

THE REFECTION OF LOCAL WISDOM OF FARMER COMMUNITY'S WORLD VIEW IN BREBES REGENCY

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Abstract

The farmer community's collective minds in Brebes Regency may be classified with linguistic expressions at the lingual unit level of word, phrase, sentence, and discourse. The farmer community's local wisdom may be identified through linguistic category and expression, covering local cultural, astronomical, technical, economic, and social wisdom. This qualitative research describes the local wisdom of the farmer community in Brebes Regency related to the Javanese language and culture through linguistic expression in agriculture, husbandry, and fishery. The analysis model used an ethnoscience model called The New Ethnography. The local wisdom refers to the farmer community's significant local wisdom, which is the farmer community's choice to remain becoming farmer. The research shows that the farmer community's view of life is their way to view this life, that humans are created as individuals and social beings The farmer community's mindset may be observed from their daily behaviors of simplicity, hard work, and maintaining harmony between nature and humans.

Keywords: local wisdom, view of life, farmer

Introduction

A view of life is an abstraction of life experience (Siswanto, 2010). View of the world is how the farmer community views the world. This world does not exist automatically, but it is made to exist and mastered by its highest ruler. As an integral part of Javanese society, the farmer society does not view this world differently, that God is



the center of the universe and any living beings since He is the first one to exist before anything exists and occurs in the world. The said highest ruler is the one to give livelihood, balance, and stability. In the ruling, there are some hierarchical levels of the ruler from the ruler of earth, sea, and mounts, while the lowest ones are overseers, in which they may, in *bermunajad* (worship), be observed through traditions they express, through their verbal expression, in this case, to whom offerings and mantras are addressed to. In this case, the society distinguishes the forms of their expressions and offerings by category, expressed in their linguistic expressions. The importance of Javanese tradition regarding language and culture problems is studied because, in the realm of agriculture, there is a farmer community's traditional knowledge system inherited from generation to generation. The knowledge system implies local wisdom that needs to be empowered and developed to revitalize cultural excellence heritage. Generally, ancestral cultural heritage can be distinguished from verbal acts (lingual units) and non-verbal acts (such as ritual ceremonies). For example, dry land tillage, plant cultivation, or sap tapping (nderes) is included in the non-verbal act. In a ritual ceremony of initial planting (witwitan) or reaping rice (*jabel*), as well as the ritual of bringing rice to the barn after being harvested; Following those activities, a verbal act is delivered by revealing spells containing the meaning to honor Goddess Sri as the symbol of fertility and the prosperity giver to the farmers.

Javanese people believe that each of their movements is always under God's power and that anything is determined by God (Pratiwinindya, 2018). Such Javanese people's view is commonly known as *Kawulalan Gusti*, which is a view assuming that it is humans' moral obligation to achieve harmony with the absolute power and that it is the absolute unity that humans surrender to as *kawula* (servant) towards their *Gusti* (God/The Creator). This is manifested in farmers' activities in Brebes Regency during their *bermunajad* (worship), such as during the beginning of planting and *jabel* 'harvest.'

Their mind realm formulates that humans live in two cosmoses (realms), namely macro cosmos and microcosmos. Macrocosmos, in their mind, is the attitude towards and view of life in the universe, which contains supernatural power and is full of anything mysterious and magical. At the same time, microcosmos is the attitude towards and view of the life of the real world. The main objective of life is to find and create harmony or balance between macrocosmic and microcosmic lives.

It is interesting to study farmers' concept of the world, in which such a belief phenomenon raises forms of respect linguistically reflected through speech and forms of local wisdom. Local wisdom may be understood as local ideas which are wise, full of wisdom, good, instilled in and followed by members of society, and inherited by a generation with influence on areas far away from the center of culture (peripheral) through various forms of acculturation (Jamalie, 2016).

This qualitative research describes the local wisdom of the farmer community in Brebes Regency related to Javanese language and culture through linguistics expression in the agricultural, husbandry, and fishermen realm. This method is used to reveal various qualitative information as well as an accurate and meticulous description (Sutopo, 1996).). The study is an explorative qualitative method with an ethnographic technique since it combines the ethnographic method that has characteristics of (1) holistic and integrative, (2) detailed and meticulous description, 3) deep analysis to get the farmer community's life view, world view, and local wisdom. The analysis method used is the ethnoscience model, also known as The New Ethnography (Spradley, 1997).

