



Aparaja Revitalization: Lio Ethnic Oral Tradition

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Abstract. Oral traditions, as discourses told or passed down from generation to generation, include oral and written, all of which are passed on orally. Aparaja is a form of oral tradition of the Lio ethnic community that needs revival. Aparaja is part of oral tradition in the form of traditional questions in the form of riddles. Currently, the Lio language puzzle is never spoken by a parent or child, by the Lio community. This is evident when people are asked questions about Aparaja in general, no one knows; some parents say they heard it but could not talk about it properly. This paper aims to explain the form and function of Aparaja as the cultural wealth of the Lio ethnic community in two villages located on the south coast of Ende Regency, namely Wolotopo and Ngalupolo villages. The approach used is qualitative. Data collection techniques consist of interview techniques, recording techniques, listening-engagement techniques, and note-taking techniques. The theories used are those of oral literature and those of reception.

Keywords: revitalization · aparaja · oral tradition · Lio ethnicity

1 Introduction

Oral literature is a legendary exertion passed down orally from generation to generation, including folk tales and folklore. Folklore, according to its type is divided into three main groups: (1) oral folk tales, (2) partial oral folk tales, and (3) non-oral folk tales. (Brunvand, 1968: 2–3) in Danandjaja, 1984: 21). Revitalization or reviving is a process taken to save something from extinction, one of which is oral literature.

Oral folklore is folk tales that are told purely orally. Folklore forms (genres) of folklore that fall into this broad group include: (a) slang words such as accents, nicknames, traditional rank and titles of nobility, (b) traditional expressions, such as proverbs, (c) traditional issues such as riddles, (d) folk poetry such as pantun, gurindam and syair, (e) folk prose such as myths, legends, fairy tales and folk songs. Regarding traditional questions, namely puzzles, there are also Lio ethnic communities in Ende Regency. The puzzle in the Lio ethnic community is called Aparaja which consists of two words, namely what is ‘what’ and raja ‘raja’ which means what is the answer or the king of the questions given. The official oral tradition of the Lio ethnic community is rarely found due to the influence of modernization and the absence of inheritance from parents to their children so that children and even parents do not know about puzzles in the Lio

language. In ancient times this traditional question was usually asked during a traditional ceremony, at a death ceremony, during a marriage ceremony, and at leisurely times when the night was full moon.

Pudentia (20017: 27) states that oral tradition is a discourse that is told or passed down from generation to generation, including oral and written, all of which are passed on orally. Aparaja is a form of oral tradition of the Lio ethnic community that needs revival. Aparaja is part of oral tradition in the form of traditional questions in the form of riddles. Rusyana (1995) has observed that research on the oral traditions of the archipelago has only produced collections of stories, story translations, and story structures. However, research on oral traditions is currently in great demand by many people, one of which is concerned with oral traditions is the Association for Oral Traditions (ATL).

According to Georges and Dundes (1963), a riddle is a traditional oral expression containing one or more descriptive elements, two of which suggests may contradict each other, and guesses the answer (referent) is needed (In Danandjaja, 2002). Puzzles are also classified into certain categories (Taylor, 1951). In its development, puzzles are used in education to build metalinguistics in children. In fact, puzzles are considered the most perfect learning media. According to Zipke, puzzles are a perfect learning medium for using language on the grounds that puzzles build femininity towards language and motivate students to read that language (Zipke, 2008). Aparaja is a term used by the Lio ethnic community, Wolotopo and Ngalupolo villages since ancient times because for traditional people the king is the most correct person who is most appropriate in making decisions, so what is the word and the king means what is the king or the correct answer is the question given.

Although many studies on oral traditions have been carried out related to folklore, this research is important and different from other research because this research has the theme of folklore related to puzzles that are currently rarely used and this research revives the Lio ethnic folklore, Ende Regency which has long been forgotten and unknown to the younger generation who are currently entering the digital and industrial era. So, this research is also expected to be an input for educational institutions to become part of learning local content and as an effort to maintain local language and culture.

Therefore, this paper as a form of concern for the oral tradition aims to describe the form and function of the apparatus in the Lio ethnic community.

2 Method

This research used a qualitative approach. The data collection was carried out by means of an interview technique, by engaging in conversation and taking notes. The data was then analyzed using interaction data analysis.

