

"ASEAN TOGETHER": A CASE STUDY OF A THAI TELEVISION PROGRAM ABOUT ASEAN

BY

MR. THAWATCHAI KAMONWAN

AN INDEPENDENT STUDY SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS (ASEAN STUDIES) PRIDI BANOMYONG INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC YEAR 2015 COPYRIGHT OF THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY

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INDEPENDENT STUDY

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MR. THAWATCHAI KAMONWAN

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ABSTRACT

The Thai television program "ASEAN Together", or *nakkit talui ASEAN*, was the focus of study. Data on the frequency, proportion of content, and representational character of ASEAN member countries in "ASEAN Together" was gathered. Quantitative content analysis was used to investigate the amount of content about ASEAN countries and qualitative content analysis to investigate the representational character.

Results were that the most frequently discussed countries in "ASEAN Together" were, in descending order: Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, the Philippines, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Indonesia, Singapore, and Brunei. Physical, socio-cultural, historical-political, and economic characteristics were displayed, in that order.

Qualitatively, most representations in "ASEAN Together" were positive. Content analysis with binary opposition revealed representations of pair patterns such as mainland/ maritime, colonized/ not colonized, Communist/ non-Communist, economic prosperity/ economic poverty, Buddhism/ Islam, and traditional/ modern. These findings suggest that "ASEAN Together" does a reasonable job in building ASEAN awareness in Thailand, especially among younger viewers. **Keywords:** ASEAN, representation in media, image construction, media, Thai television program



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	(1)
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	(3)
LIST OF TABLES	(7)
LIST OF FIGURES	(8)
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the problem	1
1.2 Independent Study outline	6
CHAPTER 2 THEORY AND LITERATURE REVIEW	7
2.1 Representations	7
2.2 Narrative theory	9
2.3 Relevant research	12
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODS	17
3.1 The sample	18
3.2 Research methods	21
3.2.1 Quantitative content analysis	21
3.2.1.1 Criteria for content analysis	22
3.2.1.2 Definition and scope of categorical areas	22
3.2.2 Qualitative content analysis	26
3.2.3 Overview of research method	29
CHAPTER 4 BACKGROUND AND FORMAT OF "ASEAN TOGETHER"	30

Page

4.1 The producer and objective of "ASEAN Together"	30
4.2 Format of "ASEAN Together"	32
4.2.1 Theme	32
4.2.2 Plot	32
4.2.3 Characters	33
4.2.4 Setting and location	34
CHAPTER 5 FREQUENCY AND PROPORTION OF CONTENT ABOUT	
ASEAN MEMBER COUNTRIES IN "ASEAN TOGETHER"	35
5.1 Examples of the content about ASEAN countries in	
"ASEAN Together"	36
5.2 Frequency and proportion of the content about ASEAN member	
countries in "ASEAN Together"	40
CHAPTER 6 REPRESENTATION OF ASEAN MEMBER COUNTRIES IN	
"ASEAN TOGETHER"	44
6.1 Representation of ASEAN member countries in terms of the physical	
characteristic	44
6.1.1 Mainland vs. Maritime	44
6.1.1.1 Mainland	44
6.1.1.2 Maritime	47
6.2 Representation of ASEAN member countries in terms of the social	
characteristic	50
6.2.1 Historical-political type	51
6.2.1.1 Colonized vs. Not Colonized	51
6.2.1.2 Communist vs. Non-Communist	53
6.2.2 Economic type	53
6.2.2.1 Economic prosperity vs. Economic Poverty	54
6.2.3 Socio-cultural type	56
6.2.3.1 Buddhism vs. Islam	56

6.2.3.2 Traditional vs. Modern	59
6.3 Determination of narrator standpoint from Thai's perspective	62
6.3.1 Thai media producer's perspective	62
6.3.2 Perspectives from participants in the show	63
6.3.2.1 Students' perspectives	63
6.3.2.2 Guest stars' perspectives	64
6.3.2.3 ASEAN experts' perspectives	64
6.4 Narration in game shows for edutainment	66
CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSION	67

7.1 Frequency and proportion of presenting content about ASEAN	
member countries in "ASEAN Together"	67
7.1.1 Frequency and proportion in presenting the ten ASEAN	
countries as questions in "ASEAN Together"	67
7.1.2 Types of information and content constructed as representations	
of ASEAN member countries in "ASEAN Together"	69
7.2 Representation of ASEAN member countries in "ASEAN Together"	70
7.3 Conflict between the ideologies of nationalism and regionalism	71
7.4 Recommendations	77
7.5 Suggestions for further studies	77
BIBLIOGRAPHY	79
APPENDIX	88

BIOGRAPHY

(6)

90

LIST OF TABLES

Tables	Page
3.1 First year (2013): Ten selected tapes, including 40 questions	18
3.2 Second year (2014): Ten selected tapes, including 29 questions	19
3.3 Third year (2015): Ten selected tapes in the first half of 2015, including	
30 questions	20
3.4 Frequency and proportion in presenting ten ASEAN member countries in	
the questions in "ASEAN Together"	24
3.5 Frequency and proportion of information categories for individual ASEAN	
member countries and collective totals in "ASEAN Together"	25
3.6 Summary of research methods	27
5.1 Examples of the content about ASEAN countries in "ASEAN Together"	36
5.2 Frequency and proportion in presenting the ten ASEAN countries in	
the questions in "ASEAN Together"	40
5.3 Frequency and proportion of information categories for individual ASEAN	
member countries and collective totals in "ASEAN Together"	42
6.1 Signs and symbols representing the character of Buddhism in ASEAN	57
6.2 Signs and symbols representing the character of Islam in ASEAN	58
7.1 Keywords presenting Laos in a patronizing way	73

LIST OF FIGURES

Figures	Page
2.1 The circuit of culture	7
2.2 Model of story development	10
3.1 The elements of the semiotic sign	26
5.1 Proportion (percentage) of the ten ASEAN member countries in	
the questions in "ASEAN Together"	41
5.2 Proportion (as a percentage) of information categories in Table 5.3	
(collective ASEAN)	43
6.1 Map of Cambodia	45
6.2 Map of Laos	45
6.3 Map of Myanmar	46
6.4 Map of Thailand	46
6.5 Map of Vietnam	47
6.6 Map of Brunei	47
6.7 Map of Indonesia	48
6.8 Map of Malaysia	49
6.9 Map of Singapore	49
6.10 Map of the Philippines	50
6.11 Bokor Palace Hotel in colonial style	52
6.12 Marina Bay in Singapore	54
6.13 Location in Don Kon, Laos	56
6.14 Pra That Luang in Laos	58
6.15 Kota Bahru mosque in Malaysia	59
6.16 Ubin Island in Singapore	60
6.17 Farm in Dalat Province, Vietnam	60
6.18 Singapore city	61
6.19 Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam	61
7.1 Proportion (as a percentage) of the content about the ASEAN	
Political-Security Community (APSC), the ASEAN Economic	
Community (AEC), and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community	

(ASCC) in the Thai TV news program "ASEAN Journey"



70

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the problem

Where does knowledge come from? Knowledge is an understanding of society about some facts, information, or description that are certifiable, reasonable, and regular. We can get the knowledge through learning in various ways, both from the world of reality, or the world of knowledge and thinking (Kanjana, 1998, p.22); that is, the education system, society, religions, and importantly, mass media, since it is a significant factor in modern culture. People enjoy receiving media and gaining knowledge from the world of media more than from the world of reality or direct experience. This is especially true with international relations, because many people have no direct experience of other countries. And of course, if they are learning about other countries it will have to be through transnational media (Komjorn, 2004).

Mass media is always available, because it is pervasive in modern life, and as long as society and people have a need for information and entertainment, the media will be there to provide it. Mass media also creates norms around which people structure their lives without hesitation. For instance, Anderson (1991) mentions that a "nation" is an imagined political community, imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign, and it is by imagining that people create this shared nation in their minds and in their perception. "Nation" in Anderson's view includes limitations (of physical space, social space, and cultural space), sovereignty, and community. He emphasizes how people ignore differences because of a sense of shared nation. Mass communication (basically language, press, poetry, prose, songs, and monuments), can construct the sense of nation by creating feeling in mental and social space. Similarly, the concept of "the other" and negative associations are also constructed in some media, for example the negative associations of the word "Vietnamese" in the Vietnam War era. Mass communications history consistently shows that mass media is an important tool for propaganda and strengthening the nation and community, but "the other" component is also deep-seated in the media despite the long historical development of the industry.

Television is a kind of traditional and classic media that is accessible and popular among most social levels (Kanjana, 1998, p. 55). In addition, it is an effective media that impacts the receiver in several ways: forming, projecting, shaping, and cultivating the particular identity of its viewers (Fahmi, 2014). Television not only entertains people; it also instructs. For instance, it enables us to experience things in distant places through picture and sound. People cannot go everywhere in the world, but they can learn about other countries through television. Interestingly, a survey of 2,170 undergraduate in the ten ASEAN nations has shown that for 78.4%, television is the most important media affecting student awareness and attitude toward ASEAN (Thompson & Chulanee, 2007). Television remains the platform of choice for delivery of messages due to its ability to reach the masses. Television, magazine and newspaper advertisements continue to be among the most-trusted forms of advertising in Southeast Asia, preferred by 78% in the Philippines, 74% in Indonesia, 72% in Thailand and 70% in Malaysia (Nielsen survey data from 2013, cited in ASEAN Secretariat, 2014). ASEAN television programs present social, cultural, religious, historical, economic, political, and leisure facets of ASEAN member countries that are also part of local people's daily lives (Withaya, 2011, p. 80).

Media can function in several ways: providing information and news, coordinating different parts of society, creating social continuity, entertaining social members, and campaigning on social, economic, and political issues (Ubonrat, 2004, pp. 5-7). Since everyone can access television, and it is in almost every Thai house, some Thai TV programs concerning ASEAN are the government's preferred channel to educate, and in particular to disseminate ideas, awareness, and knowledge about ASEAN to Thai people.

The ASEAN community has become a popular issue in the region, and mass media is an important tool to help people gain mutual understanding and knowledge about it. In Thailand, Nontharee Hemtanont (2013) studied Thai TV programs concerning ASEAN aired on national commercial television channels that are owned by the government: Channel 5, and Modernine TV, some privately owned under state contracts, including Channel 3 and Channel 7. Channel 3 has three TV programs concerning ASEAN in talk show format, and mostly on economic news: "Asia Connect," "*jor loke setakit*" (world economics), and "*mong lok baeb vikrom*" (Vikrom's view of the world). Channel 5 has one cultural tourism documentary, "*teenee ASEAN*" (This is ASEAN). Channel 7 has two news shows, "*dat setakit*" (excellent economics), and "*hong kao jed see*" (Room 974). Modernine TV has one game show, "ASEAN Together" (*nakkid talui ASEAN*). From Nontharee's study, the content of these shows covers economics, politics and security, and socio-culture. However, content about economic growth tends to dominate. In addition, from my review of the current national Thai TV schedule, there are more TV programs concerning ASEAN, including some economic and business programs: "*turakit pichit ASEAN*," (business to conquer ASEAN), "*ayu noi ruay larn su ASEAN*" (young businessman conquers ASEAN), and "*AEC mee thang ruay*" or (wealth from AEC), all on Modernine TV. There are also

some social, cultural, and travel programs: "Unseen ASEAN" on Channel 5, "*see san ASEAN*" (colorful ASEAN) and "*nitan ASEAN*" (ASEAN Fairy Tales), both on NBT11, and "Spirit of Asia" on Thai PBS. There are also some variety programs: "*roo wai chai wa ASEAN Community*" (the ASEAN community you should know) on Channel 5), "yong yai ASEAN" (connections in ASEAN) on Channel 7, and "ASEAN News" on NBT11.

"ASEAN Together" (*nakkid talui ASEAN*) is a prominent game show aimed at students and youth. Its questions deal with ASEAN and ASEAN member countries. The program is a cooperation between Modernine TV (Thai television station), Zense Entertainment Company (TV production company), and OBEC, the Office of the Basic Education Commission (Thai government). OBEC has a mandate to improve the quality of education about change in the region. Also, they support new television variety shows and game shows which promote knowledge about ASEAN to students and the general population, especially deeper understanding of the politics, security, economies, societies and cultures, and the scientific and technological capacity of each country in the ASEAN community. It is aired on Modernine TV, Saturday 10.00-11.00, which is prime weekend time for youth and students, who are the main target. Because of this focus on youth and students, this program presents its ASEAN content through entertainment as a game show. There are two student teams -blue and red- from two schools. Each team has 25 people, including leaders. Three questions are asked, which require knowledge of ASEAN member countries, and there is an expert from OBEC to provide more information.

The main drivers of globalization today are increasing numbers of internet and social media users, who use the media for social interaction, and use web-based and mobile technologies to turn communication into interactive dialogue. Receivers can access all kinds of information all over the world, anytime, anywhere, in two-way communication systems (Nattanun, 2011). According to the Asia-Pacific Digital Overview as of January 2014, Southeast Asia had more than 195 million internet users. The same source indicates that internet penetration is high in 7 out of 10 member states, with 73% in Singapore, 65% in Malaysia, 59% in Brunei Darussalam, 39% in Viet Nam, 36% in the Philippines, 35% in Thailand and 29% in Indonesia (ASEAN Secretariat, 2014). In the case of "ASEAN Together", social media provides an alternative for the audience, who can access it by internet, and watch back-up tapes, exchange information, and join activities, creating an interest community. They can also give feedback directly through the Youtube Channel. Moreover, the program created a Facebook fanpage in Thai language, namely "นักคิดตะลูขอาเซียน" (nakkid talui ASEAN), and the official website www.nakkids.com. The TV program producer provides more than one channel to follow the program, and you can access the content anytime, anywhere, on any digital device. This means more possibility of receivers catching the content of "ASEAN Together".