Theoretical Framework



Ethnolinguistics is also called anthropological linguistics, a linguistics type studying the relationship between language and culture in a society. Weber (1990) said that language is a nation's reflection. Besides, it is explained that the definition of ethnolinguistics (anthropological linguistics) is a linguistics branch concerning the language's position in a wider social and cultural context to develop and maintain cultural practices and social structures (Foley, 1997). Everyday diversity is demographically complicated, engagement in cross-cultural contacts is frequently mediated by other identifiers, and the materiality and spatial organization of spaces are important in fostering these encounters (Mc Neill, 2019).Mc Neill, E. (2019). SPACES OF CROSS-CULTURAL ENCOUNTER.

Subroto et al. (1997) mentioned that they researched Javanese language and cultural aspects consisting of paribasan, bebasan, saloka, pepindhan, and sanepa from an ethnolinguistics study perspective; Subroto et al. (2003) researched Javanese society's local wisdom reflected in the wangsalanpitutur-luhurform from ethnolinguistics perspective; next, Subroto et al. (2007, 2008, 2009) researched Javanese speech level shift in the younger generation in Surakarta and its surroundings; Fernandez (2008) about Linguistic Category and Expression in Javanese as the Reflection of The Speaker's Local Wisdom: An Ethnolinguistics Study in Farmers and Fishermen Communities; Fernandez (2008) studied Linguistic Category and Expression in Javanese as the Reflection of The Speaker's Local Wisdom: An Ethnolinguistics Study in Farmers and Fishermen Communities in Jember, Petungkriyono, and GunungKidul. The research result showed that in the activity relating to both livelihoods, it was known that the Javanese language in the area of the research sample saved many community knowledge systems (cognition), reflecting the compatible relation in the human relationship with surrounding nature ecology, social ecology, and community's mind ecology. In its myth wealth, the relation between farmers and fishermen, macro and microcosm nature ecology, and the compatible relation tied vertically with the supernatural world and horizontally with fellow society were reflected. In linguistic category and expression as appearing in vocabulary and chord, there are mindset and life view of farmers and fishermen recorded in implicit or explicit meaning clarifying the culture owners' ability on knowledge system (cognition) recorded in language as the culture's integral part. Kipacha (2005) concluded that 'the texts presented here form important documentation of severely diminishing records of ancient Swahili culture and socio-economic life. I have attempted to present and discuss these texts so anthropologists and linguistics could use the material. The article does not pretend to be exhaustive but offers a small contribution to documenting our Swahili heritage'. This document-form text is important because it saves Swahili culture and socio-cultural life. We have discussed that anthropology and linguistics experts may use this text. This article is not too complicated, but it may contribute to documenting our Swahili heritage"-Harun (2009) about ethnolinguistics by pragmatics Power Approach to the Pepindhan in Javanese.

From the literature study, it can be concluded that the study researched has not existed, and the study above may give significant benefit in writing this research result. If there is similarity and the research is conducted in a different place, the conclusion will be different.

Method

This qualitative research describes the local wisdom of the farmer community in Brebes Regency related to the Javanese language and culture through the linguistic expression in the realm of agriculture, husbandry, and fishery. This method is used to



reveal various qualitative information as well as an accurate and meticulous description (Sutopo, 1996). This descriptive qualitative method combines ethnographic method that has characteristics of 1) holistic and integrative, 2) detailed and meticulous description 3) deep analysis to get a live view, world view, and local wisdom of the farmer community. The analysis model uses the ethnoscience model, also known as The New Ethnography (Spradley, 1997). The research is phenomenological research that tries to understand various phenomena and human interaction in a context that is also flexible and open. The analysis is inductive by using data not only as a proving tool but also as a tool to understand existing facts and phenomena (Sutopo. 1996). Fact and phenomena in this research are verbal and non-verbal expressions following cultural phenomena that can be analyzed in forms of folklore, linguistics expressions, and category to express local wisdom, mindset, and life view of the farmer community in Brebes Regency. The data in this research can be divided into two groups which are primary data and secondary data. The data then are analysed through linguistics category and expression in farmer community using ethnography and linguistics models to find farmer community's local wisdom in Brebes Regency The farmer community's local wisdom would be found in their cultural themes when doing a farming activities, social activities, and folklore.

