

Accreditation:--

e-Journal of Linguistics

**The *Bakayat* SpokenText Tradition
The Articulation of Religious Value and Social Discourse of
Sasak Community in Lombok**

I Made Suyasa

e-mail: kadeksuyasa@gmail.com
Muhammadiyah University of Mataram

I Nyoman Weda Kusuma

e-mail: wedakusuma@yahoo.com
Study Program of Linguistics, School of Postgraduate Studies,
Udayana University

I Nyoman Suarka

e-mail: tuarik4@yahoo.com
Study Program of Linguistics, School of Postgraduate Studies,
Udayana University

I Nyoman Darma Putra

e-mail: idarmaputra@yahoo.com
Study Program of Linguistics, School of Postgraduate Studies,
Udayana University

Abstract

This study explored the *bakayat* spoken-text tradition of the Sasak people in Lombok. The tradition was used as media for preaching on Islamic day, customs and ceremonies, as well as appreciating the folk literature. Malay literary texts that contained religious values were articulated continuously in various social discourses by the community that owned this tradition. The impact of the globalization and the inclusion of various Islamic doctrines in Lombok have threatened the existence of the *bakayat* tradition and now most Sasak people especially the younger ones are not interested in this tradition. The background explained above has become the main reason why this study was conducted. Moreover, there were still a few studies which had investigated the *bakayat* tradition in-depth. This present study was focused on the history, structure, function, meaning, and articulation of the religious values and social discourse of the *bakayat* tradition by Sasak people. This research used the descriptive analytical method. The data were analyzed using the interpretive qualitative method. The theories used in this study were the theory narratology proposed by Gerard

Accreditation:--

Genette (1986), the theory of articulation proposed by Stuart Hall (1986), the theory of functions, and the theory of semiotics.

The results of this study showed that the historical development of the Sasak *bakayat* tradition was characterized by the emergence of Islam in Lombok. It significantly contributed to the existence of *bakayat*. It was followed by the Islamic Malay literature which was used as the reading material in the *bakayat* tradition and the media for learning Islam. The historical development of the *bakayat* Sasak was explained in various aspects such as religious, cultural, political, and social aspects. The structure of the *bakayat* text was a form of the articulation in spoken style which involved the characteristics of the narrative structure, which was seen from the narrative, rhythmic, and storytelling style. The *bakayat* tradition had two functions, namely the manifest function and latent function, and there was a shifting function. The manifest function of the Sasak *bakayat* tradition was that it was used as the Islamic preaching media, while the latent function was that it was used as the educational, social, economic, and customs media. The shifting function of the tradition was that it was used as an entertainment that described the function of social identity, local knowledge, and competition activity. Based on the cultural and social context, the tradition implied that the *bakayat* tradition had historical, political, aesthetic, and social significances. The translation during the performance of the tradition was accompanied with the meaning interpretation or review conveyed in Sasak language. Each performance had new meaning interpretation of the text; the dominant meaning of the text was about the singleness of God, negotiation, ambiguity, and rejection. The articulation of the Sasak *bakayat* text was a form of new meaning. The articulation of the religious value and social discourse of the *bakayat* text was about the story of Prophet Joseph made up of the spoken-text form using the typical Sasak song.

Keywords: *text, oral traditions, articulation, bakayat, Sasak community.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Bakayat is a tradition of Sasak people in Lombok in a form of reading the saga/poetry by singing (*menembangkan*), translating and interpreting the text in Sasak language alternately by the singer (*pemace*) and interpreter (*bujangge*). This tradition has a long history. From the data, it could be identified that this tradition started approximately in 16th century or in early 17th century and it still continues today (Jamaluddin, 2011: 63-88). The demand to perform this tradition was scarce; the demand was usually made by the

Accreditation:--

parents living in rural areas as well as in the specific communities of urban areas, which still adhere to the past traditions and customs.

Bakayat was originally used as a medium for converting people to be Islam by mubaliq that came to the Lombok island. *Bakayat* tradition was originally performed on the anniversary of Islamic holidays (PHBI) as the Prophet's Birthday and Isra 'Mi'raj to remind people of God almighty as well as to introduce the prophet's contribution to the spread of Islam. As time passed by, *bakayat* was used in some of religious rituals performed by the Sasak people such as *ngurisang* (haircut baby), *nyiwa* (The 9th day of death celebration), marriage, *beretes* (7th month celebration of firstborn), *Hajj* celebration, and circumcision ritual. Later on, this tradition continued developing along with the dynamism of the community in various aspects of life.

The *bakayat* spoken-text tradition in its development was used as the media for appreciating the Sasak literature in the spoken-text form. The performer of the *bakayat* tradition articulated the text in various forms, from the delivery, the translation which was accompanied with interpretation, utilization, as well as the response to and the attitude towards *bakayat*. The phenomenon of *bakayat* is significant to be explored in order to describe its existence in the Sasak community where the majority of the people are Muslims. Nowadays, the *bakayat* tradition as the spoken-text has not been studied in the form of research.

Today, the *bakayat* tradition of Sasak faces the effect of globalization and the influence of the new ideology and doctrine (Islam). Such impacts decreased the support given by the community and the regeneration of the *bakayat* Sasak tradition. The negative view from the Islamic puritanical groups toward the *bakayat* was that tradition it was considered *bid'ah* and *khurafat*, causing the people who performed this tradition to decrease.

According to Ikram (1998: 7) art hikayat *bakayat* passing is less attractive to the young and no visible effort is made to preserve it. The condition is still going on and no rescue effort has been made by the stakeholders. Such reasons made most of its community abandon the *bakayat* tradition. Therefore, it was necessary to explore the attitude of the

Accreditation:--

community in accordance with the ideology they hold of the existence of the *bakayat* tradition today.