It was the intention of the producer that "ASEAN Together" should be a program that everyone can enjoy and at the same time learn more about ASEAN member countries in various aspects. Thus it is clear that the images representing ASEAN member countries in the media will be crucial for Thai people's perceptions and attitudes toward other countries in ASEAN. It is particularly important that such imagery can lead to both good and bad relationships among people in the region. Sririmit (2008) studied the relationship between Thailand and Laos in Thai entertainment media, in particular building the image of Laos in the "Lucky Loser" film. Using national identity, representation, and encoding-decoding of cultural symbols, Sririmit found that the representation of Laos was negative from the Thai viewpoint, and this representation led to a conflict and loss of trust on the international stage between Thailand and Laos. This case study recommended that the producer and the distributor should be sensitive to this issue, and carefully encode meanings, because the representations of ASEAN member countries in the world of media can and will influence the world of reality.

Cultural Studies focuses on representations in cultural texts, including media culture, and their relationship to real-world ideologies of class, gender, race, ethnicity, and nationality. Cultural Studies researchers were among the first to study the effects of newspapers, radio, television, film, and other popular media forms upon their audiences. Contemporary research in Cultural Studies on entertainment media is very interesting. Kanjana (2002) mentions that entertainment media has been considered a peculiar object for academic studies. Nevertheless it is now very popular, and can shape a large economy. Ignoring these media has been an error of academia. For instance, an interesting study in Cultural Studies is Komjorn's research (2006). He studied how Southeast Asian countries are constructed in Thai film. He analyzed the content of Thai films which mentioned neighbouring and Southeast Asia countries from the past to the present, and did a textual analysis based on narrative method and Thai social context. Basically, this research inspired me to do this independent study.

In this independent study, I will show the representations of ASEAN member countries embedded in the television game show "ASEAN Together". I will focus on the ASEAN country representations using a constructionist approach (see Chapter Two below). Moreover, in order to understand the construction of images/ representations of the ASEAN countries, the study focuses on two central research questions:

• What is the frequency and proportion of content about ASEAN member countries in "ASEAN Together"?

• What is the character of the representation of ASEAN member countries in the content of "ASEAN Together"?

These questions will be answered by analyzing the content on 30 sample tapes of "ASEAN Together", including a textual analysis of the game show format and its questions, analyzing and classifying the questions through the use of a data collection sheet, statistical methods, and descriptive analysis.

The "ASEAN Together" game show is a competition to answer questions concerning the ASEAN countries, with the goal of helping Thai students gain some knowledge from this virtual world that is the result of a process of selection, encoding, and constructing from the Thai viewpoint. The questions also focus on only one aspect, not reflecting the whole story, or trying to reproduce the real world. This independent study will argue that the representations of ASEAN countries embedded in "ASEAN Together" are constructions, created in a Thai context, from a Thai perspective, and to fit the theme of a television program in the game show genre.

1.2 Independent Study outline

Chapter Two - Theories and Literature Review. In this chapter I will show related theories and review the literature on Media Studies research.

Chapter Three - Research Methods. In this chapter I will show the methods used to find the answers to the two central research questions. This independent study uses combined quantitative and qualitative methods and the data are in written and in video format. I will further introduce the main research methods: content analysis, and random sampling.

Chapter Four - Background and format of "ASEAN Together". A study of the program will require a review of its objectives, from the perspective of producers and participants, to understand the intentions and the main target group.

Chapter Five - Frequency and proportion of content about each ASEAN member. This chapter is the content analysis part of this independent study. It will be a quantitative content analysis of the data collected from 30 sample tapes to find the frequency and proportion of content about ASEAN member countries in the program.

Chapter Six - Representation of ASEAN member countries in "ASEAN Together." In this chapter, I will apply a descriptive analysis using the concept of binary opposition.

Chapter Seven – Conclusion. This chapter will summarize the findings and provide the answers to the two main research questions, and make some final recommendations.

CHAPTER 2 THEORIES AND LITERATURE REVIEW

This independent study focuses on the Thai television program "ASEAN Together" (*nakkit talui ASEAN*), a game show about ASEAN member nations. The theoretical background of this study is about media and the function of media within society. The objectives of this study are to analyze the proportion of appearances of each ASEAN country, the nature and character of the representation of each country, and the construction process of each representation.

2.1 Representations

Culture can be understood in terms of shared meaning (Hall, 1997). In the modern world, the media is the biggest tool for spreading these meanings, especially through representations. The concept of representation has come to occupy a new and an important place in the study of culture and media. Representation connects meaning and language to the culture, and it is an important process for exchanging information among members of the culture. The Circuit of Culture is a process for creating meaning and cultural artifacts, and it is related directly to representation. This circuit includes representation, identity, production, consumption and regulation, articulating endlessly, and constantly affecting each other (Nattakrit, 2014, p.17), as in Figure 2.1.

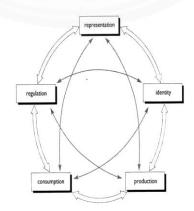


Figure 2.1. The circuit of culture. Adapted from *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, by S. Hall, 1997, London: SAGE.

Figure 2.1 shows that these elements work together; they are all very closely connected co-constructs, and each is a part of all the others. First, production (construction) is about inventing something, how it is made and how it is meaningful, and based on the economic factor, who pays for the job and the people who do it? Second, consumption (reading, viewing) is about choosing and paying for something, and how and why it's used. Third, regulation is about formal and informal rules and conditions that affect things, and how regulation shapes their usage. Fourth, identity is how individuals, consumer groups, corporate, national and international identities establish an identification with the object. Here I also explore the ways in which designers attempt to bring together production and consumption. Finally, representation is the establishment of a specific cultural meaning through language, both oral and visual.

Representation can be explained in three approaches: reflective, intentional, and constructionist (Hall, 1997). First, the reflective approach: everything in the real word has at least one representation, namely in language. Language functions like a mirror to reflect actual things that become fixed in the words used to refer to them. Second, the intentional approach: "meaning" in representation is the intention of an individual (speaker, writer, artist) to covey and communicate their need to other people. Finally, the constructionist approach: representations are constructed; the meaning of everything in the world is a construction. Constructions are in the language system, symbol system, or whatever system we are using to present our ideas and concepts, and to communicate to other people (Hall, pp. 24-26).

Lacey (1998) also mentioned that any representation is a part of the process of construction of concepts in any mass media for the purpose of communicating with society about ideas, beliefs, values and so on. People in the same society can understand the meaning of a given representation in the same way, because they have the same idea system, the same perception, the same image in mind, and they also use the same interpreting approach that uses the cultural code embedded in the representation.

For this study, I will follow the constructionist approach. Construction takes place by encoding meaning in the media, and then conveying that encoded meaning as a representation to the audience. The people do not believe these representations are reflections. People believe they are constructions from some part of the real world, or social constructions of reality. The representation may be constructed from real things or from non-existing things, but in the end, people do believe that such a construction exists in the real world (Anyamanee, 2009). Also, in this study, I use a Cultural Studies approach to analyze the program content about ASEAN countries in "ASEAN Together".

2.2 Narrative theory

Narrative in any medium or genre -oral or written, novel or letter, film or soap opera- is a way of structuring and representing lived experience (Fulton, 2005, p. 27), and long ago Aristotle analyzed the components of storytelling, which include plot, characters, dialogue and diction. His view of the art of storytelling was that it is an imitation of reality, like the reflection in a mirror. On the other hand, some scholars in constructionism see storytelling as a construction of meaning that changes objective reality to subjective reality, shaping people's perceptions and making sense of society. In addition, narrative is related to semiology, the concept of signs with power. Importantly, Foucault questioned narrative, asking who has the power to construct and reconstruct these meanings and realities? (cited in Kanjana, 2010, pp. 248-252).

The process of narration and the instruments of narration are important aspects of storytelling. Narration includes various components, analyzed by Kanjana (2010), as follows:

Plot is the structure of a story. It shows the events of a story, in this order:

-beginning: exposition, rising action

-middle: climax

-end: falling action, and ending

Kanjana analyzes these elements further:

• Exposition is where the characters, setting and conflict (problem) are introduced. Most importantly, the main theme is introduced to the audience.

• Rising action is the progression of events that occur as a result of the central conflict. This part of the story begins to develop the conflict(s). A building of interest or suspense occurs and leads to the climax.

• Climax is the highest point of interest or suspense of a story, and it is the turning point of the story. Usually the main character comes face to face with a conflict, and the characters have to make an important decision.

• Falling action is events after the climax. It shows how the main character begins to resolve the conflict.

• Ending is the last scene. It can be one of several possible resolutions, such as a happy ending.

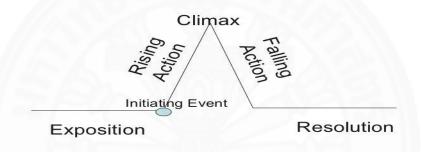


Figure 2.2. Model of story development. Adapted from *New Analysis in Communication Studies* (p.209), by K. Kanjana, 2010, Bangkok: Pabpim.

Theme is the central, general message, the main idea, the controlling topic, and it is what the author wants to convey through this medium.

Setting is in all narration, and it supports the development of various events. Moreover, it can indicate mood, concepts, presentation of character, and the main idea of story.

Characters are the actors in a story. One important character is the narrator, who tells the story. The narrator can be human, animal, a personified plant or even a fantasy creature like a mermaid or centaur. Characterization includes not only description of the characters but also key scenes that show their values, their motivations and other important information about them.

In case of "ASEAN Together", there are several characters participating in the game show, such as masters of ceremonies, students, guest stars, and ASEAN experts, but the main narrator is "Pee Einstein", constructed by the Thai media producer. He is an animation, in the character of a bird, and has an important role in the game show. He introduces information about ASEAN countries to the students, and explains the geography of ASEAN countries, supplies information from field surveys, asks the question, and later supplies the correct answer.

Narration standpoint is an important element in the internal logic of narration. It influences narration and the method of narrating. There are four types of narrator: first-person, third-person, objective, and omniscient (Kanjana, 2010).

• First-person narrator is a story from the first-person perspective: the viewpoint of a character writing or speaking directly about him- or herself. This narrator always uses "I", and conveys attitude and bias. For this study, basically, Pee Einstein is a first-person narrator.

• Third-person narrator is a story from other characters who are not the main character. In this kind of narration, the narrator cannot know the emotion and attitude of the main character, because he/she just is a witness and indirectly related to the situation. However, he/she still has some bias, but less than the first-person narrator.

• Objective narrator is a story from a middleman who has no bias. This is pure situation, and the content is adjudged by the receiver; for example, a documentary film.

• Omniscient narrator is a combination of the three narrators mentioned above. Narrators of this kind know every thought, emotion, and feeling of all characters.

Thiranan (2000) studied narrative theory usage in Thai master degree theses. Her results were, in general, that theses using narrative theory can be divided into two groups, based on topic. First, there were theses about ethics and social values presented in the media. Second, there were theses about the reflection of social reality in the media. She believed that the narratives of soap opera and film can reflect the state of society. Moreover, the narratives of song and advertisement construct some ideology for marketing.

In this independent study, I emphasize narration theory in analyzing this TV game show that combines academic and entertainment goals. Narrative theory also helps to build up the whole concept and picture of the program, including the intension of the producer, from small pieces, like doing a jigsaw puzzle.

2.3 Relevant research

Nattika (2005) studied news about ASEAN countries in Thai daily newspapers. She used 92 newspapers (including "*thai rath*," (The Thai State), "Daily News," "*matichon*", (The People's Choice) and "*krungthep turakij*", (Bangkok Business)) as data sources to find the frequency, amount of space, format, and values of ASEAN country presentations in Thai daily newspapers. In this discipline there are three standardized values (called "directions"): positive, neutral, and negative. She collected the data on a code sheet, and found that "*krungthep turakij*" has the highest number of ASEAN news items, followed by "Daily News," "*matichon*" and "*thai rath*." Indonesia was the first-ranked country, followed by Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, Myanmar, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Brunei. As for the content of news, politics was the most frequent topic, followed by economics and terrorism. For attitude embedded in such news, Cambodia, Vietnam, and the Philippines were always presented in a negative light because of evaluations by foreign news offices. In addition, this study shows that newspapers have a clear role in setting the agenda as they make their selections for publishing.

This research is relevant to my study, because these authors use similar content analysis methods: frequency of news on ASEAN, and analysis of news formats. Moreover, there is the code sheet as a tool for collecting data. Thus Nattika's research is a good guideline for my work.

Thompson and Chulanee (2007) studied student attitudes and awareness about ASEAN. Their survey targeted 2,017 undergraduate university students from leading universities in each of the ten member nations of ASEAN. There were five themes: attitudes toward ASEAN as a whole, knowledge about the region and the association, orientation toward the region and specific countries, sources of information about the region, and aspirations for integration. They summarized key findings on a nation-by-nation basis followed by a general summary of region-wide trends. The responses of the students from Thailand were generally positive, and often extremely enthusiastic, toward ASEAN. The responses revealed obvious gaps and unevenness in their objective knowledge about the association– particularly extremely high cartographic literacy but low recognition of the association's symbols and history. Moreover, the authors propose several general suggestions regarding steps for future development of ASEAN to be gleaned from the perspectives of the next young generation. There are many points on which students from all or almost all nations tend to agree: the importance of economic cooperation and addressing poverty and development needs, shared orientations shaped by the desire for "modernity," and a desire to know more about the region. The authors find, most importantly, "a perhaps embryonic but nevertheless perceptible sense of ownership and stake in ASEAN as citizens of the region" (Thompson & Chulanee, 2007).

In my opinion, this research is useful for people whose interest is a general picture of ASEAN, and it is relevant to my study, because it gives me comparative data on ASEAN knowledge and attitude both in general, and by specific country. In addition, I can compare the information between countries. This study also confirmed that the most important source of information about the ASEAN region is television, chosen to be my case study.

