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## A Discourse Analysis of *Melengkan* at a Gayonese Wedding Ceremony

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### Abstract

*Melengkan is a special form of the Gayonese language which is spoken in poetry, lyrics, and proverbs. This study investigated its use as poetry specifically in wedding ceremonies held in Gayo, Aceh, Indonesia. The data was collected by observations and a video-recording of a traditional Gayonese wedding ceremony, as well as from interviews with melengkan speakers. We described and analyzed the context of the use of melengkan, the form of melengkan, and the cultural values conveyed through melengkan used in the wedding ceremony. The findings showed that there were six types of melengkan: Melengkan Turun Caram, Melengkan Beguru, Melengkan Munyerah Rempela, Melengkan Munerime Rempela, Melengkan Munyerah Munenes and Melengkan Munerime Munenes. The values of melengkan are for remembrance of local knowledge, warnings from customary philosophy, warnings from religion, and also for giving advice and recall the history and beauty of melengkan speech. The context of using melengkan is to perpetuate and reflect cultural values, namely, politeness, respect, speaking softly, friendliness and resoluteness. These findings imply the importance of conserving melengkan as part of the Gayonese culture in every part of their life.*

**Keywords:** Discourse analysis, *melengkan*, Gayonese, wedding ceremony, Aceh.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In this study, discourse analysis is language use in social relations for a special type of performance. Rahman (2004) has stated that language used for social relations and cultural identity uses “practices” more than just “structure”. Not surprisingly, there is a point where discourse analysis is as an inroad into understanding becomes a theory

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which is completely detached from an empirical engagement with the analysis of language use.

This study was done to look at the phenomena of a special language used in Gayo. The Gayonese people are an ethnic group who lives in the highlands of Aceh Province, Sumatra, Indonesia. Aceh consist of many ethnic groups (Yusuf, 2013), and different societies in the ethnic groups construct different cultures that indicates the uniqueness of the culture they have (Nasir, 2015). Thus, most Gayonese live in the regencies of Bener Meriah, Central Aceh, and Gayo Lues. In the Gayonese society, there is a form of language known as *melengkan*. *Melengkan* is a form of poetical language which has been traditionally used by Gayonese society in different contexts for different purposes. According to Pinan and Aman (2003), *melengkan* is deeply rooted in the Gayonese community as a form of communication for oral literature. *Melengkan* is often used to make analogies and to convey deep meanings especially to give advice to a new bride and bridegroom; it is spoken by certain people especially using figures of speech known in the community.

However today, there is a tendency for many Gayonese to start to lose interest in *melengkan*. We observed that most of the Gayonese, especially the young generation, do not speak Gayonese any more, they speak Bahasa Indonesia. Some are ashamed to speak Gayonese, and even their parents do not teach them to speak Gayonese. This leads to the fact that *melengkan* nowadays is just merely used in wedding ceremonies. Many Gayonese do not know in what context it should be used, the form of it and the messages conveyed through *melengkan* itself, because it speaks indirectly, so that the audience needs to have deep comprehension of Gayonese to understand them.

Hence, by this study, the first writer as a part the younger Gayonese generation would like to uncover the essence and meaning of *melengkan*. Based on the foregoing introduction, the three research questions for this study were:

1. In what contexts is *melengkan* used?
2. What are the forms of *melengkan*?
3. What are the cultural values conveyed through *melengkan* at a wedding ceremony?

In accordance with the research questions above, the objectives of this study are to investigate the contexts of *melengkan* use, to find out the forms of *melengkan*, and to discover the cultural values conveyed through *melengkan* at a Gayonese wedding ceremony. We hope that the results of this study can be a part of documentation for *melengkan* perseverance for the Gayonese youth.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Discourse Analysis

Several authors have defined discourse analysis that considers the different ways that people use language which can present different views of the world and different understandings (Paltridge, 2006). It examines how the use of language is influenced by relationships with effects upon social identities and relations. According to Dijk (2003), discourse essentially involves three main dimensions, namely language use, cognition, and interaction in their sociocultural contexts. Furthermore, Schiffrin (1994) has described and compared several different approaches to the linguistic analysis of

discourse via: speech act theory, interactional sociolinguistics, ethnography of communication, pragmatics, conversation analysis, and variation analysis.

