

# A Cross-Cultural Communication in the Chant of Osong in "Rambu Soloq" Death Ceremony of Torajan Culture

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to explain a cross-cultural communication between Torajan and Buginese cultures contained in a mourning song in *Rambu Soloq* ritual in Toraja, called Osong. This research is a participatory observational study conducted in Sa'dan Balusu District, North Toraja Regency. The data in the form of social situations and speech events were obtained through recording, interviewing, and note-taking techniques. The data were analyzed interpretively-qualitatively. The results show that in the oral tradition of the death ritual "*Rambu Soloq*" in Osong song there is cross-cultural communication between the two regional cultures in South Sulawesi, namely Torajan culture and Buginese culture in the Luwu region which have a close relationship. This is expressed in Osong song which uses expressions in two different languages, namely the Buginese language and the Torajan language. The cross-cultural communication contained in Osong Song is described using the theory of intercultural communication which expresses the values and cultural norms and local wisdom of the people in the two regions.

**Keywords:** *Communication, Culture, Osong song, Rambu Soloq.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesian society has long been known to be very heterogeneous in various aspects, such as the diversity of ethnic groups, religions, languages, customs and so on. On the other hand, the rapid development of the world today with very high mobility and dynamics has caused the world to move towards a global direction that has almost no boundaries as a result of the development of modern technology. Therefore, society (in a broad sense) must be ready to face new situations in the context of cultural diversity or whatever it is called. Interaction and communication must also run with each other, whether they already know each other or have never met at all, let alone get acquainted.

In communicating with the context of cultural diversity often encounter problems or obstacles that were not previously expected. For example, in the use of language, symbols, values or societal norms and so on. In terms of conditions for the establishment of a relationship, of course, there must be mutual understanding and exchange of information or meaning between one another.

The peninsula of South Sulawesi is inhabited by many ethnic groups and sub-ethnics that can be easily identified based on the language of instruction used and the area inhabited. Therefore, this region is known for four major ethnic groups, namely Buginese, Makassarese, Mandarese and Torajan. These tribes or ethnicities can be identified from the physical characteristics, customs and language used. Physically and in terms of customs, it is difficult to find a striking difference between the four major ethnic groups in South Sulawesi. For example, in the Buginese and Makassarese marriage ceremony, it is called *mapacci'* (in Buginese) or *apacci'* (Makassarese). The Mandarese tribe probably has a ceremony similar to other terms although the meaning is slightly different from Torajan culture because it is strongly influenced by religious differences with the other three ethnicities. These cultural similarities clearly show that there are common cultural roots between the four ethnic groups in South Sulawesi [1].

Regarding the language used in the four major ethnic groups namely Buginese, Makassarese, Mandarese and Torajan, there is the use of the same language in a death song called Osong *Ma'tammu tedong* ceremony of

Rambu Solo' Torajan culture. The Ma'tammu tedong ceremony is one of the rituals in the death ceremony in Toraja which brings together all the buffalo that will be offered/sacrificed preceded by local traditional rites.

To see the relationship between cross-cultural communication, it will be described how cross-cultural communication occurs between Torajan and Buginese ethnics at a funeral ritual ceremony through a mourning song called Osong. The following Osong songs show the words spoken in the two languages. The source of Osong data below was recorded during the burial ceremony of Ne' Yurlin and Ne' Dini (Pak Talantan) in Sangkaropik' (Sa'dan Mataallo District) North Toraja.

## 2. THEORETICAL BASIS

Communication and culture have a reciprocal relationship. Culture becomes part of communication behaviour and in turn, communication also determines maintaining, developing and inheriting culture as Hall [2] said that communication is culture and culture is communication. On the one hand, communication is a mechanism for disseminating the cultural norms of society, either "horizontally" from one society to another, or vertically from one generation to the next. On the other hand, culture is the norms or values that are considered appropriate for a particular group.

Learning to understand intercultural communication means understanding the cultural realities that influence and play a role in communication. One can see that the process of communication and cultural attention lies in the variety of steps and ways of communicating that cross the human community or group. The focus of attention on the study of communication and culture also includes how to explore meanings, patterns of action, as well as how these meanings and patterns are articulated into a social group, cultural group, political group, educational process, and even a technological environment that involves human interaction.

