

Semiotic Analysis of Traditional Wedding Ceremony in Oelomin Village of Kupang Regency

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
Traditional Wedding Ceremony Symbol Meaning Semiotic Oelomin Village	This research entitled “ Semiotic Analysis of Traditional Wedding Ceremony in Oelomin Village of Kupang Regency ” aims to answer several questions, namely: (1) What symbols are used in traditional wedding ceremony in Oelomin Village of Kupang Regency? (2) What are the meanings of the symbols used in the traditional wedding ceremony in Oelomin Village of Kupang Regency? This research aims to find out the meanings contained in the symbols in the traditional wedding ceremony in Oelomin Village of Kupang Regency. This research used descriptive qualitative method to analyze the data, and data collection through observation, video recording, picture taking, interview, and note taking. The result of this research shows that there are ten symbols in the traditional wedding ceremony in Oelomin Village of Kupang Regency. They are as follows: <i>puah manus</i> , <i>oko mama</i> , <i>none</i> , <i>bijael</i> , <i>bete</i> , <i>tais</i> , <i>apilu</i> , <i>po’uk</i> , <i>apoho</i> , and <i>dulan</i> . Each symbol in the traditional wedding ceremony in Oelomin Village of Kupang Regency means social status, culture identity, respect, politeness, responsibility, openness with community and family ties. By understanding the meanings of each symbol, it can increase knowledge about Timorese culture especially in Oelomin Village of Kupang Regency, as well as appreciation for the cultural heritage of the ancestors.
How to cite: Baitanu, A., Kroon, Y. B., Rahayu, G. (2025). Semiotic Analysis of Traditional Wedding Ceremony in Oelomin Village of Kupang Regency. <i>SPARKLE Journal of Language, Education and Culture</i> , 6 (1) 59-62.	

INTRODUCTION

Semiotics is an area of linguistics that investigates signs and symbols. According to Eco (1976) and Chandler (2002), semiotics is concerned with everything that can be deemed a sign. Semiotic signs might be words, pictures, sounds, gestures, or objects. As a result, we can study semiotics through culture, which contains various signs such as symbols, images, words, texts. Symbols are markers that serve as conventional signs established by the community with predetermined meanings that the community has agreed to and uses.

Wedding ceremonies are essential sociocultural traditions for people all around the world. The writer chose this topic because the writer wanted to find out the symbols and meanings used in traditional wedding ceremony in Oelomin Village of Kupang Regency. The following are two of several examples of symbols found in traditional wedding ceremony in Oelomin Village of Kupang Regency, namely candles and bibles. Candles and bibles are symbols of light and guidance for the bride and groom in navigating the household ark. These two symbols have a religion value where Timorese people recognize and always involve God in their lives; one example is in married life. This study may help society in Oelomin Village of Kupang Regency, to fully understanding the meanings of each symbol contained in the traditional wedding ceremony, especially for the younger generation who live in the millennial era.

Based on the background above, the writer is motivated to conduct the research under the title: “**Semiotic**

analysis of traditional wedding ceremony in Oelomin Village of Kupang Regency". This research aims at identifying the symbols used in traditional wedding ceremony and to describe the meanings of those symbols which are used in traditional wedding ceremony in Oelomin Village of Kupang regency.

METHOD

The research design used was descriptive qualitative method. Descriptive qualitative method is used to identify symbols that were found in traditional wedding ceremony and to describe the meanings of those symbols which were found in traditional wedding ceremony in Oelomin Village of Kupang Regency. Qualitative method was defined as social science research methods that collect and analyze data in the form of human words and actions and researchers do not try to calculate or quantify the qualitative data that has been obtained and thus do not analyze numbers (Afrizal, 2016:13). The writer collected the data by conducting observation, video recording, picture taking, interview, and note taking. Techniques of data analysis conduct of identified the symbols, described the meanings and interpreting the symbols and meanings found in traditional wedding ceremony in Oelomin Village of Kupang Regency.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

This chapter is divided into two parts: finding and discussion. These parts are answering the research questions. In findings the writer presents the data analysis of symbols that were found in traditional wedding ceremony in Oelomin village of Kupang regency. This research used semiotics theory from Peirce (1931). Lastly, in discussion, the writer described the meanings of symbols based on the result of analysis.

Based on the result of the research, there are four steps involved in traditional wedding ceremony in Oelomin Village with ten symbols in them.

Table 1. Symbols found in wedding traditional ceremony in Oelomin village of Kupang Regency.

No	Symbols	
	Dawan Language	English
1.	Puah Manus	Betel nut
2.	Oko Mama	Betel nut holder
3.	None	Dowry
4.	Bijael	Cow
5.	Bete	Traditional clothing for man
6.	Tais	Traditional clothing for woman
7.	Apilu	Headdresses for man
8.	Pou'k	Shawl
9.	Apoho	Belt
10.	Dulan	Tray

Discussion

In this part the writer would like to explain the meaning of all the symbols found in traditional wedding ceremony in Oelomin village of Kupang regency. There are several objects of symbols that were found in traditional wedding ceremony in Oelomin Village. These objects are described one by the writer along with their respective meanings below:

1. Puah Manus (betel nut)

The tradition of chewing *Puah Manus* (betel nut) is often practiced, including by the people of Timor. *Puah Manus* (betel nut) is a social and cultural symbol that illustrates respect and hospitality to visitors, both in traditional ceremonies and in everyday life for the Timorese people. This tradition also fosters a sense of brotherhood and intimacy between the two parties. *Puah Manus* (betel nut)

is also a symbol of openness; when Timorese people give *Puah Manus* (betel nut) it means that they are open and ready to accept these things.

