

A SYMBOLIC MEANING ON *DEKKE SIMUDUR-UDUR* IN BATAK TOBA WEDDING CEREMONY

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Abstract

This study aims at findings out how gender study on Batak Toba Wedding Ceremony that show on YouTube at Semiotics with type of Sylvia Pierce's (1899) theory casual effect. The objective of the study to investigate what symbols of Dekke Simudur-udur in wedding ceremony of Batak Toba cycle of and how the realization of dekke have a holy symbols in married life. A descriptive qualitative design is applied in the research with scientific individual experience life by textual analysis of Neuman, (2007). The procedure of collecting data is analyze the Video in YouTube from watching the video and take the utterances of giver of Dekke simudur-udur for bride and groom. The research findings are found based on Pierce's theory, they are joy, blessing, prosperity, loyalty, and harmony. In conclusion, several regulations have been established for traditional Batak weddings, particularly in the section on handing over dekke simudur-udur. Only the woman's family and the bride's parents' brothers are permitted to participate in the procession.

Keywords: *Semiotics, Symbols, Wedding Ceremony, Batak Toba.*

INTRODUCTION

The relationship between language and culture is complicated, in part because it is difficult to understand people's cognitive processes when they communicate. (Wardhaugh, 2002) and (Thanasoulas, 2001) define language in slightly different ways below, with the former focusing on what it does and the latter on how it relates to culture. Culture, on the other hand, has many symbols that can be found all around us. As a result, semiotics, a branch of linguistics that studies signs in particular, needs to be explored and analyzed.

Linguistics encompasses non-formal approaches to studying other aspects of human language, such as social, cultural, historical, and political factors. Linguistics is also related to semiotics, as (Porcar, 2011:22) defines semiotics as "the study of signs." Semiotics appears to be a paradoxical discipline; in that it can be found everywhere and nowhere at the same time. Semiotics is important in our daily lives because our lives are full of semiotic systems that we have unconsciously learned and understood. It is a societal behavior to assign a value to something, and while semiotics may create some different perspectives, the goal is to explore the meaning for something better in the future. Semiotics is closely related to linguistics, which studies the structure and meaning of language in greater depth. The semiotics tradition investigates the study of signs and symbols as an important aspect of communication.

The study of culture and its relationship to symbolism is narrowed down to a more specific subject matter. One of the Toba Batak community's customs that is very concerned with speaking is the wedding. The importance of language in supporting the wedding cannot be overstated, (Gurning, 2004). Weddings are one of the most important religious and social cultural practices in almost every country on the planet. It is a ceremony in which two people (male and female) are legally united through the institution of marriage.

In this case, the researcher wishes to introduce one of Indonesia's traditional, the Batak Toba. One of the Batak Toba traditions is *Dekke Simudur-Udur*, which is usually given during a wedding ceremony. In Medan, *Batak Toba* people still practice traditional marriage, such as giving "*dekke simudur udur*" which aims to give good words of blessing or advice for the bride's life in the future through *hula-hula*.

This paper will provide readers with some basic information about goldfish as a symbol of life's blessings. The writer, in particular, would give a review of goldfish in the wedding ceremony. Goldfish or *dekke* were used as a symbolic from *hula-hula* and bride's parents that delivered to a bride as an expectation, a blessings prayer, and a petition during a wedding ceremony.

Based on the background of the study above, the problems that are discussed in this study are: (1) What symbols of meanings are used in *Dekke Simudur-udur* in Batak Toba wedding ceremony?; (2) How are the symbols realized use in *Dekke Simudur-udur* of Batak Toba wedding ceremony?; (3) Why is *Dekke Simudur-udur* used in Batak Toba wedding ceremony?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Semiotics

Semiotics is the study of signs and symbols, specifically how they communicate things in spoken or unspoken language. A sign is defined as any motion, gesture, image, pattern, or event that conveys meaning. Semiotics is an important field of study when considering the evolution of human

consciousness. Signs are dyadic, which means that a sign is linked to a specific meaning (Chandler, 2007:10). The development of intelligence into three steps: understanding the nature of things, understanding what to do to achieve whatever you want to achieve, and being able to communicate these things to others (Sebeok, 2001). Signs were the beginning of language.