Jaworski and Coupland (2006) have proposed ten definitions of discourse analysis from a wide range of sources. They all fall into the three main dimensions that are: (1) anything beyond the sentence, (2) language use, and (3) a broader range of social practices that include non-linguistic and non-specific instances of language use. To conclude, discourse studies the ways in which a language is employed in texts and contexts by the speakers.

In *melengkan* there are terms and meanings that go beyond the sentences and language. They are usually used based on the context used by the speaker and sometimes they are very difficult for common people to understand, for example, '*reje...petue imem...ku tetue...ari kite rata bewene*', which literally translates as 'honorable the king, the leader of communal prayer, the leader of tradition and of the common people'. This expression uses some terms that have different meanings from the literal meanings; for instance, in the wedding ceremony context, the king here is not a real king that lives in a big palace like the real king in a kingdom, but the king here is the leader of the village or the head of the bride's family (Hakim, 2001).

## 2.2 *Melengkan*

In Gayo, each village is headed by a leader called *gecik*. In the traditional governance system of the Gayo people, there is a board called *Sarak Opat* leadership, which consist of *reje* (king), *petue* (advisor), *imem* (priest), and *rakyat* (the people). Today, there are no more kings in the governance of Gayo, ever since Aceh became a part of Indonesia in 1950. This *Sarak Opat* is still maintained in traditional ceremonies, thus, the king is usually replaced by *gecik* of the village.

In social interaction, the Gayonese language functions as a medium of communication and also as a medium of cultural expression. As Pinan and Aman (2003, p. 24) have said that in the Gayonese ideology, the use of language is known as '*becerak mutempat*' and '*becerak lembut*', which mean speaking based on the place and speaking softly. These connote that when a Gayonese person speaks, it should be based on the place and context, and he should be polite and soft with his words.

An example of a form of language in Gayonese that is still maintained until today is the use of *melengkan* in wedding ceremonies. According to Melalatoa (1982, p. 219), "*melengkan adalah pidato secara adat dengan menggunakan kata pilihan dalam adat perkawinan*" [*melengkan* is a customary speech by using selected words in a wedding ceremony]. Most of the Gayonese lack the knowledge to comprehend the deep meaning within the use of *melengkan* because it uses many special poetical words rather than the ordinary Gayonese words. Sometimes these meanings are very difficult to be understood by ordinary Gayonese people. The speakers use non-literal meanings to express the message in the *melengkan*. For example, *telangke sange* is a branch of *sange* or name of a grass and *kekelang rukut* is a name of a wild grass that is able to be used as a vegetable; these phrases actually refers to 'someone/persons who is/are delegated to investigate the characters of the candidate bride or groom' before the wedding is held. The purpose of this investigation is so that if the candidate is found to have an unaccepted past or behavior, the wedding can be postponed until an agreement is reached between both family of the bride and groom, or even cancelled. If the investigation found good things about the candidate, then the wedding can proceed. If

the listeners have no cultural knowledge about these phrases, they will certainly not understand them.

In *Melengkan*, the advice is not given by the bride's parents but by the customary leaders, which means that the social culture in Gayonese society is still very strong and rooted. They say *si kuet ken penemah, sibijak ken perawah*, which literally means 'who is strong to be a leader, who is fluent to be a spokesman'. Thus, typically, the *melengkan* are recited by the *gecik, petue* and *imem*.

Thus, *melengkan* is presented in a poetry manner. Lethbridge and Mildorf (2004, p. 142) say "poetry is perceived as fictional, it uses specialized language, in many cases it lacks a pragmatic function, it is also ambiguous". Thus, poetry is also a configuration of words bounded by rhyme, or the number of rows characterized by dense language. In English, "poem" or "poetry" means to make or manufacture. This is because through poetry, someone can express a message or a picture of a particular atmosphere, both physical and spiritual, by using artistic language.

### 3. METHOD

This is a descriptive qualitative research study which was done in the regencies of Bener Meriah and Central Aceh, where Gayonese as the local indigenous language is spoken. The sources of the data for this study were speakers of *melengkan*, customary figures, and speakers of Gayonese. Several instruments were used to collect data: interviews, observations, and recordings. In this study, the respondents were four public figures who often use *melengkan* in various contexts including at wedding ceremonies.

