

SYMBOLIC MEANINGS of *MANUK RULU* in KARONESE MARRIAGE TRADITION

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Abstract. Semiotics thus includes different resources, such as language, images, music, sound and embodied action, and the meanings which arise as choices from these resources combine in semiotic phenomena such as texts, interactions and events (KAY L O'HALLORAN: 2020). This research is concerned with the symbolic meaning of Manuk Rulu in Karonese Marriage Tradition. Manuk Rulu is a tradition or culture in Karo people usually presented by the couple of marriage and the groom's parents to Kalimbubu. It indicates the respect given to Kalimbubu in the hope that through the pray of them to the Almighty God, the marriage couple can get harmonious, happy, peaceful life and getting descendant, son and daughter. The aim of this research is to find and elaborate the symbolic meaning of Manuk Rulu in Karo tradition. This tradition is found in Deli Serdang Region. Manuk Rulu consists of: Manuk Raja Mulia "the symbol of Respectfulness, Loyalty, Obedience to Kalimbubu so that through this tribute hopefully the marriage couple can get blessing from God. The result of this research can be shown here such as those symbolic meanings are found here such such bravery in facing the life, sincere heart, quality or glory of speech. The method of research is done by descriptive qualitative research proposed by Hancock (1998). The main theory to support this research is the theory of Semiotics by Charles Sanders Pierce (1990). This research can be concluded that the local tradition of Karo people can reflect the Semiotic Symbols which are considered valuable to the language learners.

Keywords: Symbolic; Meaning; Semiotics; Manuk Rulu.

I. INTRODUCTION

Language is unique and can unite and create the dissension among the society or even between one nation to another one. On the other hand, language can also deliver the knowledge or idea from person to another person, keeping the message as well as part of conventional symbols or signs used for daily communication among the community. Mooji (2010) stated that sign, symbols, colors, and letters are essential parts of humans' memory as the association network. Hershberger (2014) added a sign is anything that represents something to someone in some way. Humans are meaningless without language, and language is regarded as the most important means of communication for conveying meaning (Rezeki & others, 2018). As a result, when a speaker is unable to deliver his or her point in one language, the speaker must switch to a more understandable language (Sagala, 2018)

In this context, language is a tool to elaborate the culture or tradition belongs to Karonese tribe in North Sumatera. Karonese tribe lives in several parts of regions, such as Tanah Karo, Langkat, part of them in Eastern Aceh, Dairi, Simalungun, and Deli Serdang Regions. One of the culture or traditions that is to convey the intention from one person to another one, that is to present Manuk Rulu to the mother's brother or parents in law with the expectation of getting valuable thing from God through the prayer of Kalimbubu.

Manuk Rulu is the same with Manuk Sangkep. The difference between Manuk Rulu and Manuk Sangkep is that Manuk Rulu is only presented to Kalimbubu on a special moment, as Manuk Sangkep can be given to anyone who wants to eat it or, sometimes, it is done for the

magic purpose. Manuk Rulu or Manuk Sangkep means the chicken or cock which is cooked with special style and after being cooked, it is usually combined with the coconut meat and its ingredients. After being cooked, it is put on the white stoned plate. According to the tradition of Karonese people, different colour and sex of chicken will be different allotment. Red colour is usually the cock or male cock, for the other allotment, it can be black, white and yellow chicken. Red colour is the symbol of bravery. The meaning of this color is courage, while the blue color means calm (Putri, Aulia : 2023).

Manuk Sangkep (Bukit, 2021 : 13) adalah diartikan “daging ayam utuh atau daging ayam yang disusun secara utuh “complete constructed chicken or chicken meat constructed with complete body or intact” which is already cooked without being cut into slices, only the feathers and feces thrown away, it lies face downward on the plate. The chicken is selected for this type of traditional presentation that is red, white or yellow colour.

The cultural or traditional event of Karonese people making Manuk Sangkep is a specific cooking consists of a chicken as one of the traditions belongs to Karo tribe as an appreciation or respect to Kalimbubu so that those who give it can be healthy, successful, long life and prosperous in his life or family (<https://karonewsupdate.wordpress.com/tag/manuk-sangkep>).

This Manuk Sangkep is presented by Anak Beru “sister of Kalimbubu or groom’s parents. The spot or place of sitting for Kalimbubu must be from the side of respected place or usually called arah julu “from the east of surrounding” with a special white mat there.

Karonese tribe generally resides in Karo Region, Langkat, Binjai, Simalungun Region, Deli Serdang and Tanah Pinem, in accordance with the only use the ritual completement of custom that is using chicken meat. The chicken is named with the term ‘Manuk Sangkep or Manuk Niatur. (<https://www.sipayo.com/2019/09/tanpadisadari-budaya-karo-ternyata-telah-lama-mendukung-wisata-halal.html>). Servista Bukit Universitas Negeri Medan Journal Ability : : Journal of Education and Social Analysis, Volume 2, Issue 4, October 2021.