According to (Pierce, 1899), signs only work if there is intelligence capable of learning from experience. Pierce had a triadic view of semiotics: sign, meaning, and interpreter. Modern semiotics examines the entire network of signs around us, including signs or symbols that mean different things in different contexts, as well as signs and symbols that sound the same. Consider what an ambulance siren communicates to you while driving: "Someone is in danger, and we need to get there quickly." Pull over to the side of the road and let us pass, or we'll find you and fine you."

Semiotics is commonly defined as the study of signs, according to (Porcar, 2011). Semiotics appears to be a paradoxical discipline in that it can be found both everywhere and nowhere. Semiotics is important in our daily lives because we are surrounded by semiotic systems that we have unconsciously learned and comprehended. Assigning a value to something is a societal behavior, even if semiotics may lead to a different perspective, but the goal is to discover the meaning of something in order to improve it in the future. Semiotics is closely related to linguistics, which delves deeper into the structure and meaning of language. The semiotic tradition studies signs and symbols as an important component of communication.

2.2 Symbols

Symbol is sign where the relation between signifier and signified are purely conventional and culturally specific most words. *Everyone often communicates by using sign or symbols*. Symbol cannot be separated from human life. It also cannot be divided from Batak culture because was exist on several years ago. Symbol is very important because it has many profit in human social life.

A symbol, according to Peirce, is "a sign that refers to the object that it denotes by virtue of a law, usually an association of general ideas, that operates to cause the symbol to be interpreted as referring to that object." We interpret symbols based on a 'rule' or a 'habitual' connection. The symbol is linked to its object by the idea of the symbol using mind, without which no such link would exist. A symbol is defined as "a traditional sign or one based on habit" (acquired and inborn). Although all words, sentences, books, and other conventional signs are symbols, they are not the only ones (Chandler, 2002)

According to Saussure, a symbol is a sign "whose special significance or fitness to represent just what it does represent lies in nothing more than the very fact that there is a habit, disposition, or other effective general rule that it will be so interpreted." 'A genuine symbol is one that has a general meaning,' meaning that it represents a type of thing rather than a specific thing (Chandler, 2002).

2.3 Culture

Culture is the complex whole that includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and the other abilities and habits that man has acquired as a member of society. (Tyler, British anthropologist 1870), cited by (Avruch, 1998), stated that "culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, and for behavior

acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the unique achievements of human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and particularly their connected values; culture systems may, on one side, be regarded as proliferating."

According to (Yoeti, 2006), the process and development of culture can be viewed through two lenses: idealistic and materialistic theories. The idealistic theory holds that culture is determined by the development of the human capacity to create and develop ideas, whereas the materialistic theory holds that culture is determined by the natural environment and the economic opportunities (natural materials) that are available.

Culture is very important in human life, according to (Adhitia, 2009), because humans have a provision to start a life. Culture is a collection of references and human grip in adapting to the environment, such as creating anything that can aid human activities. Based on the definitions above, we can conclude that culture is strongly influenced by the environment because it shapes human mindset and character. Culture is formed or manifested as a result of human interaction. As we all know, humans are the highest form of God's creation, possessing a mind, intelligence, feelings, emotions, and behavior. Humans will create culture by combining all of their abilities. As a result, culture encompasses ideas, behavioral patterns, and the objects of human labor. And, when it comes to culture, the Batak Toba have a tradition or custom that has become a culture among them, such as the culture of birth, the culture of death, and the culture of marriage.

2.4 Wedding Ceremony

Communicative activity in wedding ceremony of Batak Toba custom begins from their ancestor behavior where in every communication activity in wedding ceremony of Batak Toba custom has a meaning for their ethnic identity. Marriage becomes a symbol of unity forever. Marriage is not only supposed to go on living for generation, but also a union among families and clans in general. By having married the clan number increases and it adds the notion of clan or *marga* to a wider understanding of *marga* or clan line.

Nowadays the phase of Toba Batak wedding ceremony has simplified to be preserved and conversed by people who play a role in the ceremony. It happens because the influence of globalization that tends to be materialistic the real meaning of wedding ceremony named "*mangan juhut ni boru*" (eating the bride's meat in the wedding party) is a part of culture ritual for inauguration the bride to come into her husband clan.

