

Naki-Naki: Oral Tradition of the Karo of North Sumatra

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Abstract

The purpose of this article entitled "Naki-naki: Oral Tradition of the Karo Tribe in North Sumatra" is to examine the context of the traditional courtship system among the young people using oral tradition (oral literature) in the Karo community that developed in ancient times. The Karo community has a unique tradition in finding a life partner. Karo youths, whether male or female, are encouraged to marry (*erjabu*) as soon as they reach adulthood. Adult males are referred to as "*anak perana*" and are identified by characteristics such as wearing long pants (*saluar gedang*) and sleeping in the traditional Karo building called "*jambur*." Adult females are known as "*singuda-nguda*" and are identified by characteristics such as menstruation, participation in youth work groups, including communal activities and involvement in artistic festivals (*guro-guro-aron*). The stages of introduction between young people begin with the tradition of "*ngaras-ngaras*" and continue with "*ertutur*." *Ertutur* can be done with the help of friends, family intermediaries, or directly. The introduction then progresses to a stage known as "*Naki-naki*." *Naki-naki* is the moment when the "*anak perana*" endeavors to convince the "*singuda-nguda*" to fully accept him for marriage. *Naki-naki* involves using the eloquent Karo language and is often done at night on the terrace of the house ("*tire*") or inside the house. The goal is for the couple and their families to get to know each other well.

Keywords

Naki-naki; oral tradition; courtship; Karo; North Sumatra



I. Introduction

The Karo people have produced a range of genres of oral literature, such as *kanam-kanam*, *naki-naki*, *regi-regi*, *jolah jemole*, *kuning-kuningan* (*teka-teki*), *ndung-ndungen* (oral poetry), *bilang-bilangan* (funerials), *nendung*, *mangmang*, *didong doah*, *turi-turien* (prose stories), and *kantonang-katonang* (*perkolong-kolong* songs in funeral rites, and *cawir metua*), among others. In the *cawir metua* ritual *perkolong-kolong* is sung in Karo language (*cakap lumat*). The choice of language and expressions are rendered with specific diction and grammatical rules in accordance with Karo oral tradition which conveys high values and meanings. Essentially these literary forms also have a political dimension. The refined language reflects the high culture of Karo society.

Through its oral literature the Karo people convey meaning with expressive conventions. The goal of communication is not contained solely in the arrangement of words that are used. Rather the goal is to convey intention to be innately understood by informed listeners. In certain cases communication and speech uses expressions of *keluh-kesah*, humming, mantra, prayers and others. The context requires *kosa kata* appropriate to the situation. Literary *Kosa kata* are referred to as *cakap lumat* among the Karo. *Cakap lumat* are traditional sayings, *anding-andingen*, *perumpamaan*, *pantun*, *gurindam*.

At this time, *cakap lumat* is still often used in adat rituals such as weddings, funerals, and consecration of new homes. However in daily interactions and in activities connected with a young female finding a suitable mate *cakap lumat* is not used anymore. The current young generation has already been influenced by modern styles of interaction which nowadays relies on cellphones and other gadgets, social media such as Facebook and Instagram, as well as direct contact using daily modern language rather than oral literature which invites interpretation.

From a historical perspective the style of romance among the Karo in earlier times was quite unique. Introductions between a male (*anak perana*) and a female (*singuda-nguda*) occurred according to rules and mores of customary *adat*. An adult male called *anak perana* was distinguished by the fact that he wore long trousers (*saluar gedang*), was circumcised, sexually mature (*geret-geratan*), bathed appropriately, participated in the work collective (*aron*), and slept in the men's building. Elders would initiate inquiries as to whether he was ready to marry (*emppo*). Similarly a young woman (*singuda-nguda*) should marry provided she had already menstruated, participated in *guro-guro aron sembelin*, participated in the work collective (*aron*), and slept in the female building would be asked by elders or family when they wished to marry (*sereh*). In Karo society men (*emppo*) and women (*sereh*) were united in a marriage ritual (*erjabu*).

