

## Semantic Analysis in Understanding and Maintaining Betawi Cultural Identity Through the Bikin Rume Traditional Ceremonial Process

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### Abstract

*This research analyzes the meaning of the Traditional Ceremony Process of Making Rume and the Existence of the Betawi Language. The lack of knowledge regarding Betawi Culture in today's society has sparked the enthusiasm of researchers to research this object. The aim is to know and understand the meaning of the Bikin Rume Traditional Ceremony Process and the existence of the Betawi language. The theories used in this research are Semantic theory and supporting theories of Cultural Anthropology. The method used in this research is qualitative. This research uses observation techniques (interviews) and questionnaires (questionnaires). The observation technique is a data collection technique using in-depth interviews. The questionnaire technique (questionnaire) is a list of questions related to the problem being studied. The results obtained are the meaning of the Traditional Ceremony Process of Making Rume and the Existence of the Betawi Language.*

### Keywords

Betawi customs; language existence; semantics; qualitative



## I. Introduction

As we know, the history of the origin of the name Jakarta previously had many naming changes from Sunda Kelapa to Jayakarta (1527), then Batavia or Jaccatra (1619-1942), then Djakarta or Djakarta Tokubetsu Shi (1942-1972) and finally Jakarta. The Betawi ethnic community generally inhabits the Jakarta area. The name "Betawi" comes from the word "Batavia", which over time changed to "Batavia", then from the word "Batawi" and adapted to the local community to become the word "Betawi". The Betawi people who live in Jakarta certainly have a place to live in the form of a house known as a Traditional House. There are three types of typical Betawi traditional houses, namely the Kebaya House or Bapang House, Joglo House, and Warehouse House. This typical Betawi traditional house was built by implementing the traditional Making Rume Ceremony procession. Betawi people in the past considered this traditional ceremonial activity sacred because it was related to calculations, certain taboos, good days, good fortune, and safety for those who would inhabit the house.

According to the KBBI, customs are eternal codes of conduct passed down from one generation to another as a legacy, so they are strongly integrated with community behavior patterns. Adat comes from Persian, which means habit, method, use, or ceremony. Meanwhile, istiadat comes from the Arabic isti'adah which means return request. Society considers customs to be a guide to life for justice and prosperity. The custom of the Making Rume Ceremony is included in the category of unwritten traditions. This causes one of the Betawi traditional traditions to be eroded by time if its existence is not maintained.

The lack of knowledge in today's society regarding Betawi Culture, one of which is the Traditional Ceremonial Process of Making Rume, has sparked the enthusiasm of researchers to research this object. This research raises the meaning of Betawi cultural history and inserts the existence of the Betawi language. It is this existence that has the role of language in the traditional ceremony process of making rume as a means of communication in the ancient and present eras, of course, with many differences. The existence of the Betawi language is a symbol of identity in the era of globalization that needs to be directed and preserved by all Betawi descendants as a characteristic that marks the preservation of a language, especially the Betawi language. This is necessary so that the Betawi language continues to exist among other languages.

Behind the Data Making Rue Ceremony Process, there are many hidden meanings of life that many people do not necessarily know. This meaning will be studied by researchers using semantic theory and cultural anthropology to understand further the meaning of the Bikin Rume Traditional Ceremony Process and the existence of the Betawi Language. Because traditional ceremonies are part of Betawi culture, this is related to two theories related to meaning, humans and culture. The meaning stored in this traditional ceremony is significant and needs to be known by the wider community, especially the Betawi tribe.

## **II. Review of Literature**

### **2.1 Linguistics**

Linguistics is a science that examines the nature and ins and outs of language in general, which humans use to communicate. Linguistics is generally used to ask about the science of language. The term linguistics is also usually expressed by various terms or names. Therefore, linguistics is called the science of language and the scientific study of language. Linguistics can also be said to be a science about language or a science that investigates language scientifically (Effendi, 2012). The essence of linguistic meaning does not only focus on one particular language but also language in general which is used to communicate between speakers and those spoken to, in the sense that the language in question may be a regional language or another language.