Threedet (2009) studied representation of Burmese in Thai films. Basically, this was qualitative research, using a content analysis to understand the meaning of the film context. He studied six Thai films from the 1930s, selected by a procedure called Purposive Sampling. The concepts used as framework for this study include stereotypes, film characters, film portrayal, and the relationship between Thais and Burmese. He found that although the Burmese characters in this study came from many different screenplays, they were reproducing the same story. It reflects the beginning era of the Thai film industry, therefore, the film makers noticeably tended to create an enemy character who was Burmese and distinctly cruel. In a simplistic and stereotypical way, these characters are likely to be villainous and insensitive in their interactions with others.

From my point of view, the representation of Burmese in Thai films shows a standardized and traditional Thai perspective embedded in the content of Thai film and media, and it is relevant to my study, because I am studying trends, stereotypes, and reproduction in Thai media through characterization and storytelling.

Nattakrit (2014) studied TV program representations of teachers who work in rural areas. He focused on a TV program called "*khon khon khon,*" *a* dramatized documentary. The aim was to study the process of presenting representations of marginal teachers in the countryside. He studied the different perceptions of audiences who were teachers, compared to general audiences, and he also compared rural and urban populations.¹ He used qualitative research methods; in particular he used textual analysis including theme, character, point of view in storytelling, plot, and communication in the TV program. There are good examples here of the process of selecting and scoping sample text, ordering and classifying content and analysis. He also focused on audience analysis by in-depth interview. In this I find a good example of a process of choosing and grouping a sample population for analysis, and audience decoding. Moreover, there are good guidelines for interview questions to explore the linkage between representations of marginal teacher encoded in the program content, and audience decoding and perception.

From my point of view, this study is useful for Mass Communication Studies and Cultural Studies to analyze the contemporary situation from a new perspective.

Nonthareeh (2014) studied ASEAN television programs in Indonesia. The purpose was to study the format and the content of television programs about ASEAN in Indonesia. The researcher used qualitative methods: in-depth interviews, documentary research and content analysis. The researcher chose the Indonesian program "ASEAN Today" to be the case study. The content of this TV program is presented in English, and through a magazine-style program; that is, stories presenting diverse content, but connected in one theme. The show was based on the three pillars of ASEAN. The researcher found that this TV program played a range of important roles: surveillance of the environment, correlation of the different parts of society in responding to the environment, transmission of social heritage from one generation to the next, and creating ASEAN awareness. These were the main functions of the TV program. According to this study, the program fulfills its purpose and the policies of its TV station by helping to link the country together under the slogan "think global, act local", and to link ASEAN together as "a dynamic and outward-looking region in an increasingly integrated and interdependent world" (Nonthareeh, 2014).

¹ The resulting analysis of audience's decoding in each group is dominant or preferred meaning; i.e., understanding of the audience matches the intension of sender. He could not find oppositional perception, opposite to the intension of sender.

In my opinion, this study could be applied by a Thai media producer to develop and improve Thai TV programming on ASEAN. This study is a relevant example for me as well, especially the analysis of content and format of the program. In addition, Nonthareeh critiqued the important role of this TV program and TV station, applying mass communication theories. I have also adapted this concept to show the important role of television.

Nongnuch (2014) studied the role of presenting ASEAN news, focused on a TV program which presents ASEAN news organized around the ASEAN three pillars, and presented content in several ways: storytelling, talk, and interview. She analyzed the role of this TV program in society, using the performance theory of mass media by McQuail (1983), which considers the roles filled by the program: providing information and news, coordinating different parts of society, creating social continuity, entertaining, and campaigning on social, economic, and political issues. She used qualitative methods, in-depth interviews and content analysis. Her results showed that although the program focused on the three pillars of ASEAN, most content was in the socio-cultural dimension.

In my opinion, since some TV programs presenting ASEAN news do not cover all dimensions, this study may help mass media to develop and improve their presentation of ASEAN news in all three basic areas: political-security, economic and socio-cultural. From this example, I can study the various types of TV narration.

In my review of the relevant research, there were several interesting topics about the content of TV programming on ASEAN: the several types of presentation and narration, and new and interesting content that seems successful in attracting mass audiences. So this relevant research has influenced my study in many dimensions, especially guidelines for content analysis. There are several methods of content analysis that I can apply, and I also need to analyze the types of presenting, analyze the elements of the program, analyze the content classified by the three pillars, and do an in-depth interview of the media producer. Especially, my study emphasizes the content of the program concerning ASEAN and its main target, students and youth. It is an edutainment program that is compounding information, news, knowledge, and entertainment, and its goal is that the viewer will build his or her knowledge, attitude, and behavior in the right direction (Parichart, 2000, p. 281). This study will also examine the representation of ASEAN and ASEAN member countries embedded in a TV game show program, including the intension of the TV producers, from different perspectives.

Overall so far, I have found that knowledge and attitude are interesting topics. Knowledge is an understanding of society about something, based on facts, information, and description. We can get knowledge by learning from various sources: the education system, society, religions, and mass media. Knowledge about ASEAN member countries, for instance, is an agglomeration of different kinds of facts: location of the countries, their economic systems, political systems, and their cultures. "Attitude" is an individual expression of favor or disfavor toward a person, place, thing, or event. Attitudes vary in direction (either positive or negative), and in degree (how positive or how negative) (The Association for Educational Communications and Technology, 2001).

The "ASEAN Together" TV show also has a "student's brainstorming" segment that clearly reveals student knowledge and attitude toward ASEAN member countries, based of course on the Thai point of view. My reviewing, and my work on Thai TV programs about ASEAN, and on Thai perceptions and understanding of the ASEAN countries, are all still at a beginning stage. However, it is good for Thailand to have some research accomplished and continuing about these points. Thailand can use this research and data to assist the media to develop and prepare the Thai people appropriately and well for the ASEAN community already growing among them.

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODS

This independent study of "ASEAN Together," a Thai television program about ASEAN, aims to analyze the content narrated in this game show. Facts about the ASEAN countries are filtered through Thai perspectives, the show's format and the producer's intentions. The result is construction of various representations of the ASEAN countries with each question. To address the research questions, I use content analysis as the main research method.

Content analysis is a media research method, focusing on the content of media. Berelson (1952) defined content analysis as a research technique which insures objective, systematic and quantitative description of the contents of communications.

Here "objective" means that researchers in different fields can analyze the same collection of content and still avoid subjective analysis.

Here "systematic" means that the sample content should be selected by a suitable process without bias.

Finally, here "quantitative" means that the research results should be presented in terms of number, frequency, and percentage, with a basic statistical and mathematical approach.

Content analysis is used to study a broad range of 'texts' from transcripts of interviews and discussions in clinical and social research, to the narrative and form of films, TV programs and the editorial and advertising content of newspapers and magazines (Macnamara, 2005).

Kanjana (1998) divided content analysis into two groups: "quantitative content analysis", and "qualitative content analysis". Quantitative content analysis aims to examine the amount of message sent. Qualitative content analysis aims to study the meaning and ideology constructed and embedded in the content of media.

For this study, to cover my research objectives, the research methods include both quantitative content analysis, and qualitative content analysis.

3.1 The sample

I have chosen the Thai television quiz show "ASEAN Together" as my data source to carry out this content analysis of the representation of ASEAN countries. The show has been aired on Modernine TV once a week since 2013. From the beginning to the first half of 2015, this program has totaled 101 shows, recorded on 101 videotapes.

However, because of some limitations, I must study these tapes through back-up videos on Youtube. As a method of random sampling, I divided the sample into three groups: first year (2013), second year (2014), and third year (2015), and in each group I made up some tags and then picked ten tags from each group, totaling 30 tapes. In the following tables I have classified this data along with the questions used.

Table 3.1

No.	day/ month/ year/ time of	competitors
	broadcasting	
1.	Thursday 4 July 2013,	Prayaprasertsuthasai School vs. Darakam
	18.00-19.00	School (four questions)
2.	Thursday 11 July 2013,	Tungmahamek School vs. Anu-
	18.00-19.00	banpiboonvek School (four questions)
3.	Thursday 25 July 2013,	Chumchanprathipatvittayakan School vs.
	18.00-19.00	Sainamthip School (four questions)
4.	Thursday 1 August 2013,	Piboolaubpratam School vs. Wat
	18.00-19.00	Plubplachai School (four questions)
5.	Thursday 24 October 2013,	Chan Hun Bamphen Schoolvs. Bung
	18.00-19.00	Thong Lang School (four questions)
6.	Thursday 14 November 2013,	Wat Lat Pladuk School vs. Anuban
	18.00-19.00	Pathum Thani School (four questions)
7.	Thursday 21 November 2013,	Bang Kapi School vs. Santirat
	18.00-19.00	Witthayalai School (four questions)

First year (2013): Ten selected tapes, including 40 questions

No.	day/ month/ year/ time of	competitors
	broadcasting	
8.	Thursday 12 December 2013,	Udom Witthaya School vs. Banklong
	18.00-19.00	Prapirom School (four questions)
9.	Thursday 19 December 2013,	Bangsai Witthaya School vs. Suksanaree
	18.00-19.00	School (four questions)
10.	Thursday 26 December 2013,	Sara Witthaya School vs. Triam Udom
	18.00-19.00	Suksa Nomklao School (four questions)

Note. Created by the author.

Table 3.2

No.	day/ month/ year/ time of broadcasting	competitors
1.	Thursday 2 January 2014, 18.00-19.00	Prakanongpittayalai School vs. Rittiyawannalai School (four questions)
2.	Wednesday 2 April 2014, 16.00-17.00	Dipangkornwittayapat (Watnoinai) School vs. Desirinromklao School (three question)
3.	Wednesday 23 April 2014, 16.00-17.00	Triamudomsuksa Suwinthawong School vs. Horwang Pathumthani School (three question)
4.	Wednesday 21 May 2014, 16.00-17.00	Sarawitthaya School vs. Silacharapipat School (one question)
5.	Wednesday 11 June 2014, 16.00- 17.00	Mattayam Wat Bung Thong Lang School vs. Suankularb Wittayalai Thonburi School (three questions)
6.	Thursday 4 September 2014, 18.00-19.00	Piboonbumpen Demonstration School vs. Sriwittaya 2 School (three questions)

No.	day/ month/ year/ time of	competitors
	broadcasting	
7.	Thursday 2 October 2014,	Rajavinitbangkhen School vs.
	18.00-19.00	Kunateerutharam Witthayakhom School
		(three questions)
8.	Thursday 27 November 2014,	Triamudomsuksapattanakarn Nonthaburi
	18.00-19.00	School vs. Chaengron Wittaya School
		(three questions)
9.	Thursday 18 December 2014,	Rajwinitbangkaepankhum School vs.
	18.00-19.00	Yothinburana School (three questions)
10.	Thursday 25 December 2014,	Wat Lat Pladuk School vs.
	18.00-19.00	Debsirinromklao school (three questions)

Note. Created by the author.

Table 3.3

Third year (2015): Ten selected tapes in the first half of 2015, including 30 questions

No.	Day/moth/year/time of broadcasting	competitors
1.	Saturday 3 January 2015, 10.00-11.00	Matthayamnayrok School vs. Matthayamwatsigh School (three ques- tions)
2.	Saturday 17 January 2015, 10.30-11.00	Chulapornratchavithayalai School vs. Sriayutthaya School (three questions)
4.	Saturday 7 February 2015, 10.00-11.00	Watsutthiwararam School vs. Nonthreewitthaya School (three questions)
5.	Saturday 14 February 2015, 10.00-11.00	Bangmodwitthawa School vs. Jangronwitthaya School (three questions)

No.	Day/moth/year/time of	competitors	
	broadcasting		
6.	Saturday 7 March 2015,	Nuannoradit Witthayakhom	
	10.00-11.00	Rajamangalaphisek School vs.	
		Yothinburana 2 School (three questions)	
7. Saturday 6 June 2015,		Pratumwilai School vs.	
	10.00-11.00	Chanpradittaramwittayakom School	
		(three questions)	
8.	Saturday 20 June 2015,	Hadammara Aksornlukwittaya School vs.	
	10.00-11.00	Wat Lat Pladuk School (three questions)	
9.	Saturday 11 July 2015,	Wisutthikasatree School vs.	
	10.00-11.00	Nawaminthrachinuthit Satriwitthaya	
	144 44 1500	Putthamonton School (three questions)	
10.	Saturday 25 July 2015,	Rattanakosinsomphotbowonniwetsalaya	
	10.00-11.00	School vs. Pomnakarachswatyanon	
	N/ Burrank	School (three questions)	

Note. Created by the author.

In these video presentations, by both verbal and non-verbal language, the questions about ASEAN countries are considered the main resource for content analysis. Also, content analysis focuses on input from the intention of the media producer.

3.2 Research methods

3.2.1 Quantitative content analysis

First, in terms of method, I will examine carefully the construction and representation of ASEAN countries through the questions that are used for the competition each week. There are three questions per week; that means three countries a week, since each question focuses on only one ASEAN country. Before asking each question, the program always presents some interesting and general information about that country, presented in one or more dimensions. Then, the moderator asks the question and provides three choices for the student contestants. I will analyze and classify the data from the questions with my data collection sheet (see Appendix). Each show presents a variety of content and information about an ASEAN member: history, politics, economics, and socio-culture. I will classify the content in the table including date of airing (necessary information for readers who want to watch the program), country, information on country, and image or representation of country divided into physical and social characteristics, the question, brainstorming by students in the game, and the correct answer (see the table in Appendix).