Anyhow, the most important thing based on the context of this research is to find out the symbolic meanings of Manuk Rulu and the other substances as part of the culture in Karonese society, particularly in Deli Serdang. Symbolic meaning is part of the study of semiotics. Semiotics is not so primary in linguistics but is usually connected with the field of semantics. One of the definitions is that of Umberto Eco (2006: 9), who declares that semiotics is concerned with everything that can be taken as a sign.

Semiotics covers not only the study of what we refer to as ‘signs’ in daily communication but of anything that stands for something else. In a semiotic sense, signs take the form of words, images, sounds, gestures, and objects.

Semiotics is part of the study of semantics; it pertains to the meanings of language. It is not only concerned with the meanings in general, but it also talks about semiotics, as it is related to cultural signs. A prior study looked at two supporting components of language: the sign or symbol and the language’s sound (Aragno, 2019).

Semiotics is the study of the properties of signaling systems, whether they are natural or unnatural. It refers to the study within philosophy of sign and symbol systems in general (Panjaitan, 2015: 47). Based on the semiotic view above, if all social practices can be regarded as language phenomena, then all of them can be seen as signs. One expert in the field of semiotics, Roland Barthes, who emphasizes attention in the sign (sign), which means very broad, can be in the form of non-verbal language (Muthia, 2016). Semiotics, also called semiotic studies or semiology, is the doctrine and science of studying sign systems, sign processes, and sign functions. It is thus a more comprehensive system than language itself and can therefore be used to understand language in relation to other forms of communication and interpretation, such as nonverbal forms. Semiotics focuses on the production, transmission, exchange, and interpretation of meanings consisting of one or more signs (Jinshun Long, 2019).

Language is a virtual communication system that consists of words and oral signs that already exist in the long-term memory of the speaker of the language concerned (Kumral, 2013).

There are some terms or signs that are found in Manuk Rulu or Manuk Sangkep, such as: the color of chicken:

- Red colour
- Yellow colour
- White colour

On the other hand, there are also some signs that will reflect the meaning of the presentation, such as:

- Lacina “small chilly,” or in Bahasa Indonesia, it is called cabe rawit.
- Nakan mentar “white rice”
- Naruh manuk, “chicken egg.”
- Lau poula, “palm water”
- Sira “Salt”
- Bunga Raya “Raya Flower” (optional)

All these complements are a kind of respectfulness, honor, appreciation, and reward to Kalimbubu. There are some other additional complements to be given together with Manuk Rulu, as stated above. All those complements must have meaning. Semiotically, it is called semiotic meaning or symbolic meaning.

The aims of these compliments presented to Kalimbubu are only to give them respect, appreciation, and honor with the expectation of receiving a blessing from God. According to the beliefs of Karonese people, if we honor deeply our Kalimbubu, God will fulfill what the couple expects at their wedding. According to tradition, it is acknowledged that Kalimbubu is the relationship between linguistic expression and the objects in the world that they refer to.

Believe or not to believe, Manuk Sangkep, according to the beliefs of Karonese people (an exception), is not only presented to Kalimbubu but also to those who believe in his or her invisible creature as supposed to be a helpful creature for them.

Semiotics is the study of the properties of signaling systems, whether they are natural or artificial. It refers to the study within the philosophy of sign and symbol systems in general. Pierce (1990: 78) sees the field as divisible into three areas: the relationship between linguistic expression and the objects in the world that they refer to or describe, the relations of these expressions to each other, and the dependence’s meaning of these expressions on their uses (Panjaitan, 2015: 51).

Semiotics may consist of two signs, such as linguistic signs and non-linguistic signs. A linguistic sign is a sign that can be a spoken or oral symbol as well as a written form. Non-linguistic signs are things that are in the form of concrete signs. For example, all the substances or things that are presented to Kalimbubu are Manuk Rulu and other complements.

II. METHODS

The method used in this research is descriptive or qualitative research. Descriptive research is the method that is done on the basis of library research or textual methods. The same is true of the opinion given by Moleong (2012: 6), that qualitative research is the research that is intended to understand the phenomenon of what is experienced by researchers, such as behavior, perception, motivation, and action, with holistic means and by description in the form of words and language in a specific context scientifically. The method of collecting the data is the descriptive-qualitative method, but it is supported by the primary data collected from the informants. According to Yin (2011), there are five steps in analyzing data: compiling, disassembling, reassembling, interpreting, and concluding. Textual references include articles published in journals related to this discussion. All the data and information found here are

analyzed using a qualitative system and interpreted from the beginning until the end of the research. Analysis and interpretation refer to the study of philosophy through the means of epistemological, axiological, and cosmological forms, which are related to this research.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In doing research, there must be a subject matter to be analyzed, and the theory must be used in accordance with the theories applied to this matter. Research without theory must not be complete to prove its result. The research supported by the theories is scientifically applied and proven.

