present there (Nichols, 2017). A participatory documentary exhibits an interaction between the filmmaker and the social actor or the subject. This type of film displays how the filmmaker takes part in events or activities happening before the camera (Nichols, 2017). A reflexive documentary shows the absence of the filmmaker on the screen, and yet the filmmaker solemnly speaks about the historical

world and addresses the issues and problems of representing it. Therefore, this type of film provides a reflective mode on the subject matter as well as the complexities in delivering it to the viewers (Nichols, 2017). A performative documentary explores the expressive qualities of the filmmaker in an engagement with the subject matter. In performing the engagement, the filmmaker addresses the viewers explicitly and actively (Nichols, 2017).

The last theoretical framework to apply is the montage classification. They are metric, rhythmic, tonal, over-tonal, and intellectual/ideological montages (Eisenstein, 1977). Montage is a synonym for film editing. In filmmaking, editing is crucial in production and post-production. It implies not only the work of a film editor in the post-production but also the decisions and technical choices made during the production. The decisions and technical choices meant here concern “a sense of which setups, shots, and sequences are included and in what order” (Kuhn & Westwell, 2012, p. 269). Therefore, interaction between editing technique, *mise-en-scene*, narrative design, and the film’s theme is the primary focus in montage. Editing technique is critical as it is especially governed by the considerations of continuity between shots, scenes, and sequences (Kuhn & Westwell, 2012).

Metric montage is a film editing whose technique is done by joining the pieces (shots and scenes) based on a measurement of musical beat. The beat can be simple, such as the primitive methods (3/4, 2/4, 1/4, etc.), or compound ones, such as the complicated irregularity (16/17, 22/57, etc.). In this metric montage, the content of the frame is relegated to the absolute length of the piece that are applied repetitively in the designated pieces. The effect of this montage is to create an aesthetic tension, suspense, or drama (Eisenstein, 1977). Unlike metric montage, rhythmic montage gives equal consideration to the content of the frame. Technically, rhythmic montage is similar to the metric one but the former also promotes the significance of the content of shots and scenes. The effect of rhythmic montage is that greater continuity of the contents of the pieces is maintained (Eisenstein, 1977). As for tonal montage, this type of film editing focuses on maintaining the emotional tone of the pieces. It suggests that joining or placing two visual and aural contents of the pieces together should be able to express emotions desired to achieve. A director, for instance, cannot simply cut the pieces based on the visual image or tempo of the music without considering the emotions that can be drawn from placing. Thus, tonal montage is applied to create different emotional effects on the audience (Eisenstein, 1977).

Over-tonal montage is the furthest development of tonal montage. Technically, it is similar to tonal montage but the technique is applied to the larger piece (sequence) and the structure of the film corresponding to the overall theme (Eisenstein, 1977). About intellectual/ideological montage, Eisenstein properly defines it as “montage not of generally physiological over-tonal sounds, but of sounds and overtones of an intellectual sort: i.e., conflict-juxtaposition of accompanying intellectual affects” (Eisenstein, 1977, p. 82). Intellectual montage allows audience to infer meaning and emotions about the correlations between shots and scenes. The effect of this type of montage sometimes create surprise and disrupt audience’s expectation (Eisenstein, 1977).

METHOD

The writer applies a filmic close reading and note-taking method to collect the data from the examined films. The method is conducted through observation. In film studies, observation technique is inevitable. A film is an audio-visual work meaning that audience sees the visual images and hears or listens to sound and music or scoring at the same time. About this, Bernard F. Dick, a professor of communications and English at Fairleigh Dickinson University, maintains that:

In a movie, however, the conflict is audiovisual: it is heard and seen rather than written and read. A movie "embodies time-space relationships." While a written narrative can suggest that two events are occurring at the same time and in different places, a movie can do more than suggest: it can show them occurring (Dick, 1998, p. 4).

A close reading method in film studies is a method of observing (not only watching, but also listening, and thinking) a film to develop audience’s critical thought of the film (Lewis, 2014). Note-taking is also important in analyzing the film because the activity “help us record our observations either during or immediately following the screening, while our impressions are still vivid. If something strikes us write it down” (Lewis, 2014, p.285). To carry out this observation, the writer selects some shots and scenes in the examined documentary films, and then proceed it with the analysis. The method to analyze the shots and scenes is through interpretation. Making meanings through interpretation is a valid and proper practice in film criticism (Bordwell, 1991; Lewis, 2014; Rosenbaum, 1995).

THE DOCUMENTARY VOICE AND THE STORYTELLING METHOD OF *MENDENGAR SI BISU BERNYANYI: BIOGRAFI PRAMOEDYA ANANTA TOER* (Srikaton, 1995)

Mendengar Si Bisu Bernyanyi: Briografi Pramoedya Ananta Toer was produced by Lontar Foundation and directed by Srikaton in 1995. The duration of the documentary is 29:19 minutes. The film exclusively portrays the life of Pramoedya Ananta Toer, his principles of life and his struggle against any forms of oppression he encountered in the past, be that of political, economy, cultural, nor societal ones, against oneself and others. This confirms a portrayal of Pram, his nick name, as a true paradox man in his life. Many people adore and yet, at the same time, many others condemn him. Such a quality – paradox – is what becomes his power, and he truly realized it and stuck to it to the end. His short stories and novels, such as *Tjerita dari Blora* (1952; “Tales of Blora”), *Bumi Manusia* (1980; “This Earth of Mankind”), *Anak Semua Bangsa* (1980; “Child of All Nations”), and *Rumah Kaca* (1985; “House of Glass”), prove to have enchanted many people in Indonesia and abroad (Kemendikbud, 2016; Pletcher, 2023).

