



## Cultural Attractions as a Pattern for Preserving *Betutor* Tradition in the Tamiang Malay Traditional Wedding Ceremony

Halimatussakdiah<sup>1</sup>, Robert Sibarani\*<sup>2</sup>, Pujiati<sup>2</sup>, and Dardanila<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Doctoral student of linguistics, Faculty of Cultural Science, Universitas Sumatera Utara, Medan, 20155, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Faculty of Cultural Science, Universitas Sumatera Utara, Medan, 20155, Indonesia

\*Corresponding author email: [rs.sibarani@usu.ac.id](mailto:rs.sibarani@usu.ac.id)

### Abstract

*This study aims to: (1) describe betutor tradition in the traditional wedding ceremony of the Tamiang Malay community which is almost rarely carried out in its entirety; (2) find the pattern of preserving betutor tradition as an effort to maintain the cultural tradition in the traditional Tamiang wedding ceremony through cultural attraction activities. Betutor tradition contains local wisdom that can be realized in cultural attractions that are flexible, non-contextual, and artificial so that local wisdom is conveyed to the community through cultural attractions. This tradition is a tradition that is almost extinct due to technological developments and modernization so that most people no longer carry out this tradition. This betutor tradition is a tradition that contains the values of local wisdom that regulates the marriage procedures and processes that are approved by both parties. This tradition is also a source of life guidelines that have a function to maintain brotherly relations and togetherness as a Tamiang community respecting and respecting each other as a family. In the performance of this tradition using traditional expressions, the Tamiang Malay rhyme is full of values of love, respect, and responsibility. Cultural attractions as a pattern for preserving cultural traditions are carried out because the values and functions of a lost tradition can be preserved and transformed to the younger generation through promotion, documentation, and promotion efforts.*

**Keywords:** *Betutor, cultural attractions, local wisdom, Tamiang Malay.*

### INTRODUCTION

The term *betutor* is interpreted in Indonesian which means to speak/speak. *Betutor* tradition is an activity to convey the ideas and feelings of a language speaker, either one person as in a single rhyme or a group of people as in reciprocal rhymes that have been determined at traditional ceremonies carried out by the community both with regard to

rites (birth, marriage, and death) as well as other traditional activities (Merduati et al., 2012). This tradition contains local knowledge possessed by the Tamiang Malay community or what is also called the Tamiang community in conveying speech according to the type of traditional ceremony carried out, which is related to the rites of life (birth, marriage, and death cycle) (Halimatussakdiah et al., 2020; Octavianna et al., 2021; Sibarani et al., 2021; Silaban & Sibarani, 2021).

According to Sembiring (2020), *betutor* tradition is one way for the Tamiang Malay community to learn and carry out customs, including in traditional marriage ceremonies. *Betutor* is delivered by *datukninik* who are represented by intermediaries called *telangke* (from the groom's side) and *tande* (from the bride's side). The speech delivered in accordance with the stages of the traditional Tamiang marriage ceremony or also called placing the child consists of four processes, namely looking for a *jodoh* 'soulmate' and asking for a hand in pre-wedding, holding a wedding party, and *ngantagh* the groom after the wedding (Diman, 2003; Priyotomo, 2011). The four processes have parts that are similar in implementation as in other ethnic Malays such as Langkat Malay, Tanjung Pura Malay, Deli Malay, and Tanjung Balai Malay (Erwany, 2016; Hijjannati, 2019; Islam & Sharif, 2018; Mulyani et al., 2018; Takari et al., 2017). *Betutor*, in general, contains advice and marriage guidance for the bride and groom. Speeches are delivered with variations in delivery using either the expression or *tetuhe's* words, rhymes, and speeches of prayers and blessings (Sembiring, 2020; Priyotomo, 2011).

However, today's reality is that *betutor* tradition in traditional marriage ceremonies has not been fully implemented in the life of the Tamiang Malay community as determined by customs. This is supported by research by Sarah et al. (2019) that there are changes in the implementation of traditions in wedding ceremonies, including the tradition of reciprocating rhymes at wedding ceremonies. The results of the field research indicate that there are stages that are omitted from tradition as a form of time and cost-efficiency (Sibarani et al., 2021; Sibarani, Sibarani, et al., 2021b). In addition, speech in the rhyme containing marriage advice has also begun to shift into speech that is merely entertainment. *Betutor* tradition does not understand the essence and meaning of its implementation even by the singer himself. Whereas oral tradition is a cognitive manifestation of society in interpreting life and facing life's problems, including finding solutions to problems in society (Sibarani, Sibarani, et al., 2021c).