3.2.1.1 Criteria for content analysis

For how the researcher systematized and categorize the data, on my data collection sheet, for initial content classification, I applied the categories used for the classification of Southeast Asia's space in Thai film as devised by Kamjorn (2006). However, to make it easier for the reader to understand, I will divide the content into two main groups, such as physical characteristics, and social characteristics (nonphysical characteristic). In addition, the social characteristics will be subdivided into three types by the researcher: historical-political, economic, and socio-cultural (see the table in Appendix). These types are primarily based on the scope of content in the three pillars of ASEAN: the Political-Security Community (APSC), the Economic Community (AEC), and the Socio-Cultural Community.

3.2.1.2 Definition and scope of categorical areas

Physical characteristics are used in constructing and presenting ASEAN countries through information and knowledge about geography, location on a map, climate, landscapes and scenery.

Social characteristics are used in constructing and presenting ASEAN countries through information and knowledge about the activities in society, which are not information and knowledge about history, politics, economics or geography. The three types of social characteristics are described below.

• The historical-political type occurs when ASEAN countries are constructed and presented through information and content about important historical situations in Southeast Asia: the periods of prehistory, ancient kingdoms, ancient wars, European colonization, independence, The Cold War, The Vietnam War, and globalization. These will also include important persons in history: kings, colonial leaders, and nationalist leaders. And for contemporary politics in Southeast Asia, it will include political systems and political organization. History and politics were conjoined because Southeast Asia history usually focuses on the politics and wars of the past.

• The economic type occurs when ASEAN countries are constructed and presented through information and content about economic systems in ASEAN: trading networks, investment, finance, goods, industries, services, tourism, income, class and ethnic divisions, economic growth and economic stability.

• The socio-cultural type occurs when ASEAN countries are constructed and presented through information and content about lifestyle of people in ASEAN countries: culture, language, religion, belief, social norms, traditions, education systems, class and ethnic divisions, and popular culture.

The next step in the process is to count the frequency of each type of presented content from all 99 questions, as collected on each data collection sheet, and then to apply basic statistical methods to find the percentage and proportion of each ASEAN country presented, and the percentages of the various content categories presented. The result is two numerical data tables. One is the table of frequency and proportion in presenting the ten ASEAN countries, and the other is the table of frequency, percentage and proportion of constructed content for each ASEAN member country, and for all ASEAN collectively. Table 3.4

Frequency and proportion in presenting ten ASEAN member countries in the questions in "ASEAN Together"

	Frequency of pre-	
Country	senting as question	Percentage
		%
		%
		%
		%
		%
122		%
		%
		%
		%
		%
Total		%

Note. Created by the author.

Table 3.5

	Physical characteristics			Social characteristics						otal
Country			history and	politics	ecor	nomics	socio-	culture		
	fre-			per-	fre-	per-	fre-	per-	fre-	
	quency	percent	frequency	cent	quency	cent	quency	cent	quency	percent
		/	56							
			. 8				16			
			1.10				201			
							SV A			
					1/2/2	2102	(2)			
					2.1.1					
Collec-										
tive										

Frequency and proportion of information categories for individual ASEAN member countries and collective totals in "ASEAN Together"

3.2.2 Qualitative content analysis

After quantitative content analysis, I will analyze the representation using the concept of binary opposition to find the character of the representation. According to semiology, binary opposition makes meaning clearer. Binary opposition is a pair of related terms or concepts that are opposite in meaning (Kanjana, 1998b), for example, white and black, rich and poor, and men and women. When considering such semantic opposites, additional connotative meanings emerge, supplying wider and deeper meaning beyond the bare content itself. For the process, I used the same system and scope of categorical areas with quantitative content analysis including the physical characteristic and the social characteristic (subdivided into three types). After reviewing and collecting the whole content in the data collection sheet, I organized the common content into binary pairs to find the meaning. These binary pairs had either cropped up in the show or were chosen by the researcher:

- Mainland vs. Maritime
- Colonized vs. Not Colonized
- Communist vs. Non-Communist
- · Economic Prosperity vs. Economic Poverty
- Buddhism vs. Islam
- Traditional vs. Modern

Moreover, in the content of media, the sign has always been an important concept. "Sign' is something which stands to somebody for something in some respect" (Kanjana, 1998b). Saussure offered a 'dyadic' or two-part model of the sign. He defined a sign as being composed of a 'signifier' -the form which the sign takes; and the 'signified' -the concept it represents (Chandler, 2014).

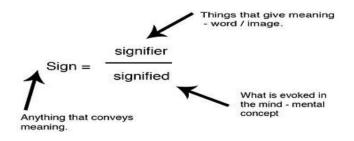


Figure 3.1. The elements of the semiotic sign. Adapted from *Semiotics*, 2013, Retrieved from https://emmamarsh1305161.wordpress.com/2013/12/10/semiotics/

"ASEAN Together" sometimes presents meaning through signs. Importantly, the aim of this descriptive analysis is to show the construction of each representation of an ASEAN country in the content of "ASEAN Together." To support my study, I will use additional research about how contemporary Thai society perceives and understands ASEAN countries.

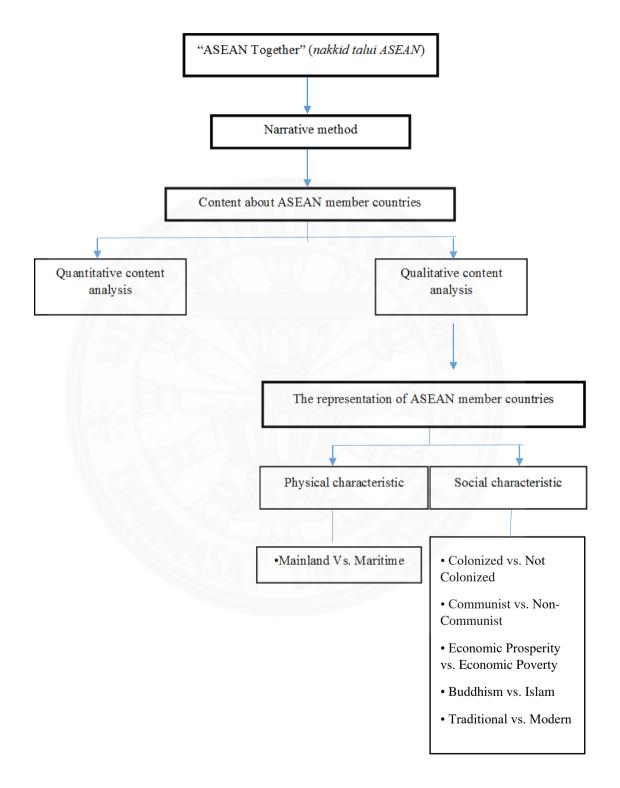
Table 3.6

Research question	Theory	Research r	nethod
112		Data	Research
11.6.37			Method
1. What is the	10000	- Videos in Youtube	- Quantitative
frequency and		- Content from my 30	content analysis
proportion of		sample tapes,	- Categorize
content about		emphasizing video	with data
ASEAN		representations of	collection sheet
countries in		countries in ASEAN	- Calculate with
"ASEAN		RA YA	basic statistics
Together"?			- Show the
			results in table
			and pie charts
			(After getting
			the results, I will
			try to answer
			why the result is
			like this,
			matching with
			Thai context,
			and other related
			research.)

Summary of Research Methods

Research question	Theory	Research m	ethod
		Data	Research
			Method
2. What is the	- Representation	- Videos in Youtube	- Qualitative
character of the	- Binary	- Content from my 30	content analysis
representation of	opposition	sample tapes,	- Analyze the
ASEAN member	- Semiotic signs	focus on	data with the
countries in the	(Peirce, 1931)	presentations about	concept of
content of "ASEAN		ASEAN	binary
Together"?		countries in the 99	opposition
		sample	- Systematize
11.5-37		questions.	and categorize
120	1000		- Illustrate from
120		- Analyze both	sample data
		verbal language and	- Binary
1.1/120		non-verbal language in	opposition and
125		these video	semiology will
		presentations	be used for
128	1		analysis about
			patterns in the
	20 CAL		process of
	2.5.417		making a
			meaningful
			representation

3.2.3 Overview of research method



CHAPTER 4

BACKGROUND AND FORMAT OF "ASEAN TOGETHER"

This chapter shows the basic data and useful information about "ASEAN Together". This part includes the producer and objective of "ASEAN Together," as well as the narration and format.

4.1 The producer and objective of "ASEAN Together"

The ASEAN Community is an intergovernmental organization in Southeast Asia officially launched at the end of 2015. It is an attempt to co-ordinate the changing economies, societies, politics, education and culture in the region. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary for Thailand to prepare some plans and strategies to adjust to, and benefit from, the changes in various areas, especially the education system. The country must develop the potential, talent, ideas and skills of Thai youth to equal or to exceed those of the youth in other ASEAN countries.

The Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC) has direct responsibility to develop the education system, under which it has formulated some policy initiatives to support TV variety game shows which relate to the basic upper primary - lower secondary core curriculum established in B.E. 2551 (A.D. 2008) ("ASEAN Together", n.d.). They want students and the general public to have a better understanding of the politics, security, economies, societies, cultures, and science and technology in ASEAN countries ("ASEAN Together", n.d.).

In a press conference starting the third year of "ASEAN Together," Dr. Kamon Rodkily, the Secretary of OBEC, re-affirmed that the objective of the program is promoting knowledge about ASEAN to Thai youth and students. Beside education in the main system, Thai students can learn about the ASEAN community through television media, and this program can help Thai youth gain new knowledge, and develop an ASEAN awareness (NakkidsChannel, 2015). At the same event Warawuth Janthanakul, the founder of Zense Entertainment Company, said that with "ASEAN Together" his company intended to implement the policies of OBEC. Moreover, the company also undertook field trips and conducted surveys in the ten ASEAN countries for information, and created a whole new website, namely www.nakkids.com, to increase student access and contact (NakkidsChannel, 2015b).

This TV program is a co-operative effort of Modernine TV (state-owned free-to-air television station), OBEC (Thai government), and Zense Entertainment Company (TV production company). Modernine TV is national television, and is regulated by The Office of the Thai Prime Minister (OPM). Modernine has changed its program presentations, either in form or content, to edutainment programs, drawing more attention to entertaining and content-oriented programs (Nattanun, 2011, p.3). Statistically, TV programs in Thai language are 32.75% entertainment, 17.03% edutainment, 15.95% news reports, 11.64% "critical" programming, 11.60% programs about knowledge, 6.03% sports, and 5.40% public programming (Nonthree, 2013, pp.71-72).

OBEC was formed by joining elements of the Department of General Education of the Office of the National Primary Education Commission and the Office of Private Education Commission of the Ministry of Education together in a great bureaucratic reorganization in 2003. The OBEC vision is that Thai basic education must have good quality, meet international standards, and be based on Thai identity. The goals they support for the entire school-age population are: equality in education, good ethics and character, and efficient management systems to strengthen the quality of education (Office of the Basic Education Commission, 2015).

Zense Entertainment Company was founded by Varawuth Janthanakul to create new alternatives for audiences. The company to date has a large number of famous game show and edutainment programs (Zense Entertainment Company, n.d.).

In the article about the producer, I found that the production of the show is state-supported. This could imply that ASEAN regionalism and ASEAN identity are still in the formative stage, and thus they are being implemented with a top-down approach by the government, especially the Ministry of Education. However, ASEAN identity and the sense of ASEAN as a community can be promoted not only through top-down efforts by state actors, but also can occur as social integration driven by people and non-state actors. Simon Tay, chairman of the Singapore Institute of International Affairs (SIIA), said: "a community is much more than an intergovernmental organization ... it tries to open doors for people groups" (Collins, 2008). The sense of ASEAN identity is already widely accepted in the young generation, so the time when a commercial show can focus on ASEAN and its members without state support has already arrived in Thailand, and this should be clearer in the future. For instance, "ASEAN Yummy", a TV program about traveling and cooking in ASEAN, is produced by Bangkok Broadcasting Television (Channel 7), a private channel. "AEC Business Class", a television program focusing on economics and trading in ASEAN, is produced by Thai Public Broadcasting Service (Thai PBS), also private sector.

4.2 Format of "ASEAN Together"

This is a TV game show, which includes competition, contestants, and prizes, and it is easy and uncomplicated to produce, compared to a sitcom, drama, talk show, reality show, sports program, or music program. The format of game shows is exact and constant, and it is suitable for a mass audience, although the audience may live in a different culture and country (Creeber, 2010). The narrative categories of "ASEAN Together" are as follows:

4.2.1 Theme

Learning about ASEAN countries through the questions asked.

4.2.2 Plot

The elements of plot in "ASEAN Together" are described below.

• Exposition or introduction. The multiple masters of ceremonies welcome the audience, introduce themselves, and explain the main theme, concept, intention, and advantages of the program. Then they introduce the three guest stars or "star thinkers," and interview each of them about their individual experience with ASEAN member countries, their travels in ASEAN, their favorite country, their perceptions and attitudes toward each country. Then they introduce contestants from two schools (classified into blue and red), and the competition rules, the point system, and the prizes. Final, they introduce an ASEAN expert who will explain facts about ASEAN.

• The rising action of "ASEAN Together" is the process of competition, and answering questions about ASEAN countries, following competition rules.

• The climax of "ASEAN Together" is the last question, and it is the most exciting period and turning point in the competition.

• The falling action of "ASEAN Together" is after the climax. It shows the results of the competition, and the prizes are presented to winners and losers.

• The ending is the last scene of "ASEAN Together". The masters of ceremonies summarize the lesson for that day and thank all participants. Finally, they suggest the audience follow them via their social media: Facebook or Instagram. In addition, there is a question for the audience at home, with a prize of 1,000 Baht. The audience can join this activity via www.nakkids.com. Finally, the program finishes with a teaser tape for the next show.

