

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

Human being as cultural creature has a tradition as their belief or behavior passed down within a group or society with symbolic meaning or special significance with origins in the past. Every society respects and follows their tradition where it has an important and sacred value or it can be guidance for human life. According to Graburn (2001:6) “the tradition was the name given to those cultural features which, in situations of change, were to be continued to be handed on, thought about, preserved and not lost.” The society brings their tradition in order to preserve for generation.

Indonesia is a rich country with more than 300 ethnic groups. Each of them has its own traditions and customs that is a wealth of the nation. One of the famous ethnic groups in Indonesia that believes in traditions and customs is Malay. In Indonesia Malay divided into some ethnics, such as Pesisir Malay (Asahan Malay), Deli Malay, Riau Malay, Jambi Malay, Bengkulu Malay, Tamiang Malay, Palembang Malay, Sambas Malay, Bangka-Belitung Malay, Pontianak Malay and etc. As the third largest ethnic group in Indonesia, Malay also has many traditions were to be continued for example like wedding ceremony.

Marriage or wedding is one of many phases experienced by human during his/her living in the world. It has an important and sacred value for human life; it changes human's status from single to married status. It forms new family kinship system and it can also replace a person's right and responsibility in the family environment. When a family member reaches the appropriate age to get married and has qualified in Islam as a general religion of Malays then it is advisable to immediately going to the gates of marriage.

As the writer's observation in field, Pesisir Malay traditional wedding ceremony is split into some customs namely Humpang Pintu custom. This customs is not only for Pesisir Malay, but all Malay ethnics in Indonesia own this tradition. Meanwhile the difference is from the language aspect in pronouncing the pantun. Pesisir Malay use Malay dialect with the suffix "o" similarly in berpantun which is used Humpang Pintu custom whereas most of the Pesisir Malays nowadays did not use the dialect as their characteristic in language especially in Tanjungbalai, the societies did not use Pesisir Malay dialect in berpantun anymore.

Humpang Pintu custom is a process where the groom and his entourage arrive at the bride's yard, their comings were blocked by a stretching cloth held by two guards (formerly the rod was used to block ones way). This stretching cloth is used to prevent the guests entering the gateway until they tell the brides party their goal of coming and they give a token called uncang emas or kunci emas (a packet filled with coins) as a kind of requirement to pass the entrance. In this custom,

each telangkai will convey the pantun as a communication to show their politeness in speech. If they have given this token, the guards remove the block away and the guests are welcome by berpantun. According to Winarni, (2010:6) “pantun is one of traditional poetry were very widely known languages of the archipelago.” The use of pantun in Malay is identical as their tradition. It is used in daily to the specific moment of Malay ceremony. In Malay wedding ceremony, the use of pantun is characteristic of such as ceremony. Almost every single phase of Malay wedding ceremony, the pantun will be used. Malay wedding ceremony is closely related to religious, moral social and cultural value.

The pantun in HEMPANG Pintu custom can be investigated by semiotic. Semiotics is a study of signs, but it is not merely about what we refer to signs in daily communication, but also anything which stands for something else. Charles Sanders Peirce classified the signs into three classifications. According to Cobley (2001:31) “the most basic classes of signs in Peirce’s menagerie are icon, index, and symbol.” An icon is a sign that is made to resemble, simulate, or reproduce its referent in some way. An index is a sign that refers to something or someone in terms of its existence or location in time or space, or in relation to something or someone else. A symbol is a sign that stands for its referent in an arbitrary, conventional way. Here are the examples of some pantun in wedding ceremony cited in Nadia (2016) as the following:

Batang buluh dibelah-belah

Bunga pagar bunga kemuning

Raja dan ratu jangan mau kalah

Cabut bunga warna kuning

The pantun translation:

The reed stem is chopped

The pagar flower and kemuning flower

The king and queen do not want to lose

Take off the yellow flowers

According to Nadia in her study, Icon, index and symbol on the pantun above is **batang buluh** (reed stem) is a symbol means a bamboo rod which has the meaning strong and powerful, **bunga kemuning** (kemuning flower) is an icon means the beauty, **raja dan ratu** (the king and queen) is an index means a leader who lived in palace, similarly to the groom and bride are king and queen in household life. The meaning of the pantun above is not to give up in fight over something (trying), the bridal must show that they can and do not forget to share especially in household life.

