

THE TRADITION OF KAWI MOUNTAIN
(*LINGUISTICS PERSPECTIVE*)

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ABSTRACT

Indonesia has the biggest population for Moslem people in the world. The implication of this, Indonesia has the important role in the Moslem world, such as in regional or international forum. Talking about Indonesia always to be one of the interesting topic especially about Moslem groups. It is because, this country has 700 local languages with culturally diverse. All of these foundation to be the basic capital for my country to be one of the leading nation in Asia. In so far, at the present time we also develop of understanding about multiculturalism for maintaining this nation from chaos because of different believer or religion. In addition, this study reflected on the real life of society in east Java, *Kawi Mountain*.

Method of this research uses qualitative research approach, in which the data were collected from the area of *Kawi Mountain* or most of the people called *Pesarean Gunung Kawi*. Hence, the writer classifies and makes categorization of the data based on ethnolinguistics perspective to get the meaning inside this tradition. Then, the writer starts making categorization from the primary data from the field and supported by the secondary data from the library.

The result of this research shows that various rituals can be found from this area, they are ritual concept from moslem people and non-moslem people during visiting this place. For Moslem people they start the ritual activities using Islamic terms speech, they are opening, content and closing. For opening consists of stating *basmalah*, as the verbal utterance to open the interaction with the God. The second stage is content that consist of reading *ayat-ayat al-qur'an*, and the third is closing, in this step they deliver about expectation and invocation to God. On the other hand, for non-moslem

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or Javanese people, they also have 3 sections during the ritual or *selamatan*, they are, opening, content and the closing. Furthermore, people with different believer also have three aspects of praying in this place, they are; opening, content and closing.

Keywords: *Tradition, islamic terms, lingual aspects.*

A. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has many places that popular for people around the world one of them is Kawi mountain, this place located in Malang east Java. This place consists of 532 ha protected forest with the population number of the people for about 6676 people². Most of the people here work as a farmer to fulfil their life. In detail, Kawi Mountain located at the village of Wonosari, Wonosari is a district and to be the administrative area of Malang regency. In this place there is *Pesarean Gunung Kawi*³, it is to be the icon and very famous location because many people know about this place with some reasoning and purposes⁴, even people from all over the world like, China, Philippine, Singapore, Thailand, and Korea. It is not difficult to reach this place, people just need 1 hour or for about 35 km from the capital city of Malang.

This paper tries to explore about the ritual activities of the visitors in this location from the perspective of language approach, in so far the writer used language as one of the instrument to approach social communities group here, as we know that many ways to understand the culture to interpret them, one of that is from the language aspect. In other words, we can understand the culture in the society through the language that they use because language is seen as the reflection to the cultural facts,⁵ moreover language itself also has various aim based on the purposes of the speaker.⁶

Furthermore, every culture has their own aim and perspective about the values inside. Javanese people commonly celebrate in several events during the year. Culturally Java has many events, like, *Riyoyo Fitri* and *Qurban (Lebaran Day and I'dul Qurban)*, *Suran*, *Mauhud*, *Rojab* and still many others. These events usually shows the special characteristics in verbal and nonverbal action. Geertz stated on his book that every event which is done by the javenese people relate to the cycles of Slametan, Calendrical, Village and Intermittent *Slametans*⁷. At kawi mountain, moreover during *Sura* month especially 1 *Sura*, this place is very crowded with visitor because during this month there special

² Data taken from 2008.

³ The other name of Kawi Mountain, in which many people mention this place as Pesarean gunung Kawi.

⁴ People come here because they want to get blessing for their life and to get wealthy with some rituals.

⁵ William A. Foley. *Anthropological Linguistics: An Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell Published. 1997. p. 3-5.

⁶ Look, Harimurti Kridalaksana.. *Kamus Linguistik*. Edisi keempat. Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama.2008. p. 68.

⁷ Look, Clifford Geertz. *The Religion of Java*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1960. p. 77-85.

moment to commemorate of the people which is buried in this place (Eyang Djoego and R.M. Soedjono)⁸, most of the people here call him as the first person who live there or *mbabat alas*⁹.