The theories used are those of oral literature (folklore) and those of reception. The word folklore is an Indonesian adaption of English folklore derived from two words folk and lore. The word folk describes a group of people who have physical, cultural and social identifiers to distinguish them from other social groups. The identification features include skin color, hairstyle, occupation, etc. The word lore is an indigenous lore that is part of the culture, transmitted orally or by example accompanied by gestures and reminders.

Folklore is part of the culture that is traditionally spread or passed down with signs and memories, both verbally and by example, while according to the Big Indonesian Dictionary, folklore is traditionally passed down from generation to generation, but not recorded. The characteristics of folklore are as follows.

1. The distribution and inheritance is written orally
2. Traditional
3. Anonymous
4. It has an important function in people's lives, apart from being entertainment, value education, conveying social processes and to convey hidden desires/wills.
5. It belongs to the community that supports it

According to American folklorist Jan Harold Brunvard, folklore can be divided into three main groups based on types.

1. Oral Folklore

Folklore is a purely oral form that is created, disseminated, and passed on by word of mouth. This type of folklore can be found at:

- a. Folk language is a language that is used in a society as a means of communication between people or a language that is used in everyday life as a means of association, such as: accent, dialect, vocabulary, nicknames.
- b. Traditional expressions are short sentences extracted from long experiences. Proverbs typically comprise truth and wisdom. Like, proverbs, sayings.
- c. Traditional queries (puzzles)

A riddle, according to Alan Dundes, is a traditionally spoken phrase containing one or more illustrative elements, in which the answer must be guessed.

- d. Folk poetry is folk literature that already has a certain form. Its functions are social control, entertainment, game initiation and means of making fun of others, such as rhymes and poetry.
- e. Folk prose stories are stories that are passed down from generation to generation (by word of mouth) in society, such as fairy tales, myths, legends.
- f. Folk singing, is an oral tradition of a society that is expressed through traditional songs or songs. A recreational function that gets rid of the boredom of daily life and avoids the difficulties of life to become a kind of comfort, such as songs from various regions.

2. Partially Oral Folklore

It is a form of folklore that mixes oral and non-verbal elements. This folklore is also known as a social fact. Encompassed in the oral tradition in part are:

- a. People's belief (superstition), this credence is often considered not based on rationality because it cannot be scientifically justified, involving beliefs and applies (habits). Congenital through the intermediate of talking.
- b. Folk games, feast through oral tradition and widely dispersed without the help of adults. Examples: arrogant, slap, galasin, bekel, play rope, etc.
- c. Folk theater
- d. Folk dance
- e. The peoples party

- f. Traditional ceremonies that develop in the communal are based on spiritual beliefs or local communal beliefs. Traditional ceremonies are habitually carried out as an appearance of appreciation to the powers that are considered to deliver defense and wellbeing to them.
3. Folk tales Not Oral

It is a folk tales whose form is not spoken but how to create it is imparted verbally. Frequently leave the form of substantial (artifacts). Encompassed in non-verbal folklore:

 - a. Folk architecture (inscriptions, sacred constructions)

Architecture is the art or science of scheming structures.
 - b. Folk artistries

Initially made just to fill spare time and for domiciliary needs.
 - c. Traditional clothing/jewelry that is characteristic of each region
 - d. Traditional medications (ginger and turmeric as cold medicine)
 - e. Traditional cooking and drinks

3 Findings and Discussion

The location of data collection on this apparatus was focused on two villages positioned on the south coast of Ende Regency, namely Wolotopo Village and Ngalupolo Village. There were also informants as data sources. These were young people and parents who had inhabited the two villages. Based on the results of the Aparaja interviews, the Lio ethnic community varies greatly.

There is Aparaja in the form of interrogative sentences or questions. The official Aparaja in the Lio ethnic community consist of:

- a. Aparaja related to plants

Example:
Aparaja: sa'o semboko leke setoko 'one pole one house puzzle' (mushrooms)
- b. Aparaja related to body parts

Aparaja: uta ki'i tembu leka biri 'riddle of leafy vegetables growing on a cliff' (ear)
Aparaja: te'e ria weka leka lia 'big mat puzzle stretched out in the cave' (tongue)
Aparaja: po'o pe'i ke biri 'riddle of babu leaning on cliff' (nose)
- c. Aparaja related to fruit