According to Kim [3], the assumption underlying the boundaries of intercultural communication is that individuals belonging to the same culture generally share commonalities in their overall experience background than people from different cultures. So intercultural communication refers to the phenomenon of communication in which participants with different cultural backgrounds establish contact with each other directly or indirectly. While intercultural communication requires and deals with cultural similarities and differences between the parties involved, the cultural characteristics of the participants are not the focus of the study. The focus of intercultural communication is the process of communication between individuals and individuals and groups with groups.

Culture and communication are inseparable relationships. When an individual begins to mingle with

society, cultural values have begun to be adopted in his life. The values and norms he adheres to are obtained from the values and norms adopted by the community where he lives and grew up. The absorption process was obtained through a communication situation.

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Every individual who communicates verbally uses language to convey his message. Language is a representation of culture because every message that is strung through words cannot be separated from a person's cultural identity.

Through language, messages can be conveyed, meaning can be shared, and communication processes can occur. According to Mulyana (2004), one of the advantages of humans over animals is that humans speak. Language is a cultural representation or a "rough map" that depicts culture, including the world views, beliefs, values, knowledge and experiences of the community concerned.

Understanding the meaning and function of oral tradition texts also needs to consider the context of the oral tradition. The context of the oral tradition can be in the form of situational context, cultural context, social context, and ideological context. Verbal expressions and forms of oral tradition are analyzed to reveal the meaning and function as well as values and norms. culture by using various relevant theories including pragmatic theory, semantic theory, and semiotic theory. Semantic and pragmatic theories examine texts from all levels (sounds, words, sentences, and discourses) to find meaning, intent, function, and message in the lingual form based on the context and context. It is the co-text and context that make pragmatics and semantics important in anthropolinguistic studies. Understanding the lingual form (verbal text) cannot be separated from the context and context as mentioned above, but must be tied to the context and context of its use. Therefore, there are two stages of the process of understanding the text linguistically, namely analyzing the lingual form first from the appropriate linguistic level, then looking for the meaning, intent, function, and message of the lingual form according to the context and context. Understanding the text based on the context and context is related to the performance of the oral tradition. By understanding the meaning, intent, message, and function of a text in an oral tradition performance, the values and cultural norms of the oral tradition will be interpreted, then the local wisdom will be understood" [4].

Pragmatic and semantic studies based on the linguistic level are focused on the study of lingual forms (verbal texts), while semiotic studies can also be used to examine other forms such as co-texts and the context of an oral tradition to reveal local wisdom contained in oral traditions. This combination of theories will be able to explain the form of oral tradition and express cultural values and norms as well as local wisdom contained in oral traditions [4].

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The problems in this study were examined using qualitative research methods. This research was conducted by entering certain social situations by observing and interviewing people who were considered to know well the social situation. The data was obtained by directly visiting the place (location) of the Rambu Soloq ceremony to conduct participatory observations. Primary data in the form of the speech obtained from field studies (from informants) through recording and note-taking techniques. Apart from speech texts, this research data is also in the form of information about cultural traditions and patterns of people's life/actions in the form of social relations. Data were analyzed qualitatively.

### 4. DISCUSSION

The speech text data showing the following extextualization process were obtained from the death ceremony in a ma'tammu tedong ceremony, a meeting of all buffalo to be offered/sacrificed preceded by local traditional rites.

Following are some examples of quotes from Osong's songs which are spoken in two (2) regional languages, namely Toraja and Bugis. An example of this Osong song is spoken at the Ma'tammu Tedong ritual ceremony and the Ma'kaburu ritual, as the data attached below. Figures and tables should be placed either at the top or bottom of the page and close to the text referring to them if possible.

- (1). Tabe'ambe 'tabe injo'  
'respect for father and mother'
- (2) Siman kita sola nasang  
'also respect for all of us'
- (3) Angki tannunpa batingki  
'we will explain our sorrow'
- (4) Marinjai bulu'  
'this village is sad'
- (5) Sarong bulawanna lipu  
'the country's golden shade'
- (6) Manganjuri Tuan Londong'  
'heading to the land of Puang La Londong'
- (7) Uran di hulu  
'rain upstream'
- (8) Salo' massaro lempa'  
'the great overflowing flood'