Before *erjabu*, an *anak perana* required time consuming and unique steps to find a potential mate, called *ngaras-ngaras*, *ertutur*, dan *naki-naki*. *Naki-naki* is a stage realized by the *anak perana* towards *singuda-nguda* in order to discover compatibility and for the families to become familiar with each other. However among the Karo this is achieved using specific oral language (*cakap lumat perumpamaan/ peribaratan/ kiasan/pepatah*). The ability to speak with *cakap lumat* would confirm the high standing of an *anak perana* to praise, approach, court and convince *singuda-nguda* so that she would accept him as a lover and as life-long companion. The capacity of an *anak perana* to speak with *cakap lumat* would be a measure by which *singuda-nguda* would be impressed and accept his advances.

In this context there would in fact be a sort of subtle competition of speaking in *cakap lumat* between the *anak perana* and *singuda-nguda*. If the *singuda-nguda* were successful with her *cakap lumat*, then the confidence of the *anak perana* would be questioned or even laughed at by elders around him. To avoid failure both *anak perana* dan *singuda-nguda* would continually consult with their elders or others recognized to be expert in their community or even elsewhere. The ability and power of *cakap lumat* became a fundamental requirement in order to determine continuation to further stages. Besides conveying values and high cultural meanings there were also inherent political values in the process of *naki-naki*. *Naki-naki* was not simply a matter of choosing and ordering the right words. It also conveyed with oral expressiveness and replete with its own meaning. As noted by Bertrand Russel, traditional utterances are the wisdom of many found in the brilliance of one (Danandjaya, 1991: 28).

II. Review of Literature

Halimah, Lili, et al. 2021. "The Existence of *Ekturtur* Culture or 'Polite Greeting' Tradition in the *Persadaan* Batak Karo Community in Cimahi City," in the *Journal of Progressive Citizenship Thinking and Research* (Jurnal PkN Progresif). Sebelas Maret University. The writer analyzes the *ekturtur* culture of the Karo Batak, which is gradually being abandoned by the younger generation. The research indicates that the *ekturtur*

culture requires the role of traditional figures to revitalize the practice among the younger generation to prevent its disappearance. *Ertutur* is characteristic of the Karo community in terms of introductions, usually initiated by asking about one's clan and family background. Additionally, it can be linked to each party's known family and even inquiring about *trombo* (ancestral lineage) to determine the level of kinship. The level of kinship between individuals can be determined through *ertutur*. *Ertutur* uses the clan name from both the father and the mother, which is passed down to the child. The clan name from the father is passed down to sons, called *merga*, while for daughters, it is called *beru*. The clan name from the mother is passed down to both sons and daughters, referred to as *bere-bere*. The combination of both the father's and mother's clan names can thus establish the level of kinship with other clans.

Br Ginring, Rini, et al. 2021. "Representation of Educational Values in Karo Language Song Texts as Strengthening Local Wisdom-Based Character Education in High Schools," in the *Basataka Journal (JBT)* of Balikpapan University. The research results yielded four out of eighteen character education values present in Karo language song texts, namely religious values, honesty values, caring values, and finally, responsibility values. One of the Karo language songs that contains religious values is titled "*Enda Aku O Tuhan*" by Soeraya Kataren. This song tells the extraordinary visitation of God in one's life. The song "*Purpur Sage*" conveys a message that a social being should not harbor grudges in the heart, so that one can live life with sincerity and peace. The song "*Ku Inget Sanga Ikuta*" is a song that teaches about the value of honesty. This song conveys the longing of someone for their hometown and childhood friends, whose whereabouts are now unknown.