Overall, Brebes Regency has 26 sub-districts. In this research, seven subdistricts were chosen considering that the villages were assumed as required villages that met the criteria of purposive sampling that can be studied, which were villages lived by farmers, cattlemen, tappers, and fishermen that Javanese language and culture category and expression containing local wisdom might happen in Brebes Regency. Likewise, the research object was focused on the farmers currently being subsistent farmers. The characteristics of farmers in Brebes Regency can be identified that (1) The farmers there are subsistent farmers and still resistant to the agricultural types types from a peripheral area that is experiencing a livelihood transformation process,(2) beside becoming farmers, cattlemen, tappers, and fishermen,(3) farmers tradition is still traditional, and it is maintained in the ways concerning its balance of the natural environment, (4) As a transitional area, besides maintaining the resistance from the peripheral area, it also experiences innovation in the language in line with the influence from the cultural center,(5) although they experience livelihood transformation, in principle, they still withstand in an agricultural world that they always bring farming pattern in rituals, offerings, and spelling. In that condition, the aimed farmer community is the one whose Javanese language and culture category and expression relating to the local wisdom are the accumulation of their life experiences relating to the social-culture-economy factors to get a place to continue their lives.

The participatory observation intended that the researcher entered the situation and actively acted as an observer and participant at the same time to scrutinize the needed research data. Practically, the researcher followed the Javanese language and cultural expression done by farmers and cattlemen. Participatory observation is the characteristic of the ethnography field research method which is holistic-integrative, thick description, and qualitative analysis in order to get the native's point of view (Spradley, 1997).

It is done in the implementation of prayer/spell reading in ritual ceremonies when preparing to plant, reap, fight pests, folklore, and myth. The participatory observation technique proceeded with confirmation and interview with the chosen informant while creating ethnographic notes and structural and contrast descriptive questions (Spradley, 1997). Structural and contrast descriptive questions were accompanied by the listening, speaking, note-taking, and recording technique (Subroto,



1992; Sudaryanto, 1993) completed by the identity of who the source is, when the source is taken, the content, and where it is completely and stored to ease the data analysis of ethnoscience model (taxonomy, componential, domain).

After conducting the participatory observation, the researcher was immediately able to see, ask, record (photo, tape recorder), and take note of all data related to the Javanese language and culture category and expression of the farmer community in South Brebes. The chosen strategy to conduct the participatory observation included (a) delivering self-introduction indeed accompanied by proof in the form of permission from local government and related instance, (b) explaining that the researcher's involvement in all activities would not create spiritual, moral, material, formal, and social-political disadvantages, (e) Put ourselves in ethical order practically, spiritually, and psychologically in their lives,(d) understand the sensitivity over the social-cultural and social-economic conditions to avoid contra productive situation,(e) put themselves as research partners who play important roles (f) researcher manages the strategy of when they should be open and covert, (g) participating expression activity of their Javanese language and culture accurately, (h) researcher extract their important information both in oral and written forms, and (i) researcher prepares descriptive, structural, and contrast questions list.

Findings and Discussion

Farmer Community's Religious and Spiritual Activities as Reflection of Faith

Brebes people are not classified as *santri* Muslim, but a mixture of some Islamic concepts and ways of thinking with an original view of *kodrati* realm and *adikodrati* realm (*Muslim Kejawen*). *Kejawen* means Javanism, Javaneseness; which is a descriptive mark for Javanese cultural elements deemed as Javanese essence and is defined as one typical category of Javanism, which is religion as well as a view of the life of Javanese people that emphasizes inner peace, harmony, and balance, the attitude of '*nrima*'to accept as is' any existing events while placing an individual under the society and the society under the universe.

As a transitional region, Brebes regency has Javanese characteristics that tend to be more similar to the Javanese culture in Banyumas than the Javanese culture in the cultural center region. This may be observed from its language that maintains non-using speech level language since each language has a different concept of an object or item. If an object or item in the real world is not present, then the object or item is not necessarily symbolized by a word (Rahyono, 2015).