The original process is very simple by carrying out a ceremony in house but today it has been changed by progress of the modern times and modern people. According to society, so much the bigger of the event the longer times of the event goes by shows the high degree of the bride's family. Toba Batak wedding ceremony should be watched by *dalihan na tolu* elements from bride's side and groom's side by three steps of confirmations, that is the inauguration according to religion, according to law, and according to *dalihan na tolu* custom. So, by these three steps of confirmation the percentage of divorce will be

smaller than just two steps of the confirmation. According to the writer, religion without supported by culture custom was crumbly.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The researcher employed descriptive qualitative methodology in this study. (Neuman, 2007) defines qualitative data as "documenting real events, recording what people say, observing specific behaviors, studying written documents, or examining visual images." According to Denscombe (2007), qualitative research is closely related to the use of words to create a larger unit of analysis, such as texts. He goes on to say that qualitative research differs from quantitative research in that it focused on numbers as the subject of analysis. Qualitative research allows the researcher to provide a more detailed description of the subject being studied. According to Stoep and Johnson, (2009), it provides a detailed description and narration of the subject of analysis. The research also employed some fixed numbers to support the description of the and to denote the study's fix findings.

3.2 Research Subject

In this study, the data were collected from the observation of Batak Toba wedding ceremony. The data got from wedding ceremony in Medan City between years 2021.

3.3 Research Instruments

The research instrument is the researcher as the main instrument who participates directly in collecting data and analyzing the data entirely. (Meoleong, 2015) states that the human instrument is used because only human who has the capability to understand the real condition of the research subject. The instrument that use in this research is, Video of Youtube Channel that show Batak Toba Wedding Ceremony. So, in this research directly transcribing the script based on YouTube and focus on the utterance when the *dekke simudur-udur* is delivered.

3.4 Data Collection Techniques

According to (Marshall and Rossman 2006), qualitative researchers typically use four methods together information: (1) participating in the setting, (2) observing directly, (3) in-depth interviews, and (4) analyzing documents or material culture. A document is a text-based file that may contain primary or secondary data (collected by the researcher) (collected and archived or published by others). The researcher chose document analysis as a method of data collection. The writer analyzes the document to find "*A Symbolic Meaning on Dekke Simudur-udur in Batak Toba Wedding Ceremony*". However, in this study the researcher obtains data documentation.

The steps of collecting data are describe as following:

1. Watching the ceremonial of *Dekke Simudur-udur* in Batak Toba wedding ceremony.
2. Transcribing the meaning of *Dekke Simudur-udur* in Batak Toba wedding ceremony.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Naturalism in literature develops determinism as a naturalistic aspect. This is reinforced by Edward Quinn's (2006: 115) argument, which says determinism is the belief that the circumstances underlie all events in the world, even those in human history. Determinism played a major role in the formulation of naturalism since the 19th century in literary studies.

In a conversation between Gabe and Lucy talk about their job:

Several aunts and uncles of the bride give Dekke simudur udur offerings and are opened by the father of the bride accompanied by an umpasa (greeting) from the father as a form of gratitude and a happy form of parents regarding his daughter's marriage, the following is the Umpasa of the bride's father:

“Kepada Hela kami, dan boru kami pada hari ini kalian telah menerima pemberkatan pernikahan suci di gereja melalui Pastor dan kita bersenang hati pada saat ini. Dengan ini kami serahkan Dekke Simudur-udur sebagai bentuk suka cita dan rasa syukur kami” (04:57-05-20)

English : “To our Hela (son-in-law), and boru (daughter) us today you have received the blessing of a holy marriage in the church through the Pastor and we are happy at this time. We hereby submit Dekke Simudur-udur as a form of our joy and gratitude”

Based on the words of the bride's father, by giving Dekke simudur-udur it represents a form of gratitude for their daughter's marriage. Dekke (goldfish) symbolizes happiness and gratitude for the new family that the child will take with her husband in the future.