Rahmah, Siti. 2011. "The Existence of the Keyboard in the Guro-Guro Aron Drum and Its Influence on the Character of Young People in Karo," in the *Harmonis Journal: Journal of Knowledge and Thought in the Arts*, Department of Performing Arts, Faculty of Languages and Arts, Sebelas Maret University. The article discusses the art of *guro-guro aron* in the Karo community, involving changes, and the influence of the keyboard on *guro-guro aron* music. *Guro-guro aron* is a Karo youth festival that serves as a means of entertainment, internalization of traditional Karo music, fostering intimacy among young people, which naturally can lead to matchmaking, training village leadership, and more. Initially, the practice of *guro-guro aron* was related to the agricultural cycle, specifically at the end of the harvest season. *Guro-guro aron* can be defined as a festive event for young people, featuring Karo drums and *perkolong-kolong*. *Perkolong-kolong* is done by singers, usually a pair, one male and one female. Various functions are found in this *guro-guro aron*, one of which is learning ethics. In *guro-guro aron*, the female performers (*pemudi*) and male performers (*pemuda*) also learn etiquette or manners in social life with each other. Young people learn to follow traditions in terms of "*ertutur*" (how to determine kinship based on traditional clan) because when traditional etiquette prescribes conventions that while dancing none of them should be "*sumbang*" (disruptive), The dancing follows the conventions and mores of Karo customs and kinship.

III. Research Methods

Our research used qualitative methods with an ethnographic approach. Atkinson and Hammersley (in Denzin and Lincoln, 2009: 316-317) tell us in practical terms that the term ethnography is a form of social research with several distinct characteristics, including: 1) Emphasizing exploration of the essence of social phenomena, 2) Working with unstructured data, 3) Researching specific cases, 4) Analyzing data, including

interpretation of meaning and function in general using descriptions and verbal explanations. Ethnographic research involves both participatory and non-participatory observation to describe social reality. Observation is not just a research technique per se but a research model characterized by the researcher's own engagement with that reality. Lincoln and Guba (Ian Hodder, 2009: 544-547) also suggest differentiating original documents from copies through their texts. Material culture is created communicatively and representatively, with the clearest examples exposed in written texts.

IV. Result and Discussion

4.1 Oral Tradition

Oral tradition could be defined as oral witness which is conveyed through words from generation to generation. Oral traditions can also deploy unique symbols handed down through generations, not only to take up time but rather as conduits of attitudes, worldview and reflections of high aspirations. Pudentia (1999) provided understanding in the matter of orality regarding all matters relating to literature, language, history, biography dan knowledge and other art forms which are handed down mouth to mouth. The word tradition originates from the Latin word which means “transmitted” or also “what is usual”. Higher levels of understanding in fact have been part of any society, state, culture, time or religion for a long time. The basis of tradition resides in information that is transmitted through generations both in oral and written form. Without transmission tradition would die (Pudentia in Nggawu, 2011: 109). According to Danandjaya oral tradition is synonymous with oral folklore. And according to Brunvand oral folklore is in fact entirely oral. We can include the following in this group:

1. Folk dialects (accent, names, traditional positions and royal titles)
 2. Traditional expressions (proverbs, addages, sayings)
 3. Traditional riddles.
 4. Folk poetry (pantun, gurindam).
 5. Folk prose stories (myths, legends, and childrens fables)
- (Danandjaya, 1991: 21-22 and Endswara, 2013: 200).

Oral literature demonstrates the richness and high civilization expressed by its proponents in its time. As a reflection of high civilization one will discover cultural facts within the time period. Exclusive to oral literature one can find cultural attributes such as ethics, morality, laws, regulations, romance, a system of knowledge, and tenets of language. Forms of oral literature were born in the midst of society as a product of the artist's imagination and the result of reflections on the social tendencies around them (Jabrohim, 2012: 77). As a result the birth of oral literature constitutes a mirror of the life of the society which nurtures it, as a collective subject rooted in the society's social and cultural reality. Suripan Said Hutomo (1991: 11) states that oral tradition consists of a number of elements, including: (1) oral literature; (2) traditional technology; (3) folk knowledge outside of royal courts and metropolitan cities; (4) aspects of religion and folk beliefs outside of the limits of the great religions; (5) folk arts outside of royal centers and metropolitan cities and (6) traditional systems of law. Further relying on Danandjaya (1991: 21) oral folklore is that which is entirely oral.