- (9) Wai mata maccolo  
'like flowing tears'
- (10) Dipatotoi to maloloe  
'fate of people who die young'
- (11). Pakkaede  
'Pakkaede'
- (12) Tappaja na tupp solo'(bela)  
'Sorrow continues to plague our lives'
- (13) Tindak sarira na olai  
'rainbow lived'
- (14) Koro uwe na letei  
'lightning is passed'
- (15) Mangunjuri Tuan Londong'  
'to the land of Puang La Londong'.
- (16) Leppangan memang ri linoe '  
'this world is a temporary place'
- (17) Riolona Puang Ede  
'before God is eternal'
- (18) Tudangan marajae  
'glorious seat'.
- (19) Pa'di tae randanna  
'endless sorrow'
- (20) Apa ma'dokkomo ambe'  
'sit down father'
- (21) Mairi' lisa'na tondok  
'the whole country has come'
- (22) Umbengki'pa'pakilala  
'will give advice / custom'
- (23) La dirandukmo te ada'  
'this traditional ceremony will begin'
- (24) Tonoran sangka'to dolota  
'the rules of our ancestors'
- (25) Anna rapa' katongkonan  
'may our condolences rest in peace.'
- (26) Puang Matua Ambe'ta  
'Lord God, our Father'
- (27) Puang tontong ta porannu  
God who remains hope
- (28) Ilan a'gan katuan-anta  
'in all aspects of our lives'.
- (29) Den oi upa' ta poupa'  
'hope we are all safe'
- (30) Paraya ta poparaya  
'happy and prosperous.'
- (31) Anta masakke mairi'  
'safe and comfortable.'

The text of the osong song is an expression of sorrow (sadness), praise, flattery and hope for the deceased.

Texts 1,2,3 above reveal an event of mourning, sadness and even despair because of remembering the occurrence of death. Likewise in text 12 in Bugis "Tappaja na tupp solo" 'grief continues to plague our lives. In the Toraja local language, the meaning is the same as the expression "pa'di tae randanna" 'endless sorrow' see text 19.

The next level is said to be explained by the narrative. This is indicated by the statement in the text segment (4-31) that says that this village is in a state of sadness, namely that a young family member has passed away

who was given the title sarong bulawanna lipu 'the golden protector of this country (in text segment 5) whom he expected as a protector. the land or the guardian of the land but he has returned to heaven which in the text is called Puang Lalondong (6 and 16). In the text it is said, it is explained that he went through the rainbow and bridged the lightning (15-16) as his bridge. The sadness of their hearts is like rain upstream like a great flood that overflows (text segment 8). Their tears of sadness are like flowing water, one of their family members died at a young age "dipatotoi to maloloe" (10) . It is followed by a text segment (13), and a text segment (2) is said to show that sorrow has no end or its end, no end (20).

There is self-submission to accept death because this world is only a temporary place (17) before God (18) who is eternal "tudangan marajae". The Father has sat down (21) and the entire family (text 22), traditional advice (text 23) has also been present. The burial custom will begin, which will be held in the ma'tammu tedong ceremony. We will carry out the customs of the ancestors (23-25). May our condolences rest in peace, Lord God our Father (27-28) be our hope in all aspects of life and may we all be safe, happy and prosperous (29-31). Traditions that have been rooted like bamboo roots and ancestors who handed down truths (23-25).

Narrative markers are also found in the text segment which states that 'adat' will start at the root. In Osong song, it can be seen at the following text level:

23. La dirandukmo te ada'  
'this traditional ceremony will begin'
24. Tonoran sangka'to dolota  
'the rules of our forefathers'
25. Anna rapa' katongkonan  
may our condolences rest in peace.

These words and expressions related to family relations based on the lineage of the ancestors of the Toraja people with the ancestors of the Bugis, namely from the Luwu area as described in the story of Lakipadada, a man from Toraja who wandered in search of immortality to Gowa, where he married with the princess of the kingdom of Gowa and gave birth to uptra who became king of Gowa Makassar, Luwu and Toraja.

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The Bugis/Luwu community in this verse, if traced based on historical (historical) background, shows that there is a kinship (blood) relationship between the Toraja people and the Bugis people. In this case, these two regions are related in terms of history which have similarities in terms of nobility. According to the myth that is often told in the passage "Passomba Tedong" that Tomanurun is a person who came from heaven to perfect

aluk, customs, and culture on earth. In this case, Puang Tamboro Langi' was sent by the Almighty to bring Aluk Sanda Saratu 'a very complete rule' to perfect the aluk that was passed down previously.

