



Ethnolinguistic Perspective: Correlational Superstition and *Sumbang Duo Baleh* Minangkabau Society

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Abstract. The superstitions and *sumbang duo baleh* are one of many local wisdoms in Minangkabau. Superstition is a statement that contains supernatural meaning, while *sumbang duo baleh* is a condition that describes unethical behavior carried out by someone. Contextually, there is a relationship between superstitions and *sumbang duo baleh*. The superstitions that are formed in the life of the Minangkabau people are reconstructed from a contribution. The purpose of this paper is to describe and prove this relationship so that a common thread can be drawn regarding the relationship between superstition and *sumbang duo baleh* in the Minangkabau society. This research approach uses an ethnolinguistic approach. This paper uses content analysis techniques to reveal and interpret the data that has been collected. The data referred to are the superstitions of the Minangkabau society as reflected in the contribution of *sumbang duo baleh*, namely, sitting, standing, silent, saying, asking, answering, hanging out, walking, and dressing, seeing, working, and behaving. Therefore, it is important to conduct an in-depth study to reveal the existence of a superstition and discord relationship between *sumbang duo baleh* in the Minangkabau society.

Keywords: ethnolinguistics · superstition · *sumbang duo baleh* · Minangkabau

1 Introduction

Culture in each region has a uniqueness [1]. The uniqueness of each region is a characteristic that distinguishes one culture from another. The characteristics of each culture reflect the way of thinking of the people who live around the culture they follow [7]. In reality, life always requires us to make choices based on the best or worst criteria to ensure reference values [40][41]. We may say that the person's actions are right, but in the wrong way the person's attitude is good, even though the physical appearance is bad, or the painting is beautiful, even though the figures are ugly. Everyone has a sense of value, and no community is free from the value system [37][42]. Therefore, when we are in a position not to choose a value, many external factors such as friends, institutions, parents, or neighbors also determine the value which ultimately affects our choice to avoid the role of values that are not good or often called destructive. [5][6] We must have a complete view of man and nature. This is important because most humans on

the one hand often witness constructive values such as decency, justice, beauty, compassion, and obedience, while on the other hand they are often faced with events that contain destructive values such as brutality, injustice, hatred, and violence [2][44][55].

One specific term for culture is folklore [10]. Folklore is part of a collective culture that is spread and passed down from generation to generation, both in oral form and examples accompanied by gestures or reminders [16]. Folklore can take the form of language, literature, music, games, mythology, rituals, customs, crafts, architecture, and other arts [14]. Folklore is divided into three parts, namely oral folklore, partly oral, and non-verbal [12][11]. One type of folklore is partially oral folklore. Partial oral folklore is folklore whose form is a mixture of oral and non-verbal elements. The forms of folklore belonging to this group are folk beliefs (superstitions), folk games, folk theater, folk dances, customs, ceremonies, folk parties, and others [13][15].

Superstitions are one of many types of partially oral folklore that are often found around society [19]. The term superstition refers to beliefs or influences that the rational mind cannot match [21]. Superstitions are irrational beliefs in which an object, action, or goal is associated with an event that affects its outcome [30][33][34]. Superstition is a complex phenomenon in society. Most of the theories about this are related to belief and psychology [17]. There are 6 characteristics of superstition, namely (1) superstition should be fundamentally irrational, (2) superstition should be accepted and popular, and (3) superstition usually affects behavior that believes in it, (4) superstition is a supernatural phenomenon. In the conventional sense, (5) superstition has no evidence from personal experience to support it, and (6) superstition can arise spontaneously and spread without any consenting authority [26][22].

Scholars have long argued that superstition is a cultural phenomenon with relativity. This superstition differs in various cultures. Relativity in superstition is illustrated by Lesser as "That which one person believes but not another; not trusted by one person at a time and trusted by another [25]." Wagner explains that superstition is not related to intelligence or rural and urban life, as well as religious beliefs, he also states that young people believe in superstition more easily than older people [36]. In terms of its use, superstition is associated with several other terms, such as expressions of prohibition, folk beliefs, and superstitions [20][23][24]. The author defines the term superstition because the words for prohibition are not very appropriate if it is proven by an example: You are not allowed to sit on a pillow, it will cause ulcers. The statement does not have an indirect or meaningful meaning like the expression, so it is not appropriate to use the term prohibition. In addition, the term people's trust is considered too broad. If an area believes in something supernatural, such as the presence of Nyi Roro Kidul, then that can also be said with the term trust [35][3]. Furthermore, the term superstition is considered very taboo, so it can disguise the meaning of the intended superstition. In essence, the Minangkabau people use superstitions not to believe in something taboo. However, it is aimed at educating and instilling ethical values. Superstitions can be exemplified such as the Chinese people's belief in the number 13 which is interpreted as an unlucky number or the Russian's belief that black cats bring bad luck and bad luck [8][4]. Therefore, the term superstition is more appropriate to be used in this paper. Etymologically, superstition comes from the word super, or means supernatural, and

state which means statement. So, superstition is a statement that has a meaning that is associated with something supernatural.