In the Pesisir Malay, wedding ceremony get a lot of high places in the customs especially berpantun is very prominent in Malay culture but not for nowadays. In this era although pantun is still known and used by people, but it is no longer culminating with the worth values of its original culture, such as it is a joking or just a mimicking of the young to their idols. As a consequence, the

pantun has become the plaything, have lost the function and meaning of its essentials, such as a teaching and the media to give the inheritance of the worth values of the nation.

Supported by previous research where Azlidia in her journal entitle “Tradisi Berbalas Pantun pada Upacara Adat Perkawinan Masyarakat Melayu Kecamatan Meral Kabupaten Karimun” explains berpantun in Malay traditional wedding ceremony only as an addition and used at a few phases of the wedding ceremony with the evidence by the resulting 52.3% of respondents replied that the tradition of berpantun is used at several phases of Malay traditional wedding ceremony by societies in Kecamatan Meral.

Another research declared by Mustika in her journal entitle “Analisis Tepuk Tepung Tawar pada Prosesi Pernikahan Adat Melayu Desa Dendun Kabupaten Bintan” that tepuk tepung tawar is one of Malay custom which is still carried out in Malay societies, especially in the Desa Dendun. But some people have started leaving this custom and did not know the meaning of tepuk tepung tawar custom, similarly with the writer’s experience in her environment, traditional wedding ceremony nowadays especially in Tanjung balai only as a formality and less ritual stages that should be a characteristic of the tradition itself. But to simplify and shorten the procession of Malay traditional wedding ceremony, most Pesisir Malay just take a few rituals to serve as a guide so the old tradition that has been preserved for generations loss of value, function and its true meaning. Malay traditional wedding ceremony is a type of wedding

ceremony which still have nuance of religious so that peep out signs (icon, index and symbol) delivering in the pantun having a meaning to carrying out off and understanding society culture of Malay.

In this case, signs were indicated in the pantun of Malay traditional wedding ceremony especially in HEMPANG PINTU custom should be interpreted as any language interactions that occur in societies where there is an agreement on the use of certain sign system as a representation of thoughts, feelings, ideas, or expectations because the signs can be made guidance of life to Pesisir Malay. Every societies has their own perspective to interpret the sign meanings in the pantun without knowing its purposes where most of Pesisir Malay especially in Kota Tanjungbalai use the pantun in HEMPANG PINTU custom without understanding the meaning of the pantun whereas there are many signs (icon, index and symbol) delivering in the pantun, on the contrary most of them did not know what the meaning at all.

Based on the explanation above, the writer is interested to analyze the signs in pantun of Malay traditional wedding ceremony in Kota Tanjungbalai (semiotic approach) especially in HEMPANG PINTU custom using Pierce's theory of signs: icons and index and symbol to show the meaning of all signs are found in the pantun used in HEMPANG PINTU custom of Pesisir Malay traditional wedding ceremony especially in Kecamatan Tanjungbalai Selatan.

B. The Problem of the Study

Based on the background above, in order to get a meaning from the interpretation of the pantun in Hempang Pintu customs, the writer would like to explain and analyze each of the signs that appeared in the pantun. The problem of the study is formulated as the following:

1. What are the icons, indexes, and symbols of the pantun used in Hempang Pintu custom?
2. What are the meanings of icons, indexes, and symbols of the pantun used in Hempang Pintu custom?

C. The Objective of the Study

Concerning with the problems above, this analysis is intended to achieve some objective:

1. To identify the icons, indexes, and symbols of the pantun used in Hempang Pintu custom.
2. To describes the meaning of the icons, indexes, and symbols of the pantun used in Hempang Pintu custom.

D. The Scope of the Study

The scope of the study is semiotic, especially about sign classification. This study specifically investigates the meaning of Hempang Pintu custom by using theory of Pierce's signs classification where according to Cobley (2001:31)

“the most basic classes of signs in Peirce’s menagerie are icon, index, and symbol.” In order to limit the research, this study only focuses on analyzing the use of icon, index, and symbol found in the pantun of HEMPANG PINTU custom of Pesisir Malay traditional wedding ceremony in order to get the meaning.

E. The Significance of the Study

It is expected that the findings of this study are significant theoretically and practically. Theoretically, the research findings are useful for:

1. Linguists or cultural observer to enrich their knowledge about the theory of semiotic, especially the use of the pantun in Malay traditional wedding ceremony.
2. Other researcher to get information of semiotic sign used in the pantun of Malay traditional wedding ceremony, so that it can be reference in conducting relevant studies.

Practically, the research findings are expected to be valuable for:

1. Readers especially and societies in Tanjungbalai as a reference or contribution and get a new information about semiotic sign used in the pantun in order to preserved Malay tradition in berpantun.