### **2.2 Semantics**

Semantics is a branch of linguistics that studies the relationship between linguistic signs and the things they signify, or in other words, a field of study in linguistics that studies meaning in language (Ginting & Ginting, 2019). According to (Ridwan, 2002:61) semantics is a branch of linguistics that examines and researches the meaning of vowel units which refers to the relationship between meaning and the units in question. One definition of meaning is a direct relationship between a linguistic symbol or sign and its reference and meaning is a reflection of the speaker's mental image of the subject he is talking about. Researchers will identify the meaning contained in the Bikin Rume Traditional Ceremony Process. One of the Betawi cultures certainly has a written or implied meaning in it.

### **2.3 Cultural Anthropology**

According to Willian A. Haviland, anthropology is a science that studies humans to create practical general conclusions about humans and their behavior to gain an understanding of various human characteristics. Meanwhile, cultural anthropology is a branch of general anthropology that examines cultures in various places worldwide. It

focuses on the study of cultural variations in humans (Winny, 2013:4). This cultural anthropology theory helps in understanding the cultural aspects of the Betawi people including social norms, rituals, and symbols in the Traditional Ceremonial Process. The traditional ceremony process of making rume is part of the Betawi tribe's culture. Before building the house, this activity is carried out by following the customs that apply in the Betawi tribe by instilling normative values.

### **III. Research Methods**

#### **3.1 Qualitative Method**

This research uses a qualitative deep interview approach method. Qualitative research is intended to understand events regarding what is experienced by research subjects, for example, perpetrators, perceptions, motivations, actions, etc. holistically and descriptively in the form of words and language in a special natural context and by utilizing various scientific methods. (Moleong, L, 2010). Meanwhile (Mulyana, 2008) describes qualitative methods as research using scientific methods to express an event by describing data and facts through words regarding the research subject. The qualitative approach is carried out by listening, understanding, organizing, classifying, and interpreting data qualitatively and inductively.

This research was carried out by visiting several Betawi cultural figures in the South Jakarta area using observation and questionnaire techniques. The researcher asked several in-depth questions regarding the Traditional Ceremony Process of Making Rume to Betawi Cultural Experts as resource persons. Meanwhile, questionnaires were given to the Betawi people to measure their knowledge about one of the Betawi cultures.

#### **3.2 Data Collection Technique**

Observation techniques (interviews) and questionnaires (questionnaires). The observation technique in the form of interviews is a conversational activity with a specific purpose. The interviewer and the source as the interviewee carry out the conversation. (S. Nasution, 1996:73) interviewing aims to find out what is contained in other people's minds and hearts. In qualitative research, interviews are used as a strategy for collecting data. In this context, field data notes obtained are in the form of interview transcripts. Meanwhile, the questionnaire technique in the form of a questionnaire is a series of questions related to the problem being studied. According to S. Nasution, a questionnaire is a list of questions that are distributed to be filled in and returned under the supervision of researchers.

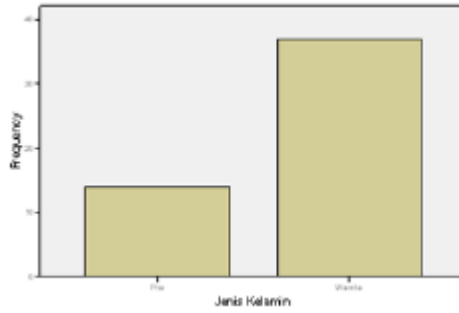
#### **3.3 Data Analysis Technique**

Qualitative data analysis is an ongoing, iterative and ongoing effort. The problems of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion are a series of analysis activities that follow each other. The data analysis process begins by reviewing, and examining all available data from various sources, summarizing and focusing on important things.