As a biographical or portrait documentary, the work of Srikaton is structured into 13 segments. A segment is equivalent to a sequence in a fiction film (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013). Segment 1 introduces Blora, the birthplace of Pramoedya Ananta Toer (Pram), and his residence at Utan Kayu, East Jakarta, to the audience. Segment 2 unfolds Pram and his involvement at *LeKR*a (a cultural wing organization of the Indonesian Communist Party). Segment 3 defines Pram as a true individualist. Segment 4 describes Pram as an avant-garde author. Segment 5 reveals the spiritual relationship of Pram and his works, a father-child like one. Segment 6 recounts the oppressions, exiles, and imprisonments of Pram. Segment 7 revisits Pram’s early career as an author. Segment 8 traces back Pram’s inferior complex. Segment 9 conveys Pram’s attempt of committing suicide. Segment 10 illustrates Pram and his freedom. Segment 11 shows the significant meaning of a mother to Pram. Segment 12 uncovers the strength and determination of Pram. The last one, segment 13, presents the imaginary message of Pram’s mother.

As regards the documentary voice or the filmmaker’s voice (Önen, 2021), *Mendengar Si Bisu Bernyanyi: Briografi Pramoedya Ananta Toer* (Srikaton, 1995) articulates an idea that Pram is a complex individualist. He has undergone psychological, sociocultural, and political hardships in a long period of his life. This is evident in a scene of segment three wherein the camera shoots Pram from behind and slowly pans to the left. The frame shows

Pram who is reading and smoking in his working room at night as indicated below.



Figure 1.
Pram, a complex individualist
(Srikaton, 1995, 04:14)

While the scene displays this visual, Pram's internal voice explains that he is an individualist, unable to be directed by others and unwilling to direct others. He is determined to his stands and unwilling to trade off his principles. His internal voice further mentions that he is rebellious to anything in his life as he considers that things go against him, oppress him. The camera slowly zooms in Pram's portrait figure as his internal voice expresses his self-identity as a true Pram, "Pram is Pram, and not others" (Srikaton, 1995, 04:29). Pram does not even care when people allege that he is a Communist.

To better express the idea of Pram's individualistic disposition, the storytelling method of Srikaton's biographical documentary employs a number of techniques. Firstly, the camera follows the subject in the film (Önen, 2021). Secondly, the narration is done by the omniscient point of view (POV) the third-person POV and first-person POV (Önen, 2021). The omniscient POV is conducted by the voice-over (VO). The third-person POV is a social actress dressed in blue *kebaya*, acting as Pram's mother who follows and watches Pram's life. The first-person POV is Pram himself who recounts his life. The most dominant POV in the film is the first-person POV followed by the omniscient and the least dominant is the third-person POV. Thirdly, both the third-and first-person POVs are on screen (Önen, 2021) as shown below.



Figure 2.
Third person POV narrator,
the woman in blue *kebaya*,
(Srikaton, 1995, 01:49)



Figure 3.
First person POV narrator, Pramoedya
Ananta Toer
(Srikaton, 1995, 11:03)

The next technique to use is the presence of the filmmakers on screen (Önen, 2021). It is represented by the social actress herself in the film. The employment of the social actress on screen gives a sense that it is designed. Therefore, audience is aware that it is a film, and the presence of the filmmakers on screen is embodied by the social actress. Nevertheless, the social actress does not interact with the film subjects (Önen, 2021), Pramoedya and other social actors involved on screen. They seem to be unaware of the presence of the social actress in *blue kebaya*, which gives an impression that they live in two different worlds, but they are closely connected.

Beside the techniques mentioned above, the storytelling method of *Mendengar Si Bisu Bernyanyi: Briografi Pramoedya Ananta Toer* (Srikaton, 1995) is delivered in a non-narrative form (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013). The non-narrative form employed is the rhetorical form, and the type of the rhetorical form is the argument from source. The film's argument relies on the reliable source of information. The reliable source of information is obtained from the firsthand accounts of the subject (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013). In this portrait documentary, the viewers get the firsthand accounts from Pramoedya himself in the form of testimonies of his life. The argument of Pram in this film is clear in that he claims himself to be an individualistic and rebellious person, as well as an avant-garde author (Srikaton, 1995, 03:53).

With this non-narrative form of the documentary storytelling method, Srikaton's portrait documentary, therefore, does not have a particular narrative element at stake. This is the case since the presence of something at stake in telling a story only applies when the form of the storytelling is in a

narrative form (Bernard, 2007). The narrative form of the storytelling involves the existence of definitive protagonist and antagonist (or antagonistic force) as well as a narrative plot and structure, such as exposition, moments of conflicts, climax, and resolution, to make the story more dramatic and compelling (Bernard, 2007; Bordwell & Thompson, 2013). However, it does not mean that the portrait documentary has no powerful element to tell that can allure the audience. The powerful element of the film lies in the rhetoric itself, the claim of Pram, which may evoke neither agreement nor disagreement of the audience.

Another parameter to examine the power of the documentary storytelling is through the employment of accurate facts (Bernard, 2007). *Mendengar Si Bisu Bernyanyi: Briografi Pramoedya Ananta Toer* (Srikaton, 1995) employs a high degree of accurate facts. The subject matter of the film itself is about Pram and his disposition in life, both as an individual and a novelist. It is achieved through the testimonies of Pram as the firsthand reliable source as well as through other visuals and narratorial sources from Pram's old photographs, factual objects and event. The following shots show how stock photo, factual object and event are incorporated in the film.



Figure 4.
Pram's old photograph
as a detainee at Buru
Island
(Srikaton, 1995, 08:32)



Figure 5.
Pram's old house in
Blora
(Srikaton, 1995, 13:10)



Figure 6.
The Launching of
Pram's novel, *Arus Balik*
(Srikaton, 1995, 22:24)

From the mode of documentary presentation (Nichols, 2017), Srikaton's biographical documentary combines expository and observational modes. As was explained previously, an explanatory method about a subject matter delivered in a rhetorical or narratorial frame is the heart of an expository documentary. As for an observational documentary, a close observation of the social actors or the film subjects undergoing their daily activities matters most (Nichols, 2017). Srikaton's work demonstrates these features in all segments. When the camera captures the activities of Pram as if unnoticed, so that the audience feels present in the moments, then the observational mode is

applied. On the other hand, when the camera captures the explanation of Pram or the commentaries of the social actress narrator, thus, the expository mode is used. This pattern goes along the way to the end of the film.

