Cultural Semiotics in the Traditional Marriage Process of Enggano People

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Abstract. This research is ethno-semiotic research that focuses on tracing the meaning of cultural semiotics in the traditional marriage procession of the Enggano people. Geo-culturally, the Enggano people are one of the ethnic groups in Bengkulu Province. The Enggano people inhabit Enggano Island, which is about 90 nautical miles from Sumatra Island, thus causing language and cultural differences with the people on the mainland of Sumatra. At the socio-cultural level, the traditional marriage procession of the Enggano tribe or known as the *parur hia'au* plays a very important role. A series of processions are carried out provide their own uniqueness, so they are worth exploring further, especially in the perspective of semiotics. This study aims to explore and describe the understanding and meaning of various signs in the concept of cultural semiotics that exist in the traditional marriage procession of the Enggano tribe. The objects in this study are various signs and markers in oral texts spoken by traditional actors in relation to the socio-cultural life of the Enggano community. The data collection method was carried out by observation and in-depth interviews with traditional elders on Enggano Island. The results of this study indicate that every traditional *parur hia'au* wedding procession contains cultural semiotics with a very deep understanding and meaning, especially in the traditional wedding procession, *Pahema Iaru*, and *Kaheno*. The symbols and icons in each medium used during the procession show that the Enggano community highly values sense of togetherness, kinship, and mutual cooperation. Not only that, the search for terms in each procession also shows that there is a relationship between the etymology of the word and the socio- cultural life of the Enggano people.

Keywords: cultural semiotics · Enggano · traditional marriage

1   Background

Talking about traditions that are entrenched in a community group, it will not be separated from the basic concepts that build the culture itself. At least three basic concepts must exist, including the concept of language, society, and the concept of culture itself. In line with that, Masinambow (2010: 38) states that the concept of language and culture refers to humans as components of society which are the basic foundation for components such as language and knowledge symbol systems, beliefs, arts, laws, customs, and so on.

In relation to the Enggano community, literally, the Enggano community does not have a written culture, but an oral culture. Therefore, language in this case speech becomes one of the media in conveying the intent and purpose. Nugroho (2015) revealed that the function of the Enggano language is the same as other languages, namely as a means of communication for both adult and adolescent groups of speakers. This kind of condition is inseparable from past historical factors that place the Enggano people as a marginalized ethnic group, both geographically and socio-culturally. However, this kind of condition actually maintains the authenticity of the socio- cultural life in the Enggano community.

The Enggano people strongly adhere to customs to this day. However, the transmission process to the younger generation is not going well considering that the younger generation is now familiar with the outside world, especially with the influence of modernization and globalization. As the main basis for knowing how the Enggano culture can be a reflection of its own society, this research is considered important to do, so that the younger generation will understand the philosophical meaning of each traditional procession, especially in traditional marriages. The subject of this research is the traditional marriage procession of the Enggano people (Fig. 1).

2   Research Method

This research is ethno-semiotic research that combines ethnography and semiotics. This method is an extension of the semiotic method in cultural studies that puts forward interpretive analysis of the text towards the reading community. In the context of ethno-semiotics, Piliang (2010:106) states that a text cannot be separated from the social structure of its society. Therefore, in searching for the meaning of cultural semiotics, such as the customary marriage of the Enggano tribe, it is considered appropriate. On the other hand, the data obtained will be described qualitatively. In ethnographic research, this approach is very suitable to be used because various forms of speech and information obtained are sources of data that can be used as references. Sugiyono (2019:18) qualitative research method is a research method based on the philosophy of post positivism, used to examine the condition of natural objects. In this case, the researcher is the key instrument. Meanwhile, the data collection technique is triangulation (combined), the data analysis is inductive/qualitative, and the results of qualitative research emphasize the meaning of generalizations.

In line with Sugiyono, Abdussamad (2021) reveals that qualitative research refers to empirical things such as real human life, including human attitudes and actions socially. From some of these views, it can be said that the descriptive qualitative approach describes phenomena through images that are mixed in natural language. In this approach, data collection by prioritizing observation and in-depth interviews is the right way. This is deemed appropriate to capture primary data obtained from the source directly, namely through direct informants.