## IV. Results and Discussion

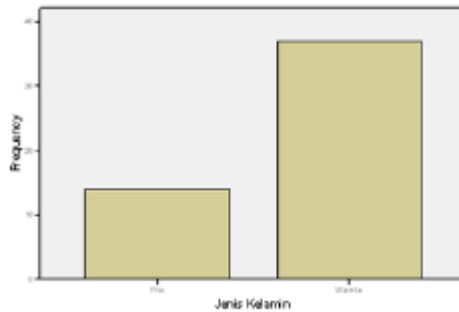
### 4.1 Data Analysis

This research was conducted in the South Jakarta area. The form of this research is qualitative. The graph below aims to explain the data that has been collected so that it can provide an in-depth understanding of how the Betawi people maintain and maintain Betawi Cultural Identity through the Traditional Ceremony Process of Making Rume. The number of people involved in this research was 5 informants and 51 respondents.



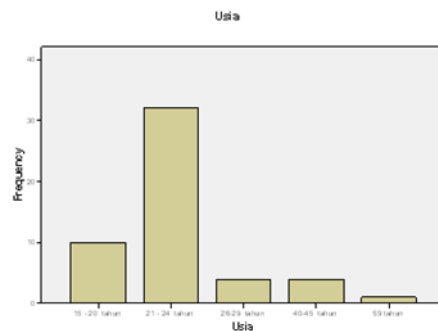
*Figure 1. Gender of respondents*

Based on the graph above, shows that the number of respondents who filled out the research questionnaire was more female respondents with 37 points and 14 male respondents.



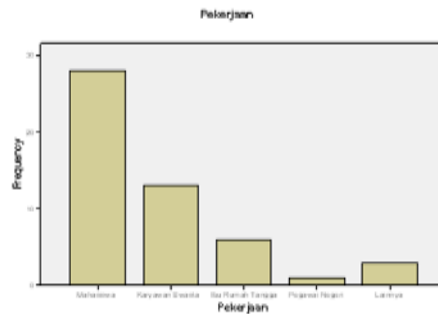
*Figure 2. Age of respondents*

The graph above shows the age range of respondents who helped fill out the research questionnaire, consisting of 10 people aged 15 - 20 years; 21-24 years old, 32 people; aged 26 – 29 years as many as 4 people; aged 40 – 45 as many as 4 people; and 1 person aged 59 years.



*Figure 3. Respondent's place of birth*

Graph 3 above shows that more respondents were born in Jakarta compared to other areas such as South Tangerang, Bogor, and Solo.



*Figure 4. Respondent's occupation*

Based on the table above, the respondents' occupations are predominantly students, while the rest are private employees, housewives, traders, and so on.

The Betawi tribe has a variety of cultures, one of which is the Traditional Ceremonial Process of Making Rume. Building a house is necessary for safety. Before building a house, the first thing to do is gather relatives to discuss or deliberate regarding the construction of the house that will be built. The next stage is to determine the direction of the house and determine a good day by calculating the day, date, and month the construction will take place. The house to be built must not be on sloping land, sacred land, or land to the left of the parents' house. Furthermore, prospective homeowners can pay in instalments or save for building materials to shorten the time to build a house. After the construction day has been determined and everything related to the construction of the house has been prepared, the neighbours are invited to Merowahan or pray together to Allah SWT so that the construction of the house can run smoothly. This activity also informs neighbours to help or join in the work.

The initial ceremony carried out is measuring the land to be built and then backfilling it to increase its height, this is known as making baturan. Then coarse salt is spread on the prepared land, the aim is to avoid interference from spirits. The next step is making foundation pillars or what are called guru pillars. Before the guru pole is erected on a stone base, it is necessary to place ancient money such as gobangan coins or silver. This activity has meaning so that the life of the homeowner will be prosperous. After that, the teacher's pillar was erected. The meaning of the four guru pillars in the Betawi traditional rume forms a unity that does not stand alone. As a foundation for a strong Betawi house.