According to Suyanto and Sutinah (2005), an interview is a way which is used to obtain information (data) from respondents by directly asking them either face to face or by using other communication devices, such as a telephone and/or the internet. In this study, the first writer interviewed face to face the four cultural figures from Gayonese society who knew a lot about *melengkan*. The interviews were conducted in Gayonese and the interview guide was designed to verify the data related to the institutional activities in which *melengkan* is used within the Gayonese language. It included questions that covered the use of *melengkan*, the reasons for using it, the literature of *melengkan*, and other related matters.

The form of observations used was structured observations; the researcher acted as an observer-participant. He observed the performance of *Melengkan* from the beginning to the end at a wedding ceremony, and paid attention to the openings, the content and the closings of the *Melengkan*. A video and tape recording was also used to ease us obtain a more complete data in the use of *melengkan* in the ceremony.

There were also other documents used to support our literature and findings. These include books containing *melengkan* texts, the history of the Gayonese, and information related to *melengkan* itself. According to Bogdan and Biklen (1998), personal and official documents are very important, as they can provide understanding of areas of the study being researched. In analyzing the data, this research followed the steps for analyzing qualitative data, namely, analyzing the script of the *melengkan*, categorizing the data into the context, form and values of *melengkan*, and also analyzing the data by using discourse analysis in literal translation and the meaning of *melengkan* based on the context. Those steps were done to describe the three foci of this research, which are the context, the forms and values of *melengkan*.

## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1 The Contexts of *Melengkan*

*Melengkan* is delivered by the *reje* from *Sarak Opat*. Usually the *reje* from one side delivers a speech and then the other *reje* from the other side replies the speech. In a marriage ceremony, *melengkan* is delivered in several occasions, and the data from this research reveals that there were six kinds of *melengkan* and are used in different occasions or contexts of the ceremony. They are:

- (1) *Melengkan Turun Caram*,
- (2) *Melengkan Beguru*,
- (3) *Melengkan Munyerah Rempete*,
- (4) *Melengkan Munerime Rempete*,
- (5) *Melengkan Munyerah Munenes*, and
- (6) *Melengkan Munerime Munenes*.

The main content of *melengkan* is to hand over the bride to the groom by her family and villagers. Thus, each form of *Melengkan* mentioned above is explained in the following sections.

#### 4.1.1 *Melengkan Turun Caram*

*Melengkan Turun Caram* means the delivery of the gold as the dowry and gifts to the bride's house by the groom before the wedding ceremony. It is usually held in the bride's house. This is when the groom's entourage comes to the bride's house. The groom's entourage includes the village chief (of the groom's village), other leaders of his village, some leaders of nearby villages and sub-villages, and some members of the bridegroom's family, but the bridegroom is absent at this time. They bring gold as part of the dowry, money, bedding and clothing. Generally the *melengkan* here consist of three parts, namely: (1) the opening, (2) the body or content, and (3) the closing.

The core of the *Melengkan Turun Caram* speech is set out below (M refers to *Melengkan*, and 1 refers to data 1, and so forth)

- (M1) *Reje...ujut ayu murubah, mungkin mera mupinah, mata ni mera musapor terang, bagi kite ni heme, mera we mutalok iden, mera we mulupen lale.*

[Translation: "King...the new exist exchange, may be able to move, the eye can be hazy, for us as a human, able to forget".]

The content of the *melengkan* above is the core of the event. The meaning is that with the delivery of the dowry, the groom's entourage hope that it will win the hand of the bride and they be accepted by her family and people in the village. They hope that the gifts brought by the groom by the bride's family are enough. At this time, a leader from the bride's part will examine the gifts to ensure that it is not less than or in accordance with previous agreement prior to the wedding. If there were still some gifts missing and not as previously agreed by both sides of the bride and groom, then it will be added immediately by the groom's entourage. At the end of the *melengkan*, the groom's entourage further asked for forgiveness to the bride's family if there were still deficiencies in their gifts.