In terms of the montage technique (film editing) that supports the storytelling of Srikaton's portrait documentary, the tonal and over-tonal montage are the most powerful ones. The former keeps the tone of two shot or scenes connected emotionally and thematically with the purpose of reinforcing the emotion or psychological meaning of the film. The latter does further by incorporating the qualities of similar speed (metric montage), logically continued objects captured (rhythmic montage), and similar emotion (tonal montage) in the shots or scenes (Eisenstein, 1977).

Mendengar Si Bisu Bernyanyi: Briografi Pramoedya Ananta Toer (Srikaton, 1995) displays the use of tonal montage, for example, in these three different shots of segment 6 (six) as shown below.



Figure 7.
Newspaper clipping of
Pram's "dark" past
(Srikaton, 1995, 06:31)

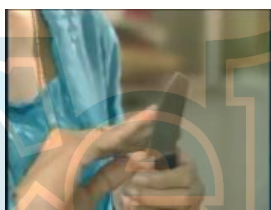


Figure 8.
The social actress narrator
and the knife
(Srikaton, 1995, 06:35)

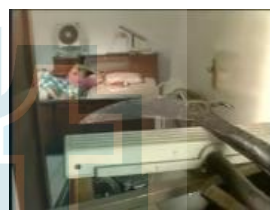


Figure 9.
The sleeping Pram and
the sickle
(Srikaton, 1995, 07:10)

Figure 7 captures the old newspaper clipping of the accusation of Pram's "dark" past, which tells his stout defense against the critics and political opponents of President Soekarno. Figure 8 shows the social actress narrator who is cleaning a knife with oil giving the impression of maintaining the sharpness of the knife. Figure 9 demonstrates Pram who is sleeping in his bedroom in the background, while the camera also captures a sickle in the foreground. They are all linked by the idea political and psychological insecurity and threats that Pram has to encounter and live with. The newspaper heading, the knife, and the sickle reinforce such a dangerous state. As these shots appear consecutively, the internal voice of the social actress narrates that a past experience of Pram when he was working for President Sukarno and condemned by the Army (then New Order regime) and its supporters as being pro-Sukarno and communist party. Pram was cornered

and attacked by his ideological opponents causing him to lose everything. Then, the New Order regime detained and exiled Pram to Buru Island without a fair trial.

The over-tonal montage of the film can be observed, for instance, in segment 9. In this segment, three juxtaposed shots that appear one after the other in the same duration, and of three different objects are visualized along with the threatening sound effect as indicated below.



Figure 10.
Pram acts in trance
(Srikaton, 1995, 20:00)

Figure 11.
The social actress
narrator in a meditation-
like expression
(Srikaton, 1995, 06:35)

Figure 12.
The tranced Pram and
the superimposed bright
image of sun
(Srikaton, 1995, 20:04)

Figure 10 captures Pram speaking of an extraordinary event during his meditation in prison. In Pram's meditative vision, he saw a tiger emerged from the wall of the prison approaching him and was about to devour him. Pram then spoke to the tiger that if the beast wanted to devour him, he let it happen as he was not in fear anymore. Then, the shot is followed by Pram's act of trance. Subsequently, figure 11 appears featuring the social actress narrator in an extreme close-up shot. The shot gives the impression that the narrator intends to imagine what Pram experienced in his meditative vision. Following is figure 12, which shows a superimposed shot of Pram in trance and a bright light resembling the image of sun. These shots are in the same duration (metric montage). They consecutively appear in a cause-effect relation (rhythmic montage). They are also thematically and emotionally linked by the idea of metaphysical experience of Pram as he was in a precarious and hazardous situation (tonal montage). He basically questioned his inner-self and life to God. Furthermore, as the film shows these shots, the menacing sound effect is audible to the audience, which completes the over-tonality of Srikaton's portrait documentary.

From the examination above, the documentary voice and the storytelling method of *Mendengar Si Bisu Bernyanyi: Biografi Pramoedya Ananta Toer* (Srikaton, 1995) can be inferred to be coherent. The employment of a number of techniques in the storytelling method of the film fitly represent Pram's complex nature, the individualistic disposition. They are capable of portraying what kind of man Pram is; what values he upholds; and how he lives with such disposition and values. Srikaton's work can therefore be considered highly credible with such qualities coherently expressed. By idea, the film articulates Pram's nature and maintains the filmmaker's voice distinctively. Equally, the storytelling method of the film aesthetically supports and further enhances the documentary voice.

THE DOCUMENTARY VOICE AND THE STORYTELLING METHOD OF *KI HADJAR DEWANTARA: MATA AIR KEBANGSAAN* (Anshoriy, 2017)

Ki Hadjar Dewantara: Mata Air Kebangsaan was produced by the Directorate of History of the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia in cooperation with Ilmu Giri Pictures in 2017. Nasruddin Anshroriy is the director of the film. The duration of the documentary is 52:32 minutes. This documentary film focuses on the meritorious deeds of Suwardi Soerjaningrat aka Ki Hadjar Dewantara to the independence of Indonesia as well as the birth of the modern and nationalistic educational system in the country.

By structure, this work of Anshroriy is arranged into 9 segments. Segment 1 discloses the noble birth origin of Ki Hadjar Dewantara. Segment 2 portrays the life struggle of Ki Hadjar Dewantara in the Dutch colonial times. Segment 3 highlights his struggle for a political independence of Indonesia. Segment 4 focuses on delineating Ki Hadjar Dewantara and the rise of indigenous journalism as his vehicle for a political struggle. Segment 5 pictures the pivotal role Ki Hadjar Dewantara in the center of political turbulence for the Indonesian independence. Segment 6 portrays Ki Hadjar's vision of a nationalistic educational system for all Indonesians. Segment 7 represents his struggle in the field of culture. Segment 8 describes the merits of Ki Hadjar Dewantara to the development of Indonesian fine arts. The last segment captures the bestowal of honorary titles upon Ki Hadjar Dewantara and his departure.