Aparaja: semboko bole nggo 'puzzle one wood bell' (pineapple)
- d. Aparaja related to equipment

Aparaja: jara rako kuru bara 'puzzle horse eats white grass' (coconut kukur)
Aparaja: ine kuni ana mbana 'riddle mother tells the children to walk' (bow and arrow)
Aparaja: ka ke ka ke 'puzzle eat cry eat cry' (cotton spun tool)
Aparaja: maso no wau leka lia sama 'puzzle in and out in the same hole' (flashlight)
Aparaja: rio leka wolo watu, eru leka one lia 'riddle bathing on a rock, sleeping in a hole' (machete)

Aparaja: foo fai imu telu, turu tena no nelu-nelu ‘three-person girl riddle, take continuous load’ (fire furnace)

Aparaja: ine ke mulu ana ke ndu ‘riddle the mother first the child comes’ (needle and thread)

e. Aparaja related to deeds or actions

Aparaja: deer me ghele wolo, ae bubu ghawa lowo ‘riddle the deer screams on the hill, the water flows down the river’ (crying).

f. Aparaja related to animals

Aparaja: ine kai is deaf, ana kai reads ‘riddles the mother writes the child reads’ (the mother hen is scavenging the ground and the chicks are eating)

Aparaja: bote ata kowe teo tuku tobhe ‘puzzle hanging motionless’ (bee)

Aparaja: wawi baa leka laje hinga ‘puzzle pig lying on ear’ (cigarette tucked in ear)

The official aparaja of the Lio ethnic community shows features observed by George and Dundes (1963) about riddle. They state that a riddle is a traditional oral appearance that encompasses one or more evocative essentials, a twosomes of which can contradict each other and the answer (referent) must be fathomed. What is expressed is sometimes irrational and funny but if you think about it properly, the answer is appropriate.

The division of official aparaja above was made by the researcher based on data from interviews with informants consisting of mosalaki (customary elders), cultural observers, young people, and parents aged 50 years and over. The classification made is not based on a definite reference, but the researcher tries to group it based on its parts. The apparatus that the informants remember relates to several things such as deeds, animals, plants-food, tools, fruits, and body parts. From the results of the interviews, information was obtained that there were still many aparaja that had been played but the informants were not able to remember them well, it took a few minutes to recall the aparaja that had been played before.

The existence of the current apparatus can be said to be on the verge of extinction because during this small study, many informants tried to recall what they had known, both what they heard from their parents and what they experienced themselves. However, most of the informants remember little about the apparatus. For some informants, this research was perceived as a good attempt because they were invited back to open their memories of their past lives while playing aparaja, because the aparaja is very interesting to play.

The lack of information about the official aparaja was caused by several factors, including the influence of globalization so that the younger generation do not know and could not even use the Lio language nor do they ever find out about their oral traditions, the absence of inheritance from parents to children, and the influence of urbanization which has resulted in people leaving their culture, and there is an assumption that the generation sometimes considers it taboo to communicate using the Lio language.

The function of the Lio ethnic community official aparaja is to sharpen the brain because by asking a question someone will be forced to find the answer or what is the king of the questions given by associating the words with the right thing, besides that the officers also serve to entertain because during research, a piece of information was obtained that aparaja is not only played when the mood is happy, for example when

enjoying a beautiful full moon night, or when finishing dinner, while working together in the garden, during traditional rituals, but also played when mourning or death because at that time the neighbors will come to comfort the grieving family at night while parents will ask each other questions or play the aparaja. Another function of the aparaja is to conduct competitions. In the past, young people or children held a competition when they were playing together. Besides that, the aparaja served to strengthen the ties of kinship between the people who owned it by playing aparaja with others.

Oral literature such as aparaja will still exist in the culture of its people if the community continues to maintain its sustainability (appreciate) because without the community the owner of the aparaja will not have any function and meaning.

4 Conclusion

Based on the explanation, it can be concluded that the aparaja in the Lio ethnic community are in the form of interrogative sentences that function to sharpen the brain, entertain, conduct competitions, and strengthen brotherhood. The existence of the aparaja which is slowly disappearing in the midst of rampant modernization needs special attention so that the aparaja does not experience extinction. The revitalization of the aparaja can be done in several ways, among others, by making it a medium of learning in schools, seeking to continue research on oral traditions so that oral traditions are maintained.

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