The situation described above is also influenced by the current globalization which affects the way people view and think about tradition. Adolescents and young people are facilitated to access products and traditions that are sourced from outside their culture compared to facilities related to the implementation of the nation's cultural traditions (Sibarani, et al., 2021a; Sibarani, 2021b). So that makes the younger generation does not get an atmosphere about the traditions that are owned by their ethnic groups because they have been distracted by traditions and cultures from outside. Adolescents and young people are facilitated to access products and traditions that are sourced from outside their culture compared to facilities related to the implementation of the nation's cultural traditions. So that makes the younger generation does not get an atmosphere about the traditions that are owned by their ethnic groups because they have been distracted by traditions and cultures from outside. Adolescents and young people are facilitated to access products and traditions that are sourced from outside their culture compared to facilities related to the implementation of the nation's cultural traditions. So that it makes the younger generation does not get an atmosphere about the traditions

that are owned by their ethnic groups because they have been distracted by traditions and cultures from outside.

Based on the background of the problem, it is necessary to conduct research that focuses on the pattern of preserving *betutor* tradition in the marriage ceremony of the Tamiang Malay community. Multidisciplinary studies from various sciences such as cultural science and anthropolinguistics are needed to explore performance patterns, cultural values as local wisdom in this *betutor* tradition. Thus, the variety of traditions in society can be preserved and continued. The variety of marriage traditions in the Malay world have similarities and differences in the nature of Malay marriage customs which are transmitted through oral tradition. Differences become a treasure trove of marriage traditions in the Malay world, including traditional marriage ceremonies in the Tamiang Malay community (Takari et al., 2017).

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Cultural Attraction**

The development of tourist destinations requires the 4ASC concept, especially for the management of tourist destinations in Indonesia. The 4ASC concept stands for attraction, accessibility, amenity, ancillary, safety, and comfort (Sibarani, 2017, p. 1). Cultural attractions are everything that has beauty, uniqueness, value, both in cultural richness, diversity and man-made products that can be a factor of attraction and become a tourist destination to visit, which then motivates tourists to travel to these attractions. This is because cultural attractions are the main capital (tourism resources) or tourism sources for visitors when deciding to travel to a tourist destination. Tourists make cultural attractions a consideration for traveling in addition to accessibility, amenities and so on. The management of cultural attractions that are right on target will encourage the number of tourist visits to tourism areas. This will also have a positive correlation with the improvement of the local community's economic sector.

Cultural attractions are oriented towards tourist destinations which are quite in demand by domestic and foreign tourists as has been published by news pages relating to tourism developments, especially cultural attractions have increased, because tourism consumers like products that have their own uniqueness from the community. In the past, consumers were more dominant in favor of activities that were entertainment in nature, and now they are starting to be interested in cultural attraction tourism. As stated in the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 9 of 2009 article 3 that the function of tourism is to meet the physical, spiritual and intellectual needs of every tourist with tourist and recreational trips and increase state income to realize people's welfare. So in this case, cultural attraction play an important role in improving the tourism sector, especially if the cultural attraction is able to implement local cultural creativity as a tourist attraction (Richards, 2001).

### **Cultural Tradition**

Cultural traditions, also known as oral traditions, are guidelines for the life of a particular community/community which have cumulative characteristics: (1) It is a cultural activity in the form of oral, partly oral, and non-verbal; (2) Having an activity or event as a context for its use; (3) Can be observed and watched; (4) Traditional in nature; (5) Inherited from generation to generation; (6) The process of "word of mouth" delivery; (7) Contains cultural values and norms; (8) Have versions; (9) Shared ownership of certain

communities; (10) Potential to be revitalized and appointed as a source of cultural industry (Sibarani, 2012).

*Betutor* tradition is a manifestation of cultural traditions that have been carried out by the Tamiang community for generations. In the context of the form of cultural tradition, *betutor* tradition belongs to the tradition of speaking custom. In addition, what is also a common concern is that the process of speaking can be classified in the oral tradition of the community, and in the present condition it is still being preserved by utilizing technological developments without reducing the essence of *betutor* tradition as the identity of the Tamiang community. In other hand, oral tradition or cultural tradition is a traditional cultural activity of a community that is passed down from generation to generation with oral media from one generation to another, whether the tradition is in the form of an array of spoken words (verbal) or other traditions that are not verbal (non-verbal).