2. Oko Mama (Betel nut holder)

Oko Mama is a very important part of Timorese traditional culture. The term *Oko Mama* comes from two words in the Dawan language, namely: *oko* which means “place to store betel nut”, and *mama* which means “main”. Literally, *Oko Mama* is a main place to store betel nut, which in Timorese culture has a very deep symbolic meaning. *Oko Mama* has a meaning as a symbol of hospitality, courtesy, and respect. *Oko Mama* is also a traditional heritage that is used in various traditional events and in everyday life.

3. None (Dowry)

None is the traditional dowry given by the male family to the female family. *None* in Timorese custom is given in the form of money. This *none* is given by the man to the woman's family as a symbol of the responsibility and respect for the woman's family who has raised and educated his future wife. The amount of *none* to be given by the man's family to the woman's family depends on the request of the woman's family. *None* is also a symbol that the man is ready to carry on the responsibility as a husband and part of the woman's extended family.

4. Bijael (Cow)

Bijael (cow) is one of the dowries used in traditional wedding ceremonies for the Timorese community, including in the Oelomin village. *Bijael* (cow) is interpreted by the community as a symbol of the endorsement of every traditional ceremony conducted. Bringing a female cow by the groom's family symbolizes the embedding of the bridegroom's clan in the bride's name. This means that the bride has officially become part of the groom's family.

5. Bete (Traditional clothing for man)

Bete is the traditional clothing for the man of Timorese. *Bete* worn by men symbolizes authority and honor. The *bete* is worn at various important events such as weddings, which signify social status and serve as a symbol of cultural heritage. *Bete* is a reflection of a person's social status, seen from the color of motif on the *Bete*. *Bete* is also a symbol of masculinity from Timorese men. *Bete* is also used as dowry in traditional Timorese weddings, symbolizing protection and love, as well as a symbol of family ties and unity.

6. Tais (Traditional clothing for woman)

Tais is traditional clothing that has become one of the identities in culture, of Timorese people. *Tais* is a traditional clothing of Timorese women that is often used in daily as well as in traditional events. *Tais* symbolizes the honor and elegance of Timorese woman. *Tais* also become a cultural identity for those who wear them. In addition, *tais* can also be used as item of dowry in traditional Timorese marriages and there are two pieces of *tais*.

7. Apilu (Headdresses for man)

Apilu is a traditional headdress in the form of batik cloth worn by Timorese men on various traditional occasions, including traditional weddings and other important ceremonies. *Apilu* symbolizes social status, tribal identity, and position in society. The use of *apilu* in marriage ceremonies or other traditional events reflects maturity, responsibility, and honor. It is also symbolic of a man's role in looking after and leading his family and community.

8. Pou'k (Shawl)

The *pou'k* (shawl) is one of the most important traditional items in Timorese culture. *Pou'k* (shawl) are often worn by brides and grooms in the traditional wedding ceremonies as a symbol of

honor and cultural identity. In marriage, *pou'k* (shawl) often symbolizes social status and serves as complementary accessories.

9. Apoho (Belt)

Apoho is a belt worn by Timorese women as part of their traditional dress. *Apoho* is made of metal. *Apoho* is not just an accessory; it also has important symbolism in Timorese culture. It symbolizes a woman's social status, maturity, and honor.

10. Dulan (Tray)

Dulan is a place to put the offerings brought by the male family to the female family. Below the writer explain the content of each *Dulan* brought by the groom's family to the bride's family, are as follows:

1. The first *Dulan* contains offerings in the form of candles and bibles. Candles and bibles are symbols of light and guidance for the bride and groom in navigating the household ark. These two symbols have a religious value where Timorese people recognize and always involve God in their lives; one example is in married life.
2. The second *Dulan* contains cosmetics for the bride. Cosmetics reflect the hope that the bride will always maintain her beauty and health, both physically and mentally. Cosmetics also symbolize the bride's readiness to take care of herself and maintain her appearance in domestic life.
3. The third *Dulan* contains traditional offerings in the form of traditional clothing for the bride and groom. This symbolizes honor and self-identity as Timorese people.
4. The fourth *Dulan* contains offerings in the form of *Puah Bonak*. *Puah Bonak* is a kind of betel that has larger size and also has a distinctive aroma. Symbolizes appreciation, seriousness and good intentions of the groom when proposing to the bride.
5. The fifth *Dulan* contains offerings in the form of traditional Timorese clothing for the parents of the bride, this is also a sign of respect and appreciation to the parents of the bride

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of this research, that analyzed symbols and meanings in traditional wedding ceremony in Oelomin village of Kupang regency, the writer found ten symbols in traditional wedding ceremony in Oelomin Village, namely *puah manus*, *oko mama*, *none*, *bijael*, *bete*, *tais*, *apilu*, *pou'k*, *apoho* and *dulan*. The symbols found in traditional wedding ceremony in Oelomin village of Kupang regency, symbolizes social status, culture identity, respect, politeness, responsibility, openness with the community, and family ties.

The writer would also suggest that by this research, the community is expected to preserve the symbols in traditional wedding so that cultural values are not lost due to modernization; the government and traditional institutions could organize seminars or cultural festivals that discuss symbols in traditional weddings so that they are better known by the wider community; and for future researchers, they can deepen the analysis by comparing symbols in traditional weddings from various regions to see the similarities and differences.

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