Edy Sedyawati tells that oral tradition produces (1) genealogy; (2) cosmology and cosmogeny; (3) history; (4) moral ethics; (4) systems of knowledge and (6) formats of linguisticity and literature (Sedyawati, 1996: 5-6). The oral tradition of *naki-naki* is a specific prescribed manner of discourse of the *anak perana* to *singuda-nguda* using Karo language (*cakap karo*) within which shapes analogies, manners and figures of speech.

4.1 Form and Content of Naki-Naki as Oral Tradition

The form and stages of introduction of the *anak perana* dan *singuda-nguda* as oral literature begins with the stage called *ngaras-ngaras*, *ertutur* dan *naki-naki*. What follows below is the form of this encounter according to these stages.

a. Ngaras-ngaras

Ngaras-ngaras represents a stage of observing the young lady who is to become the marriage candidate. *Ngaras-ngaras* can be done in one's own village or in another village. If it is done in another village often the *anak perana* will move there in order to gain the hand of his inamorata. There is a reason for why the *anak perana* might go *ngaras-ngaras* might leave his own village to find a candidate elsewhere. The positive reason would be that neither would have known each other before. Any negative element would be properly hidden in the name of positive aspects.

b. Ertutur

Ertutur is the stage of introduction between *anak perana* and *singuda-nguda* which is realized with the assistance of elders or relatives of the village. Usually the *anak perana* will avail of the help of elders (*janda*) who reside in the same village with the *singuda-nguda*. Introductions are arranged with liaisons close to the girl who have become familiar through the process of *ngaras-ngaras*. What follows is an example of *ertutur* in action:

Male	Translation
"Enggo dekah kita la jumpa turang" ... "Kai berita kena, mama ras mami?" ...	We haven't met for some time... How are you sister, papa and mama?
Femaile	Translation
Ue kaka, sehat ras mejuah-juah kami kerina...	Yes brother, we all are healthy
Male	Translation
"Ma banci nge kita si oraten turang?"	Can we get acquainted?
Femaile	Translation
Banci kaka ...	Sure brother
Male	Translation
Beru apai dage kam age?"	What is your merga/beru
Femaile	Translation
"Bagi sikukatekan sanga kerja tahun mbarenda kaka... Beru Sembiring kaka ...	As I told you at the party last year.. I am beru sembiring
Male	Translation
Bere-berena?	From what bere?
Femaile	Translation
bere Karo	Bere Karo
Male	Translation
Adi bage uga dage orat tuturta?	So what shall we call our relationship?
Femaile	Translation
Kam kai kin mergandu kaka?	If that is so what is your merga brother?
Male	Translation

<i>Mergaku Gurusinga Tambar Malem ...</i>	He who heals longing
Femaile	Translation
<i>Bere-berena kaka?</i>	Your main merga brother?
Male	Translation
<i>Bere-bere Karo</i> <i>Adi bage uga dage orat tuturta?</i> <i>Adi la kam mehangkai rimpal kuakap kita</i>	Bere-bere Sembiring If that is so what shall we call our relationship? If you're not shy – impal
Femaile	Translation
<i>Engkai maka aku menghangke adi bage kin oratna kaka ...</i>	Why should I be shy if in fact that is the case?
Male	Translation
<i>Adi bagi piga kin kam sembuyak turang?</i>	If so how many siblings do you have?
Femaile	Translation
<i>Telu per empatken ras kena kaka ...</i>	Three, four including you
Male	Translation
<i>Piga kam diberu?</i>	How many sisters?
Femaile	Translation
<i>dua kaka ...</i>	two brother
Male	Translation
<i>Sintua, sintengah entah singuda kam turang?</i>	Are you the oldest, the middle or the youngest?
Femaile	Translation
<i>Sintua kaka</i>	I am the oldest, first child
Male	Translation
<i>Kuh dengan kin orangtuanta?</i>	Are your parents both still alive?
Femaile	Translation
<i>Kuh denga kaka, tapi mesera-mesera kel kami..</i> <i>Kam piga kin sembuyak kaka?</i>	Both are still alive, but our life is difficult and poor. Brother, how many siblings do you have?
Male	Translation
<i>Telu, per empatken ras kena adi la kam mela..</i>	Three, four including you if you don't mind
Femaile	Translation
<i>Kam sintua entah singuda?</i>	Brother are you the oldest or the youngest?
Male	Translation
<i>Aku sintua, maka erkaka tua kam man bangku agi...</i>	I am the oldest, so that younger ones call me oldest brother
Femaile	Translation
<i>Ue kaka tua...</i>	Yes, oldest brother
Male	Translation
<i>Aku pe agi ... adi enggo sibetehen orat tuturnta adi meriah ukurndu kita si tandan..</i>	I am also younger sister, if we are already acquainted and if you are happy with our acquaintance. In fact I am not at all disturbed