The characteristics, forms, and definitions of these oral traditions indicate cultural activities. Because cultural traditions involve all cultural activities, the cultural traditions in this study involve cultural traditions, both in traditional skills and in traditional products that contribute to developing tourism attractions in the Tamiang Malay community.

### **Cultural Transformation**

Cultural transformation is a process of changing traditions with various creative modifications according to the needs of society and the development of the times (Sibarani, 2019). Changes in tradition are influenced by several things including historical aspects and heterogeneous society (Kistanto, 2018). Historically, the cultural traditions of the community have been manifested in local wisdom which is the link between communities in interacting and creating socio-cultural experiences. As for cultural transformation, local wisdom is the link between cultural traditions and cultural creativity which has different characteristics between the two.

Cultural traditions have standard, contextual, natural and traditional characteristics. Cultural traditions are standard, meaning that cultural traditions follow the standards of values and norms that have been passed down from generation to generation in a particular culture. Contextual means that cultural traditions are tied to their use in the context of life cycle ceremonies, livelihood system ceremonies, and social practices that have been passed down from generation to generation. The next characteristic of cultural traditions is that they are natural, namely cultural traditions in their current state by using local natural resources wherever possible. In addition, cultural traditions are traditional, namely pre-scientific, rural, and agrarian. Traditional also means that cultural traditions are resistant to change and innovation, tied to the past, tend to be static and peace-oriented.

The characteristics of cultural creativity consist of flexible, non-contextual, artificial and modern. What is meant by flexible is that cultural creativity adapts standard values and norms to the conditions and demands of today's needs. The next characteristic of cultural creativity is non-contextual. Non-contextual means that it is free to use without being tied to the context of life cycle ceremonies, livelihood system ceremonies and social practices that are passed down from generation to generation. What is meant by "artificialism" in the characteristics of cultural creativity is an innovative state by using more interesting creative technology wherever possible. In addition, cultural creativity

has modern characteristics, namely scientific, urban and industrial, adaptive to change and innovation, looking to the future. On other word, ethnicity with the touch of modernity (Sibarani, 2021a).

The pattern of cultural transformation by Sibarani can be seen through the following diagram:



## METHODS

This research was conducted in Karang Baru District, Aceh Tamiang District. This research paradigm uses qualitative research. The research model used to reveal the value content of local wisdom is an ethnographic model. The selection of informants in this study was done intentionally (purposive sampling). Data collected through participatory observation and in-depth interviews were strengthened by document studies. The data obtained were analyzed by referring to the data analysis model developed by James P Spradley with the following steps: domain analysis; taxonomic analysis; component analysis; and analysis of cultural themes. (James, 1997) The flow of this ethnographic research consists of 12 (twelve) stages, namely: selecting and determining informants, interviewing informants, asking descriptive questions, analyzing the results of ethnographic interviews, conducting domain analysis, asking structural questions, conducting taxonomic analysis, asking contrast questions, conducting component analysis, looking for cultural themes, and making ethnographic reports. (Cresswell, 1997).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Local Wisdom of *Betutor* Tradition

Local wisdom can be understood as local ideas and knowledge that are wise, full of wisdom, good value, and virtuous owned by members of the community. Local wisdom is obtained from cultural traditions or oral traditions because local wisdom is the content

of oral traditions or cultural traditions that are inherited and used for generations to organize the social life of the community in all fields of life (Manugeran, 2017). Local wisdom is a local cultural value that can be used to regulate the life of the community wisely or wisely (Balitbangsos Ministry of Social Affairs, 2005; Sibarani, 2012). Thus, the local wisdom together with cultural traditions will be applied in preserving the existing traditions in the people of Aceh Tamiang district.

Based on speech *betutor* at the traditional wedding ceremony of the Tamiang Malay community, local wisdom was obtained that reflected the life of the Tamiang Malay community. The local wisdom can be interpreted from the lexicon used in the speech and the content of the speech.