#### 4.1.2 *Melengkan Beguru*

Before the wedding ceremony, the bride and the groom must participate in a *beguru* ceremony usually held in the morning or afternoon in the house of the bride's parents'. Here, all of their relatives and friends in the village and beyond are invited. In a *beguru* ceremony, the main event is a speech giving marriage advice to the betrothed couple, by means of a *Melengkan Beguru*. Below is part of the content of this kind of *melengkan*:

(M2) *Anakku...anak ni kami. Pengen ko mulo ling ni kami si tetue ni, warus mu i wajiben, ringen mu i bereten, oya nume geli ni ate ni kami ken ningko, gere ko kami tulak urum serde kolak, kami senawat urum kami besik urum kayu loes anakku. Enti kase gere betih ko oya sunah ni nabinte ari pudah mi, wajib ukumme.*

[Translation: My daughter...our daughter. Please listen to our advice, your duties are obligatory, they are weighty, we do not hate you, we do not push you with a wide *serde*<sup>1</sup>, and we do not hit you with wood, my daughter. Don't you know that these are the *sunnah*<sup>2</sup> prayers of our messenger from the last, this is obligatory.]

The content of this *melengkan* are addressed directly to the bride to always listen to the advice of her parents and to understand the reason of why she is getting married; it does not mean that she is being expelled from her home, thus it is to continue the *sunnah* of the prophet that marriage is recommended to couples who are capable to do so. In the Gayo tradition, a girl who is married will usually live in the village of the husband's.

#### 4.1.3 *Melengkan Munyerah Rempete*

After the *beguru* ceremony held in the afternoon, then the next morning an entourage will accompany the bridegroom to go to the bride's home. When they arrive, a ceremony will be held, usually at the local *mushalla* (small mosque) or mosque, before the wedding ceremony. Below is a part of a *Melengkan Munyerah Rempete* speech:

(M3) *Reje...rejeku...reje...*

*Sitimang beret, sijuel murege, remalan pemulo, kunul teruken, si tertib majelis, umet bermulie. Atas si kedue si kami pemuliei, imem si muperlu sunet, wan edet gere neh pipet, wan ukum gere neh bele, atas yang ketige e tetue si musidik kasat, gere neh sesat ton te mungune. Selanjut e miyen, rakyat genap mupakat sara kopat bagi pendare si kami hormati.*

[Translation: King...my king...a king...who is so weighty and valuable, running the first sitting to lead, orderly assemble the honorable people. Second, who we honor, *imam*<sup>3</sup>, who knows *sunnah* that does not conflict with the custom, the law

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<sup>1</sup> *Serde* is a tool like a coal shovel to flatten the soil of a rice/paddy field.

<sup>2</sup> *Sunnah* is the verbally communicated record of the teachings, deeds and sayings, silent permissions (or disapprovals) of the prophet Muhammad.

<sup>3</sup> *Imam* is the person who leads prayers in a mosque.

no longer moves. Third, the elders who have held firm their roles, which are no longer astray when asked. Furthermore, the people who are considerate.]

The meaning from the *Melengkan* above is to honor the leaders of a community. This includes the leader of the village (who in *Melengkan* is *reje*, literally means the king), thus today, colloquially called a *gecik*. He is someone who is highly respected by the community, who always protects his people, standing before them to face all odds. Then they also present their respect to the village scholars who always teach and preach about religion in the community, and who never tire of giving advice to people in the community. Finally, the last respect is to the people, who are expected to be always considerate and tolerance with each other.

#### 4.1.4 *Melengkan Munerime Rempela*

After the head of the groom's village recites *Melengkan Munyerah Rempela*, it will be continued with *Melengkan Munerime Rempela* performed by the head of the bride's village. The words of the *Melengkan Munyerah Rempela* are as follows:

(M4) *Memang jarak bang ari Serbejadi, kati lengkap bang bilang ne reje, gere taring bakul sugi si mabok. Ara bunge lawang jarang-jarang, nge tamah mangas bang kati ilang, beta bang kata oleh ni reje sine.*

[Translation: Indeed far from Serbejadi<sup>4</sup>, to fit the number, do not miss the basket of *sugi*<sup>5</sup>.]

This expression is a reply from the bride's head of the village addressed to the groom's head of the village, stating that each act must be based on religious laws and customs, so that everything goes as expected. Thus, the wedding ceremony must also conform to the laws of religion and the customs of the Gayonese, so that no thing unanticipated will occur.