The documentary voice articulates a notion that the significant merits of Ki Hadjar Dewantara in the fields of politic, education, and culture in pre-and around independence times of Indonesia are undeniable. Throughout the film, these merits are well described and find their confirmation at the concluding segment where the bestowal of several titles, a National Hero, Pre-Independent Hero, and The Founding Father of Education in Indonesia accordingly. The film shows the Hero Stars and the Honorary Badge. Furthermore, his birthday on May 2 has been celebrated as the Education Day in Indonesia since 1959.



Figure 13.
The Hero Stars and the Honorary Badge
of Ki Hadjar Dewantara (Anshoriy, 2017, 43:11)

To further emphasize the undisputed grand merits of Ki Hadjar Dewantara, the film employs a number of techniques in its storytelling method. First, *Ki Hadjar Dewantara: Mata Air Kebangsaan* (Anshoriy, 2017) shows that the camera does not follow the subject (Önen, 2021). Second, it uses omniscient, third-person and first-person points of view (POVs) to tell the exposition. The omniscient POV is via a female voice-over. The third-person POV is through testimonials of the witnesses or authorities in the film (Önen, 2021). As for the first-person POV, the film presents Ki Hadjar himself in his testimonial. The most dominant POV narrator is the omniscient one followed by the third-person, and the least dominant one is the first-person POV. The appearance of the third-person and first-person POVs on screen (Önen, 2021) can be seen below.



Figure 14.
Third-person POV narrator,
Ki Hadjar's granddaughter,
Nyi Ganawati
(Anshoriy, 2017, 03:22)



Figure 15.
First-person POV narrator of
Ki Hadjar Dewantara,
from the national archives
(Anshoriy, 2017, 10:01)

This biographical documentary does not indicate any involvement of the filmmakers with the film subjects (Ki Hadjar Dewantara and other social actors/actresses on screen). Therefore, consequently, the audience does not see the filmmakers on screen either (Önen, 2021).

Besides the aforementioned techniques, the storytelling of the film is delivered in a non-narrative form documentary, a rhetorical one (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013). The type of the rhetorical form is that of the argument from source. In this biographical documentary, the viewers obtain the accounts from not only the talking heads aka testimonials of reliable witnesses and authorities, but also from the accounts of Ki Hadjar Dewantara himself. He gives testimonies on what he had been through in the past. In this film, Ki Hadjar tells the audience the background and reasoning of the establishment of *Indische Partij*, his struggles to support Indonesian independence, and his devotion to develop education and cultures in the country. All what he did came out of his patriotic and nationalistic views to bring Indonesia to an independence from the Dutch colonialization.

Since this biographical documentary employs a non-narrative form, therefore no particular narrative element at stake occurs (Bernard, 2007). The power of *Ki Hadjar Dewantara: Mata Air Kebangsaan* (Anshoriy, 2017) lies in its explicit usage of accurate facts. The historical facts that the film shows are highly demonstrated. The theme of the film concerns the undeniable significant merits of Ki Hadjar Dewantara. This is achieved by means of the testimonials of Ki Hadjar Dewantara himself and other reliable social actors/actresses, the manuscripts of Ki Hadjar's articles in the past, the old photographs and footages of Ki Hadjar Dewantara's past activities, as well as the honorary titles conferred on him by the Indonesian government. The shots below represent how those elements are incorporated in the film.



Figure 16.
The testimony of
Ki Hadjar Dewantara
(Anshoriy, 2017, 13:21)



Figure 17.
The testimony of
Ki Hadjar's
granddaughter,
Nyi Ganawati
(Anshoriy, 2017, 03:22)



Figure 18.
The manuscript of
Ki Hadjar's article
in *De Expres*
(Anshoriy, 2017, 12:16)



Figure 19.
An old photograph of
Ki Hadjar's activity
in *Indische Partij*
(Anshoriy, 2017, 11:05)

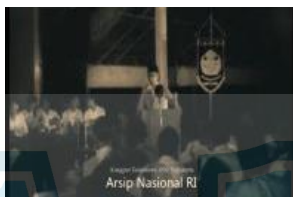


Figure 20.
A footage of
Ki Hadjar delivering
a speech at the
Congress of Taman
Siswa in 1956
(Anshoriy, 2017,
20:50)

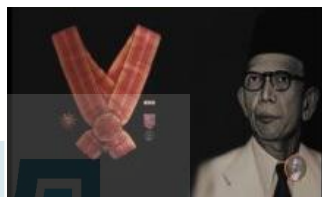


Figure 21.
The Hero Stars and the
Honorary Badge of
Ki Hadjar Dewantara
(Anshoriy, 2017, 43:11)

In terms of the mode of documentary presentation (Nichols, 2017), Anshoriy's biographical documentary serves as an expository one. It vividly describes the film subject, Ki Hadjar Dewantara, in an explanatory way. The film systematically following Ki Hadjar's timeline. The documentary shows his birth origin, his involvement in the political struggle for independence, his journalistic works, the banishment to the Netherlands, his return to Indonesia to establish Taman Siswa School, the joining of the first presidential cabinet, and his departure.

Moving to the montages applied in the film (Eisenstein, 1977), tonal and rhythmical montages seem to be dominant. *Ki Hadjar Dewantara: Mata Air Kebangsaan* (Anshoriy, 2017) shows the use of tonal montage in the following shot for instance.



Figure 22.

The tonal montage in use, juxtaposing the shared belief in cultural and educational strategies of Rabindranath Tagore's *Shantiniketan* in India and those of Ki Hadjar Dewantara's *Taman Siswa* in Indonesia (Anshoriy, 2017, 21:34)

The shot above demonstrates the juxtaposed footages of students of Tagore's *Shantiniketan* and those of *Taman Siswa* dancing. These footages give the impression of parallelism. Tagore and Ki Hadjar were close to each other; they were both compatriots struggling for the independence of their countries. Both of them also dropped their noble titles, Sir Rabindranath Tagore, and R.M. Soewardi Soerjaningrat. They did this to be close and mingle with their respective countrymen.