The next stage of building a house is raising the hood or wooden frame before placing the roof tiles. In this step, one of the pieces of wood in the middle of the building design is wrapped around a red and white flag, and then rice, sugar cane, bananas, and coconuts are also placed. The purpose of the procession of raising these requirements to the wooden foundations of the roof of the house has the meaning that when the construction workers are at the top and feel hungry, they will eat bananas. Furthermore, when they feel thirsty, they will eat sugar cane. This is so that workers are not busy going up and down to eat and drink. Meanwhile, when the roof is installed, the coconut will be grated and the rice will be lowered to make red and white porridge, just like the Indonesian flag. However, according to some cultural experts, some believe that rice is a form of worship of the Goddess Sri, namely a form of prosperity. Another thing is when the rice has been processed into porridge, the meaning of this porridge means heaven and earth, red means amaro (anger)

and white mutmainah (kindness) and some say that the red and white porridge made after the house is finished is a symbol of the world. The underworld and the upper world. A symbol of humanity, a symbol of the good that will happen.

The next activity is raising the roof tiles which is done by tying or inviting neighbors to help. After helping to install the roof tiles, the prospective residents of the house must provide food to eat together. Then, when the house starts to take shape but does not yet have windows and doors, living in it or what is called pamali is very taboo. The house must be prayed for first by doing more renovations and as a thank you to the neighbours who have helped build the house.

The existence of the Betawi language in the context of the Betawi Rume Making Traditional Ceremony Process can be said to have survived to this day. According to Babeh Yahya, construction workers around Setu Babakan still always use tool terms in the Betawi language. Examples of words in the Betawi language are lengkul, rapiah, pindela, and umpak. This indicates that there is an area where the language used is that Betawi terms cannot be replaced by other language terms, even though the use of Betawi terms is minimal. According to Babeh Indra, most parents still use Betawi, except for the prayer part, they still use Arabic. Meanwhile, according to Babeh Yoyo, the existence of the Betawi language in the context of the Making Rume Traditional Ceremony Process depends on where it is used. Each region has its own petiti rules.

Betawi's cultural research regarding the traditional ceremony process of making rume provides answers far from the researcher's expectations. The respondents stated that they needed to learn more about these customs because no information was conveyed or taught by their parents to the current generation. This means that the younger generation needs to learn about the existence of the traditional ritual process of making rume. In line with the flow of globalization and urbanization, knowledge of Betawi culture is being eroded.

The results of several questionnaire answers were submitted to respondents, one of which was whether or not they had ever encountered the Bikin Rume Traditional Ceremony Procession, only 9.8% had ever encountered it, 47.1% of them answered never, and the remaining 43.1% rarely.

Based on the diagram above, which asks questions about whether the traditional ceremony tradition of making rume is still easy to find or not, only 7.8% answered that it is easy to find, 49% of them answered never and the other 41.2% answered rarely.

So, maintaining and preserving knowledge about one of the Betawi cultures in the context of the Making Rume Traditional Ceremony Process must be supported by Cultural Experts who will later disseminate it to the Betawi people. Because cultural observers have an important role in maintaining and preserving this Betawi culture. Researchers believe that if only one forum covers conservation, it will not be realized optimally for people with minimal cultural knowledge.

## V. Conclusion

This research concludes that there are several meanings contained in the Betawi Traditional Making Rume Ceremony Process, namely during the baturan procession, before the erection of the guru pole, raising the hood, and the red and white porridge ceremony. During the baturan procession, the tradition of sprinkling salt is carried out to avoid interference from spirits. Then, before the teacher's pillar is erected, it is necessary to place old money in the hope that the occupants of the house will have good fortune. Then the hood was raised with all the requirements for the welfare of construction workers and



the worship of Dewi Sri. Furthermore, the red and white porridge ceremony is interpreted as a symbol of the underworld and the upper world, a symbol of humanity, and a symbol of the good that will happen. The existence of the Betawi language in the context of the Betawi Rume Making Traditional Ceremony Process is only used in the name of an object, specifically the tools used in building the house. Except for the prayer section, because the Betawi tribe is predominantly Muslim, of course, this section uses Arabic, not Betawi.

#### Suggestion

With this research entitled "Semantic Analysis in Understanding and Maintaining Betawi Cultural Identity Through the Traditional Ceremony Process of Making Rume", researchers hope that the Betawi people will have more general knowledge related to their own culture. At the same time, to preserve and maintain the tradition of the Bikin Rume Traditional Ceremony so that the values contained in it are not lost to the erodes of time.

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