#### 4.1.5 *Melengkan Munyerah Munenes*

After the wedding ceremony is held in the bride's village, the next day the bride and her entourage go to the groom's village. In the Gayonese language, this is called *mujule bai* or *munenes*. Below are the contents of a *melengkan munyerah munenes*.

(M5) *Langkah pemulo amangku dan ku reje si ara i sien yang bahwa sat ne kami nge i alui ari elem-elemen renye sawah ku dodok ni tenge ni ama reje ni, kebetulen kami pe nge ikonolen ku kenonolen atan nialas si sara bedang, yaitu si berukir leladu bercucuk kerawang ni, nge sedie kami i tmpat si pemelie oleh ama reje, untuk ini kami ucepken berijin.*

[Translation: The first step is for the king, now we have gone from the field of our village to come to the leader of the village. Say the king, we also have been given a seat on one sheet of mat, which is carved beautifully filled with threads, which is already available neatly, of course, we say thank you.]

<sup>4</sup> Serbejadi is the name of the village in which the wedding ceremony was held when data was collected.

<sup>5</sup> *Sugi* is betel in Gayonese.

After opening the *melengkan*, further expressions of gratitude from the bride's group to the host for the welcome and hospitality from the leader of the groom are expressed, using expression full of figurative and beautiful phrases. This is then followed with the expression of an apology if anyone from the group in attendance has behaved inappropriately or in a way that is less than pleasing to the local people.

#### 4.1.6 *Melengkan Munerime Munenes*

As usual, after the handover of the bride to the groom, there will be an expression of acceptance on the part of the groom's family; this is called the *Melengkan Munerime Munenes*. Here are the contents of *Melengkan Munerime Munenes*:

(M6) *Ike ibarat awal serlo mane nge le kite suenen, cumen ini kami manaten ku ume berume, awal ni ke nge kite suenen mokot kemokote ke bakal muah, cumen ku manaten ku ume berume maksud te jeroh ume, tetapi awalni ike nge male tue enti tupang orom oloh tejem, karna orom oloh tejemni pangane batange ama reje, maksud te jeroh akhere borok batange mu toh uwahe, ta kunewe keta, gelah ume berume mumerah kayu cabang, gelah jeroh tupange kati selamat ama reje sana si kite suen.*

[Translation: The rice that we have planted (will grow) like the banana that we planted yesterday, and we suggest to parents, this banana plant, day by day, will give fruit, but when it is old, please do not lean on it with a sharp bamboo, because that can cut the banana, and cause the fruit to fall. So the parents should find good wood to lean on and that will save what we have planted.]

Furthermore, *melengkan* contains advice to the *besan* (the relationship between the parents whose children are married) to always keep the harmony, by not imposing their desires above what the new couple are able to afford, and to treat well their in-laws so that a happy marriage will be achieved by the couple.

## 4.2 The Forms of *Melengkan* Poetry

*Melengkan* poetry uses much indirect messages, and this is done by employing figurative languages. Below is an example of a Gayonese *melengkan* that consists of four lines (rhyming e-e-e-e), in which all the lines are part of the contents and the language has figuratives. An example of this *melengkan* poetry is as follows:

(M7) *sene bubak bang sene buge,*  
[hopefully the jokes]  
*berakah sene i telege,*  
[jokes near the well]  
*cerak ni kekanak nge le sawah ku tetue,*  
[talk of the kids are up to parents]  
*beta kata oleh ari reje.*  
[so the word of the king]



The poetry in M7 tells the readers that a man and a woman must first know each other and be friends. Day by day, they may fall in love. And thus, it is advised that parents do not force their children into doing something that they are not fond of, such as a forced marriage to someone they do not love.

Likewise, the poetry in M7 refers to a romantic nuance. Typically, in the traditional Gayonese society, once a man or a woman wants to get married, they do not directly tell their parents their intention. Thus, they would inform close relatives first, and this relative (s) will inform his/her parents about the marriage intention.

In general, the form of the *melengkan* is similar from one speaker to the other. They start with an opening, content (message) and ending. Furthermore, in terms of forms of poetry, this study found two forms of *melengkan*, they are lyric and maxim-proverb. These forms are explained in the following sub-sections.