In addition, the relationship between the Toraja and Bugis people in the Luwu area began to establish communication where in the past when the Toraja people immigrated to the Luwu area to earn a living. Because the area island for agriculture and plantations. Of the many Toraja people who immigrated to Luwu, only a small number of them returned to their ancestral lands in Toraja and most settled in the Luwu area so that those who had settled there had mingled with the Luwu/Bugis community through marriage. By itself, this resulted in the assimilation of customs/cultures that led to the occurrence of multiculturalism. Even if they have settled in the Luwu area, the Toraja people will forget their ancestral land and extended family which is seen at the time of the death ceremony. When they come with their families to express their condolences, this is expressed by words in two languages, namely Toraja and Bugis which they use every day. This is what causes cross-cultural communication.

As described earlier, intercultural communication has many benefits, especially in the way we communicate and respond to the behaviour of a person or group of a different culture from ours. We can see some important values in this cross-cultural communication, such as religious values, cooperation and kinship values.

#### *a. Religious Value*

The religious value in the text of Osong's song implies that humans accept death with complete submission and complete surrender to Allah the creator. In the song Osong in the Bugis language text it says *leppangan* is true *ri lino e, riolona Puang Ede tudangan maraja* "This world is a stopover place, in the presence of a noble God, an eternal seat which means this world is a temporary stopover place only a place to spend the night for a moment and later we will leave and in heaven is a beautiful place as a place of human eternity with God.

#### *b. The value of Cooperation*

The value of cooperation at funerals in Toraja society is called *sambangan ongan, siringan-milanan, sisonda Siangkaran* which means helping each other in distress by coming to bring donations without being invited as a statement of sympathy, an expression of condolences because of the deep ties of inner ties as members of the community.

#### *c. Family Value*

There are four kinship values contained in cross-cultural communication in Osong Nyanyian, namely, first, *sipopa'di* 'sependeritaan' meaning those who come to feel the sadness experienced by the bereaved family. Second, *sialamase* 'to love one another means to give one another sincerely' not by giving debt to a grieving family.

Third, *siporannu* 'expect one another' in terms of visiting each other, helping in trouble, and so on.

Family values are mentioned that through the death ceremony, family relations are refreshed. Attending the death ceremony (in Toraja language called *tongkon*) is a reunion with relatives even with all friends or casual acquaintances. People meet, sit down, talk to each other, ask each other about their origins/family lineage while eating, it will strengthen the kinship of one big family, even with all parties who come to mourn.

This is very visible in the *Rambu Soloq* cultural event, especially the funeral ceremony carried out by the upper social class (aristocratic) family in Toraja. At the funeral of Nek Yurlin with Nek Dini in Sangkaropi (Sa'dan Matallo, North Toraja), where Osong's singing was researched), Luwuk's family attended the ceremony with different customs, ethnicities, and religions. However, after being traced carefully, it turns out that their ancestors have blood relations with families in Sa'dan. At that time they came in quite a number. To share their grief, they sing a form of a song called Osong. The song is basically in Toraja with the Sa'dan dialect, but in it, there are so many Bugis Luwu words used by the family who came, as in the previously mentioned line of text.

Their presence is a form of togetherness and a sense of solidarity over the grief that is being experienced by the family. The grief of a family member is not experienced or felt alone but by the entire family, even with different customs, ethnicities, and religions. Cohesiveness and unity in blood ties are continuously maintained and maintained to keep growing and one like a bamboo clump which is always a fertile unity with the expression 'tuoki sang rapu tallang sang kaponan aog' we live like a lush and shady bamboo grove and a shady aur clump and strong. The funeral service is the last chance to convey a sign of respect and love for all family members. The gathering of all family members at the funeral ceremony is a symbol of the intact brotherhood between them. Death will never break the bond of love between deceased family members and those who are on pilgrimage in this world. Therefore, funeral ceremonies are always carried out as well as possible as a binder and glue for family clumps of different customs, ethnicity, and religion.

## 5. CONCLUSION

As described earlier, intercultural communication has many benefits, especially in the way we communicate and respond to the behaviour of a person or group of a different culture from ours. We can see some important values in this cross-cultural communication, such as religious values, cooperation and kinship values. Therefore, this insight becomes important in the process of our interactions with fellow humans. By establishing friendships through traditional and cultural ceremonies like this, each adherent of different customs, ethnicities, and religions can learn from each other and understand

each other's cultural behaviour through communication that respects and appreciates each other to create tolerance and sustainable harmonization even within the framework of socio-cultural life that is multiculturalism.

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