Language is very significant to human life for interaction or communication. Nothing can be done without using language. Language is a tool for everything, whatever the human is doing, having knowledge, etc. Language usage is based on the types of sentences. For example: declarative sentence, interrogative sentence, exclamatory sentence, imperative sentence, simple sentence, compound sentence, complex sentence, and compound complex sentence. All the types of sentences must have significance according to the need for language use or functions. According to Manullang & Lizasдела (2021), the language can be known from the circle or social class where the person is from, but generally, it talks about how symbols can stand for something else, how they can be used to communicate, and how they can be imbued with meaning.

One of the activities of human beings in their lives is to get married. To conduct a marriage party, it must be based on the culture of a particular tribe. The Karo tribe has a tradition in which it must be done before the son-in-law gets married, which is to give Manuk Rulu to Kalimbubu.

Kalimbubu is the mother's brother or father-in-law and must be respected in karo kinship culture. Karo people believe that Kalimbubu can bring blessings and even be considered a visible God (<https://id.wikipedia.org>). Manuk Rulu, in Karonese tradition, is also called Manuk Sangkep. Actually, both Manuk Rulu and Manuk Sangkep are the same form or ingredients, but the term is different depending on the moment or event. If the event is getting married and the chicken is given to Kalimbubu, it is called Manuk Rulu. If the chicken is given to Kalimbubu in other events outside of a married party, it is called Manuk Sangkep. The term is different in both events. Manuk Sangkep can be given or done to anyone who needs it to eat. It depends on the user who uses this culture. The connotation describes the interactions that take place; the signs meet the feelings of the users and their cultural values. (Najafi, Farzaneh, & Abbas, 2014: 177).

After Manuk Rulu is given to Kalimbubu, there must be some advice rendered by Kalimbubu to the couple about marriage so that they can run the family well or harmoniously from that time forward. It is known that the goal of marriage is to achieve harmony, peace, happiness, prosperity, and loyalty.

There are some aspects to be applied in their lives so that harmony, peace, happiness, prosperity, and loyalty can be earned (Panjaitan, 2015: 58), such as:

1. Mutual Understanding: The husband and wife must have mutual understanding of the different characters and wants.
2. Mutual loving: there must be mutual love between one and another, not to hurt the partner's heart.
3. Succumbing: is the character that must be owned by both husband and wife, and the way how to maintain a harmonious marriage or family.
4. Thankfulness: As human beings, we must know how to appreciate and thank those who have given their prayers, are involved in handling all their marriage parties, and provide everything for the sake of the success of the marriage party.

This research pertains to semiotic meanings, that is, Manuk Rulu in Karo culture in Deli Serdang. Why is it said in Deli Serdang? Because the event of making Manuk Rulu cannot be found in all Karo regions, though it belongs to Karo people.

According to Broadbent, a sign, as an object, is capable of conveying communicative information. It is able to stand for something else so that it can be perceived in someone's mind (Broadbent, 1980, in Dharma, 2010:2). The message will encourage the recipient to build meaning for himself or herself as it is spoken by Kalimbubu. Semiotics is the theory par excellence of the artificial and therefore should have a substantial role in understanding designed phenomena (Holt, 2017:332). Krawczyk (2017:23) emphasized the importance of the intentions of the language user when expressing meaning because it directly makes the recipient involved in the process of decoding the meaning of the message.

There are two streams of semiotics, such as the flow that follows the thought of Charles Sanders Peirce, and the second stream that follows the thinking of Ferdinand de Saussure. Peirce with concepts based on firstness, secondness, and thirdness. Saussure is more insistent on aspects of language or based on his background, namely as a linguist. And from these two theories, do not make divisions or differences of opinion, but on the contrary, that is complementary and can be used in the world of design (Coelho, Denis, & Figueiredo, 2010: 335).

Semiotics is the study of signs whether it is abstract signs or concrete signs. In this research, concrete signs are mostly discussed here from the side of semiotic meanings, or what is called symbolic meaning in Manuk Rulu as well as Manuk Sangkep. The following are some symbols that are discussed, for example:

The color of chicken:

- Red colour
- Yellow colour
- White colour

On the other hand, there are also some signs that will reflect the meaning of the presentation, such as:

- Lacina "small chilly," or in Bahasa Indonesia, it is called cabe rawit.
- Nakan mentar "white rice"
- Naruh manuk, "chicken egg."
- Lau poula, "palm water"
- Sira "Salt"
- Bunga Raya, "Raya Flower or Hibiscus" (optional)

1. Chicken in red is the symbol of bravery.

Bravery is also called courage. Uploaded by Douglas R. Lindsay on January 12, 2017. "Scholars, politicians, and laypeople have all entered the debate over how to define courage. Some believe that American culture over the last 30 years or so has defined courage. That is, courage has been attributed to all manner of actions that may indeed be admirable but hardly compare to conscious self-sacrifice on behalf of something greater than self-interest" (McCain & Salter, 2004, p. 13).