The meaning of *sumbang* according to Minangkabau custom is an attitude and behavior that is not following customary ethics. *Sumbang* according to Minangkabau customs are not necessarily *sumbang* according to customs in other places. For example: according to Minangkabau custom, women are not allowed to sit on the *baselo* (sitting with crossed legs, each foot or heel being squeezed by the other thigh), but must sit cross-legged. Elsewhere there is a custom that allows women to sit cross-legged. In Java, for example, in certain situations, women are even required to sit cross-legged. Misconceptions according to Minangkabau custom are violations committed consciously or unconsciously against the norms and regulations that apply. Wrong actions for example taking something that is not right, violating the prohibition, blaming the right, and justifying the wrong. A person is said to be wrong if he sits at a table because the table is not a means for sitting. That person wouldn't be wrong if he sat on a chair. That person is said to have made *sumbang* even though he was sitting on a chair but it is not polite to be seen by others. The impoliteness may be due to sitting with legs raised higher than the seat, or because there are older people (seniors) around the place sitting on the floor [9]. The meaning of the *sumbang-salah* is behavior that shows a violation of customary ethics. *Sumbang* or inappropriate according to the views of others, wrong according to the senior concerned. An example is someone sitting in the chair where the senior is sitting on the floor. Other people will judge that such behavior is *sumbang* according to custom, while the senior will judge that his behavior is wrong, therefore the senior or one of the other seniors will reprimand him [54].

The uniqueness that is still visible in the habits of the Minangkabau people, especially the Kubuang Tigo Baleh community is the use of superstitions. The Kubuang Tigo Baleh community is one of the people who still use superstitions. People still think that this statement can save them from danger. Superstitions in the Kubuang Tigo Baleh community are more aimed at the norm of decency. For the following example *Jan mambae kutiko sanjo, beko kanai anak dubilih* (You can't throw it at dusk, you'll get a demon child). This superstition aims to prohibit someone who will throw something at dusk. This is done so that the thrower does not disturb the surrounding community who want to perform the Maghrib prayer in an atmosphere of rest. This goal provides a wise lesson regarding the norms of decency so that there is a process of ethical education in preventing a form of violation. Therefore, it is interesting to examine the mustika of the Kubuang Tigo Baleh community which is contained in the superstitions and *sumbang duo baleh*.

Based on the explanation above, it can be explained 4 things related to the need for research related to the ethnolinguistic perspective on the correlation of superstitions and *sumbang duo baleh*. First, previous researchers viewed superstitions as a form of backward or irrational thought patterns or even not based on thinking. However, this study tries to prove that superstition in Minangkabau society is the opposite, which is born from high-level thinking processes in producing good education or parenting patterns for unethical/*sumbang* behavior. Second, with this research, it is hoped that it will be able to overcome the problems of disharmony and destructive values that have been eroded over time. This is based on the report of The Union of International Association

(UIA, 2003) as the opposite value of the constructive value. The UIA identified about 114 destructive values. These values, according to UIA, are the cause of chaos and complexity in human life today. Three of the most dangerous values are selfishness, the impartiality of right, and distaste for others. Third, this research can be used as an alternative to generating positive content in other studies, especially those related to parenting education and social and anthropological research. Fourth, there have been no previous studies that have revealed the relationship between superstition and *sumbang duo baleh* [27][28][29][31][32][34]. Thus, it can be understood that there is an element of novelty in this study.

2 Method

This research is a type of ethnolinguistic research. Ethnolinguistics is a science that examines the relationship between language facts and cultural facts. Theoretically, ethnolinguistics is known as linguistic anthropology or anthropological linguistics [49]. The collection methods used in anthropolinguistics are interviews, direct observation, and document review [46][48]. The observation points were carried out in Kubuang Tigo Baleh, namely Solok (Solok city), Selayo, Gantuang Ciri, Koto Gadang, Cupak, Muaro Paneh, Talang, Saok Laweh, Guguak, Koto Anau, Bukik Sileh, Kinali, and Koto Gaek [53]. The data of this study are data obtained from speech events. Any information about the object and focus of research that is expressed through speaking activities is used as data in this study. The speech events in question can be in the form of interviews, traditional speeches, television/radio broadcasts, talk in the shop, and others [47]. This research data collection technique uses in-depth interview techniques in the form of conversational engagement listening techniques and conversational engagement free listening techniques [49]. Furthermore, this research data analysis uses content analysis techniques in the form of three activity lines, namely: (1) data reduction, (2) data display, and (3) concluding [50].