<i>Ma lakin kam mela agi?"...</i> <i>Adi kutandangi ula kel kam melewas agi</i>	If I come again do not be aloof sister.
Femaile	Translation
<i>Labo kaka tua, reh kel kam ..</i>	No no brother, please come again
Male	Translation
Adi bage mulih lebe aku agi.. Sebab matawari pe enggo ncidahkan lasna...	In that case I will go home now because the sun is already showing rays
Femaile	Translation
Ue kaka manjar-manjar kel kam, ertoto kel aku maka seh kel kam I kuta alu mejuah-juah..	Yes brother, I pray that brother will arrive at your village and home safely.

Translation Edward Van Ness, 2023

c. Naki-naki

Naki-naki are pronouncements/expressions of the *anak perana* to *singuda-nguda* using propositions, figures of speech and inference. The text of *naki-naki* as oral literature represents utterances expressed by the *anak perana* to the *singuda-nguda*. *Naki-naki* as oral literature has its basis in traditional culture such that it has cultural values which deserve to be preserved and developed. The form of this cultural heritage is implied in meanings as documents of thought, crystallization and manifestation in the social and high cultural in the society which supports it. The vision or complex values which are inherent to them become a foundation and a reflection of the behavior of its society. Because of this, analysis of speech can be useful as an analysis of societal behavior. For Schiffrin (1994: 54) the act of speech is the product of speech in a specific context and represents a fundamental unit of language communication.

Generally literature develops via two aspects which are the most basic: ethics and aesthetics. As a result of this literary works are of two forms namely oral and written (Anton and Marwati, 2015). Hutomo states that oral literature in the main is of two types, namely:

- Pure oral literature which is only expressed orally in form and expression that is traditional.
- Partially oral tradition (in the example of Central Javanese traditions) which is supported by other art forms, such as *ludruk*, *ketoprak*, *wayang* etc (in Asri, 2008).

Naki-naki is a traditional expression which is part of a purely oral tradition. The traditional expression is in language which displays a culture in society and has values which can become guidance or taboo in life. Kridalaksana (in Anton and Marwati, 2015) notes that expression is the phonological/graphemic aspect of language to convey ideas or thoughts which carry meaning. For Suwondo (in Anton and Marwati, 2015) expression is a way of conveying ideas which subsequently can become movements, language and attitudes. Allen Dandes suggests that proverbs or expressions are very difficult to define yet can be used to clarify traditional language idioms (Danandjaya, 1991: 28). Expressions used in *naki-naki* consist of a number of traditional cultural idioms and metaphors according to Alwi (Anton and Marwati, 2015). The expressions used are in the process of *naki-naki* consist of local cultural sayings. Alwi (Anton and Marwati, 2015) writes that proverbs are words or sentences which are fixed patterns, which usually convey specific meanings (which previously were maxims, expressions and parables). According to Brunvand there are three fundamental characteristics of expressions: (1) Proverbs must be a single sentences which is not only of traditional words; (2: 20-21) Proverbs have sentence forms which are already standardized and (3) A proverb must have a vitality