In data analysis, Sugiyono (2013) in Wijaya (2021) revealed that data in the form of speech or oral texts can be analyzed inductively. In other words, at the time of data collection, data analysis was basically carried out, namely by confirming important information and the meanings stored behind the desired data. Not only that, the elicitation

Fig. 1. Map of Enggano Island (Source: Personal documentation).

process can also be carried out according to the needs of the researcher. In terms of data processing, Miles and Huberman (1994) mention that there are three important stages, namely: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data reduction is intended to streamline data that is considered important and supportive. Meanwhile, data presentation can be done as a good alternative. Presentation of data can be done in various forms, such as pictures, tables, graphs, charts, and so on. The last stage is drawing conclusions. This stage is intended to see an overview of the results of data analysis although it is still temporary, until the data obtained are sufficient to be used as final conclusions.

3   Result and Discussion

3.1   History, Society, and Culture of Enggano

Fachruliansyah (2019) revealed that the name "Enggano" probably comes from the Portuguese language which means 'disappointed' or 'deceived'. The immigrants from Portugal were about to sail to the island of Java. However, the first island he visited was Enggano and thought that it was Java. Loeb (1972) in Fahcruliansyah (2019) stated that a Dutch explorer named Cornelis De Houtman first stopped at Enggano Island in 1596. In other words, Enggano Island had been visited by foreign explorers both for trading purposes, looking for spices, as well as in expanding their power, as was done during the Japanese and Dutch colonial times.he life of the Enggano people is very dependent on fish catches and plantations. Most of the people of Enggano work as fishermen considering that the Enggano area is surrounded by the ocean, while most of the others work as farmers with plantation commodities such as bananas, jengkol, and melinjo. The arrival of the Malay community from the mainland of Sumatra brought a new plantation sector on Enggano Island, namely coffee.

Based on data from the Badan Pusat Statistik released in 2020, the population of Enggano District in 2019 was 3,334 people who occupied an island 40 km long and 17 km
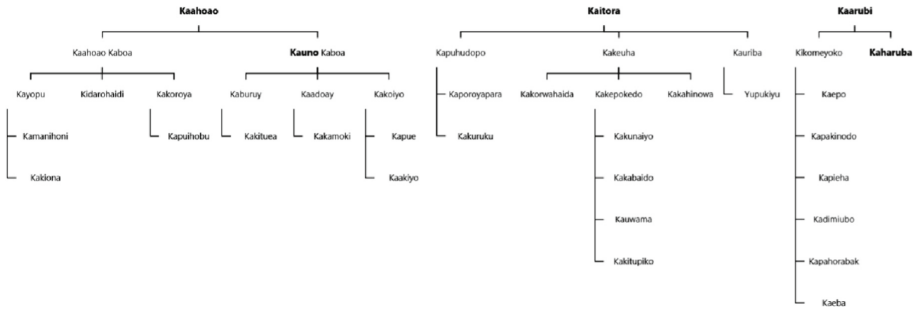
Fig. 2. Genealogy of the Enggano Tribe (Source: Fachruliansyah: 2019)

wide. The Enggano people live in five villages, namely: Kahiapu, Ka'ana, Malakoni, Apoho, Meok, and Banjarsari. The Enggano language is classified as vulnerable to language shifts considering the tendency of the Enggano people to teach Indonesian to their children, so that the Enggano language itself is secondary and is not even transmitted to their children. Enggano Island has public facilities such as an airport, ferry, as well as a highway as a link between villages. Enggano Island is also a transmigration destination, precisely in Malakoni and Ka'ana Village.

Regarding inheritance and the nomenclature system in the family, the Enggano community adheres to a matrilineal system that puts women first regarding inheritance and other rights. Not only that, the decline in tribal names was also passed down from the mother's side, not the father's side. There are six tribes in the Enggano community, including: the Kaitora, Ka'hea, Kaharubi, Kaharuba, Kauno, and Kamai' tribes. Especially the Kamai tribe'. Arios (2018) revealed that this tribe is an immigrant tribe from various regions in Indonesia, such as Java, Batak, Sundanese, Minang, and others. Tribal chiefs lead each tribe in Enggano, each tribe has a chief (*Ekapu*) and 'kepala pintu' (*Ka'udar*). Meanwhile, there is a coordinator (*Pabuki*) who is in charge of bridging between tribes when there is a meeting or deliberation (Fig. 2).