3 Discussion

Minangkabau custom stipulates a minimum of 12 kinds of points of *sumbang salah* or *sumbang duo baleh*, yaitu: *sumbang duduak*, *sumbang tagak*, *sumbang diam*, *sumbang bajalan*, *sumbang kato*, *sumbang caliak*, *sumbang bapakaian*, *sumbang bagaya*, *sumbang karajo*, *sumbang tanyo*, *sumbang jawab*, dan *sumbang kurenah* [22].

1. *Sumbang Duduak (Sitting)*

Sumbang duduk is a *sumbang* or inappropriate for someone if he sits not by the ethics of sitting according to custom. Especially for women, *Sumbang sitting* can be divided into three sitting conditions, namely how to sit, where to sit, and the situation in which to sit. Contributing sitting for women according to the method, including *duduak baselo* (sitting cross-legged) which is sitting with crossed legs where the tip of the left leg is squeezed by the right thigh and the tip of the right foot is squeezed by the left thigh. *Duduak mangangkang* (sitting astride) is sitting with both thighs wide open even though they have been covered with cloth or wearing

pants. *Duduak mancongkong* (squatting sitting) is sitting where only the soles of the feet are stepped on or splashed onto the seat, both hips hanging and attached to both calves [51]. *Sumbang duduak* according to the place occupied is when sitting in a place that is not provided for seating, such as at a table, at a window, at a door, on a ladder, or on the side of the road. *Sumbang duduak* (sitting) according to the situation is sitting that is not allowed because the situation and conditions are considered inappropriate. An example is a woman sitting near many men who are chatting or playing [52]. Some examples of superstitions with *sumbang duo baleh* that are created as a form of prevention to control children's behavior include: *Indak bulieh urang hamil duduk di ateh simin beko kareh malaian nah* (It is not permissible for pregnant people to sit on cement, it will be difficult to give birth).

2. ***Sumbang Tagak (Standing)***

Sumbang tagak (standing) is a *sumbang* or inappropriate for a woman if standing is not by the ethics of standing according to custom. Similar to sitting decency, upright celibacy can also be divided into three conditions, how to stand, where to stand, and situations where to stand. The way of standing that causes *sumbang* in people's eyes is standing by doing something that is seen by people as a sight that is not good according to ethics. For example: standing with the need for something or because of work, making the body bend where the skirt/cloth/ *sisampiang* is short so that the calves or thighs are visible to others. A standing place that invites *sumbang* or inappropriate for a woman is standing in a place that is not a place for women to stand, for example standing on a table, on a chair, or goods [9]. Some examples of superstition relationships with *sumbang duo baleh* that were created as a form of prevention to control children's behavior include *Indak bulieh tagak di pintu wakatu hujan beko ditembak patuih* (You can't stand at the door when it rains you can be struck by lightning); *Indak bulieh gadih tagak child at the Beko Tibo Pitanah intersection* (No girl is allowed to stand at the crossroads later there will be slander).

3. ***Sumbang Diam (Living)***

Sumbang diam is inappropriate for a woman if she lives that is not by Minangkabau traditional ethics. As for the residence that is not by the intended custom, including living or sleeping in the house of a man who has no family in the house (he is alone), while the woman is not accompanied by an older woman [9].

4. ***Sumbang Bajalan (Walking)***

Sumbang bajalan (walking) is a *sumbang* or inappropriate for a Minangkabau woman if she walks not by customary ethics, which is seen from the way she walks, the situation and time when she walks, or the condition when she walks. An example of a *sumbang* way of walking is when walking often looks at parts of the body or oneself. An example of *sumbang bajalan* according to the situation and time when walking is walking alone on an empty street [9]. Some examples of superstition relationships with *sumbang dua baleh* that are created as a form of prevention to control children's behavior include *Indak bulieh bajalan batigo ka rumah urang mati, beko ado-ado nan tajadi* (It is not allowed to walk in three to the house of the person who died, later something will happen). Another example, *Indak bulieh bajalan di pamatang malam-malam beko abih padi dek mancik* (You can't walk on the bund late at night, the rats can eat up the rice).