4.2.3 Characters

There are four masters of ceremonies: Pipat Wittayapanya (2013present), the main master of ceremonies for the show, who controls the competition. Pimlada Chaiyaprichawit (2013-present) is also a master of ceremonies, and the head of the Blue Team. She has the responsibility to lead her team to guess the correct answers. Pattarapon Toaun (2013-present) is the head of the Red Team, and he has the same role as Pimlada. Poriboon Chanreang (2015) is another master of ceremonies who is very funny, and he has a role of one of the star thinkers, whose task is to convince the students to accept his choice.

The contestants of "ASEAN Together" are students from schools under OBEC. In each team there are 24 students. The contestants' role is to analyze, guess, and give an opinion about the answer, and the most confident student has the right to answer the question individually.

Several famous people have come to be guest stars for "ASEAN Together": actors, actresses, singers, comedians, TV show hosts, DJs, and athletes. They have to be "star thinkers," select an answer, and convince the students to agree with their choice. Moreover, there is also "Pee (elder sibling) Einstein."

To explain more information about ASEAN countries and the ASEAN community, there are the ASEAN experts from several agencies: OBEC,

Prayaprasertsuntrasai (kajank singhasenee) School, Satri Si Suriyothai School, Department of ASEAN Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ASEAN Media and Communication Studies and Research Center, University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce, Department of ASEAN Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and ASEAN Studies Center, Chulalongkorn University.

4.2.4 Setting and location

The setting of "ASEAN Together" is in studio, and it is colorful and decorated by ASEAN emblems, ASEAN member country flags, and pictures of tourist attractions. There are two grandstands, one under a blue light, the other red, and a podium for star thinkers. The colors and design of the set are suitable for young students. During the narration of each question, videos of real ASEAN country locations are shown, for example a traditional market, temple, building, street, cultural tourist attraction, natural tourist attraction, modern office tower, department store, or park.



CHAPTER 5 FREQUENCY AND PROPORTION OF CONTENT ABOUT ASEAN MEMBER COUNTRIES IN "ASEAN TOGETHER"

In this chapter I will show the process and result of content analysis of the representations of ASEAN member countries in "ASEAN Together". First, I collect and classify the content from 30 sample tapes (including 99 questions) with my data collection sheet. Second, I use statistical methods to show quantitative data, the frequency and proportion of content in percentages. Finally, I conduct a descriptive analysis of the representation of ASEAN member countries, applying the concept of binary opposition, and noting the Thai perspective. In this chapter, the results of the quantitative content analysis are divided into two parts:

5.1 Examples of content about ASEAN member countries in "ASEAN Together"

5.2 Frequency and proportion of the content about ASEAN member countries in "ASEAN Together"

5.1 Examples of the content about ASEAN countries in "ASEAN Together"

The examples of the content about ASEAN countries were collected and classified as shown in the following table.

Table 5.1

Examples of the content	about ASEAN countries in	"ASEAN Together"
1 2		0

			14	Information ab		Answer			
No.	Date	Country	Physical char- acteristic	Social characteristic			Question	Brain- storming from	Correct answer and
				Historical and political type	Economic type	Socio- cultural type		student in game show	additional information
1.	4 July 2013	Vietnam	Location on map - City scenery in Vietnam	The communist party and politics of Vietnam - The government of capital city Hanoi		- World Heritage site in Vietnam: Halong Bay	What is the meaning of the traffic sign shown here?	- Beware of lightning - Devious road	The meaning of the traffic sign is "height restriction."

	Information about c		out country			Answer			
No.	Date	Country	ntry Physical char- acteristic Historical and political type type cultural type				Question	Brain- storming from student in game show	Correct answer and additional information
2.	4 July 2013	Laos	Location on map			 Lao smile Lao simple lifestyle Buddhism in Laos Buddhist center Tam Ti Buddhist object: Mom 	The Mom statue in Tam Ti represents which animal?	- Dog, tiger - Tiger means great. - Turtle means long life	Mom is combination of dog, tiger, and cat. - Thailand uses a lion statue, and some temples also use "Mom". - "Mom" is the origin of Thai word. "Mommam"

					Aı	iswer			
No.	Date	Country	Physical char- acteristic	Soc	25.6	Question	Brain- storming from	Correct answer and	
				Historical and political type	Economic type	Socio- cultural type		student in game show	additional information
3.	4	Thailand	Location on		- The export	11 1	Which	"E-Lip"	This durian is
	July		map		of Thai	1	species of	because of	"Monkhang".
	2013		- Thai province		agricultural		Thai durian	the shape	
			of Chanthaburi		products and		is shown in	of durian	- It is a
					Thai fruit	11/2	the studio?		traditional
					- Income	UL m	J		durian in
					from Thai	200	12/		Thailand.
					fruit is more	2	A. 7/1		- Durian is a
					than six bil-		5.577.6		cultural fruit
					lion Baht, a	1	9//		in ASEAN
					high level in				(Malaysia,
					ASEAN				Indonesia,
					- durian				and Brunei)
					festival in				- expanding
					Chanthaburi				export market
									for durian.

				Information ab		Answer				
No.	Date	Country	Physical char- acteristic	Soc	ial characteris	tic	Question	Brain- storming from	Correct answer and	
				Historical and political type	Economic type	Socio- cultural type		student in game show	additional information	
4.	4 July 2013	Vietnam	Location on map - population in Hanoi and Bangkok (comparison)			- Lake of the Returned Sword as Vietnam representation	Why was a pagoda con- structed in the middle of the Lake of the Returned Sword?	No comment	 In Vietnamese myth, the pagoda in the middle of the Lake of the Returned Sword is the home of aquatic animals Vietnam myth about turtle in lake 	

To view all samples (99 items), you can download the table from: https://www.academia.edu/26077089/The_data_collection_sheet_showing_the_content_about_ASEAN_countries_in_ASEAN_Together_

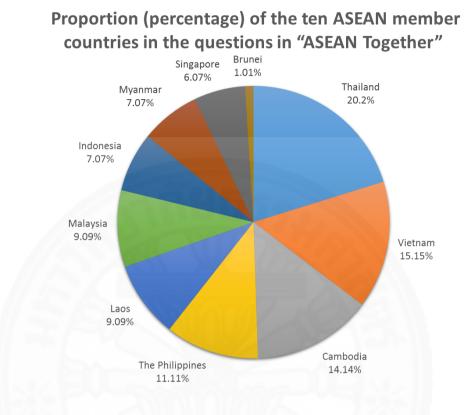
After compiling my data sheets, I modify the content to numerical data with some basic statistics. The aims are (1) frequency and proportion in presenting the ASEAN countries in questions, and (2) frequency, percentage and proportion of information and content constructed as representations of individual countries, and all ASEAN countries collectively.

5.2 Frequency and proportion of presenting the content about ASEAN member countries in "ASEAN Together"

Table 5.2

- and	Frequency of presenting as		
Country	question	Percentage	
Thailand	20	20.20	%
Vietnam	15	15.15	%
Cambodia	14	14.14	%
The Philippines	11	11.11	%
Laos	9	9.09	%
Malaysia	9	9.09	%
Indonesia	7	7.07	%
Myanmar	7	7.07	%
Singapore	6	6.07	%
Brunei	1	1.01	%
Total	99	100	%

Frequency and proportion in presenting the ten ASEAN countries in the questions in "ASEAN Together"



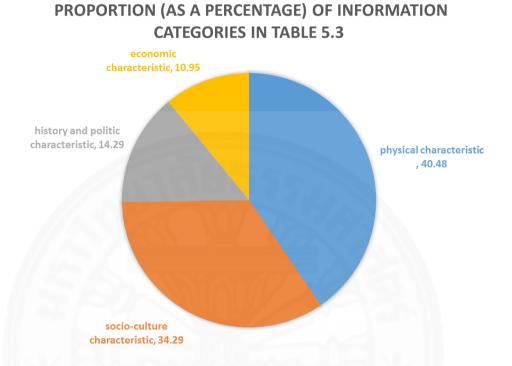
The information in Table 5.2 is alternatively presented in Figure 5.1 below.

Figure 5.1. Proportion (percentage) of the ten ASEAN member countries in the questions in "ASEAN Together" created by the author.

Table 5.3

	Physical	characteris	stic		11	Social characteristic							Total		
Country				history and poli- tic		eco	nomic		socio-culture						
	fre- quency	percent		fre- quency	per- cent		fre- quency	per- cent		fre- quency	per- cent		fre- quency	percei	nt
Thailand	17	41.46	%	3	7.32	%	5	12.20	%	16	39.02	%	41	100.00	%
Vietnam	12	34.29	%	4	11.43	%	6	17.14	%	13	37.14	%	35	100.00	%
Cambo- dia	14	43.75	%	6	18.75	%	3	9.38	%	9	28.13	%	32	100.00	%
The Phil- ippines	8	38.10	%	7	33.33	%	1	4.76	%	5	23.81	%	21	100.00	%
Laos	8	40.00	%	4	20.00	%	1	5.00	%	7	35.00	%	20	100.00	%
Malaysia	8	50.00	%	1	6.25	%	2	12.50	%	5	31.25	%	16	100.00	%
Indonesia	6	42.86	%	1	7.14	%	2	14.29	%	5	35.71	%	14	100.00	%
Myanmar	5	33.33	%	3	20.00	%	1	6.67	%	6	40.00	%	15	100.00	%
Singa- pore	6	46.15	%	1	7.69	%	1	7.69	%	5	38.46	%	13	100.00	%
Brunei	1	33.33	%	0	0	%	1	33.33	%	1	33.33	%	3	100.00	%
Collec- tive															
ASEAN	85	40.48	%	30	14.29	%	23	10.95	%	72	34.29	%	210	100.00	%

<i>Frequency and proportion of in</i>	formation categories fo	or individual ASEAN member	r countries and collective totals in	"ASEAN Together"



The information in Table 5.3 is alternatively presented in Figure 5.2 below.

Figure 5.2. Proportion (as a percentage) of information categories in Table 5.3 (collective ASEAN) created by the author.

CHAPTER 6 REPRESENTATION OF ASEAN MEMBER COUNTRIES IN "ASEAN TOGETHER"

This chapter is qualitative content analysis. I do some descriptive analyses of the representations of ASEAN member countries within each different characteristic, keeping in mind that these representations are constructed from a Thai point of view. According to Cultural Studies, the content in media is not a reflection, but rather is a construct. Although the images shown on television are of several kinds, such as images of daily life, images of adornment, special images, terrible images, impressive images, and images in memory, they have a shared point: all images in television are mental constructs (Kanjana, 2010, p. 506).

6.1 Representation of ASEAN member countries in terms of the physical characteristic

A physical characteristic is about geographic or topographical references, landscapes and specific locations in ASEAN countries, as constructed in "ASEAN Together". Content analysis of physical characteristics using binary opposition can show the character of ASEAN member representations, as follows:

6.1.1 Mainland vs. Maritime

In terms of content, this pair showed basic but interesting information about the geography, location, landscape, weather, natural features, plants and animals of ASEAN member countries. In addition, a map of Southeast Asia was shown as an instructional aid for the geographical questions in "ASEAN Together". The examples of mainland and maritime are as follows:

6.1.1.1 Mainland

(1) Cambodia



Figure 6.1. Map of Cambodia. Adapted from "*ASEAN Together*" [Television broadcast], by J. Valavuth (Producer), (2014, December 18), Bangkok: Mass Communication Organization of Thailand (M.C.O.T.).

"Whoever loves travel in peaceful places, in good weather,

Try going to Kampod province in Cambodia" (Valavuth, 2014d).



(2) Laos

Figure 6.2. Map of Laos. Adapted from "*ASEAN Together*" [Television broadcast], by J. Valavuth (Producer), (2013, August 1), Bangkok: Mass Communication Organization of Thailand (M.C.O.T.).

"Laos is a land-locked country. There are no seaports like there are in all other ASEAN countries" (Valavuth, 2013d).

(3) Myanmar

(4) Thailand



Figure 6.3. Map of Myanmar. Adapted from "*ASEAN Together*" [Television broadcast], by J. Valavuth (Producer), (2013, December 19), Bangkok: Mass Communication Organization of Thailand (M.C.O.T.).

"Today, Pee Einstein will introduce the new capital city of Myanmar, namely Nypidow. It was changed from Yangon to Nypidow. Nypidow means 'land of the king'" (Valavuth, 2013g).

Figure 6.4. Map of Thailand. Adapted from "*ASEAN Together*" [Television broadcast], by J. Valavuth (Producer), (2013, August 1), Bangkok: Mass Communication Organization of Thailand (M.C.O.T.).

"Learning from eastern Thailand, Chathaburi province: this province has rich fruits, food, and beautiful beaches" (Valavuth, 2013d).

(5) Vietnam



Figure 6.5. Map of Vietnam. Adapted from "*ASEAN Together*" [Television broadcast], by V. Jentanakul (Producer), (2014, December 18), Bangkok: Mass Communication Organization of Thailand (M.C.O.T.).

"Vietnam is a prominent rice exporter in the world, because its location and its climate are suitable. It is located in rich water resources and has good rain" (Valavuth, 2013b).

6.1.1.2 Maritime

Maritime Southeast Asia in "ASEAN Together" is constructed with icons about islands, seas, and oceans.

(1) Brunei



Figure 6.6. Map of Brunei. Adapted from "*ASEAN Together*" [Television broadcast], by J. Valavuth (Producer), (2014, January 2), Bangkok: Mass Communication Organization of Thailand (M.C.O.T.).

"Brunei is located in the South China Sea, on the northwest coast of Borneo (Kalimantan). Its area is 5,675 square kilometers, about the same size as Chanthaburi province of Thailand" (Valavuth, 2014a).



(2) Indonesia

Figure 6.7. Map of Indonesia. Adapted from "*ASEAN Together*" [Television broadcast], by J. Valavuth (Producer), (2013, December 26), Bangkok: Mass Communication Organization of Thailand (M.C.O.T.).