3.2 Traditional Marriage Procession (Parur Hia'au)

Zawa (2020) states that traditional marriage or customary marriage is a ritual or marriage procession carried out traditionally through various stages. Every region in the archipelago generally has a traditional marriage ritual or procession, including the Enggano tribal community. The Enggano community has a traditional marriage system known as 'parur hia'au'.

3.2.1 Parur Hia'au

Parur hia'au or traditional marriage is carried out by the Enggano indigenous people who come from the five indigenous tribes, including: Kaharubi, Kaharuba, Kaitora, Ka'hea, and Kauno. However, along with the times, Enggano Island is unavoidable from the many immigrants who are looking for work, even marrying the indigenous people of Enggano. Therefore, as a form of welcoming and openness to the Enggano tribe, immigrants from outside are given their own tribe which they call the Kamai' tribe or migrant tribe.

The traditional marriage process is divided into several series: customary deliberations, customary marriages, and traditional parties. Both parties carry out the customary deliberation along with the tribes of each family plus the tribes of friends. Companion tribes are tribes that have the closest relations with each other, for example the Ka'hea tribe and the Kaitora tribe, the Kaharubi tribe and the Kauno tribe, as well as the Kaharuba tribe and the Kaitora tribe. The companion tribe plays an important role in organizing traditional wedding processions, especially in the *pahema iuru'* and *kaheno* processions. If the deliberation has been carried out, the prospective groom will hand over a certain amount of dowry in the form of money to the woman. Before offerings in the form of money, formerly the offerings to the bride were in the form of objects, such as machetes, mats, and so on. Not only that, the groom-to-be must also submit three flags, which are affixed or hung with a sum of 20 thousand for each flag or what can be called traditional flags. Then, the traditional flag is handed over to the father's side first, then to the mother's side, and finally to the in-laws. These doors will later be responsible for the prospective groom.

On the other hand, the prospective groom gives a set of clothes and three machetes. The three machetes are given to the father's side of the bride, to the tribal leader from the woman's side, and to the chief of the father-in-law's tribe. Money is included in each handle of the knife. The machete and money handed over are symbols of closer feelings and symbols of efforts to get a future wife. After the offerings are finished, during the day people are served drinks and food as a sign of gratitude for the traditional wedding procession. In the afternoon, the tribe of friends gather all the indigenous people to discuss and parading the 'pohon masyarakat' to where the party is taking place. After the community tree procession, the next procession is the exchange of gifts from both parties and what is known as *pape ia'a.*

3.2.2 Pahema Iaru and the 'Pohon Masyarakat

The 'pohon masyarakat' in the marriage process of the Enggano community is only found if the marriage is carried out according to custom. The 'pohon masyarakat' is a symbol of togetherness, mutual cooperation, and the kinship of the Enggano community. The 'pohon masyarakat' is part of a tree, for example a shrub complete with branches. The branches function to hang money from indigenous peoples. Money from indigenous peoples is collected before the customary marriage procession which is coordinated by the head of the friendly tribe.

In the *pahema iaru* procession, the indigenous people gather at a point not far from the tent or aisle or *he'ku* then walk hand in hand with the chief of the tribe of friends in front while carrying a *pohon masyarakat*. After arriving in front of the aisle or inside the tent, the 'pohon masyarakat' is planted in the ground, and the indigenous people form a formation and perform *pahema iaru* or verse accompanied by a movement called *pahema* (Fig. 3).