5. ***Sumbang Bakato (Talking)***

Sumbang kato (talking) is a *sumbang* or inappropriate for someone if speaking is not by Minangkabau customary ethics. Things that are categorized as *sumbang* include speaking too loudly or with dirty words [9]. Some examples of superstition relationships with *sumbang duo baleh* that are created as a form of prevention to control children's behavior include: *Mangicek-ngicek nan buruek indak bulieh di ateh rumah urang mati doh, beko mareh rimau* (Speaking of bad things should not be in the house of the deceased, later angry tiger). Another example, *Indak buliah mamatah urang gagok de beko pindah ka anak awak* (You can't imitate someone who stutters later, you can transfer them to your child).

6. ***Sumbang Caliak (Seeing)***

Sumbang caliak (seeing) is a *sumbang* or inappropriate for a woman to see something, both the way and the goal that is not by Minangkabau traditional ethics. An example is a *sumbang* for a woman in someone else's house to see something excessively, either by walking or just looking from a seat [9]. Some examples correlation of superstitions and *sumbang dua baleh* that are created as a form of prevention to control children's behavior include: *Indak bulieh manonton dakek-dakek beko rabun mato* (not allowed to watch closely, your eyes will be blind). Another example, *Jan mancaliak kabalakang kok lah bajalan dari kubua beko nampak dubilih;* (Don't look back when you walk from the grave you will see a demon/ghost).

7. ***Sumbang Bapakaian (Wearing Clothes)***

Sumbang bapakaian (wearing clothes) is a *sumbang* or inappropriate for a Minangkabau woman if she dresses not by Minangkabau traditional ethics, both in terms of quality and form, as well as in terms of its use. For example, women wear men's clothes or dress like men's clothes [9]. Some examples of superstition relationships with *sumbang dua baleh* that are created as a form of prevention to control children's behavior include *Urang hamil indak bulieh mamakai jilbab lilik beko talilik tali puseknyo* (People who are pregnant should not wear the hijab wrapped around the child's umbilical cord later). Another example, *Indak bulieh malakekan sarawa tabaliak beko nyo cari dek rimau* (You can't wear pants upside down, we'll be looked for by the tiger).

8. ***Sumbang Bagaua (Getting Along)***

Sumbang bagaua (getting along) is a *sumbang* or inappropriate for a woman to get along with a man even though the man is his own family. The definition of *sumbang bagaua* is a personal association in the form of sitting together, talking in a limited number, especially if you are alone [9]. Some examples of superstitions and *sumbang duo baleh* that are created as a form of prevention to control children's behavior include: *Indak bulieh pilik dek aia beko taganang kuburan wak beko* (You can't be stingy with water, your grave will be flooded). Another example, *Jan bacakak di ateh rumah urang mati beko ndak tanang aruwahnyo* (Don't fight over the house of the dead, or the soul will not be at peace).

9. ***Sumbang Karajo (Working)***

In work, women in Minangkabau are always given light work. Heavy work is customary as men's work. Therefore, it will be seen as *sumbang* or inappropriate when a woman does work that should be done by men [9]. Some examples of superstitions and *sumbang duo baleh* that are created as a form of prevention to control

children's behavior include: *Indak bulieh masak sambia balagu beko dapek laki gaek* (You can't cook while singing, you'll get an old husband). Another example, *Urang hamil indak bulieh lakinyo mambantai ayam beko sakik-sakik lihia anaknyo* (People who are pregnant with their husbands slaughtering chickens will cause pain in their necks).

10. ***Sumbang Tanyo (Asking)***

Sumbang tanyo (asking) means asking what is considered not by ethics, whether the method is incorrect, or asking pretending not to know. One way to overcome ignorance is to ask questions. However, asking questions without calculation and ethics can also cause problems for the questioner and can also lead to misunderstandings. The other side that needs to be considered is the situation and condition of the person asking the question. Maybe that person can be a place to ask questions or not, because not everyone can be used as a place to ask questions [9]. Some examples of superstitions and *sumbang duo baleh* that are created as a form of prevention to control children's behavior include *Indak bulieh batanyo katiko urang sadeng mangecek beko baji se urang ka awak* (You can't ask when people are talking, people will hate you).

11. ***Sumbang Jawek (Answering)***

Sumbang jawek (answering) is an answer or a way to answer someone's question by the person asking the question which is not pleasing to the person who asked the question or by the person who heard the answer. *Sumbang jawek* can occur because the ethics of answering are not good, or maybe because the answer material invites errors. *Sumbang jawek* can lead to disputes and hostility [9]. Some examples of superstitions and *sumbang duo baleh* that are created as a form of prevention to control children's behavior include: *Indak bulieh manjawek kato rang gaek beko dapek cilako wak ko* (You can't answer what your parents say, you'll get hurt). Another example, *Indak bulieh diam katiko ditanyo urang gaek beko gagok wak mangecek ko* (You can't keep quiet when your parents ask you, then you can stutter).