No	TEXT	SYMBOLS
1.	<i>Kepada Hela kami, dan boru kami pada hari ini kalian telah menerima pemberkatan pernikahan suci di gereja melalui Pastor dan kita bersenang hati pada saat ini. Dengan ini kami serahkan Dekke Simudur-udur sebagai bentuk suka cita dan rasa syukur kami –Father of Bride</i>	happiness and gratitude
2.	<i>Dengan ini tulang (uncle) Sianipar mendukung rasa bahagia kalian, do'a kami semoga kalian panjang umur, sehat dan bahagia selalu jangan lupa berserah diri kepada Tuhan. Mauliate ma dihita saluhutna.. dihamuna ibebere nami, dison hami ro tulang muna sianipar, na</i>	Happiness in welcoming a new household

	<i>manumpahi las niroha muna, doa kami semoga kalian sehat dan bahagia selalu,, jangan lupa berserah diri kepada Tuhan.Tung songonon pe na boi hupasahat hami tu hamu bere hasian, hata ni umpasa na mandok Sititi ma sigompa Golang golang pangarahutna Molo songonon pe dekke na pinatupa ni tulang mu dohot nantulang mu sai godang ma pinasuna –Tulang Sianipar</i>	
3.	<i>Anak kami, Bere kami Dio. Ini Mama Uda ndu, dan Mami ndu dan untuk Gita manggil Bapak Uda sekarang. Ini Mak Tua, ini Mak Uda. Ini nakku kami bawakan dekke simudur-udur ya nakku, ini menandakan supaya kalian kemana pun sama, satu Arih kalian. Arih itu istilah namanya ‘satu lah kalian’ ya. Kalau bias hindari semua perselisihan, jangan sampai ada perselisihan walaupun ada cepat selesaikan, Jangan terlalu berlarut-larut. Sehat sehat kalian, murah rezeki kalian, cepat dapat momongan, Tuhan si masu masu kalian, sampai selama-lamanya. Amen -</i>	Unifying
4.	<i>Buat Bere kami Dio, dan anak kami gita ini kami bawakan manuk sangkap gelu (dekke simudur-udur) supaya hidup kalian bahagia sempurna dan saling mengasisi dan anak dilaki ras diberu ya nakku. Pokok nya sehat sehat kita semua, cepat dapat momongan, Bujur, Amen – Mak Tua</i>	Prosperity
5.	<i>Kepada anak kami, selamat sudah melakukan pemberkatan untuk menjadi sebuah keluarga. Dengan dekke ini kami serahkan agar kalian menjadi keluarga yang di nerkahe oleh Tuhan, Amen –Father of Bride 2</i>	Blessed by God
6.	<i>Kepada anak kami, kami berikan dekke simudur-udur dari Bapak Tua, Mak Tua, Nang Tulang, Tulang Uda, dan Nang Uda. Kami serahkan sudah agar hidup kalan bahagia</i>	Approved the marriage

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>setelah pasu-pasu semoga hidup kalian dipenuhi keberkatan dan kebahagiaan -Pak Tua</i></p>	
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Table 1. Findings Symbols in Dekke simudur-udur Batak Toba Wedding Ceremony

Symbolic Meaning on Dekke Simudur-udur in Batak Toba Wedding Ceremony on video YouTube, Reseacher got findings:

1. Based on the narrative and utterances of the dekke giver in each marriage, there are several meanings of giving dekke in the two marriages that are the limits of this research. Giving dekke simudur-udur has several meanings in first and second marriages, including joy, blessing, prosperity, loyalty, and harmony. In some sentences spoken by the giver of dekke, simudur-udur, the giving of dekke is a form of blessing from the giver's parents and family for their children's marriage. The context and speech (Umpasa) of the dekke giver to the bride and groom determine the meaning of giving dekke simudur-udur. Because each dekke giver has their own way of speaking (Umpasa) when presenting the dekke simudur-udur to the bride and groom. However, the main symbol of the description of dekke simudur-udur itself is the family's blessing and joy for the blessing of the marriage performed by their children.
2. Each symbols had its own semiotics elements which are represented, object and interpret. The symbols were refred to the family who was hold the ceremony, by parents, and hula-hula (Bapak Tua, Tulang, and Uda) read: Uncle. The giver of dekke simudur-udur had their own symbol meaning. The interpret of the dekke simudur-udur symbol was obtained from expression while the symbol was given.
3. Dekke evolved from a greeting (Umpasa) that expresses the give of dekke simudur-udur to the foundation for conveying hopes, prayers, and dreams. Dekke can serve as a conduit for blessings from the men (Tulang) to the boru (daughter). According to Batak tradition, you must be marhula-hula (Uncle from the bride). Tulang (uncles) are held in high regard in the Batak tradition. His position is higher than that of our own father. He is the God who can be seen. As a result, the Batak people believe that when he conveys his blessing to us, the blessing will be very powerful against his life. Goldfish, according to the philosophy, are dekke simudur-udur. Dekke Simudur-udur describes a pure and clean way of life. Goldfish live in clean, clear water that has not been polluted. As a result, it is hoped that those who consume this dekke will always live a clean life. Dekke Simudur-udur represents a life that is always harmonious across generations. Goldfish live in groups and are frequently seen swimming (marudur-udur).