#### 4.2.1 Lyric

Lyric is a kind of poem in which each stanza of a number of lines that rhymes. [Bértoli-Dutra and Bissaco \(2006, p. 1052\)](#) say “lyrics are written as a form of interaction between the writer and the listeners, most of the times they carry a message (whatever that might be) with the purpose of motivating the listeners, at least, to think about it”. It may comprise figurative elements that contain myth and history, or the teachings of philosophy or religion. In *melengkan*, the poems are usually long with a simple regular format that tells a short and simple story of wishful thinking, history and/or advice. An example at the wedding ceremony is such as seen in M8.

(M8) *ike ate murayi ate,*  
 [if both of your hearts love each other]  
*ungkepe serasa gule ungke*  
 [then life will be sweet like *ungke*<sup>6</sup>]  
*ike ate gere murai ate,*  
 [but if you hate each other]  
*bawal pe desne orom awal bangke*  
 [the fish will taste like a corpse]

In M8, the content of the *melengkan* urges marriage couples to love each other from the heart to live a happy life together, for hatred towards each other can lead to an unhappy life in marriage. Beyond this meaning, the *melengkan* also advise a husband and a wife to be patient with each other, no matter what challenges may strike them during their lifetime. Love will lead them to endurance and blessings from the God.

We also found that *melengkan* has no fixed rules on its length. The most important thing was the purpose of the *Melengkan* itself. Each speaker conveyed the message as advices with poetical lines and phrases.

#### 4.2.2 Maxim-proverb

The maxim-proverb is part of the verbal heritage for an area; it is a series of short speeches using classical language, with deep, broad meanings that cover every aspect of

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<sup>6</sup> *Ungke* is a kind of vegetable that grows wild and tastes bitter. But in this lyric, it means that with love, any bitter taste will turn to sweet.

life in that society. Maxim itself is a notable quote for taking action to lead a good life, or as simple as Harbus (2002) says it as wisdom poetry. Meanwhile, Yusuf and Yusuf (2014, p. 25) define proverb as “axiomatic expressions that state a general truth or give advice”. Hence, the relation between maxim and proverb is coined by Jacobs (2012, pp. xviii-xviii), who says “every proverb is a maxim, and every maxim is an observation, but not every observation is a maxim or every maxim a proverb”. This is because proverbs also include moral and descriptive elements, and this is not similar to maxim (Rocha, 2012).

**Table 1.** Maxim-proverbs in *melengkan*.

No	Text	Meaning
M9	<i>Ike ku edet enti neh pipet, ike ku ukum enti neh bele</i> [if to the customs is not run, to the law is not lost]	Everything must adjust with customs and religion.
M10	<i>Peri ni turah mubengkuang gelap, tengkahe lane kone dekat</i> [this talk must be clear, cut slowly and be sure]	We must do everything responsibly.
M11	<i>Ike atas pe batang ni uyem olongke kucak, ike renah pe birah olongke kolak</i> , [even high the resin rod ( <i>damar</i> tree) but it has small leaves, but even low the <i>taro</i> (keladi) it has large leaves]	No one is perfect.
M12	<i>ike mutungku oya turah murues</i> [every tress has internode (space between joint in the tree)]	There is cause and effect to every action.

Nevertheless, the maxim-proverb can be said as a literary form commonly used in a community. This is also found in the Gayonese society, especially in customary activities such as the wedding ceremony as one of them. Some of the maxim-proverbs in *melengkan* at the Gayonese wedding ceremony are shown in Table 1.

From Table 1 that we can conclude that in Gayonese *melengkan*, the speaker uses some of proverbs in their speech. In every *melengkan*, there are one or more maxim-proverbs that have deep meaning especially in giving advice to the bride and the groom, parents and their relatives, how to respect to the elders, be responsible in life, and be obedient to the customs as well as to God based on the Islamic teachings.