The rhythmical montage of the film can be seen in most of the segments, for instance, in segment 6 where Ki Hadjar Dewantara proposed his visions of nationalistic education for all Indonesians.



Figure 23.
Rhythmical montage of shot featuring the painting of Ki Hadjar Dewantara on the right, and an old photograph of an indigenous classroom on the left (Anshoriy, 2017, 25:54)



Figure 24.
Rhythmical montage of shot displaying an old photograph of an elitist Dutch colonial classroom (Anshoriy, 2017, 26:04)



Figure 25.
Rhythmical montage of shot representing an old picture of the students in the Dutch educational system receiving a congratulatory remark, "good luck" [*Weltevreden*] (Anshoriy, 2017, 26:14)

Figures 23, 24, and 25 demonstrate that the camera captures three different images in sequential order with the same tempo for about 10 seconds each shot accompanied by the repeated scoring (musical illustration of the visual). The voice-over (VO) narrator states that Ki Hadjar began to think of the flaws of the colonial educational system applied in Indonesia. He thought that such a colonialist education was elitist, discriminating, and oriented towards the interest of the colonial regime. As the VO says this, the film shows a number of old pictures exhibiting the educational gap conditions of those elites and the common people as shown in the three figures above.

The examination of the documentary voice and the storytelling method of *Ki Hadjar Dewantara: Mata Air Kebangsaan* (Anshoriy, 2017) indicates that they are all related in an organized and reasonable way. Such a relevant organization and reasoning fitly expresses the undeniable grand merits of Ki Hadjar Dewantara intended to be communicated.

THE DOCUMENTARY VOICE AND THE STORYTELLING METHOD *BAPAK KOMIK INDONESIA-BIOGRAFI R.A. KOSASIH* (Ahdan, 2019)

Bapak Komik Indonesia-Biografi R.A. Kosasih was produced by Faculty of Communication Science of Budi Luhur University, Jakarta, in 2019. Ahdan Mohammad was the director as well as the producer in chief. This biographical documentary takes 20:57 minutes for its duration. As clearly expressed from the title of the film, this documentary exclusively depicts the life of Raden Ahmad Kosasih as a comic artist and how he deserves to be called the father of Indonesian comic artist.

This work of Ahdan is organized into 9 segments. Segment 1 is the opening credits. It consists of a pre-credit sequence and the main title "*Bapak Komik Indonesia*". The pre-credit sequence is in the form of exhibiting the 1930's comic on a newspaper entitled *Put On* created by Kho Wan Gie. Following is the comic of R.A. Kosasih entitled *Sri Asih* appears on screen. The latter is the first Indonesian comic superhero. The function of this segment is to introduce the idea that although there had been an Indonesian comic created by Kho Wan Gie in the 1930s, Kosasih's *Sri Asih*, which was created in 1954, is the first superhero comic genre in Indonesia. Segment 2 gives an overview of comic artist and the development of comic in Indonesia. Segment 3 provides a delineation and illustration of the background of R.A. Kosasih and his first encounter with comic. Segment 4 depicts R.A. Kosasih and his

love to arts at his teenage. Segment 5 provides the testimonials of Yudhowati Ambiyana and Tatang Anjaya on R.A. Kosasih's *Sri Asih*. Segment 6 presents the testimonial of Henry Ismono on the popularity of R.A. Kosasih's works in the 1950s comic industry in Indonesia. Segment 7 discloses the testimonials of Tatang Anjaya and Yudhowati Ambiyana on their expectations for young Indonesian comic artists in the future. Segment 8 highlights the popular comic books of R.A. Kosasih. This segment functions as a concluding part of the subject matter of the film. Segment 9 is the end credits of the film.

With regard to the filmmaker's voice (Önen, 2021), *Bapak Komik Indonesia-Biografi R.A. Kosasih* (Ahdan, 2019) communicates an idea that R.A. Kosasih is a true father of Indonesian comic for he has created the first Indonesian superhero comic in Indonesian style, *Sri Asih*, and that all of his comic works also gained popularity for more than a decade. This is vividly indicated in several scenes throughout the film. They are in segment 1, 2, 5, 6, and 8. As a case in point, segment 8 shows the most popular works of R.A. Kosasih as represented below.



Figure 26.
Sri Asih, 1954
(Ahdan, 2019, 18:46)



Figure 27.
Ramayana, 1954-1955
(Ahdan, 2019, 18:53)

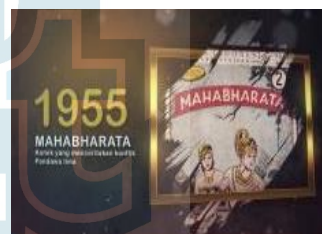


Figure 28.
Mahabharata, 1955
(Ahdan, 2019, 19:05)



Figure 29.
Siti Gahara, 1960
(Ahdan, 2019, 19:10)



Figure 30.
The intertitles informing hundreds of works of R.A. Kosasih
(Ahdan, 2019, 19:18)

First, it exhibits the serial of *Sri Asih* on the episode of *Membasmi Kumpulan Srigala Hitam* in 1954, the first Indonesian Superhero Comic. Then, it is continuous with the serial of *Ramayana* on the episode of *Pernikahan dengan Putri Mantili*, an Indian epic-based comic, from 1954-1955. Following is *Mahabharata*, a serial comic of Pandawa Lima stories, in 1955. After that is *Siti Gahara*, a 1001 night-tale-based comic in 1960. It is the second superhero comic created by Kosasih. Then, the scene displays the intertitles reading “*Dan lebih dari 100 judul Komik ciptaan RA. Kosasih*”. The figures above all confirm the popularity and proliferation of Kosasih’s comic works.