Discussions

The symbols which were found in Dekke simudur-udur were joy, blessing, prosperity, loyalty, and harmony. In research about Local wisdom and traditional wedding ceremony of Javanese (Jumino, 2019) in semiotics perspective, in his research he found wedding procession symbols, a man and a woman united by marriage bonds are expected to live together as husband and wife for the rest of their lives. Marriage is a

significant event that occurs only once in a lifetime.

This shows that each traditional wedding procession has something in common, namely expecting a marriage that will last until old age, prosperity, and fidelity. Dekke Simudur-udur namely, the hopes, and advices of parents to their beloved daughter so that Later, when they are in the household, they can reach Saur Matua (having children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren).

From the relevant study with title “Symbolic Meanings in Marriage Ceremony of Javanese Culture (Semiotic Analysis)”. The conclusion of the study is, In Javanese customs, each stage of the marriage procession contains semiotic values full of meaning and expectations of the desired life. This shows the similarity between this study and previous research which had a symbolic topic on traditional wedding ceremonies. Both of them have found that marriage customs have a symbol of harmony in the bride's family which will be fostered in the future.

According to the findings, several regulations have been established for traditional Batak weddings, particularly in the section on handing over dekke simudur-udur. Only the woman's family and the bride's parents' brothers are permitted to participate in the procession. This is why the dekke simudur-udur procession is important to understand, especially for young people who may not be familiar with Toba Batak customs and traditional wedding processions. In practice, the fish given is a type of dekke or Batak fish, a fish that only lives in Lake Toba and the upper Asahan River and has a sweet and unique flavor. Because it is called dekke simudurr-udur (fish that live in clear water and always go hand in hand / walk hand in hand together), this fish has the characteristic of living in clear water (tio) and swimming side by side (mudur-udur). This symbol represents the bride's and her family's hope, namely Hula-hula dan in unison and cheap fortune.

Cooked fish with spices until the water has been reduced to a certain level and the seasoning Let's has permeated the flesh of the fish Because of the numerous meanings contained within, the presentation of this dekke is strictly prohibited. The dekke must be served whole, from head to tail. This represents the entire picture of human life. Fish cannot be cut because the recipients will have no offspring. Aside from that, dekke na This niarsik must be presented with the head turned toward the person receiving it. If there are more than one fish, they must all be lined up parallel

CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

Conclusions

There are several meanings of Batak Toba traditional marriage from the results of data collection. These symbols are in the form of choosing a goldfish as a representative of Dekke Simdur- udur, on the grounds that goldfish live in clean fresh water, goldfish also live together and get along well with the group. This is interpreted as joy, blessing, prosperity, loyalty, and harmony. in the picture in the data it can be seen that there are more than 1 fish in parallel, this has a symbol and meaning of hope from both parents to their children to always go hand in hand or walk hand in hand together, one heart, and one mind in living or building a household ark. Mean hope is associated with dekke simudur-udur, because dekke simudur-udur is his life always side by side in looking for food and in swimming or always walking together

The symbols could be interpreted by using Pierce’s theory. Each symbol had semiotics elements. Each

person who gives *dekke simudur-udur* has almost the same meaning, namely happiness, and harmony in the household for the bride and groom. For the Batak people, the *dekke* (goldfish) has a holy meaning, therefore goldfish is used in the wedding procession as a form of sacred marriage for the Batak people.

Dekke simudur-udur (fish) represents both parents' hope for their children to always go hand in hand or walk hand in hand together, with one heart and one mind in living or building a household ark. Mean hope is associated with *dekke simudur-udur*, because *dekke simudur-udur* is his life, always beside him in searching for food, swimming, or walking together. That is the hope of parents for their children, that all work and the pursuit of happiness and prosperity will be unshakable or everlasting together, as *dekke simudur-udur* does with his life.

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