### **1. Religious local wisdom**

In *betutor* tradition, The traditional marriage ceremony of the Tamiang Malay community contains religious values which are reflected in the performance pattern and the lexicon used. Among them are *madah* (opening) of Mr. telangke's speech which begins with *basmalah* and also greetings. In addition, the closing of *betutor* tradition is also closed with a prayer. The lexicon with religious values used include: *bismillah*, *assalmualaikum*, Allah, mercy, *ridha*, etc. This religious value is in line with the values held by the people of Tamiang from the era of the glorious Islamic Kingdom, namely when it was led by Raja Muda Sedia. For the Tamiang Malay community, the governing law of the community is based on the tetuhe's word, namely: customs are established, *syara'* (Islamic law) is upheld, *resam* is woven and *qanun* is regulated.

### **2. Local wisdom of mutual cooperation**

In every stage of the traditional marriage ceremony of the Tamiang Malay community, the families of the bride and groom are assisted by relatives and also traditional stakeholders involved to make this tradition a success. The spirit of mutual cooperation and mutual assistance is reflected in *betutor* tradition, namely the presence of Tuan telangke as a spokesman to complete each stage of the traditional ceremony. Also, this ceremony will not be accepted for its validity if it does not involve the village elders who guard the traditional *resam* such as the *datuk*, priest, and relatives. All *betutor* are carried out voluntarily and help as a community of the Tamiang community.

### **3. Local wisdom is responsible**

The bragging tradition in this traditional marriage ceremony can be carried out because there is a responsibility on the part of the family to marry off their son who is already established. This can be interpreted from the male parent's bragging when the process of screaming. It is the responsibility of parents in the Tamiang community to find a mate for their child. This is also as stated in the text of customs in the life of the Tamiang tribe which was documented by the Tamiang Community Unity Association (IKMAT) in 1972 that the main obligations for parents in the Tamiang community to their children from birth are:

- a) After the child is born and bathed, the parents must make the call to prayer and give the child a name.
- b) Children are cared for, nurtured, and honed, and circumcised.
- c) After the two things above are fulfilled by parents to their children, then the child is considered mature enough, then proceed to the next main obligation.
- d) Finding a mate for a child and marrying it with the term Tamiang placing a child.

### **Cultural Attractions as a Pattern for Preserving *Betutor* Tradition**

According to Sibarani (2013), revitalization and preservation have certainly undergone changes, modifications, or transformations by the demands of the times. Especially regarding local wisdom as cultural values and norms that can be applied in managing a social life and overcoming social problems, it needs to be revitalized and preserved to become an ideology that dominates and influences people in thinking, behaving, and acting.

The preservation of this *betutor* tradition can be realized by taking into account contemporary aspects. The steps taken are to present cultural attractions related to *betutor* tradition. Cultural attractions carry characteristics that are flexible, non-contextual, and artificial. Nevertheless, cultural values and local wisdom are still maintained in one cultural performance/attraction. Cultural attractions as a medium for delivering values and wisdom needed by the community in a light but entertaining way.

Apart from being entertainment, cultural attractions also play an important role for tourism purposes. Considering that the tourism sector is currently the central sector and has received attention from the relevant agencies. Utilizing *betutor* tradition for tourist purposes, such as presenting bullshit performances, in this case, the tradition of reciprocating rhymes to tourists (local and domestic). In addition, presenting boastful performances informal events organized by the government, such as the opening of national and local events, welcoming regional guests, and others. Then make souvenirs or the like that represent the oral traditions of the Tamiang Malay community. Another effort that can be taken to take advantage of cultural attractions in tourism is to create interesting short messages to attract public interest in visiting Aceh Tamiang with the Tamiang Malay rhymes that are creatively produced both on a print and digital basis. Through the revitalization efforts as mentioned above, it is hoped that *betutor* tradition can be passed on orally (oral literature) and also in writing. The intensity of the presence of the boastful tradition will be recorded in the memory of posterity and equipped with understanding informal situations.

The pattern of preserving *betutor* tradition in the traditional marriage ceremony of the Tamiang Malay community can be seen through the following diagram:

**Cultural Attractions as a Pattern for Preserving the *Betutor* Tradition in the Tamiang Malay Traditional Marriage Ceremony**  
Adapted from Sibarani: 2021



## CONCLUSION

Cultural attractions as one of the patterns of preserving *betutor* tradition can be used as a medium of introduction to local wisdom contained in *betutor* tradition. In addition, its flexible, non-contextual and artificial characteristics become an added value amid digitalization in every line of life, including in maintaining and protecting oral traditions.

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