(staying power) which differentiates it from written cliché, such as poetic language, advertisements, and reporting Danandjaya, 1991 28 and Endraswara, 2005

According to Brunvand, there are three essential characteristics possessed by proverbs, namely: (1) a proverb must be in the form of a complete expression, not just a traditional word, (2) a proverb exists in standardized sentence form, and (3) a proverb must have the vitality (life force) of oral tradition that can be distinguished from cliché written forms such as poetry, advertisements, reporting... (Danandjaya, 1991: 28, and Endraswara, 2005: 20-21). Examples of proverbs as parables include “like eggs on the tip of a horn” or “like an eel returning to the mud” (Danandjaya, 1991: 29). The following are examples of proverbs as parables used in *naki-naki*:

<i>Adi erjabu kita agi, Bagi kerbau sada nioga kel pagi kita</i>	Meaning: If we marry, wherever we are in whatever condition we will always be together.
<i>Ula kel pagi kak tuandu Bagi si keru arang, besi la tampe</i>	Meaning: Don't wait for me to do something unproductive

Translation Edward Van Ness, 2023

Examples of pantun which are interspersed in the *naki-naki* encounter which are said by the *anak perana* to the *singuda-nguda*:

<i>Gatap-gatap juma rabin agi Mande-ande juma terulang Ercakap-cakap kita agi Kai kin tuturta turang?..</i>	Meaning: Talk so we can get to know each other
<i>Turah nde batang gundur I duru dalam la kel lit puna na Ersura kel ateku kita ertutur turang Si tandan ateku kita</i>	Meaning: I would like to go know you
<i>Kandi-kandi buluh la riket Batang buluh tabah man titi La erngadi-ngadi kena ku inget Adi tunduh pe kena bas nipi</i>	Meaning: every time my sister is in my memory, so she carried away in my dreams
<i>Enda ia telah piraing Ndabuhna i kuta perbesi Amina ndauh si kita sirang Tapi kena tetap nge ateku jadi</i>	Meaning: even though we are far apart, I still love my sister the most
<i>Enda sada maka na dua Kenca dua makana telu Ulanai nde karo ukurndu ragu Gelah sahun pagi kita erdemu</i>	Meaning: don't have any doubts about living together
<i>Bulung-bulung kalinjuhang bibi Kerah-kerah bulung kelawas Ateku tutus atendu lahang</i>	Meaning: don't let me be serious, sister I'm not serious

<i>Kujanari ma karo ndu lawes</i> <i>Belo kuh si belo jandi</i> <i>Beras piher upah tendi</i> <i>Adi kin tuhu mama biring atendu ngena</i> <i>Ula kami i pecat-pecati ..</i>	Meaning: if you really love, there is no longer any doubt
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Translation Edward Van Ness, 2023

Sayings are words which are used to express intention by the *anak perana* to *singuda-nguda*. Sudjiman (Anton and Marwati, 2015) notes that sayings are defined as short sentences which contain cues regarding a situation or behavior which conveys thoughts which are beneficial or truths. Examples of sayings;

<i>Ula kel ban ndu aku,</i> <i>Bagi kerbau pernampen, ndekah sa natap, lupa nggagat agi...</i>	Meaning: don't make me like a pernampen buffalo. I've been pesive for a long time, forgetting to eat..
<i>Adi mekuah kel atendu aku agi,</i> <i>Ngit nge kam bagi manuk si indung-indung...</i>	Meaning: if you marry me you are prepared to take your place in my extended family

Parables are used to convey thoughts or intentions by the *anak perana* to the *singuda-nguda* with other associative meanings from that which is said. Parables are sentences which use comparative language and local color, as in the following example of *cakap lumat* Karo:

<i>Ajar Bancina, artinya "La terpaksaen bagi sura-sura",</i>	Meaning; What is the condition. It means; can't be forced to do what you want..
<i>La bagi si njujung batu, lalap mberat, Artinya "lalit jorena",</i>	Meaning; Unlike stone pillarts which are always heavy. It means; life will not continue to be difficult.
<i>Ula kel kam bagi sanggar uruk-uruk agi, artinya " Ku ja angin rembus ku je pengalana",</i>	Meaning: don't be like a dwelling on a mountain which is blowing in the wind. A parable for someone who has no solid character
<i>Bagi bindoran, artinya "uga rupa inganna, bage rupana",</i>	Meaning: be like a lizard, its color depends on where it lives
<i>Ula bagi sinimai buah karimbalang, artinya "timai buah na, erpudung pe lahang",</i>	Meaning: don't wait for the Karimbalang to bear fruit, it's clear that it won't flower either
<i>Pecat-pecat bintang meriah, artinya "pecat-pecatna atena ngena, pandagina ban ngenana atena",</i>	Meaning: pretending to be insulted, actually really loved

Translations Edward Van Ness, 2023

The ideological representation which can be construed from the words of *naki-naki* are ethical ethical speech. Speaking or expressing intention or also asking for that which is desired of the person addressed foregrounds ethics in speech, which is to give signals which start the speech, signals which show the direction of desired answers to the questions presented, and signals to end the discussion. The literature of *cakap lumat* consists of parables, sayings and rhetorical speech. The style of language used includes (1) metafora; (2) personification; (3) hyperbole; (4) repetitive style of language and (5) simile (Danandjaya, 1991). Utterances of advice often are also used. Examples of advice are as:

<i>Ula belasken kata la tuhu, kata tengteng lah turiken</i>	Meaning: Don't say things that troubling but do speak words of wisdom and of a refreshing nature.
<i>Madin me kita nggeluh bagi surat ukat, rendi enta, gelah ula rubat</i>	Meaning: let's be like Surat Ukat, to give and take in life.

4.2 The Meaning of Naki-naki in its Cultural Context

To comprehend the meaning of cultural facts in a holistic manner is important and meaningful in order to understand oral literature in these modern times. One meaning of oral literature which is examined in this paper is the meaning and value within *naki-naki* of the Karo in North Sumatra. Concepts which are developed will be deconstructed as cultural wealth and the high values of the Karo people. The transmission of culture is also a social process which is connected with customs, history, ethics, genealogical systems and systems of knowledge. The meanings of words used and their structure has esthetic value.

Naki-naki as a Karo oral literature in the past was realized directly between the anak perana and singuda-nguda without an audience. Both were involved both as players as well as public listeners. The context of *naki-naki* in past times was not a performance or entertainment to be presented and witnessed. Expressions conveyed had meanings of submission from the anak perana to singuda-nguda to be accepted or rejected. In this case the speaker conceived him/herself as the public. As noted by Finnegan (Endraswara, 2005: 7-8) oral poetry is a part of oral tradition which differs from written tradition which is connected with distribution, composition and performance. Oral poetry is done with words from mouth to mouth and not via written media. For that reason the existence of oral tradition is extremely dependent by nature on the process of oral transmission. In fact today the development and construction of oral tradition has moved into performances connected with tourism. Economic meaning (the cultural industry today) is the product of creativity. This is an additional value in social culture.

V. Conclusion

Naki-naki is the process of young men (*anak perana*) approaching young women (*singuda-nguda*) using oral literary conventions (*cakap lumat*), including: proverbs, rhymes, parables, anding-andingen, or gurindam wih are sometimes used alternately. *Naki-naki* ability is the key to the *singuda-nguda*'s fascination with *anak perana*.

Naki-naki can be viewed as a form of oral literature in Karo society in North Sumatra. *Naki-naki* is a romantic love tradition for the Karo of earlier times and divided into three stages: *ngaras-ngaras*, *ertutur*, and *naki-naki*. *Naki-naki* is a process by which a young male (*anak perana*) approaches a potential female mate (*singuda-nguda*), using the artistic literature called *cakap lumat*, including sayings, pantun, proverbs, parables, *anding-andingan* or even gurindam which are often used interchangeably. The ability to do *naki-naki* for the *anak perana* is the key to winning the heart of *singuda-nguda*.

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