Ethnolinguistics perspective study is not to be the new subject or new discipline at the present time because Franz Boas at the early of the twentieth century also mentioned that there is relationship between language and the way how the people view the world. Hence, this study called as Boasian linguistics or *madzhab* Boasian. On the other hand, Sapir-Whorf also strengthens the Boas' theory in which the language creates the perception of human being to view the world¹⁰:

Language not only refers to experience largely acquired without its helps but actually defines experience for us by reason of its formal completeness and because of our unconscious projection of its implicit expectations into the field of experience.

B. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to find out the ritual or tradition through the lingual aspects and culture which are used in their activities at the Kawi mountain when they do the ritual. The ritual here reflected on the activities of the people at Kawi mountain. In addition, based on ethnolinguistics study, it can be seen as the tool to explore and make comprehensive understanding about what do they mean with ritual and cultural activities in the social communities of the people at Kawi mountain. This study also investigates and elaborates the tradition and ritual which is done by the many visitors at this location which comes from various religious background from all over the region in this country, even from overseas.

Furthermore, by studying this object, hopefully we can get different point of view in education and also give the integral and comprehensive understanding of the people from different culture and religion in the society. Lastly, this paper also to be one alternative as additional literature for the teachers, lecturers, or researcher to learn pluralism.

C. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

From the explanation above, the writer explains that this study as another alternative perspective learning pluralism from the people activities. In addition this paper also tries to describe the society behaviour over the language aspects. Then, ethnolinguistics discipline here is used to investigate the data because it is be one alternative discipline to approach in analysing the data from culture and language in the society. Furthermore, the researcher tries to formulate the question from the background of the study above, such as follow.

⁸ As the soldier of Diponegoro who escaped to avoid the colonial after exploded of Diponegoro war. Eyang Djoego which has the original name Kyai Zakaria II as mataram dynasty and also R.M. Imam Soedjono. For Chinese people, Eyang Djoego and R.M. Imam Soedjono popular with the name Taw Low She (as the first teacher) and Djie Low She (the second teacher)

⁹ To be the first person who live and stay in one place, like village or small village.

¹⁰ Geoffrey Sampson. School of Linguistics. London: Hutchinson. 1980. p.80-102.

- a. What are the lingual aspects in the activities of the visitors at Kawi Mountain?

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This research used deep interview strategies to get the comprehend data in which involves in the society or object of the research, such as proposed by Spradley with direct participation in the field to know deeply what happened with the object of the research. Furthermore, because it is used as the primary data to support the secondary data¹¹, the second option is used. Meanwhile, it is also the same thing related to the elicitation data commonly used in etnosemantics research to support the primary data. Secondary data collected from the library (such as journals, published articles, books and also dissertations and other sources from the internet). All of the data are used to argue the empirical evidences in the field. Then, the data are analysed by using descriptive analysis.

C. DISCUSSION

Ritual of carnival offering (*kirab sesaji*) which is happened at kawi mountain can be described as part of *Selamatan* or Javenese people said as *wilujengan* is the activities of people for getting blessing and salvation from the God. This method or way is to view their life come from, then some of the social communities group doing this because they want to honour and actualize their believer in this world. It is done with the specific purposes to give honour to God, what they believe to and they hope after completing of this, they will get blessing or safety. Many peripheral or food are provided during this ritual, such as “*kolak, tumpeng, ingkung, bubur or jenang* and so on”. Every menu has meaning. The people here can order from *juru kunci*¹² of Kawi mountain at the front office.

The word *selamatan* is derived from arabic word “*salamah*” mean “safety”. According to Islamic perspective, there is no term of tradition such as doing *selamatan* like in Indonesia for prayers, as we know Islam come from Makkah or Middle East¹³, but it is commonly held by the sufism. Another facts, *selamatan* was adopted from the previous religion like Buddhism or Hinduism tradition.