Traditional Religiosity of Javanese Culture

Some Brebes people are classified into *Kejawen* or *Islam abangan. Kejawen*, according to Geertz (1981), is a community that follows the elements of Islamic mysticism teaching or syncretic *Tasawuf*. Although performing Islamic-based obligations such as five times of worship, going to the mosque, and fasting during Ramadhan, they still indirectly perform traditional *Kejawen* rituals garnished with Islamic nuance. For example, when a chant is uttered to ask for safety on land, they still mention gods' names. This also reflects a fact of the cultural acculturation system. Such assumptions are closely related to their belief in *adikodrati* guidance and help from ancestral spirits, which raises a religious sense and sense of safety that each place has an overseer (other beings).

Respect for King and Religious Figure as God's Messenger



Society's spirituality is universally the same in defining God as the creator and owner of the universe. However, in the manifestation of getting close to God, they use some ways typical for each area, including the research area. Their ways and forms are mostly influenced by religious journeys coming to the research area. For example, Hinduism and Buddhism got into Java Island and reached the research area bringing the concept of magical powers. The kingdoms established brought figures of kings who were believed to be gods or reincarnations of gods. Therefore, the culture of obedience to the king develops since a king is positioned as an '*imam*' who serves to bring godly essence onto the world (Simuh, 1999). This concept is caught by the society of transitional areas far away from the center of culture in the form of the lexicon, such as *raden* and *petilasan*. In addition, direct communication with God (Owner of Power) also develops, with special spiritual rituals, such as *semedi, tapa*, and *pasa* (fasting). Propagators of Islam –*wali* and *tarekat* gurus- introduce Islam with *tasawuf* style.

Farmers in Brebes Regency are used to fasting on certain days, such as Monday-Thursday or on their day of birth. All of them are the origin of *tirakat*. In the concept of Javanese cosmology, there are four types of human lust (*nafsu*), namely *amarah*, *aluamah*, *supiyah*, and *mutmainnah* lusts which always accompany human life (Endraswara, 2006, p. 55). This conforms to their life principle that they are aware of "*sangkanparaningdumadi*" (from where humans are derived, what and who they are now, and where they are heading).

Verbal Expression of the Reflection of Farmer's View of World Principle

This principle covers two matters: the concept of human existence in the world and the concept of human's place in the afterlife. Such principle is expressed in the following sentences.

1) Akal-Agama-Wirang-NgamalSoleh'Mind-sense of shame-religion, and good practice' is Horizontal and Vertical Harmony.

Society has the *akal-agama-wirang-ngamal soleh* principle, in which humans, besides using intelligence, should also have religion or faith in God, The Creator, and then get it into practice in their daily life in the form of good deeds. This principle may be correlated with the term *ilmu lan ngilmu*. Rational, phenomenal, systematic, and regular *Ilmu* (knowledge/science) (mind) may be realized objectively in daily life in the form of good deeds (*amal soleh*). All of them are based on faith in one's religion.

2) Urip mung mampir ngombe 'Life is only to stop by for a drink' is Interpreted as Life is Very Short that Must be Utilized Well.

Urip nyong mung mampir ngombe 'My life is only to stop by for a drink' means that life is very short. Therefore, it should be utilized as well as possible.

3) Laku dadi celengan'Action is Saving for the Afterlife'

The expression above is closely related to the expression *laku nyong dadi celengan*[•] my actions are saving' means that what humans conduct will be something they will bring to appear before God. Therefore, humans must do good deeds as much as possible since life is short.

Verbal Expression Related to Farmers' Spiritual Negotiation with the Highest Ruler

Humans' desires and feelings, including those of the farmer community at the research location, to get close to God are in the form of ritual symbols of offering, sacrifice, and the like, and various forms of *tirakat*. Communication with the highest and magical rule may have various objectives, such as: asking for something, apologizing, and expressing thanks, all of which may be classified into negotiation. Negotiation may



be made using offering and sacrifice to be presented.

Frankincense burning ritual is a *laku* attempt to banish (*nundhung*) devils that will harm humans. They are supposed to believe that devils are beings created from the flame, so they may be defeated using *kebul* of flame. The manifestation of ritual *laku* is relied upon God, not the symbolized item. Therefore, they believe that such an act is not deemed *musyrik*.