### 4.3 The Cultural Values Conveyed in Gayonese *Melengkan*

Something of value has qualities and usefulness for people. Something that is worthwhile means that it is useful for human life. The value of a decision can be said to be useful or useless, religious or not religious depending on how it is connected with elements inherent in human life, namely physical, creative, tasteful and trustworthy elements. Human life is a social construction. As Boghossian (2001, p. 1) clearly explains:

To say of something that it is socially constructed is to emphasize its dependence on contingent aspects of our social selves. It is to say: This thing could not have existed had we not built it; and we need not have built it at all, at least not in its present form. Had we been a different kind of society, had we had different needs, values, or interests, we might well have built a different kind of thing, or built this one differently. (Boghossian, 2001, p. 1)

Therefore, human life is a social construction that cannot be separated from a variety of matters relating to behavior, emotional relationships and the framework of acting and thinking about each other. Henceforth, based on the analysis of the data obtained from this study, the values of using *melengkan* in Gayonese are found to be the following:

- (1) The values of local knowledge,
- (2) The values of their belief or religion
- (3) The values of giving advice,
- (4) To recall the history and the beauty of speech in their language.

Explanation of the values of *melengkan* is as follows.

#### 4.3.1 The Values of Local Knowledge

The speaker of *melengkan* always convey messages to audience to remember the local customs, one of them is that the Gayonese people must give advice to each other, work together, to know and comprehended the kinds of taboo in their society, how to make friendship, be harmonious with neighbors, and helping each other.

(M13) *Aku si tengah becerakni, tikik male munyawah ni manat spetenah, ejer marah ni muyang datu nte, singe mucap kuantu, mulabang ku papan, kati enti sawah manut ku pelipen museruk ipedenen.*

[Translation: We want to tell (you) a bit of advice from our ancestors who we always remember and do not let them be forgotten, it was and is part of the Gayonese culture that they must never be forgotten on what they have done as the custom is before us.]

In M13, the *melengkan* passes on the local knowledge to the present and future generation that all advices in their society have been inherited from their ancestors and they should be preserved and respected.

The messages in *melengkan* usually contain warnings about the things that they do in life, hence the Gayonese must adjust them with the regulation based on the customary philosophy which is rooted from their ancestors.

(M14) *Muripni sebenare turahwe i kanong edet, mate i kanung bumi, murip benar mate suci, kene si tetuente: teluk mupenimen, penyangkulen mubelide. Urang gayo mu edet, muresam, muatur. Gotolni peri, edet te enti osah pipet, resam turah kite paham, atur enti osah bele.*

[Translation: This life must be appropriate with the customs, die on earth, live truthfully, and die purely. It is said by the ancestors: the cove has a place to take water<sup>7</sup>, the net for catching fish are bamboos<sup>8</sup>. The *Gayonese* people have customs, traditions, and regulations. Do not let these customs fade, we must comprehended the traditions, do not let the regulations fade.]

The value of their customs must be conserved, even though these customs may even be unwritten or documented, but they have to be passed on and the next generation and be followed by all Gayonese people.

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<sup>7</sup> It refers to *penimen*.

<sup>8</sup> It refers to *penyangkulen*.

#### 4.3.2 The Values of Their Belief or Religion

In Gayo highland, especially in Bener Meriah and Central Aceh regencies, almost all of the Gayonese are Muslims. In every speech, a speaker must never forget to convey values of Islam in order to always praise, the one God, Allah. *Melengkan* that used in opening speeches also reminds the audiences to always remember their creator.

- (M15) *Si mukamulni bewene si bertaqwa, berimen, si mumeteh puja ku illahiRabbi, su munamat king ejerni agama te islam, Alhamdulillah.*  
[Translation: all audiences should have *taqwa* (god-fearing), keep in faith, always praise Allah, and hold tight to the Islamic teachings, *Alhamdulillah*.<sup>9</sup>]

The devoted and faithful society must always uphold their religion. The utterance of this *melengkan* asks the audience to hold tight to their religion, Islam, to always praise Allah, and never go astray.

#### 4.3.3 The Values of Giving Advice

In the Gayonese wedding ceremony, at every chance, the figures of the society always give advice to the bride and groom. Since the newlyweds will face a new life together, and also sometimes in new village, therefore they must have good and accepted manners, respect the elders, care for the young, be generous to the poor, and to never be arrogant. This is as enclosed in M16.