1 Tradition and Lingual Aspects

1. The Ritual for Offering Carnival (*Kirab Sesaji*)

People believe that Eyang Djoego and R.M. Imam Sujono as the person who are buried at the grave of Kawi mountain. Moslem people believe that they are as the special men, so near with God (*Wali*). On the other hand, for other people they are known as expert people or *orang pintar*. There are two main reason for doing offering carnival, they are:

¹¹ Look. James P. Spradley. Metode Etnografi. Translation. Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana. 1997.

¹² The special man who has more knowledge about this place both intellectual or spiritual.

¹³ Muhammad saw has brought Islam as the new religion in that era. (see. History of Arabs by Philip K. Hitti. P.139).

1. to honour their ancestor and hope the blessing from the God
2. to attract the tourists visit kawi mountain

Today, to commemorate them, many people attend and gather in this place to pray for these persons, like Thursday night of *legi*, 1, 12 *Sura* (in Javanese calendrical system).

1. Special Events at Kawi Mountain

There are several special events at Kawi mountain, they are:

1. Every 1 *Sura* according to Javanese calendrical for *Kirab sesaji*
2. Every 12 *Sura* which is held by Ngesti Gondo foundation.¹⁴ In this event they do *Istighosah*
3. Thursday night of *Legi* by doing *tahlilan*
4. Every Monday on *Pahing* in each month (based on Javanese calendrical system)

2 Pray in the Graveyard for the Ancestors

In some of Moslem clan or group there is a little bit controversial opinion related for doing ritual of *ziarah*, some of them said that it is prohibited or misleading activities, otherwise other groups say that it is not prohibited in Islam as long as we do without ignoring *syariah* or rules in Islam. *Ziarah* is one of the populer activities for NU communities, they believe it because there is *karamah* inside.¹⁵ Moreover, in *ziarah* they always mention the term *wasilah*, this term is interpreted as a medium for the people to pray to God. It is often used during *tahlilan*, activities of *tahlilan* commonly held by the people of Nahdliyin (NU) when they want to deliver praying to their ancestor. Talking about *wasilah* is not really far from tradition in sufism, as we know that KH. Hasyim Ash'ari and KH. Wahab Hasbullah established NU 31 January 1926¹⁶, in that period most of the people believe with classical system or the opposite of modernism era for education and religion. Hasyim Asy'ari as the first leader for this institution also really highly sipirtualist people in sufism.¹⁷ He known as the leader of *Pesantren Tebuireng* and also as th grandfather of Gus Dur. He is as the great *ulama* and also believed as *wali* (friends of God) who possess *karamah*.

This paper not to discuss wich one is right or false, but this paper tries to explain and identify the group or clan of east Java people based on the their activities at Kawi mountain. Many rituals are done by the visitors when they come to graveyard, such as in kawi mountain graveyard. As mentioned at background of the study, many people come here with different purposes, such as to get blessing or event *pesugihan* (want to be the rich man in short ways). Many people believe that if they get

¹⁴ One oh the foundation at Kawi mountain who manage and maintain this place, they all come from dynasty of Eyang Djoego and R.M. Soedjono.

¹⁵ Zulkifli. Sufism in Java: the role of the pesantren in the maintenance of Sufism in Java. Jakarta: INIS. 2002. p. 53.

¹⁶ Look at Profil Pesantren Tebuireng. 2011. Jombang: Pustaka Tebuireng. p. 8-9.

¹⁷ Ibid. p.46.

Dewa Ndaru fruit¹⁸, so they will get what they want (their dreaming will be fulfilled by the God). This tree located near from the grave and only one tree here. People believe that if they get fruit or leaf, it means that their intention and purpose will be fulfilled by God.

Furthermore, based on the activities of the people in the graveyard at *Kawi mountain*. we can classify them into three parts, they are *Santri*, *Abangan* and other *non-moslem* visitors. For *Santri*, they read part of Holy Qur'an, such as *yaasin* or *tahlil* to pray to God as the medium. Otherwise, for *abangan* they do the ritual based on Javanese culture, eg. they wear the traditional clothes, bring flowers and any other devices as the medium to pray. Then for non-moslem (Christian, Buddhism, Hinduism, chinese and other believers) they usually pray according to their ways.