Indonesia is located in seven seas: South China sea, Java sea, Sulawesi sea, Flores sea, Banda sea, Makassar strait, and Strait of Melaka. It is between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean, and is the connection between Asia and Australia. It is a very big country with three time zones. (Valavuth, 2013h).

(3) Malaysia



Figure 6.8. Map of Malaysia. Adapted from "*ASEAN Together*" [Television broadcast], by J. Valavuth (Producer), (2013, October 24), Bangkok: Mass Communication Organization of Thailand (M.C.O.T.).

"Malaysia is Thailand's neighbor, right next to southern Thailand" (Valavuth, 2013f).



(4) Singapore

Figure 6.9. Map of Singapore. Adapted from "*ASEAN Together*" [Television broadcast], by J. Valavuth (Producer), (2013, November 14), Bangkok: Mass Communication Organization of Thailand (M.C.O.T.).

"Singapore is the smallest country in ASEAN, but it has quality" (Valavuth, 2013e).

(5) The Philippines



Figure 6.10. Map of the Philippines. Adapted from "*ASEAN Together*" [Television broadcast], by J. Valavuth (Producer), (2014, January 2), Bangkok: Mass Communication Organization of Thailand (M.C.O.T.).

"The Philippines has the longest maritime borders in ASEAN. It is located in the Pacific Ocean, and it has a tropical monsoon climate..." (Valavuth, 2014a).

Comparing mainland Southeast Asia and maritime Southeast Asia, according to Chapter Five Table 5.2 "Frequency and proportion in presenting ten ASEAN member countries in the questions in 'ASEAN Together,'" (concepts were all from a Thai point of view) the program presented countries close to Thailand, like those in mainland Southeast Asia, more than those in maritime Southeast Asia.

6.2 Representation of ASEAN member countries in terms of the social characteristic

The social characteristic includes activities, practices, and semiotic signs in ASEAN member countries. It has three characteristics: historical politics, economy,

and socio-culture.

6.2.1 Historical-political type

"ASEAN Together" constructed and presented each national image or representation in the context of historical situation and contemporary politics. Other binary pairs relevant to this type are colonized - not colonized, and communist – non-communist.

6.2.1.1 Colonized vs. Not Colonized

(1) Colonized

In ASEAN, all countries were colonized by Europe, except Thailand. The "ASEAN Together" sample tapes presented the stories of French colonization (Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam), British colonization in Malaysia, and the Spanish in the Philippines. It presented some information on the colonial period, colonizer, regime and influence. For example:

Malaysia had many important natural resources needed by Western countries (especially its crucial location on the Straits of Melaka). Malaysia was occupied by Western countries more than 100 years, first by Portugal then the Netherlands, and finally Britain. Today, in Malaysia, influence from Britain is seen in the widespread use of English as a second language, and in its legal and parliamentary systems. (Valavuth, 2013f).

Historical sites in colonized countries are semiotic signs representing the story of Western influence in the colonial period; for example:

Today Pee Einstein will present historical evidence of the colonial period in Cambodia. ... Phnom Bokor National Park has many important historical buildings, because in 1917 the French built vacation rentals in colonial style for their elite. For example, the Bokor Palace Hotel, a school, a post office, a church, and a casino are all on this hill. (Valavuth, 2015c).



Figure 6.11. Bokor Palace Hotel in colonial style. Adapted from "*ASEAN Together*" [Television broadcast], by J. Valavuth (Producer), (2015, February 14), Bangkok: Mass Communication Organization of Thailand (M.C.O.T.).

The heroes in "ASEAN Together" are also semiotic signs representing the story of the colonial period. Nationalists are praised as heroes who fought for independence in the colonial period, for example in the Philippines;

> Emilio Aguinaldo was a Filipino nationalist hero who fought against Spain for independence after José Rizal was executed. Aguinaldo actually gained independence from Spain, and he became the first president of The Philippines. (Valavuth, 2014b).

(2) Not Colonized

Thailand was not a formally colonized country, but it also was impacted by the Western powers. For instance, "Because of the rich natural resources, the French at one time occupied Chanthaburi as a hostage" (Valavuth, 2013d). In addition, it shows the role of the Thai king in managing Western influence. For instance;

Today, we will learn Thai history from Rattanakosin Island. ... In the Rama 5 era, there were major changes in Bangkok as a capital city, especially in urban management, making it more like Western capitals. In that period, Western countries were the dominant influence in Southeast Asia. (Valavuth, 2014e).

In general, the Thai representation in "ASEAN Together" accords with the content of Thai history textbooks. In 2008 Preamroj (2013) studied

the concept of nationalism in history textbooks in the basic education core curriculum. Thai history textbooks emphasize the concept of "royal-nationalism" that emphasizes the Thai king as the primary actor in maintaining independence, and guiding and supporting democracy. Moreover, there is racism in the content of some textbooks honoring the Thai nationality.

6.2.1.2 Communist vs. Non-Communist

Basically, communist and democratic political systems are based on different ideological principles. "ASEAN Together" presents general information on ASEAN member countries' political systems, political leaders, and political organizations; for example

(1) Communist countries

Vietnam is an ASEAN country governed by a communist political system. It is under the administration of The Communist party of Vietnam. Vietnam is sub-divided into 53 provinces. The capital city is Hanoi. (Valavuth, 2013a).

(2) Non-Communist countries

Cambodia has a long and interesting political history. Its political system is a constitutional monarchy. The present king is His Majesty Norodom Sihamoni, and the Prime Minister of Cambodia is Hun Sen, in a 5-year term. (Valavuth, 2013e).

"ASEAN Together" presents the character of each political system, but it doesn't clearly judge and compare the value of each system. However, it presents the linkage of countries governed by the same political system. For example, "Cambodia's political system is a constitutional monarchy like Thailand's" (Valavuth, 2015c).

6.2.2 Economic type

Sellier (2016) divided the ASEAN member countries into two economic groups: fast-growing modern economies (ASEAN-6) and inward-looking poorer countries (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam, the so-called CLMV countries). However, in the current situation, the CLMV designation is rapidly losing its relevance as Vietnam (and now Myanmar) makes rapid advances economically and other nations such as Thailand and the Philippines struggle with their entrenched elites. "ASEAN Together" shows the economic character of ASEAN member counties in patterns of prosperity and poverty.

6.2.2.1 Economic prosperity vs. Economic Poverty

(1) Economic prosperity

"ASEAN Together" discussed economic growth, stability, planning and strategy in ASEAN. Member countries presented as economically growing and stable are Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam, and Indonesia, for example;

Malaysia plans to be a fully developed country by 2020, through the oil and gas industry. The Petronas tower is a symbol of Malaysia's prosperity. It was constructed by Petronas, Malaysia's national oil and gas company, and it has been the major symbolic landmark of Kuala Lumpur for more than 15 years. (Valavuth, 2013g).

In terms of setting and location, in "ASEAN Together" some modern buildings are presented as symbols of prosperity; for example, the Petronas tower in Malaysia, Marina Bay Sands Hotel, and Esplanade Theatre in Singapore.



Figure 6.12. Marina Bay in Singapore. Adapted from "*ASEAN Together*" [Television broadcast], by J. Valavuth (Producer), (2013, August 1), Bangkok: Mass Communication Organization of Thailand (M.C.O.T.).

One goal of the ASEAN socio-cultural community blueprint is narrowing the development gap among members. Thus Vietnam, as a member of the

CLMV group, should be supported by other countries. However, "ASEAN Together" highlights the rise of Vietnam in the economic world. For instance,

"Foreign magazines in 2012 called Vietnam the new tiger in Asia. Its Doi Moi policy made Vietnam richer and increased economic growth at a rate second only to China" (Valavuth, 2015a).

Moreover, "Vietnam's exports of rice are more than Thailand's. In 2013, Vietnam exported 2,800,000 tons, compared to Thailand's 300,000 tons" (Valavuth, 2013b).

For the Thai economy, "ASEAN Together" emphasizes the wealth of Thai agriculture and Thai tourism; for example: "As for the export of Thai agricultural products and Thai fruit, income from Thai fruit was more than six billion baht, the highest level in ASEAN" (Valavuth, 2013a).

Basically, tourism has been one of the key growth sectors in ASEAN. According to industry statistics, the wide array of tourist attractions across the region drew 81 million tourists to ASEAN in 2011, up by 30% over the 62 million tourists in 2007. Data from the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) shows that in the first few months of 2012, ASEAN was the fastest growing destination-region in the world (Tourism 2016). "ASEAN Together" presented several tourist attractions in ASEAN, for example, Phuket and Khao San Road in Thailand, Bomo volcano in Indonesia, and Kota Bahru in Malaysia.

(2) Economic Poverty

"ASEAN Together" doesn't present economic poverty in ASEAN member countries with numerical data, but it presents the character of economic poverty through symbols, setting and location. For example, from a sample tape, it presents about gangsterism in Cambodia, and suggests Thai tourists exercise care. In terms of setting and location, rural areas relying on fisheries and agriculture are presented as a sign of poverty.



Figure 6.13. Location in Don Kon, Laos. Adapted from "*ASEAN Together*" [Television broadcast], by J. Valavuth (Producer), (2014, October 2), Bangkok: Mass Communication Organization of Thailand (M.C.O.T.).

For the economic type, "ASEAN Together" praises economically stable countries, and admires the fast-developing countries. In addition, it emphasizes the Thai economy by comparing Thai economic statistics, especially on goods and trade, with those of other countries in the region.

6.2.3 Socio-cultural type

According to the ASEAN socio-cultural community blueprint, ASEAN wants to build an ASEAN identity with the theme of unity in diversity, at all levels of society Osborne (2013). Southeast Asia is an immensely varied region but with some notable unities. The diversity is religious, ethnic, linguistic, and part of the physical environment. ASEAN people need to learn about the other countries and accept the diversity of ASEAN. Content analysis of "ASEAN Together," with socio-cultural binary opposition (e.g. Buddhist/Muslim, traditional/modern), can show the characteristics of ASEAN counties.

6.2.3.1 Buddhism vs. Islam

"ASEAN Together" presents ASEAN as a region of diverse beliefs and religion: spirits and nature, Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, and Christianity. However, it emphasizes the major religions in the region: Buddhism and Islam.

(1) Buddhism

"ASEAN Together" shows several types of signs and symbols to represent Buddhism in Laos, Myanmar, and Thailand. For example,

Table 6.1

Country	Sign or symbolic act,	Meaning		
	location			
Laos	The tradition of almsgiving	Lao daily life based on		
	with sticky rice	Buddhism.		
11651	Buddhist object: Mom	Lao belief and loyalty.		
		Lao people respect		
		some objects as		
		Buddhist.		
	Pra That Luang	Sacred Buddhist place		
		for centuries; the glory		
		of Buddhism in Laos.		
Thailand	Wat Bowonniwet Vihara	The role of Thai kings		
	(King Vajiravudh, Rama	in supporting and		
	VI, temple)	protecting Buddhism.		
	The worship of "Siaokang	Thai beliefs combining		
	door" at Wat Bowonniwet	spirit worship and		
	Vihara	Buddhism.		

Signs and symbols representing the character of Buddhism in ASEAN



Figure 6.14. Pra That Luang in Laos. Adapted from "*ASEAN Together*" [Television broadcast], by J. Valavuth (Producer), (2014, December 18), Bangkok: Mass Communication Organization of Thailand (M.C.O.T.).

(2) Islam

"ASEAN Together" shows Islamic signs and symbols of several types to represent Brunei and Malaysia, Nothing about Islam in Indonesia:

Table 6.2

Country	Sign	Meaning
Brunei	Brunei's national motto: "Always render service	Islam is the national religion of Brunei.
	with God's guidance"	Tengion of Brunei.
Malaysia	Kota Bahru mosque	-place for Islamic
		ceremonies in Kota
		Bahru, center for
		Arab arts in Malaysia

Signs and symbols representing the character of Islam in ASEAN



Figure 6.15. Kota Bahru mosque in Malaysia. Adapted from "*ASEAN Together*" [Television broadcast], by J. Valavuth (Producer), (2015, March 7), Bangkok: Mass Communication Organization of Thailand (M.C.O.T.).

"ASEAN Together" presents Buddhism and Islam in ASEAN through location, ceremony, object, and teachings. It presents both similarities and differences in ASEAN; for example, the similarity of Buddhist and Islamic religious locations, and the same role of kings (supporting their national religions) in both Buddhist and Islamic countries. It also shows the difference between rules in Buddhist and Islamic states. However, it doesn't judge and compare the values of each religion. Dr. Suwit Mangkala (an ASEAN expert from the Department of ASEAN Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs), stated that tradition, ceremony, and practice related to religion are sensitive in ASEAN, and we should be very deeply concerned (cited in Valavuth, 2015b).

In addition, "ASEAN Together" showed the diversity of religion in ASEAN. It gave some spaces for other minor religions; for example, Christianity in Thailand and Vietnam, Hinduism in Bali (Indonesia) and Singapore, and Chinese religion in Phuket (Thailand). However, according to my sample, it did not show Confucianism in Vietnam even though "the profound impact of Confucianism remains strong in Vietnam. Social order is defined by its principles, and the rituals or deference and obedience are still observed" ("Confucianism in Vietnam," 2016).

6.2.3.2 Traditional vs. Modern

The official website of ASEAN Tourism (2014) states that the people of ASEAN live both simple and complex lifestyles. There are a multitude of ethnic groups inhabiting the region and many still live a traditional way of life. In other parts of the region you will witness towering skyscrapers mushrooming in the cities with a dynamic way of life. "ASEAN Together" presents both traditional and modern society through food, buildings, and lifestyle.

(1) Traditional society

"Ubin Island is the last forest area of Singapore. It is a rural village representing a simple lifestyle. It is absolutely different from the big city, including level of technology" (Valavuth, 2013h).