Pahema iaru is a rhythmic movement accompanied by poetry. *Pahema iaru* was sung by invited guests who brought the 'pohon masyarakat'. The group forms two rows facing the 'pohon masyarakat' and then begins to dance (*pahema*). *Pahema* or body movement in question is moving the body forward and backward to accompany the rhythm of chanting poetry (*iaru*), while the position of the feet is still in place. At the

Fig. 3. The Illustration of 'Pohon Masyarakat'

moment of *pahema*, the dancers' hands go hand in hand with each other. Meanwhile, the poem (*iaru*) is sung by a group leader (soloist) whose contents are in the form of words and praises to the host in the implementation of the event or party. After the guest group is finished, then the verse will be replied to by the party host group with praise and thanks for the help and arrival of invited guests, in this case the members of the tribes in Enggano.

The Poetry in *Pahema Iaru.*

Kea kea

ia'ki ia'a, ia'a

Aaaaa

Edi'iu ua'a, ua'a

Ekana u, na u

Pe'ea'au'a, aua'a Ne

hi na'a, hi na'a

Pahipèdi, pèdi

Paruru a, rua'a

Kipu'i na'a, i na'a

Ea'ua a, ua'a

Ka'udar da, dar da

Pahuba da, da Iahoba

e, ba e Epohoni, honi

Tarakai i, kai i

Munu'mai' i, mai' i

Paruru ua, ru ua

Pauidi ia, di ia

Kinaèa, èa

Edi'iu a, u a

Enakã pu, kã pu

Abaku de, ku de

Ukupa a, pa a

Ke'abe de, abe de

Kiate e, te e Hadui

ia, di ia Pununu, nu

Hepako ba, ko ba

Bakai a'a, ia'a

Iabakè, ia'ei

Ia'i au, uououuouo

Iohor in *iaru'* contains the joy of being able to unite and agree with members of other tribes and tribes to bring the 'pohon masyarakat' indicating that the completeness of the tribal members' sign of the 'pohon masyarakat' is really to protect the custom, regardless of the amount of money but this united in togetherness. Then handed over to the master of the party while conveying expressions of joy at the party. The handover of the 'pohon masyarakat' was then replied with a poem containing an expression of gratitude to the tribal chiefs and members that this traditional community tree was received with joy and joy as a symbol of togetherness of the Enggano indigenous people. The 'pohon masyarakat' with envelope accessories filled with money is a symbol of mutual cooperation and togetherness which used to be in the form of agricultural products, fish equipment, clothes, machetes, and so on. This tradition has been going on since the time of the ancestors (*ia'kak*).

After the guests and party masters finished reciting poetry, the next traditional event was *pape ia'a*. The family of the groom gathers face to face with the family of the bride. In this procession, both parties will exchange gifts or known as *pape ia'a*. Generally, these gifts contain household supplies or necessities. This procession is the last part of the traditional event held in the afternoon. After that, the people gathered in the tent while enjoying the dishes served by the family hosting the party. The last procession is the closing of the party carried out by the family of the party host. Closing the party is done with the delivery of thanks and apologies by the host of the party. In closing the party, the party master will give money tied to a stick and a piece of clothing as a condition for closing the party. After closing the party, in the evening the indigenous people and the family hosting the party will be entertained with a traditional dance, namely the *kaheno* or ant dance. This dance is performed by the indigenous people.

3.2.3   Kaheno (The Ant Dance)

After the traditional wedding procession is carried out all day, in the evening a traditional party is held by performing traditional dances accompanied by singing called *kaheno*.

Kaheno is an oral literature that accompanies the Ant Dance movement as part of the traditional procession of the 'pohon masyarakat' in a traditional party/custom wedding (*parur hia'au*). The Ant Dance is held at night, the movements of the dancers are in rhythm with the poems sung by a soloist who leads the song and then the other dancers respond. The soloist is in the middle of the line to be heard by the dancers both in front and behind. Meanwhile, the dancer at the front holds a tree as a symbol of protection for the ants. The ant dancers will disperse/finish dancing after the bride and groom light a fire on the tree.

    Kaheno is performed by indigenous peoples. In front of the bride and groom, the indigenous people form a circular formation while hand in hand. The movements that are carried out are exactly like a convoy of ants. While moving hand in hand, the dancers sing songs led by a traditional elder while holding a stick. The poems sung contain gratitude for participation in the implementation of this marriage, prayers and hopes for the family of the party host and for the two brides are also conveyed through these poems.