12. ***Sumbang Kurenah (Behavioral)***

Sumbang kurenah is a person's behavior or appearance that is considered odd to be seen by others or causes someone to feel offended. The *kurenah* that is considered *sumbang* or inappropriate includes whispering to someone in front of many people or in front of people. Will be considered *kurenah* if done in public. From the description of the above understanding, the meaning of *sumbang duo baleh* above, it can be concluded that the notion of man away from discord and wrong can be concluded, namely avoiding behavior and actions that may be inappropriate and wrongly viewed by others and are not by customary ethics [9]. Some examples of superstition relationships with *sumbang duo baleh* that are created as a form of prevention to control children's behavior include: *Indak bulieh maambuung nasi beko cilako iduik* (You can't throw rice away, you'll get hurt). Another examples, *Indak bulieh lalok maraok beko mati urang gaek dek nyo nah* (Not sleeping on your stomach later can cause our parents to die); *Tidak Indak bulieh mangambangan payuang di tengah rumah beko nyo tembak dek patuih* (You can't open the umbrella in the house, you can be struck by lightning).

Based on the example of superstitions and discord above, it can be understood that culture has a close relationship with politeness or etiquette. Only polite behavior can be considered culturally appropriate, while impoliteness is somewhat non-cultural. Politeness occurs due to accident, misunderstanding, or on their own volition so that it is consciously recognized that the principles of politeness can be exploited to deceive the listener. In a certain role relationship, “unusual” politeness, by a child to his parents, for example between a husband and wife or between friends, can be suspected as an attempt to manipulate (Blum-Kulka, 1992:276). Immodesty and deception themselves are never explained in terms of cultural norms. The rules always and only tell people how to behave badly. It seems that people themselves should know about bad behavior because culture won’t tell them about it.

Norms and rules are factors that can explain human behavior. Rules are deeply ingrained in the mind and people rely on them to understand the behavior of others to determine how they act. In this sense, the rules are the basis of social interaction itself, namely as the fabric of social communities. Norms can only explain polite behavior. In addition, culture becomes only polite behavior while impoliteness is removed from phenomena outside of culture.

Social norms always show people how to behave politely, never show how to behave impolitely. Culture becomes a “good” or “positive” entity where people are polite to one another, respect one another, and are generally warm and friendly. In other words, culture is a good place to live, and enjoyable for its members.

The relationship between culture and good behavior is evident in several examples. Ide argues that, “People who get good upbringing are more obedient to the rules” [43][45]. In line with Ide’s opinion, Lakoff states that “In its collective mind, a culture implicitly has a concept of how a good human being should behave: a target that must be achieved by its members and for self-assessment” [38][39]. Most of us, in some situations, are too polite (impossible) to violate these rules so that we know what difficulties we will face if we violate them” [18]. Thus, the qualitative aspects of the norm along with the conceptual bias towards polite behavior, and the relationship of the politeness system to the cultural level all serve further to enhance the definition of “culture” in a positive way. Culture is about good upbringing, good upbringing, and good people in general. Culture is not only a qualitative entity, but also an “ethically correct” entity. Therefore, it can be said that this research can break the theory related to the notion of superstition according to experts. Experts view that superstitions are irrational and not based on thought [11][15][23]. However, in this study a common thread can be drawn that superstitions for the Minangkabau community are closely related to the formation of behavior and ethics so that they originate from indirect and polite thoughts and are considered for social control so as to create social harmonization.

4 Conclusion

Superstitions are part of folklore (in other words, culture). This can be related to the theory presented about politeness. Superstitions contain an adab or how we act in a social relationship. In other words, there is a content of politeness in superstitions because it is part of the culture. For example, in the belief of the Minangkabau community, there

is a superstition “You must not whistle at night because it can invite snakes into the house.” Superstitions are a form of interpretation of polite norms or rules. The message contained in this expression is how we must be polite according to the ethics that apply to that society. If someone whistles it will make sounds that can disturb other people’s atmosphere because at the same time they are resting. Therefore, superstition can be used as a polite alternative to overcome the ethical problems of society that will act impolitely. In addition, superstition is created by the local wisdom of an area which is reflected in a contribution known as the *sumbang duo baleh* contribution to the Minangkabau community. Thus, it can be understood that Minangkabau superstitions are produced from a rational thought process and aim to educate so that discordant behavior becomes good behavior by the ethical values of the Minangkabau community. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a correlation between superstition and the *sumbang duo baleh*, the superstition will not be pronounced if there is no *sumbang* ethical or behavioral contribution from the violator.

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