To achieve this idea, the filmmakers seem to have built their storytelling method through some techniques. Referring to the narrative elements of Onen (2021), the camera, in the first place, does not follow the subject of the film. Secondly, *Bapak Komik Indonesia-Biografi R.A. Kosasih* (Ahdan, 2019) is narrated through the omniscient, third-and first-person POV narrators. The omniscient POV narrator comes in the form of voice-over. The third-person POV narrator appears via the testimonials of the witnesses and authorities. As for the first-person POV narrator goes through testimonial of R.A. Kosasih himself. The most dominant POV narrator is the third-person narrator one. The omniscient comes the second; and the first-person POV is the least dominant. Next, both the third-and first-person POVs are on screen (Önen, 2021) as indicated below.

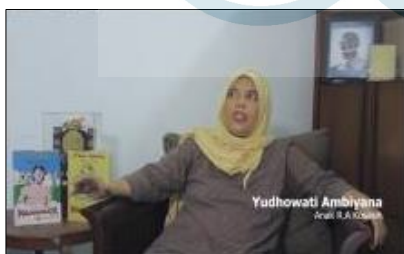


Figure 31.

**Third person POV narrator,
Yudhowati Ambiyana, the daughter of
R.A. Kosasih (Ahdan, 2019, 02:18)**



Figure 32.

**First person POV narrator, R.A.
Kosasih, , taken from TVRI stock
footage (Ahdan, 2019, 07:33)**

Compared to the that of *Ki Hadjar Dewantara: Mata Air Kebangsaan* (Anshoriy, 2017) which does not indicate any involvement of the filmmakers with the film subject on screen, *Bapak Komik Indonesia-Biografi R.A. Kosasih* (Ahdan, 2019) pays less attention on this part. The viewers can sense the filmmakers’ involvement in the film as their voices are still audible in low voice when they

did the interviews with Yudhowati Ambiyana and Tatang Anjaya in some scenes. This indicates a kind of hesitation in the part of the filmmakers whether or not they really want to be on screen or off screen.

Additionally, the filmmakers employ the non-narrative form of storytelling method in this film. The non-narrative form used is the rhetorical one (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013). This goes in accordance with the documentary or the filmmakers' voice of the film wherein R.A. Kosasih deserves to be bestowed the father of Indonesian comic artist. It is what they intend to prove and convince the audience to believe it.

As this film takes the non-narrative form, the narrative element at stake is zero (Bernard, 2007). The employment of testimonials from reliable individuals, the existing evidentiary works of Kosasih as well as the stock footage and his old photographs make the accuracy on presenting facts in this film is linearly proportioned. The subject matter or the theme of the film deals with the honor bestowed to R.A. Kosasih to the development of comic in Indonesia. Therefore, the film initially presents a comparison between Kho Wan Gie's *Put On* (1930) and R.A. Kosasih's *Sri Asih* (1954) in segment 1. Then, the film brings the testimonial of Kosasih's daughter to forth to further confirm the claim in segment 5. Still in segment 5, the audience can find the legitimacy of the fact from the testimonial of son of the publishing house of *Sri Asih*, *Melodie*. Further, in segment 6, the film provides the testimonial of the expert and collector to give a fair perspective from an unrelated party. Afterwards, in segment 8, the audience observes how works of Kosasih are organized in such a way to provide a final evidentiary touch that supports the claim R.A. Kosasih is truly a father of Indonesian comic artist. The following shots demonstrate how the organization of those elements effectively work.



Figure 33.
Kho Wan Gie's *Put On* in
segment 1
(Ahdan, 2019, 00:32)



Figure 34.
R.A. Kosasih's
Sri Asih in segment 1
(Ahdan, 2019, 00:40)



Figure 35.
The testimonial of
Yudhowati Ambiyana, the
daughter of R.A. Kosasih
in segment 5
(Ahdan, 2019, 13:03)



Figure 36.
The testimonial of Tatang Anjaya of *Melodie* Publishing House in segment 5 (Ahdan, 2019, 13:15)



Figure 37.
The testimonial of Henry Ismono, an expert and collector of comic in segment 6 (Ahdan, 2019, 15:50)



Figure 38.
The intertitles informing hundreds of works of R.A. Kosasih in segment 8 (Ahdan, 2019, 19:18)

Referring to the documentary mode (Nichols, 2017), Ahdan's biographical documentary expresses an expository one. This fact shares a common feature as the other three films discussed previously. By film title, *Bapak Komik Indonesia-Biografi R.A. Kosasih* explicitly suggests the idea of explaining who the father of Indonesian comic is. Similar to that of *Ki Hadjar Dewantara*, the film follows systematical explanation of Kosasih's timeline. The film inductively explains how from the love of seeing and reading comic strip to creating hundreds of comic books with his Indonesian style, Kosasih deserves to be honored the father of Indonesian comic.

As to the montages used in the film (Eisenstein, 1977), Ahdan's film also shares similarity to those of *Ki Hadjar Dewantara*. The dominant montages applied are tonal and rhythmical montages. The filmmakers make use of tonal montage in the following shot as an example.



Figure 39.
The tonal montage in use, juxtaposing R.A. Kosasih's *Sri Asih* (1954) and William Warston's *Wonder Woman* (1941) (Ahdan, 2019, 14:58)

The juxtaposed images of *Sri Asih* and *Wonder Woman* above clearly express a parallelism edited in a single shot. It is common to have juxtaposed images of contradictory representation in their respective shots that can illustrate an irony. Yet, when two images are combined in a single shot, an idea of strong parallelism or contrast could either be the choice (Eisenstein, 1977). In this case, Ahdan's film seems to articulate parallelism. *Sri Asih* is inspired by *Wonder Woman*.

The audience could observe the rhythmical montage of the film in many segments. The most obvious one is in segment 8, the exhibition of R.A. Kosasih's popular comic books, as represented figures 26-30. The shots in these figures demonstrate different images run in sequential order with exact tempo of each shot for about 8 seconds. Additionally, the scoring (musical illustration of the visual) of all these shots is played on repeatedly with its award winning-like music. Such an audio-visual organization expresses the idea of appreciation, honor, and gratitude for producing such phenomenal comic works. This idea is even more materialized in the film as the commemorative and dedication shots following the above popular comic books scene appear on screen.