Syair Kaheno

Iahibė da

kabėkabė da.hak

kahenoa noanoa

Tubahaia aia aia

Baipėd' Pėdi' pėdi' pėdi'

Kauidia dia dia

Ipu'ina ina ina

Eia ua ua ua

kaudar da dada dada

Kapė'ėaka aka aka

Kinė'aha na'aha

Eki'iua ua ua Kahenoa

noa noa Dobahaia

haia haia Auapude

pude pude Kahinua

nua nua Kipu'ina ina

ina

Ea'ua ua ua Monoma'i

ma'i ma'i Kaudar da

dada dada Kipu'ina ina

ina

Ea'ua ua ua

Kena'aa 'aa aa

Panini'ia nia nia

Waibi da bida bida

Kahenoa noa noa

Kea keo' kea keo'

Ke'dėhėda hėda hėda

Kinė'aha na'aha

eki'iua ua ua

Kahenoa noa noa

dobahaia haia haia

kiabėha bėha bėha

Kaiate'e' Keatee'

ahibia Eabia Umunua

nua nua Pahibida bida

bida Eaki'a Eaki'a

Eeeeee…

3.3 Identity and Cultural Symbolization in the Traditional Marriage Procession (Parur Hia'au)

Hoed (2014) says that identity is not only the embodiment of an interaction process, but also in the form of a symbol. The symbol itself is part of the elements of culture. Kroeber and Kluckhon in Hoed (2014) state that there are seven elements in culture: social organization, livelihood system, knowledge system, technology, religion, art, and language. These cultural elements are then used as the basis for the identity or identity of a community group, in this case the Enggano tribe.

In relation to the traditional marriage procession of the Enggano people, there are so many symbols or signs or symbols used to show the locality of the Enggano people through their own cultural media. Everything that is symbolized or marked in semiotic terms will bring out something else behind the symbolism, namely meaning. This meaning is conventional which in Peirce's view is called pan-semiotic. In this study, two things will be described regarding the customary marriage of the Enggano community, pragmatic semiotics, and structural semiotics.

3.3.1 Pragmatic Semiotics in the Parur Hia'au Procession

Peirce in Hoed (2014) is of the view that signs and their meanings are a process of cognition termed semiosis. Semiosis itself is interpreted as a process of interpreting and interpreting signs. The signs themselves are categorized into three groups: index, icon, and symbol. In the case of *Parur Hia'au*, the researcher focuses on the icons and symbols that characterize semiosis in the traditional marriage procession of the Enggano community.

When viewed from the definition, symbols refer to signs whose embodiment of meaning is given on the basis of social conventions. First, the 'pohon masyarakat' is

a symbol in an object embodiment in the form of the Enggano community association in mutual cooperation. This symbol itself contains a meaning that is conventionally agreed upon by the Enggano community. Trees are considered as a source of livelihood consisting of roots, stems, and leaves. In relation to the traditional marriage of the Enggano community, the tree is a representation of the association of indigenous people who work together in assisting the implementation of traditional marriage. On the 'pohon masyarakat', there are symbols that represent the care, kinship, and togetherness of indigenous peoples, namely by hanging their assistance in the form of money in envelopes which are then tied to the branches of the 'pohon masyarakat'. This kind of symbol becomes an identity that leads to the identity of the Enggano community that in a celebration or party, indigenous peoples will prioritize togetherness and kinship even though there is no obligation for indigenous peoples to hang envelopes on the 'pohon masyarakat'. Not only the 'pohon masyarakat' which shows symbolic semiosis in *parur hia'au*, *parang* or *paish* in the Enggano language, has it also given an embodiment of its own meaning. The machete as part of the offerings he holds is attached with a certain amount of money, which has a strong philosophical value. *Parang* is considered as a tool that represents the seriousness of the groom in proposing to the bride. Not only that, the symbolization of the machete is also interpreted as a man's struggle to get a bride. Meanwhile, the money placed on the handle becomes a material marker that will be given if you get married later.