Figure 6.16. Ubin Island in Singapore. Adapted from "*ASEAN Together*" [Television broadcast], by J. Valavuth (Producer), (2013, December 26), Bangkok: Mass Communication Organization of Thailand (M.C.O.T.).

"Villagers in Dalat Province in Vietnam plant many crops: cabbage, lettuce, and carrots..." (Valavuth, 2015c).



Figure 6.17. Farm in Dalat Province, Vietnam. Adapted from "*ASEAN Together*" [Television broadcast], by J. Valavuth (Producer), (2013, February 14), Bangkok: Mass Communication Organization of Thailand (M.C.O.T.).

(2) Modern society

"Singapore is a city of technology, modernization, luxury brandname shopping centers, and nightlife that can attract many tourists. It is a country that has never stopped developing" (Valavuth, 2015g).



Figure 6.18. Singapore city. Farm in Dalat Province, Vietnam. Adapted from "*ASEAN Together*" [Television broadcast], by J. Valavuth (Producer), (2015, July 11), Bangkok: Mass Communication Organization of Thailand (M.C.O.T.).

"In Ho Chi Minh city, you can see modern buildings, modern life, and density of population as in any developed country. ... Motorcycles are popular vehicles for Vietnamese people..., and there are so many traffic jams in the city" (Valavuth, 2015a).



Figure 6.19. Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam. Farm in Dalat Province, Vietnam. Adapted from *"ASEAN Together"* [Television broadcast], by J. Valavuth (Producer), (2015, January 3), Bangkok: Mass Communication Organization of Thailand (M.C.O.T.).

"ASEAN Together" presents both traditional and modern society in each country. Traditional society will be evaluated as the space with rich nature and simple lifestyle in a rural area, and agricultural and fishing societies. It is an alternative place for some tourists, while modern society will be evaluated as the space of modernization and higher technology in the center of the country. In some cases, "ASEAN Together" presents the effects of urbanization. In ASEAN, urban populations are increasing rapidly, especially in the five biggest cities, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur-Klang, Singapore, Jakarta and Manila) (Fraser, 2014).

These representations are essentially positive images without any clearly negative images which are regularly presented in other Thai entertainment media; for example, the standard Burmese enemy in Thai historical films, Burmese and Lao servants in Thai soap operas, the Cambodian (Khmer) shaman in Thai horror movies, and the Lao joker in Thai comedy films.

6.3 Determination of narrator standpoint from Thai's perspective

Determination of narrator standpoint is the first door for constructing meaning in a story (Kanjana, 2010). "ASEAN Together" stories are from the firstperson perspective, the viewpoint of characters speaking directly about themselves. This type of narration always uses "I", and embeds some attitude and bias.

6.3.1 Thai media producer's perspective

Pee Einstein is an organ of the Thai media producer's perspective. In addition, content analysis found that in Pee Einstein's point of view the concept of 'exoticism' often applies to other countries. In Critical Media Studies, 'exoticism' refers to "the ideological circulation and consumption of images of foreign lands that romanticize or mystify other cultures" (Ott & Mack, 2010). The presentations here hide some Thai point of view and Thai context in the content, but Thailand is always referred to as "we," as the center, while other countries in ASEAN are "they". In addition, there is frequent comparison of other ASEAN countries with Thailand, in all the various dimensions: physical, historical, economic, and socio-cultural. For example: "Ha Noi is the capital city of Vietnam. It has a population of more than six million people, but still less than Bangkok, our capital city, which has a population of more than ten million people" (Valavuth, 2013a).

"Ah... Don't think this is Thailand. It is Dongba market, a big market in Vietnam" (Valavuth, 2015h).

"Laos is a neighbor country which has had a long relationship with Thailand. Both Thai history and Lao history refer to each other. Lao language and lifestyle are like those of the Thai people in Isan" (Valavuth, 2013b).

6.3.2 Perspectives from participants in the show

Unusually, the format of this game show opens some space for participating students, guest stars, and ASEAN experts to show their perceptions of ASEAN member countries. Participants in the show are direct social actors in the competition (they play themselves). There is no written script. They can express their own ideas and knowledge about ASEAN countries, based on their own point of view, direct or indirect experience, through the education system, mass communications, or personal experience. The perspectives from participants in the show are described below.

6.3.2.1 Students' perspectives

Basically, the students learn about ASEAN through indirect experience rather than direct experience. Thompson and Chulanee (2007) found the most common sources of information about ASEAN among ASEAN students are television, schooling, newspapers and books (school textbooks), and secondary sources of information included the internet and radio. In this show, Thai juveniles, as the competitors, can show their own perception, attitude, and knowledge about ASEAN through brainstorming to answer questions. For example:

• A student from Chumchanprathipatvittayakan School gave his perception of Singapore: "It's believed that Singaporeans are orderly and clean" (Valavuth, 2013c).

• A student from Chanpradittaramwittayakom School said "The pronunciation of Lao language is similar to Thai language" (Valavuth, 2015e).

6.3.2.2 Guest stars' perspectives

Some guest stars show their direct experience about traveling in ASEAN member countries, for example:

• Rapeepat Aekpankul (Thai actor): "I went to Laos, and Lao people welcome Thai actors, because people living on that bank can watch Thai television, and love Thai actors and actresses" (Valavuth, 2015e).

• Annop Thongborisut (Thai singer): "I have been to Laos to do a concert. Lao people are the same as Thai people. They love listening to Thai songs, and they can dance to 'Sod Kra Prib Kra Poy,' a Thai song" (Valavuth, 20 2015f).

These statements can be supported by research about the impact of Thai radio and television signals spilling over the border. Vipa (2001) showed that 70-74% of Lao people had access to Thai television and radio. In addition, there are effects of Thai television and radio identified in this research: economic effects, political effects, psychological effects, linguistic effects, cultural effects, and the effect on the media system in Laos.

6.3.2.3 ASEAN experts' perspectives

The representations and images in "ASEAN Together," which are constructed through an ASEAN expert's point of view, can show a narrator-narrative relation (direct knowledge and experience of the story they are telling). The show invites experts on ASEAN from many Thai agencies. The perspectives of these ASEAN experts make the representations more reliable. The experts explain, and give some ideas about the similarities, the differences, the dynamics, the prominent points, and the good practices of ASEAN member countries, for example:

• Dr. Sutida Jamrat (ASEAN expert):

Thailand and Laos have some shared norms, beliefs, and practices, namely 'Heet Sib Sorng - Klong Sib See'²... In ASEAN countries, you can see some similarity and difference in the architecture, which can reflect belief and culture in each country. Lao traditional houses can be the same as those in Thailand, but different in some functions. Understanding our identity,

²"Heet Sib Sorng - Klong Sib See" is a religious-based belief in the northeast part of Thailand. "Heet Sib Song" means the good practice in 12 months. "Klong Sib See" means 14 norms for good life.

their identity, and ASEAN identity can make ASEAN citizens live together in happiness. (Valavuth, 2013b).

• Dr. Rati Stipaiwan (ASEAN expert):

ASEAN culture, we can classify into three groups: Mae Kong river basin (Thailand, Laos, and Myanmar), Malay (Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei), and the Philippines, isolated from other countries because of the influence of European culture. Learn about these cultures, and the lifestyle of each country. (Valavuth, 2013f).

• Dr. Suwit Mangkala (ASEAN expert):

Non la (Vietnamese hat) is a representation of Vietnam. In addition, there is the beautiful Vietnamese women's costume called 'Ao Dai,' which is exported to the USA under the name 'Miss Ao Dai.' There is a Miss Ao Dai contest in California, USA. Vietnam can retain these Vietnamese identities, and make income for the country. Also, Thailand should learn from neighboring countries which have these identities. (Valavuth, 2015h).

In addition, the experts share basic knowledge about regionalism, community, sense of belonging, ASEAN identity, and the three pillars of the ASEAN community, for example:

• Dr. Sutida Jamrat (ASEAN expert):

The members of ASEAN will cooperate in several aspects in 2015. ASEAN includes the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC), the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC). These are the three elements of the ASEAN community. (Valavuth, 2013c).

• Dr. Suwit Mangkala (ASEAN expert):

Aside from the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC), and the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), there is the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) emphasizing 'the people'. It is a community of caring and sharing. The caring and sharing society must start from groups of juvenile volunteers. Economic development must concern both economic and social factors. ASEAN should have a balance between economic development and social development. (Valavuth, 2015b).

6.4 Narration in game shows for edutainment

The show has a goal: "In 2016, we will get Thai youth to know, understand, and access ASEAN. All the answers in the competition are evaluated intellectually." Narration in game shows for edutainment is a key for "ASEAN Together". After analysis of the format and content of the show, I found that it encoded both education and entertainment for Thai youth and students. The show presented interesting and exotic knowledge about ASEAN countries in entertainment media harmoniously, making it clear and easy to understand. It is a good example of "edutainment," which is a form of teaching that emphasizes both fun and knowledge from various media, such as movies, music, TV shows, games, internet and software. There is modified content such as graphics, sound, light, and entertainment for attraction and relaxation, to suit various audiences (Tiamyod, 2013).



CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSION

This chapter consists of four parts. The first part is a summary of findings about frequency and proportion of representations of ASEAN countries in "ASEAN Together." The second part is a review of the types of representations of ASEAN countries and a review of the techniques of construction of representations of ASEAN countries in "ASEAN Together". The third part is a review of the conflict between the ideologies of nationalism and regionalism in "ASEAN Together". The fourth part is recommendations. The final part is suggestions for further studies.

7.1 Frequency and proportion of presenting content about ASEAN member countries in "ASEAN Together"

The data sample was 30 tapes of "ASEAN Together," including 99 questions about ASEAN member countries. As a method of random sampling, I divided the sample into three groups: first year (2013), second year (2014), and third year (2015). Then I picked ten tapes from each year. The results of the quantitative content analysis include the following information.

7.1.1 Frequency and proportion in presenting the ten ASEAN countries as questions in "ASEAN Together"

The ten countries were ranked by frequency of occurrence in questions in the following order, most frequent to least frequent: Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, the Philippines, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Indonesia, Singapore, and Brunei (see Table 5.2 in Chapter 5). The results of the study showed a clear focus on Thailand, because it was constructed by Thais in Thailand. In addition, another question was generated by the results: Why is Vietnam number two in frequency of presentations? Vietnam is a prominent mainland country, and it has many interactions with Thailand. Examining the Vietnam representation in "ASEAN Together", I found that the Thai media and the Thai audience are paying attention to Vietnam's economy, politics, society and culture.

In terms of economics, "ASEAN Together" shows that Vietnam is outstanding in the region. It has been making rapid advances economically, and it has the largest rice exports in the world. Interestingly, pointed out that:

Political and economic reforms (Doi Moi) launched in 1986 have transformed the country from one of the poorest in the world, with per capita income around US \$100, to lower middle income status within a quarter of a century with per capita income of around US\$2,100 by the end of 2015. (World Bank Group, 2016).

In addition, Vietnam has signed on to the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement. Drysdale (2015) notes that ASEAN has been watching Vietnam's performance closely on the international stage, and this agreement puts Vietnam even more directly in the international spotlight. Furthermore, Vietnam is a land of opportunity for Thai investors. Malinee Harnboonsong, director of the Thai trade Centre in Ho Chi Minh City, has suggested that "Thai investors should not think of Vietnam as a rival. Businesspeople should view Vietnam as an ASEAN partner and find ways to work together, as the two share similar national resources" (Bamrung, 2013).

"ASEAN Together" showed that politically Vietnam is a former colonized country and a communist country. Vietnam is good at balancing the power of China and America. Ngo Di Lan (2015) feels that Vietnam is on a diplomatic tightrope between the two powers, "delicately balancing one against another to reap the benefits while avoiding being trapped into a diplomatic cul-de-sac." In the longer term, Ngo sees this strategy as the foundation of a regional order based on multilateral institutions and great powers bargains. There is also a residual sense of rivalry with Vietnam due to centuries of competition for control of Laos and Cambodia.

In a socio-cultural perspective, "ASEAN Together" presented the "Vietnameseness" in the content. The show presented many tourist attractions in Vietnam; for example, Lake of the Returned Sword, Dong-Ba market, the rice terraces in Sapa, and Hoi An's Japanese covered bridge. Thompson and Chulanee (2007) found that Vietnam is the second most popular tourist destination among the Thai students, next to Singapore. Vietnamese food is famous around the world, and Thanjira (2014) found that Vietnamese food is a popular alternative for Thai people who want to eat healthy. The number of Vietnamese restaurants in Thailand, especially Bangkok, has increased. However, it is not as much as Japanese or Korean restaurants.

7.1.2 Types of information and content constructed as representations of ASEAN member countries in "ASEAN Together"

The study showed that, in a ranking of types of information and content used to construct representations of ASEAN countries, the most common dimension was the physical characteristic, followed by socio-cultural dimension, historical-political dimension, and finally, economic dimension. One exception was Vietnam, where the most common dimension was socio-cultural, not physical. Another exception was the Philippines, where the second most common dimension was not socio-cultural, rather it was the historical-political dimension.

In general, the results here accord with the content about ASEAN presented in Thai mass media. For example, excluding information about location and physical dimensions, which is basic geography, the result of my study is consistent with a study about the role of presenting ASEAN news in "ASEAN Journey," a Thai television program of the National Broadcasting Services of Thailand (NBT) presenting a range of content about ASEAN members, comparable to the content of "ASEAN Together." Nongnuch (2014) studied the presenting of ASEAN news. Her research focused on how a Thai TV program presented ASEAN news in three pillars: ASEAN economic community, ASEAN political-security community, and ASEAN socio-cultural community. The results showed that the most content is socio-cultural at 45.73%.