Based on the definition of bravery or courage above, the couple of marriage is given the red chicken by Kalimbubu, which is the reverse of giving the red chicken to Kalimbubu. There are different meanings of who and to whom it is given. If the red chicken is given to Kalimbubu, there must be the expectation of the couple of marriage to get blessing from God on the basis of prayer from Kalimbubu, and it is called Manuk Rulu. If the chicken is given by Kalimbubu to the couple in marriage, that is a kind of expectation of bravery or courage to run the new family. The chicken that is given to the couple in marriage is called Manuk Sangkep.

1. Chicken in yellow is the symbol of honor for everyone. The concept of honor seems to appear most intrusive in the Scandinavian welfare states, that is, in parts of the world where a strong honor culture seems most inconsistent and therefore reveals friction.
2. Chicken in white is the symbol of a clean heart. A clean heart means the truth of the heart or a sincere heart. A white-colored chicken can be given to everyone as a symbol of truth. It is hoped that those as well as the persons who present the Manuk Sangkep can be better, and better thinking or any action may come from the inner heart through the blessing of God.
3. Lacina kitik “small chilly” and in Bahasa Indonesia it is called Cabe Rawit, is the symbol of power, spirit or strength. Lacina kitik is usually spread over the meat of Manuk Rulu or Manuk Sangkep. The colour of Manuk Sangkep is red colour. It is known that the taste of Lacina is hot, the hotness of chilly can symbolize the increase of spirit of the person who receives it. The taste of chilly is hot, but if it is eaten with the meat of chicken and the meat of coconut, the taste of chilly is not hot any more. That is the uniqueness of this Manuk Sangkep or Manuk Rulu. *The four major sociological theories of power are the class theory of power, elite theory of power, pluralist theory of power, and gender theory of power.* (<https://unacademy.com>).
4. Nakan Mentar “white rice” is usually put on the white plate beside Manuk Rulu or Manuk Sangkep. The skinned off chicken’s egg placed above the rice. A few of salt is also put above the egg. Nakan Mentar is the symbol of sincere heart, positive thinking and becoming honest to themselves, and others.
 - A. Egg which is put above the white rice is symbolizing the noble king. Nobel king means the person who receives the Manuk Rulu or Manuk Sangkep is expected like the king with humble and noble person.
 - B. Lau Poula “Palm Water” is provided for the drink of those to whom it is given. Palm Water is still fresh or sweet. But now adays, it is already changed into another kind of drink, that is soda water or plain water without soda. Palm Water is the symbol of Success.
 - C. Salt which is put on the top of the egg can symbolize the qualified, significant and acceptable speech spoken by the person who receives the Manuk Rulu or Manuk Sangkep. Salted tase means a kind of prayer so that the speech spoken by the person concerned to whom the Manuk Rulu is given can be appreciated or accepted by other people. Salted tase is equal to the truth or appreciation.
 - D. Bunga Raya “Raya Flower or hibiscus is only placed or used only to Manuk Rulu or Manuk Sangkep especially red chicken. The meat of chicken on the breast part is usually sliced into pieces and mixed with the cooked chicken blood. Because of the blood is not allowed to be consumed by moslem people, the blood is changed with the liver of chicken. Using hibiscus in red color chicken is special for the event when the person concerned who receives it will be possessed by the spirit of their ancestor. That is why, hibiscus is optional or is not a must to be placed there.

All the terms stated above are a kind of expectation or prayer to God so that the married couple can get what they aspire in the future.

IV. CONCLUSION

Marriage is crucial in this life. According to Hadist in Islam An-Nur [24] ayat 32 contains a command to get married. The command of getting married according to some mufti can be done or compulsory if only the couple is already capable of fulfilling their need in life.

For karonese people, those who want to get married must do their traditional culture that is to give Manuk Rulu to their Kalimbubu so that their marriage can be blessed by God and to be prosperous, healthy, long life and getting descent (son and daughter).

This research is part of Semiotic meaning or symbolic meaning that is concerned with presentation of Manuk Rulu given to Kalimbubu. The method of research is a kind of qualitative research and some part of them is field research by taking some ideas from the respondents.

The findings in this research are mentioned here such as the symbol of honor, clean heart, power, spirit or strength, sincere heart, positive thinking, noble person, success, qualified or acceptable speech spoken by the couple of marriage.

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The writer,

Efendi Barus

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