On the other hand, semiosis in the icon category is also found in the *parur hia'au* procession in the Ant Dance. Basically, the *kahino* referred to in this dance is a symbol of termites, not ants. The symbolization of termites holding each other's back while moving their bodies is an icon that refers to a similarity of identity to a particular object. In relation to the traditional party, the *kahino* becomes a symbol of closing the party which will later be dissolved after the bride and groom light a fire or match. In reality, termites will come out and live freely at night, then the animals will accompany each other to form a long line while holding the back. Not only that, termites are very sensitive to fire, therefore cognitive representations appear in the Enggano community. As a form of offering or entertainment for the host of the party, the Ant or Termite Dance was made. In this dance, the dancers sing the poems which in the previous section have explained that the contents of the poems are in the form of thanks, prayers, and the happiness of the indigenous people during the *parur hia'au* procession or traditional marriage.

3.3.2 Structural Semiotics Terms in Parur Hia'au

Talking about structural theory, it cannot be separated from the world's pioneer of structural linguistics, Ferdinand De Saussure. In the study of semiotics, structuralism is certainly the most important part in perceiving a symbol or sign which will be interpreted through social conventions. Saussure in Hoed (2014) suggests that there are five important things that are the focus of structural theory, firstly, signs consist of signifiers and signified whose meaning is based on social conventions; second, language as a social phenomenon that is arbitrary and conventional has social rules in the form of langue and social practice or parole; third, syntagmatic and associative relationships; fourth, synchronic and diachronic approaches in language; and fifth, language as a social phenomenon has two levels, namely langue and parole.

Inrelationto thetraditional marriage tradition of the Enggano people, the third thing can be related to the emergence of important terms during the traditional marriage procession, namely how the relationship between signs is seen from a syntagmatic and associative point of view. In the word *kaheno* which is interpreted by most people as Ant Dance, literally *kaheno* means 'termites' not 'ants'.

However, the cognition of society that has been formed so far due to social conventions shifts that meaning, thus obscuring the meaning of *kaheno* itself. In terms of associative relations, dance and movement patterns are certainly associated with the movement of termite ants that go hand in hand with each other and generally come out at night. The fire symbol lit by the bride and groom shows that fire is a medium to disperse a swarm of termite ants. In the context of traditional marriage, *kaheno* is seen as an entertainment for the party master, it does not mean that the party master expels or disperses invited guests because the party is over. Syntagmatic relations are also seen in the phrase *pahema iaru*. Literally, *pahema* is interpreted as a rhythmic movement performed by the dancers in front of the community tree. Meanwhile, *Iaru* means poems that are sung in a monotone rhythm. Each stanza of the lyrics has almost the same number of words and syllables, so that the end of each stanza is spoken by the dancers behind the lead soloist.

4   Conclusion

Humans are creatures who are always looking for meaning in everything around them. The meaning in semiotics is known as semiosis which can be identified both structurally and pragmatically. Humans are part of society that cannot be separated from culture. Humans, culture, and language are a unit called culture. In this regard, the Enggano tribe as one of the tribes in the archipelago has a culture that is still attached to this day, namely the *Pahema Iaru* or traditional marriage procession. The traditional marriage procession in the Enggano community shows the existence of cultural semiotics that needs to be revealed as a form of cultural literacy for the Enggano community, especially for the younger generation.

The results of this study can be concluded that cultural semiotics is closely attached to the Enggano community through a series of *parur hia'au* processions. The symbolization of the 'pohon masyarakat' in the *pahema iaru* procession is a manifestation of the identity of the Enggano community, such as the culture of mutual cooperation, togetherness, and happiness. This symbolic meaning is certainly attached to the cognition of the Enggano community whose meaning is the result of social conventions. *Kaheno* or ant dance is a form of respect and consolation for the host of the party served by the indigenous people. The *kaheno* icon or literally translated as 'termites' is a social convention of the Enggano people who together entertain in a movement that is in rhythm with the chanting of poetry. In the implementation of *kaheno*, there are no barriers or limits, young or old can participate in the dance.

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