- (M16) *Remalan ko kase enti begerdak, mujurah enti muyintak, ate mu turah mu'min pumumu gelah murah. Salak enti osah kerut, budi pekertimu turah belangi, si tetue i melien, kekanak i sayangi, si nyanya ike ara rejekimu, gere dele tekek i tolong bantu ko anakku.*  
[Translation: When you walk, do not be rough over others, give something to others sincerely, let your heart be saint and your hand be soft, do not let your face frown or scowl, you must behave well, respect your elders, love the younger children, love the poor, and if you have a lot of money, give some to them as much as you can.]

This advice are expected to be remembered and followed by the newlyweds and the advice is believed to lead them to a peaceful life with their spouse, parents, in-laws, neighbors, and other society from other villages.

#### 4.3.4 To Recall the History and the Beauty of Speech in Their Language

The Gayonese also have tales, legends, and fables, and so on. They believe that everything in this world has the beginning and ending, and as the generations of Gayonese, they should know their tribe's history, origin, as well as their language. They should understand the beauty of their poetic words and the necessity to speak softly.

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<sup>9</sup> It means "all praise is for Allah".

(M17) *Musarik bumi mugegeur langit, kekite misele gere beredet. Conto taringe sumang si opat, oya umpama ume sigere mupatal, weh gere muwak-waken, perau gere muluge, koro gere beruwer, emas gere berpuro, malo gere ne iruwangi, oya...oya, ujunge mukunah kite. Oya misel ni lelayang si metos tali, lelang ku langit lolo ku bumi. Musarik bumi mugegeur langit, kekite misele gere beredet.*

[Translation: The earth screams and the sky thunders if we have not custom. If we ignore the four taboos, it is like a field that has not border, water that does not have a container, a ship (boat) that has no paddles, a buffalo without a farm, gold that has no value; it will destroy us. It is like the kite that has no strings, flying without control.]

The Gayonese do not admire their people if they do not follow their customs. Because they believe that these customs are what hold them together. These customs are rules and guidance to their life. The *melengkan* in M17 provides a lot of analogies that are related to nature. For example, they say if they do not practice the four taboos, it such as rice that is not cooked or water without a container, and like the kite that has no strings and unknown of when it will fall. Accordingly, the four taboos of the Gayonese are:

- (1) *sumang penengonen* (the taboo of sight, e.g. looking at bad things such as pornography),
- (2) *sumang kenunulen* (the taboo of sitting too much, e.g. being lazy),
- (3) *sumang pelangkahen* (the taboo of walking with, e.g. going with evil or immoral people), and
- (4) *sumang perceraken* (the taboo of speaking, e.g. gossiping, speaking ill of others).

These taboos must be avoided by every Gayonese to have them accepted in the society and be respected by other people.

## 5. CONCLUSION

After analyzing the data on *melengkan* in a Gayonese wedding ceremony, some conclusions are drawn. There are six kinds of *Melengkan* or traditional Gayonese language used in traditional Gayonese wedding ceremonies, namely: *Melengkan Turun Caram* (when giving the dowry to the bride's family), *Melengkan Beguru* (when giving advice to the bride and groom), *Melengkan Munyerah Rempete* (when handing over the groom to the bride's family), *Melengkan Munerime Rempete* (when the bride's village chief accepts the groom), *Melengkan Munyerah Munenes* (handing over the bride to the groom's family), *Melengkan Munerime Munenes* (when the groom's village chief accepts the bride). The *melengkan* are recited by the village chiefs (*reje*), village advisors (*petue*) and the priests (*imem*).

The forms of *melengkan* are lyrics and maxim-proverbs. They contain non-literal meanings to express the message in *melengkan*. Furthermore, the cultural values conveyed in *melengkan* are the values of local knowledge, the values of their belief or religion the values of giving advice, and to recall the history and the beauty of speech in this form of traditional speech.

It is suggested that those who are concerned with the Gayonese culture should study more about the use of *melengkan* since this culture should be maintained as it is a

noteworthy characteristic of the Gayonese culture. The younger generation of Gayonese ought to be made more aware of this culture to prevent it from disappearance due to the position of the Gayonese as a minority cultural group in Aceh. Finally, other researchers who are interested in conducting further research in *melengkan* to investigate it from different cultural ceremonies, such as in *Sunatan* (circumcision for a boy), *Akikah* (birth and naming of a baby), and deaths i.e. funerals/burials.

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