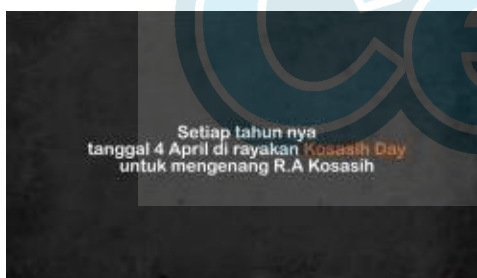


Figure 40.
The commemorative shot of
R.A. Kosasih
(Ahdan, 2019, 19:26)



Figure 41.
The dedication shot to
R.A. Kosasih
(Ahdan, 2019, 19:33)

Hence, the examination of the documentary voice and the storytelling method of *Bapak Komik Indonesia-Biografi R.A. Kosasih* (Ahdan, 2019) suggests that they are connected in an organized and efficient way. Therefore, the voice and the storytelling of the film effectively illustrate the appreciation and profundity to the idea that R.A. Kosasih deserves to be the father of Indonesian comic.

**THE DOCUMENTARY VOICE AND THE STORYTELLING METHOD
MELAWAN LUPA - POLISI JUJUR ITU BERNAMA HOEGENG
(Taharani, 2020)**

Melawan Lupa - Polisi Jujur Itu Bernama Hoegeng (Taharani, 2020) was produced by Mas'ad Taharani as an episode of a serial documentary program called *Melawan Lupa* at Metro TV Station. Metro TV is a major private TV station in Indonesia. The episode itself was produced in 2020. Although it is an episode of a TV program, by nature, it is still considered a biographical documentary. This film by Taharani runs for 28:05 minutes. The title of the film clearly suggests that the audience is going to be introduced with a police officer named Hoegeng. Yet, he is not an ordinary police officer. He was a former Chief of the Indonesian Police from 1967 to 1971 and is famous for being straightforward to anyone and non-compromising to crimes.

The structure of this biographical documentary consists of 8 segments. Segment 1 is the opening credits. Interestingly, this segment is still divided into three parts. They are montage, pre-credit sequence, and the main title *Polisi Jujur itu Bernama Hoegeng*. Segment 2 provides a jocular context of the three only trusted entities of the Indonesian Police proposed by the former President Abdur Rahman Wahid (Gus Dur). They are the sleeping policeman (speed bump), the police statue, and Hoegeng. Segment 3 illustrates the personal background of Hoegeng Iman Santoso. Segment 4 depicts the beginning of the legendary principle of General Hoegeng. Segment 5 portrays the career of General Hoegeng in Jakarta, the capital city of Indonesia. Segment 6 recounts the different policies of General Hoegeng against the corrupted policies of the New Order Regime. Segment 7 delineates the life of Hoegeng after his resignation from the Indonesian Police. Segment 8 is the end credits of the film.

Concerning the documentary voice of the film (Önen, 2021), *Melawan Lupa - Polisi Jujur Itu Bernama Hoegeng* (Taharani, 2020) expresses an idea that the tale of Hoegeng's straightforwardness and non-compromising to crimes is legendary and he can be a perfect role model for all members of the Indonesian Police. The film indicates that such a principle seems to have been the result of a proper nurturing in his family as well as good education and environment he received. The film shows these qualities in segments 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. As an example, segments 6 and 7 demonstrate how Hoegeng's straightforwardness and non-compromising to crimes are sincerely and firmly upheld. The following scenes of segments 6 and 7 represent this description.



Figure 42.

A scene of Robby Cahyadi being arrested on the case of smuggling luxurious cars from abroad in segment 6 (Taharani, 2020, 13:50)



Figure 43.

A scene of Hoengeng being summoned by President Soeharto to resign from his post as Chief of the Indonesian Police in segment 7 (Taharani, 2020, 15:07)

Figure 42 represents the portrayal of a scene where Robby Cahyadi was arrested and brought to court. The VO narrator mentions that the accusation involving Robby was the luxurious cars smuggling from 1968 to 1971. General Hoengeng and his team captured Robby and his elder brother. The police put them in jail at the Jakarta Police Headquarter. Yet, in few hours Robby and his brother were released due the intervention of the powerful officials of the New Order Regime. Further, the VO also narrates that General Hoengeng immediately intended to report the case to President Soeharto in his private residence. Yet, Hoengeng was shocked and then declined the idea to meet President Soeharto after watching Robby going out of Soeharto's residence. Figure 43 shows a scene in segment 7 where Hoengeng was summoned by President Soeharto. The VO mentions that Soeharto asked him to resign from his post as Chief of the Indonesian Police for there was no place for him in Indonesia so long as the activities of Soeharto's business cronies were 'disturbed'. Further, President Soeharto offered him to be the ambassador in Belgium, but Hogeng rejected the idea. He argued that he was not trained to be a diplomat, but a police officer. General Hoengeng then officially resigned from his post at the age of 49 in October 2, 1971. The two scenes above strongly indicate the unbent principle of Hoengeng.

To better portray the film subject above, some storytelling techniques were adopted in *Melawan Lupa - Polisi Jujur Itu Bernama Hoengeng* (Taharani, 2020). In terms of the narrative elements, the most of camera shots do not follow the film subject. Yet, only a few shots capture how the camera follows Hoengeng as the film subject. The audience can find them from the stock footages employed in the film. Then, the film makes use of the omniscient

and the third-person POV narrators. The former is carried out through the voice-over while the latter is via the testimonials of the witnesses and authorities as seen in Figure 44 below.