Tirakat as Symbol of Apprehension and Ascetic Practice

The characteristics of spiritual *laku tapa* and *pasa* are to enjoy anything not good and not to enjoy anything good, to joy over apprehension. Expectedly, after undergoing this *laku*, they will not get tempted into the world's attractiveness, and a transcendent spiritual view will be formed so that it may be stated that *pasa* aims at purifying the mind and achieving completeness of the soul. Such a Javanese people's view is normally called *Manunggaling Kawula Lan Gusti*⁴ to unite humans as a servant and God', which is a view assuming that human's moral obligation is to achieve harmony with the final power and the final unity, in which humans as servants submit to their Lord (God) (Zoetmulder, 2000).

Farmer Community's View of Life Reflecting Local Wisdom

Javanese people's view of life is an overall view of all descriptive beliefs of the reality of life faced by humans, which are meaningful and obtained from their life experiences. Javanese people stand a principle of "*sangkan paraning dumadi*" (from where humans are derived, what and who they are now, and to where they are heading) (Herusatoto, 2000, p. 78). This principle is regarding two things: the concept of human existence in the world and the concept of human's place in the world.

There is a system that demands minimizing individual interests. This is based on communal spirit, but individually, a person is demanded to have a strong belief and willpower to struggle for life (*jujur lan nerimo*). The expression above is the crystallization or material to read life spirit to position oneself as an individual and maintain life.

Verbal Expression Related to Human Essence as Individual Being

Human is individual when they are analyzed as a person who grows and develops from birth to death. As a community, farmers identify their development like coconut tree's development which gives a living since it can provide income continuously regardless of seasons two times a day. This philosophy of coconut trees is held by the farmer community in the relevant research location along with its ecological condition. This philosophy includes: (1) Cikal 'candidate or shoots', which is bakal (candidate) small coconut tree, equalized to childhood in humans, incomplete; (2) Glugu means little human acts sincerely (lugu) and never lie, innocent in thinking, and straight like nglugu 'coconut tree'; (3) Tataran, which is a ladder made out of coconut tree's trunk. This means that human life should start from phase to phase. Laku and process are required to achieve any *ilmu* (knowledge/science); (4) *Tepes*, which is wrapping of the potential coconut fruit. This means that human should be willing to be organized appropriately (pas) and harmoniously; (5) Mancung, which is coconut flower bud, which is meant that human should always mengacungkanthemselves in virtue; (6) Manggar, which is coconut flower, which means that life should be *dianggar-anggar* or considered as well as possible; (7) Bluluk 'small coconut fruit', which means that life should be balnul 'mengepal-ngepul' with keluk 'smoke' which means that human should frequently burnt frankincense as a medium of communication with Yang widiwasa 'the highest ruler'; (8)



Bluluk Cengkir is young coconut fruit which has no flesh, which means that in life, we should have strong mind, which is *kencenging piker* 'like to think'; (9) Degan is young coconut fruit of which flesh tastes quite good but cannot be shredded yet, which means that life should find gegantilaneng ati 'sweetheart', that is God; (10) Sepet is wrapping of coconut fruit, which means that human life is not always sweet, but it tastes sepet (something not good) sometimes; (11) Janur is young yellow coconut leaf, which means that life should find light (the yellow), that is Nur Illahi (Light of God).

Verbal Expression Related to Human Essence as Social Being in the Dynamics of Social Interactions

Social interaction may be defined as dynamic social relationships. Humans as an individual cannot be separated from their function as a society since every individual ceremony's purpose always involves other humans, such as *kerigen, ngode, nggaduh, slametan, uruban,* and *derep*.

1) *Kerigan'gotong royong*/work together in Various Events

Kerigen is cooperation activities among the farmer community at the research location, which is normally called *gotong royong*, performed in individual and social events. For example, when a person is building a house, many neighbors will help and serve as construction executors. In this farmer community, construction executors are not paid with money, but they only get food and drinks as necessary, commonly called *etukingon* 'obtain food.'

2) Uruban 'barter' during Jabel 'harvest' season

`*Uruban* 'barter means to exchange. Barter (*uruban*) is still part of the farmers' lifestyle when they are on the farm, just like the time when money has not existed yet. This way of life still exists and is inherited by the current generation. They do not always measure anything materially.

3) *Nggaduh* 'raise others' animal' A form of Sharing.