To identify who are they or people which are visited to this graveyard, we can identify them from the clothes, for *Santri* they usually wear *sarung*, *kopyah* or *songkok* and also just wear trouser. Then for *abangan* sometimes they wear traditional clothes for Javanese people. Meanwhile, for other religion, the people wear according to their symbols, for example, christian people they wear cross sign (*Salib*) and then for Buddhist they wear "*Jubah*" or Robe and many others devices.

1. Activities of *Tahlilan*

As stated above that *tahlilan* as dominant activities for the moslem visitors in *Kawi mountain* especially on *Jumat Legi*. It is because most of them as followers of *Nahdliyin*. Then, here also can be classified the structure of *tahlilan* during the people visiting in the graveyard. In so far, for east Java communities group, *tahlilan* to be the ceremonial obligation during ritual in the grave (*ziarah*) and to be the most influential one in their part of human life. Futhermore, ceremonial of *tahlilan* consists of three part. *The first* part is opening and the *the second* is content and the last is closing. For opening, will be started by reciting *basmallah*, then continued by *tawassul* or mentioning the our prophet (Muhammad saw), some *ulama*, *wali* (extraordinary persons), and their ancestor and the last give praying to the person in the graveyard. For content they usually read *surat yaasin*, after finishing reciting this *surat* they continue with reciting *istighfar* and *Hasbunallah* etc. For closing, they pray to God to ask and hope safety and blessing for their family and friends along in this world and hereafter later.

2. Activities of *Selamatan*

Activities of *Selamatan* for Javenese people is not really exotic thing, because it is to be one part of their life. Many purposes people hold the *selamatan*. When the people build the house, they usually start with *selamatan*, when they have a new child will be greeted with *selamatan* and still many other activities why people doing *selamatan*. Otherwise, *selamatan* for some of the people called as useless action and wasting the time moreover from the financial aspect but for classical system it is as ordinary activities and really full of values and meaning.

¹⁸ Special fruit at this place and consist only one tree, according to some people this tree come from Karimun Jawa island.

As classical system, event of *selamatan* to be the identity of lingual aspects of Javanese people especially in east Java. They will not be called as javenese if they do not hold this tradition. In addition, because as label for them, in *selamatan* they will provide the best one that they have, for eg. For food and any devices or pheriperals during *selamatan*. They believe with the better in providing for sacrifice, later they will get good retaliation and reward from God. For moslem, during *selamatan* ceremony is combined with *tahlilan* and *yaasinan*. The activities of *reading yaasin* commonly at the beginning of the ceremony. Javenese people doing *selamatan* with some functions, they are: 1) when succeed of doing something or getting their dream, 2) escape from the danger or regardless from any of dangers.

D. Conclusion

After looking from the background of the research and the discussion above, it can be concluded that there are several sign as the lingual aspects for Javanese people during visiting Kawi mountain, they are: *Ziarah*, *Tahlilan* and *Selamatan*. They do these activities with special purposes. Furthermore, for Moslem people they usually start their ritual activities using Islamic speech, as parts of linguistics features also. In so far, the structure of Islamic speech here is categorized into three parts: 1. *opening*, 2 *content* and 3 *closing*. For opening consists of stating “*basmalah*”, stating “*wasilah or tawassul*” as medium to make interaction and praying to God. The second activities for content, consist of reading *ayat-ayat al-qur'an* and closing for the last moment consist of expectation and invocation to God. On the other hand, for non-Moslem, especially for the indigenous people of Java, they also have 3 sections during their ritual or *selamatan*. *The first* is opening, and then for the *second* phase consists of content and the last stage is closing. Furthermore, for other believers or people, like Chinese they also have special order during praying in the graveyard, but the essential point consists of three main points, they are; opening, content and closing.

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