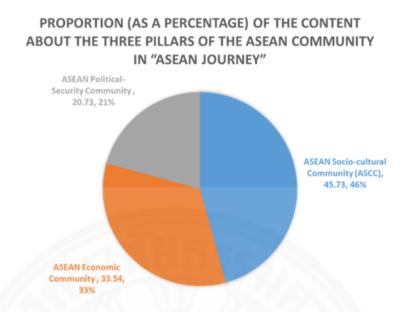


Figure 7.1. Proportion (as a percentage) of the content about the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC), the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) in the Thai TV news program "ASEAN Journey" created by the author.

The socio-cultural content is the most interesting information for the audience. It is about people, including lifestyle, art and culture, tradition, religion, and education. The audience feels it is easy to understand. Pornchai (2014) studied the presenting of cultural contents in the ASEAN Community on Thai TV documentary programs. The content can be divided into three groups: (1) in-depth stories about culture in each society, (2) cultural stories related with politics and history, and (3) content in the ASEAN Socio-cultural Community: human development, social welfare and protection, social justice and rights, ensuring environmental sustainability, building the ASEAN identity, and narrowing the development gap.

7.2 Representation of ASEAN member countries in "ASEAN Together"

The results of the qualitative content analysis include the following information:

"ASEAN Together" constructed representations of ASEAN member countries in two main categories: the physical characteristic, and the social characteristic.

First, the physical characteristic is mainly geographic information. Information about physical space was always from a Thai point of view, and, when analyzing content with binary opposition, the show focused on the opposition of mainland vs. maritime.

Second, the social characteristic is constructed from activities, practices, and symbols in ASEAN member countries. It is composed of different types: historical-political, economic, and socio-cultural. For the historical-political type, when analyzing content with binary opposition, the relevant oppositions were: colonized vs. not colonized, and communist vs. non- communist. For the economic type, the clearest pair was prosperity vs. poverty. For the socio-cultural type, the pairs were Buddhism vs. Islam, and traditional vs. modern. The representations in "ASEAN Together" were almost uniformly positive, without the bad-guy/enemy role.

In general the representations constructed in "ASEAN Together" match with the results in Komjorn's research (2006). He found that all films construct images or representations, and that everything in film is selected and elaborated. Thai producers will present Southeast Asia from Thailand's perspective; that is, they present the other countries as if they were marginal areas of Thailand. Thai films always present the similarities and differences between Thailand and other countries in Southeast Asia through language and lifestyle. He posited three relationships between Thai and other Southeast Asia nationalities, namely "enemy," "love-and-hate," and "lover." However, the relationship "enemy" did not appear in my study.

7.3 Conflict between the ideologies of nationalism and regionalism

The motto of ASEAN is "One Vision, One Identity, One Community", and it appears in every official publication, activity, and event. The leaders of ASEAN have a vision to create an ASEAN regionalism. " 'Regionalism' is the expression of a common sense of identity and purpose combined with the creation and implementation of institutions that express a particular identity and shape collective action within a geographical region" (De Lombaerde & Schulz, 2009). ASEAN regionalism will represent not only ASEAN leaders' idealism, but also the reality of a people-oriented ASEAN, the only way to build a genuine regional identity. It aims to unite the people who live together in a diverse region with the "we feeling", and in the end an ASEAN citizen shall think of himself: "I am an ASEAN citizen" (Kasama, 2011). An ASEAN identity is the basis of Southeast Asia as a community. It is our collective personality, including norms, values and beliefs, as well as aspirations to be one ASEAN community. ASEAN will promote greater awareness and common values, with the theme of unity in diversity, at all levels of society (ASEAN Secretariat, 2009). The theme of "unity in diversity" is based on the attitude that individual or social differences in physical attributes, cultural and religious practices, etc. are accepted, and not a source of conflict (Ajay, 2013).

In reality, however, to create a community ASEAN must face the ultimate challenge of the strong nationalism in each country. "Nationalism' is a sentiment of loyalty towards the nation that is shared by the people within it" (Baum, 2006). In addition, Anderson (1991) argued that "nation is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the mind of each lives the image of their communion." Strong nationalism and the antagonism among ASEAN members are the greatest barriers to regional integration and a sense of regionalism in ASEAN. For instance, Athapol Anunthavorasakul has pointed out that in Thailand the main obstacle to construction of an ASEAN community and a sense of ASEAN citizenship is Thai nationalist historiography in the education system, television, and film. Clearly, these factors are preventing a sense of living in the region, rather than in one country. What Thai youth know of the neighbor countries is learned through negative images and ascribed lower status (cited in Weeranan, 2015). In addition, Charnvit Kasetsiri has also suggested that:

If Thai people and ASEAN people want to develop an ASEAN community, and encourage the ideologies of regionalism beyond the ideology of nationalism, they need to engage the societies and cultures at the 'people level'. For example learning other languages in ASEAN, and promoting intra-ASEAN tourism more than just promoting the ASEAN flag and national costumes. (Public Relations Department, 2013).

"ASEAN Together" has abundant evidence to show this conflict between the ideologies of "nationalism" and "regionalism" in its content. It used some different techniques of narration in constructing its representations of ASEAN countries. One was the determination of the narrator's standpoint, and narration in game show format for edutainment. In Cultural Studies, the central question is always about power: who has the power to construct and reconstruct these meanings and representations? The mandate of narration is from the Thai media producer. "ASEAN Together" used first-person narration from a Thai point of view and in a Thai context, to construct its national representations. The Thais are at the center, and "the others" all around, tinged with exoticism in their content.

According to my content analysis, the content of the show is strongly influenced by this Thai perspective, and promotes the ideology of nationalism, honoring the home nationality, with considerable bias toward other countries. Looking down upon other countries in a patronizing way is still going on in the Thai media. It is quite obvious in the data, especially dealing with Laos or other less-developed countries. Below is a list of such keywords and what they are used to mean in the context of the show:

Table 7.1

Keywords					Meaning				
The	similarity	with	Isan	(Northeastern	In	the	Thai	context,	Isan
Thailand)					(Northeastern Thailand) is similar				
					to Laos, for example, language,				
					arts, lifestyle, and food. The image				
					of	Isan	in a '	Thai (Bar	ngkok)
				perspective is rural, backward, and					
					unmodern. For instance, the				•

Keywords presenting Laos in a patronizing way

Keywords	Meaning			
	images of Isan in the Thai film Panya Raenu (2011), show			
	backwardness, nature, agricultural			
	society, buffalo (symbol of			
	stupidity), and poor people			
	(Chayanin, 2011).			
Agricultural and fishery society	The economic status of less-			
	developed countries contrasts with			
	developed countries based on			
	industry.			
The words "simple," "quiet," "nature," and	A sense of innocence, naïvete, and			
"cute"	being less-developed. The show			
	noted that Laos is a destination for			
	Western tourists who admire			
	nature and quietness.			

Note. Created by the author.

These keywords are from the format of a game show for children: it has to be simplified and based on what they are familiar with. After the end of the Cold War, the increasing economic difference gradually influenced the image of Laos in Thai society. Thailand and Laos are *phee-nong* (siblings). Thailand is the older sibling, and Laos is always the younger. In the Thai perception, to step into the world of capitalism, Laos must depend on assistance and foreign investment from Thailand (Sumit, 2008). In addition, Korrawit (2006) studied the representation of Laos in Thai textbooks since 1960-2001. He found that there are three kinds of Lao characteristics in Thai textbooks: Thailand and Laos as the good *phee-nong*, where Laos has lower status than Thailand, and Laos is always trouble for Thailand. Komjorn (2004a) studied Thai entertainment media focused on relations of Thailand and other countries in Southeast Asia. He showed that Thai producers always encoded the message that "Thailand is better than Laos". Khien (2001) studied Thai-Lao relations from the Laotian perspective. He found that Lao people felt that Thai stars and Thai media always look down Laos. His survey shows complaints of this patronizing attitude from 56% of respondents. For instance, a news item claiming a Thai star had called Laos a dirty and stupid country was a very hot issue in Laos. It appeared in the *Vientiane Mai* newspaper on 10 April 2000, and many Lao people were very displeased with this comment.

On the other hand, "ASEAN Together" also constructed the ideology of regionalism in its content. The show is a good resource to study the patterns of content about ASEAN in the Thai game show edutainment genre, especially since it encourages students, guest stars and ASEAN experts to share their perspectives on ASEAN. It shows their perception and attitude from both direct and indirect experience. Knowledge about ASEAN, and the sense of ASEAN as a community are embedded in the show and convey the message from the world of media to the world of reality. In addition, by illustrating the diversity of ASEAN the show accords with a "unity in diversity" approach which assumes the existence of a region despite conceding important differences between ASEAN member states and societies (Acharya, 2000). ASEAN people need to accept the diversity of ASEAN. Kalinga (2010) argued that "thinking, feeling and acting ASEAN requires a process of mindset changes not only among business and political leaders, but also among larger constituencies including the poor who need to be more aware of opportunities and consequences of integration". In order to promote regionalism among ASEAN countries, it is necessary for citizens in each ASEAN country to establish regional awareness. It is a necessary step toward fuller understanding. From my point of view, "ASEAN Together" is a good example of a national TV show creating regional awareness. Although I am still aware of the limits of the show, it is a necessary step in the development of understanding and acceptance, especially among the younger generation. In a massive survey of first-year university students across ASEAN, Thompson and Chulanee (2007) noted that the students from Thailand agree with the statement: "I feel I am an ASEAN citizen." around 67%, but they also showed a low level of understanding about the region and the association.

> Students from Thailand were another group whose responses fell mostly in the territory of generally positive, if not extremely enthusiastic, toward

ASEAN. The responses pointed up obvious gaps and unevenness in their objective knowledge about the Association – particularly extremely high cartographic literacy but low recognition of the Association's symbols and history. (Thompson & Chulanee, 2007).

The consumption of entertainment media products with content about ASEAN and the neighboring countries is a good way to pull regional citizens closer and help them learn about the other countries. For instance, Thai entertainment media is the bridge for Vietnamese youth to learn about Thailand. Some Vietnamese youths use Thai entertainment, such as song, film, and drama, as a tool to practice their Thai language skills.

Bastian and Haryo (2016) suggested three steps to elevate the level of ASEAN awareness by using mass media. Firstly, "content is king". Data-driven ASEAN-related content will be a good start. Secondly, the content should be reconstructed to make it easier to understand. Finally, the sender should choose the right channel. "The medium is the message" (McLuhan, 1964). It is important to find the most suitable medium or channel for effective communication and catching the attention of the target group.

At the regional level, ASEAN launched the ASEAN Communication Master Plan (ACMP): 2014-2017, on 11 November 2014. With the theme of "ASEAN: A Community of Opportunities," it guides ASEAN member states and other stakeholders in communicating clearly the character, structure, and overall vision of ASEAN and the ASEAN community to key audiences, including local communities, youth, women and children, governments, businesses, civil society organizations, influencers, media and global audiences (ASEAN Secretariat, 2014). The young generation is recognized as the future of the integrated community. In this plan both education and media can and do play an important role in informing them about ASEAN and its priorities (Tan Chin Tiong, 2016). The plan emphasizes the mix of audience, suitable messages, translation with appropriate language, and the effective use of different communication techniques.

Finally, in the Thai context, although "ASEAN Together" has its conflict between the ideologies of nationalism and regionalism in its content, it can be a medium for conveying knowledge about ASEAN, and the representation or image of ASEAN member countries to Thai youth. It can strengthen both ASEAN identity and ASEAN awareness, starting from the construction of this amazing modern-day "imagined community" among the young generation.

7.4 Recommendations

First of all, frequency and proportion in presenting the ten ASEAN countries showed a clear focus on Thailand. The media producer should increase the sense of regionalism; that is, more learning about other member countries, in order to presented them as equally as possible. Focus on Thailand may be a device to increase interest of children. But if the purpose of the show is to increase knowledge of ASEAN countries among Thai students, there need not be any questions on Thailand at all.

Secondly, looking down upon other countries in a patronizing way is still going on in the Thai media. Messages in the media can spill over the border and lead to international conflicts. So I would like to send out a friendly warning to Thai producers concerning this point. Thai media producers should use extreme care when encoding representations and images of other countries. They should avoid sensitive issues such as the image of "enemy," as these can affect international relations negatively, especially with Laos. Lao people receive a lot of media from Thailand, and the Thai and Lao languages are so close that they can understand all the subtleties of content in Thai media.

Lastly, media influence must not be underestimated, especially television as the most important information source about ASEAN among the ASEAN students. Therefore, the governments and media industries of both Thailand and ASEAN should create and provide television programming about ASEAN for the young generation. In my opinion, edutainment will be recognized as a mainstream way of learning in the future.

7.5 Suggestions for further studies

This study only emphasized content analysis, so for the next challenge further studies should focus more on the audience's decoding and interpreting of those representations of ASEAN member countries by using Hall's decoding method as conceptual framework (Hall 1993, pp. 515-517), as follows:

• Preferred reading: Understanding of the audience matches with the intension of sender.

• Negotiated reading: Audience decodes the message by applying their cultural context, and they change some meanings of the message, because of mismatches with their experience and some other conditions.

• Oppositional reading: Audience denies and protests the message sent, or they decode the message in the opposite direction, since the message goes against their experience and some conditions.

In a macroscopic perspective, it would be valuable to make a comparative study of television programs about ASEAN in ASEAN member countries, including Thailand, to further the study of the construction of the representation in each country.



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APPENDIX

APPENDIX

DATA COLLECTION SHEET

I created this data collection sheet to collect data on the construction and representation of ASEAN member countries in the Thai television program "ASEAN Together" (*nakkid talui ASEAN*); focusing on the questions used in the competition.

	Date	Country	Information about country				GI	Answer	
No.			Physical characteristic	So	cial characteristic	2	Question	Brainstorming from student in game show	Correct answer and
				Historical and political type	Economic type	Socio- cultural type			additional information
							5//		

BIOGRAPHY

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