**Figure 44. One of the third-person
POV narrators, Aditya Hoengeng, in
his testimonials
(Taharani, 2020, 13:50)**



**Figure 45. A scene of Hoengeng
instructing people on the street to
stay away from crimes, the only
audible voice of Hoengeng in the film
(Taharani, 2020, 09:38)**

Although there is no first-person POV narrator employed in this film, the audience can still observe the stock footage of General Hoengeng in the form of an interview by a foreign reporter. However, the audience cannot hear what they were discussing as their voices were muted. The only voice of Hoengeng that the audience can hear is when he got off the car and instructed people on the street to stay away from crimes in Figure 45, where he just occupied his post as Chief of the Indonesian Police in Jakarta. The most dominant POV narrator in this film is obviously the omniscient. Similar to those of *Ki Hadjar Dewantara: Mata Air Kebangsaan* (Anshoriy, 2017) and *Bapak Komik Indonesia-Biografi R.A. Kosasih* (Ahdan, 2019), this biographical documentary of Taharani does not show the involvement of the filmmakers with the film subject on screen either.

The non-narrative form of storytelling method appears to be the technique in *Melawan Lupu - Polisi Jujur Itu Bernama Hoengeng* (Taharani, 2020). Additionally, it is a rhetorical one (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013). The reason behind the employment of such a method is comprehensible as the documentary voice emphasizes Hoengeng's straightforwardness and non-compromising to crimes that are highlighted.

Regarding what is at stake in a film (Bernard, 2007), there is no narrative element at stake shown in this film. The adoption of testimonials from the family members of Hoengeng, in this case, are the testimonials of

Meriyati Hoengeng (wife) and Aditya Hoengeng (son). Moreover, the testimonials from the experts, the stock footages of Hoengeng's activities, and the old photographs of Hoengeng significantly help ensure the accuracy of the fact revealed. With these all, the documentary voice is therefore powerfully and effectively expressed. To achieve this goal, the filmmakers make use of a precredit sequence in the opening segment. This part features the combination of photograph montage and stock footage of Hoengeng prior to the main title appearing on screen as seen in figures 46, 47, and 48. Then, come the part of the VO, the old photographs, the testimonials, and the stock footages that are interwoven in most of the segments to the end.



Figure 46.
The old photograph of Hoengeng in dissolve transition of photograph montage (Taharani, 2020, 00:16)



Figure 47.
The stock footage of Hoengeng (Taharani, 2020, 00:19)



Figure 48.
The film's main title (Taharani, 2020, 00:26)

As for the documentary mode (Nichols, 2017), this portrait documentary also shares a common feature of the previous films that are examined. *Melawan Lupa - Polisi Jujur Itu Bernama Hoengeng* (Taharani, 2020) is an expository documentary. With the main argument to prove and describe how straightforward and non-compromising Hoengeng is, the film follows the logic of the argument as well as the historical facts that Hoengeng experienced.

In terms of the montages applied to the film (Eisenstein, 1977), tonal and rhythmical montages are the most dominant ones. This fact resembles those of *Ki Hadjar Dewantara: Mata Air Kebangsaan* (Anshoriy, 2017) and *Bapak Komik Indonesia-Biografi R.A. Kosasih* (Ahdan, 2019). Tonal montage can be observed in the following interconnected scenes as an example.



Figure 49.
The gentle side of
Hoengeng to common
people, stock footage
(Taharani, 2020, 12:49)

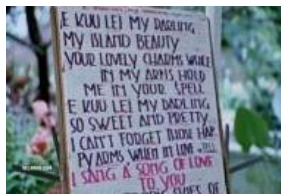


Figure 50.
Hoengeng's fond of singing
Hawaiian songs with his
band, stock footage
(Taharani, 2020, 12:51)



Figure 51.
Hoengeng's skills in playing
guitar and ukulele
(Taharani, 2020, 13:03)

Three different scenes above are closely related to each other bound by the same idea. They show and confirm the gentle and artistic qualities of General Hoengeng to people regardless their social statuses. This example of tonal montage in the film also expresses his capacity to hear aspirations of the people as well as to respect people. Yet, to criminals, Hoengeng's straightforwardness and non-compromising attitudes are legendary. As for the rhythmical montage, the opening segment of the film clearly demonstrates the same tempo and scoring (musical illustration of the visuals). This can be seen in figures 46 to 48 above. These shots appear in steady rhythm for both the visuals and the scoring.

Thus, the analysis of the documentary voice and the storytelling method of *Melawan Lupa - Polisi Jujur Itu Bernama Hoengeng* (Taharani, 2020) indicates one thing. They are all effectively arranged to portray the disposition and principles of General Hoengeng as intended by the filmmakers. The fact that it is an episode of a documentary TV program does not necessarily alter the nature of the film as a portrait documentary.

CONCLUSION

The four films share some cinematic storytelling techniques in common while maintaining their list of distinctiveness, which are not the focus of this article. Their similar techniques go as follows. First, all films employ omniscient and three-person POV narrators. Second, all of them do not show their filmmakers directly involved with the film subjects on screen. Third, they all deliver their storytelling way in a non-narrative form with rhetorical type. Consequently, none of the examined films have something at stake

narratively. Fourth, they incorporate evidentiary facts in their presentation. Fifth, the four films analyzed uses the expository mode in communicating their voices. Sixth, the tonal montage is applied to them to interweave the logic of the shots and scenes.

With these all in mind, it can then be concluded that the biographical documentaries examined, *Mendengar Si Bisu Bernyanyi: Biografi Pramoedya Ananta Toer* (Srikaton, 1995), *Ki Hadjar Dewantara: Mata Air Kebangsaan* (Anshoriy, 2017), *Bapak Komik Indonesia: Biografi R.A. Kosasih* (Ahdan, 2019), *Melawan Lupa: Polisi Jujur itu Bernama Hoegeng* (Taharani, 2020), are ideationally and aesthetically proper to portray such exceptional figures they have. By “proper” here, the sense of being fit and credible operates in these films. Further, it suggests that their documentary voices and storytelling methods enable the films to represent their film subjects reasonably, factually and convincingly, within their respective contexts.

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