Nggaduh 'raise others' animal' of which pen is normally close to the house. The yield is for consumption or saving for accidental necessity. These animals' feces are used to *nglemon taneman* 'fertilize plants in the garden and farm. *Nggaduh* usually is performed for cattle, goats, and ducks. The reward is given as deemed sufficient by conscience, which is a principle of economic activity at the research location. This is part of the social life in support of the mutual sharing element.

4) Derep 'harvest others' paddy For Farmers Who Do Not Have Farm

Derep is also a form of cooperation and barter, but special for the work to harvest paddy in paddy fields. In this case, harvesters are normally paid higher than the wage obtained from construction work in a big city. Derep is currently performed by *mboktanilanpaktani* 'men and women' since when *ani-ani* 'ketam' was still used, harvesting was performed only by *mboktani* 'women .'They now use *arit* 'sickle', commonly called *ngerit* 'ngariti.'

5) Ngode 'side work' For Farmer Who Do Not Have Coconut Tree

Ngode 'side work' is commonly performed for additional income during the nonharvest season. Farmers who do not have coconut trees *ngode* with farmers who have *deres* coconut trees. This *ngode* work is paid with a fifty-fifty yield mode. For example, a day yield is for the owner, the next day yield is for the one to do *ngode 'mendereskan*/extract juice from coconut tree,' and the following day yield will be for the owner. With this mode, they perceive that they have made fair sharing. If the quality of *nira* (coconut tree-extracted juice) *pengode* is poor because of pest, such as getting damaged by a mouse or lizard, it is his poor fate and not the owner's mistake, and vice versa.



6) Sambatan 'mutual help.'

Sambatan is to help other person work when the other person has some event, such as marriage, death, and birth. Sambatan usually comes before the day of the event to help cook for women and install kajang or cleaning work for men. After helping, they will still donate. This is a form of togetherness and kinship among local people. If someone does not follow this tradition, he will not be helped when he has any event later, even if he is a rich man. In this case, togetherness and mutual aid are their main way of life.

Mindset Which Reflects Farmer Community's Local Wisdom

1) Farmer Community's Simple Life as the Application of Local Wisdom

The farmer community has certain mindsets they take as reference/guidance to perform their social activities, such as simplicity, hard work, never giving up, and cooperation. Therefore, as the people's effort in their simplicity, they utilize anything in their surroundings as their source of income and do not live a luxurious life. As revealed from their verbal expression of *ora duwe opo-opo ning disuyuti* 'it is okay not to have anything, but respect is paid'; they prefer respectable acts to acting evil deeds to acquire wealth.

2) Maintain Cosmologic Harmony as the Reflection of Local Wisdom

The teaching that human existence in the world is only "*mampirngombe*" (to stop by for a drink) for Javanese people is defined as worldliness is temporary, "terminal" towards *Sangkan Paraning Dumadi* 'origin of humans. In such a journey, Javanese people need to go through many tiers to achieve complete life, namely *syariat*, *tarekat*, *hakikat*, and *makripat*.

The farmer community's way of thinking of unity and alignment states that they believe that one who lives harmoniously with himself as an individual and social being, the universe, and with God Almighty will experience inner peace. Therefore, the farmer community's life has been mapped in various regulations, like *tatakrama* (principles of Javanese ethics), customs/tradition (regulate social harmony), religion (regulate the formal relationship with God), attitudes of *narima*, *sabar*, *eling waspada* (introspective), *andap asor* (humble), and *prasaja* (unostentatious). Such view and mindset are commonly known as *Kawula dan Gusti*, which is a view and mindset to assume that a human's moral obligation is to achieve harmony with final power and final unity, in which humans submit totally as *kawula* (servant) to their *Gusti* (The Creator). In line with the description above, the Islamic view considers the world as temporary but valuable as long as it maintains the afterlife (Ahmet, 2018).

Conclusion

This research was conducted with a qualitative descriptive method that combines ethnographic method that has characteristics of (1) holistic and integrative, (2) detailed and meticulous description, (3) deep analysis to get farmer community life view, world view, and local wisdom. The farmer community's view of life, view of the world, and mindset are the local wisdom that is still maintained. Society's view of the world is their way of viewing that the world where they inhabit is something that does not exist automatically but is created, so it is necessary to pay respect to The Creator by performing spiritual and cooperation activities.



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