

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of The Study

Language is body of spoken or written words with which people communicate thoughts and feelings. Language is also as a sign, a code of delivering a message or meaning of things. One of the most important language functions is a means of communication.

In the study of culture and its relation to symbolism, the study is narrowed into a more specific subject matter. Considering the use of symbolism within the culture, Angkola wedding tradition has been a very good example to carry out symbolism in conveying implied messages. Wedding is one of the most important religion and social cultural practices for almost all nations in the world. It is a ceremony in which two individual (male and female) are united through legal action or institution called marriage.

Mangupa ceremony is one of traditional ceremonies that originated from South Tapanuli, North Sumatera. *Mangupa* aims to restore *tondi* (soul) to the body and seek blessing from God Almighty to keep safe, healthy, and cheap sustenance of life. Attempts to call *tondi* to the body by serving a set of materials (device *pangupa*) and advice *pangupa* (*hata pangupa*: words of wages) systematically arranges and performed by various parties consisting of parents, kings, and the parties other indigenous.

According to Marpaung (1969) there are three conditions under which the ceremony *Mangupa* can be implemented, namely: (1) *hasosorang ni daganak* (the baby born), (2) *haroan boru* (referred to the marriage of boys), and (3) *marmasuk bagas naimbaru* (entering new house).

Mangupa haroan boru (the marriage of the boys) is held before noon and usually chaired by King Panusunan Bulung holding the reins of the customary ceremonial (Marpaung, 1996) and a custom King who is considered an expert on the party (Diapari, 1996). *Mangupa haroan boru* is a very good example because it uses symbols which have hidden meaning and expressing the purpose and respect by use symbols. These are the following examples :

No	Object	Meaning
1	<i>Pira manuk</i> or chicken egg	Stay safe and healthy
2	<i>Gulaen</i> or fish	Dynamism and unity
3	<i>Sira</i> or salt	Strength

Table 1. The Symbols in *Mangupa Haroan Boru*

Systemic-Functional Linguistic (SFL) is an approach to linguistics proposed by Halliday which sees the language used in social context. This approach is based on the theory of grammar which considers language as a resource used for communication not as a set of rules. In systemic functional linguistics, three strata make up the linguistic system: meaning (semantic), sound (phonology), and wording or lexicogrammar (syntax, morphology, and lexis). Semantic is the study about meaning. Kreidler (1998) stated that semantic is the systematic study of meaning and linguistic semantic is the study of how language organize and express meanings. Semantics and that branch of linguistics known as semiotic have a common concerns

with the meaning of signs, but John Sturrock argues that whereas semantic focuses on *what* words mean, semiotic is concerned with *how* signs mean (Sturrock, 1986).

Semiotics is the study of signs. Semiotics is the approach of the production and interpretation of meaning. Its basic principle is that meaning is made by the deployment of acts and objects which function as “sign” in relation to other signs. The semiotic tradition explores the study of signs and symbol as a significant part of communication. Peirce’s sign theory, or semiotic, is an account of signification, representation, reference meaning. Peirce’s offered a triadic (three-part) model consisting of: (1) the representation: the form which the sign takes (not necessarily material, though usually interpreted as such) called by some theorist the ‘sign vehicle’; (2) an interpretant: not an interpreter but rather the sense made of the sign ; (3) an object: something beyond the sign to which it refers (a referent).

The relation between *mangupa haroan boru* and semiotic study is on the meaning and the function which occur in the society. The function of *mangupa haroan boru* aims to restore *tondi* (soul) to the body and seek blessing from God.

The topic of symbolism in wedding have been studies by some researchers. One of them is Purba (2014) took a chicken as a symbol in wedding ceremony of Simalungun. He found that people called *dayok na binatur*. Presentation *dayok na binatur* intends to convey a message or admonished the people to be given food (*dayok na binatur*) is “Ase lambin taratur tene ma pargoluhan haganupan songon paraturni dayuk na binatur on. (hopefully our life as regular as this regular dayon na binatur)”.

Based on the object and theory that have been stated above. It is important to know more about the meaning and the function which occur on *mangupa haroan boru*. It can explore more detail about the culture in Angkola. Thus, this issue encourages the presentation of the research entitled *Mangupa Haroan Boru In Angkola Wedding Ceremony: A Semiotic Approach*.

B. The Problem of The Study

Based on the background of the study, the problems of the study are formulated as the following :

- 1) What meanings are used in symbols of Angkola wedding ceremony *Mangupa Haroan Boru* ?
- 2) How are the meanings of the symbols used in Angkola wedding ceremony *Mangupa Haroan Boru* ?
- 3) Why are the symbols used as they are ?

C. The Objectives of The Study

With reference to the study, the objectives of the study are:

- 1) to identify the symbols used in Angkola wedding ceremony *Mangupa Haroan Boru*
- 2) to describe the interpretation of the meanings of symbols used in Angkola wedding ceremony *Mangupa Haroan Boru*
- 3) to find reason for the use of symbols

D. The Scope of The Study

To avoid an overlapping and misleading discussion, the study focuses on semiotic and used theory of sign by Pierce. The researcher analysed the meaning of the symbols that can be found in Angkola wedding ceremony *Mangupa Haroan Boru*. In addition, the researcher interviewed two people who are considered to be competent to provide any information concerning with *mangupa haroan boru* in Angkola wedding ceremony. The interview itself is conducted in unstructured interview. The study also focused on wedding ceremony in Padangsidempuan city.

E. The Significance of The Study

Findings of the study are expected to offer theoretical and practical significances.

Theoretically: (1) This study will apply the Pierce's theory, (2) To augment research about semiotics study and culture, (3) The findings are expected to be useful for those who concern to study symbols and meanings, (4) To promote the culture in North Sumatra especially for Angkola culture, (5) To introduce the Angkola culture to the young generation.

Practically: The findings of this study are expected to explore knowledge about semiotic field analyzing the cultural symbol and meaning.

UNIVERSITAS NEGERI
MEDAN
UNIMED

THE
Character Building
UNIVERSITY