Bakayat, as a cultural practice performed by the Sasak people, is derived from Malay literature, and can still be found to exist in spite of the decrease in the audience in the community of Sasak Muslim majority. Nowadays, the Islam religion learning has been replaced by other media; it has been learned through the electronic media, as well as through the formal and non-formal educational institutions. Therefore, before the *bakayat* Sasak tradition loses its function and value, it was necessary to undertake research on this tradition. Moreover, few studies have been conducted about this tradition.

Based on several reasons explained above, the problems in this study were about the *bakayat* historical development, the structure of the *bakayat* text, the function of *bakayat*, the meaning of *bakayat*, and the articulation of the religious value and social discourse in the *bakayat* tradition of the Sasak people in Lombok. The aim of this study was to analyze the spoken-text of *bakayat* in the form of performances performed by the Sasak community in order to solve the problem and inspire the community to preserve and economically use this tradition to contribute to the reinforcement of the Indonesian people's character.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE, CONCEPT AND THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

The *Bakayat* tradition has been in existence since a long time ago, but the research related with this tradition was still limited. Some studies have been conducted on this oral-text of *bakayat* tradition. There were three researchers who had explored this tradition. They are Ikram (1989), Sapiin (2010), and Acim and Ahyar (2011). However, there had been no specific study which investigated *bakayat* in the form of the oral-text. In addition, there are several studies and writings that discussed the development of the Sasak written literature that can be used as references in this present study. Such studies include some works done by Suastika (1997), Adrian Vickers (2009), and Jamaluddin (2011). Although the results of the studies which had been conducted on the oral-text tradition are not the same, there is a related study conducted by Darma Putra (2013).

Accreditation:--

As there were still a few studies which had been conducted to explore the *bakayatspoken-text* tradition and the dynamism of the *bakayat* tradition of the Sasak people, the researcher was encouraged to conduct this present study. It is important to undertake this research as the data and information obtained were more comprehensive in various aspects of the *bakayat* Sasak tradition development in Lombok as the material of the study.

The term spoken-text tradition should be distinguished from the term the oral literature. According to Hutomo in Sudikan (2001: 14) and Sibarani (2012: 36), the spoken-text tradition can be expressed as the oral tradition from oral literature if it contains aesthetic elements and is delivered with performances. Based on the opinion above, it can be stated that the Sasak *bakayat* tradition is an oral-text tradition.

The word “*bakayat*” is derived from the word *Kayat* with prefix *ba-* which means “to do”, the word *Kayat* in-Sasak language has the same meaning *ashikayat* (saga). *Bakayat* means an activity of reading the saga. In addition, the other terms such as *ngayat*, *Kayat*, *nyaer*, *Koran Kayat* are frequently used which is interpreted as reading the bible (*the Koran*) by singing it. The word *bakayat* in Sasak language was initially used in the eastern part of Lombok in the beginning of its development. But in the other parts of Lombok *bakayat* is pronounced *bekayat*. It is a combination of the morpheme *be-* and the morpheme *-kayat*. The morpheme *be-* likely tended to change in the Sasak language into the morpheme *ng-*; therefore, the term *bakayat* is also commonly pronounced as *ngayat* which means reading the saga (Saharudin, 2012: 252).

The term articulation has double meaning, 'articulate' means to say, speaking toward, speech, expression, and so on; while 'be articulated' means to connect the front (*cab*) with the rear end (*trailer*). The two parts are connected to each other, but through a special connection it can be disconnected. Therefore, the articulation is a form of connection that can unite two different elements on certain circumstances. It is a relationship that does not need to be determined; it is not absolute and essential all the time (Hall, 1986: 141). *Bakayat* Sasak, as a text, contains religious values; it cannot be denied that the text has divinity and spiritual values. The religious value of the text of *bakayat* was traced through its relation to the social discourse of the practice of the *bakayatspoken-text* tradition.

Accreditation:--

The terms 'discourse' and 'text' are often confusedly used. Some people think that both terms are the same and are used interchangeably. Discourse and text are used to refer two different orientations of the language. Text is considered the application of some parts of the language which are concerned with the linguistic aspect without being concerned with the communicative situation. Discourse refers to a language use which is analyzed from the perspective of communicative situation (Nunan, 1992: 19). From that perspective, the text is oriented towards the language itself while discourse is concerned with spoken language. From the definition, it can be seen that there is implicit relationship between the writing and the text. If the work of writing is a spoken language (in written form), then the text will be a discourse (oral) which is transformed into a text form as in *bakayat*.

The word 'Sasak' is a term for the original name of the tribe or ethnic group that inhabits the Lombok Island. The majority of Sasak people are Muslims. From the anthropological perspective, it is known that there are *Islam waktulima* and *andislamwaktutelu*. The difference is in the implementation of the Shari'ah. The Sasak people in this research are the community of *Islamwaktulima* at MapakDasan village, West Lombok and Belatung Mataram.

In research theories are needed as the requirement to solve some issues in the research. In this present study the theory of articulation, the theory of discourse, the theory of function, and the semiotic theory were used. These theories were used to analyze all the existing problems in the study. The theory of Articulation developed by Stuart Hall (1986) was used to reveal the form and meaning made by the performer of *Bakayat* who interpreted the text that contain religious values and social discourse. The theory of discourse was used to examine the structure of the text as presented by Gerard Genette (1986: 47). There are five key points namely; order, duration, frequency, mode, and speech. The analysis in this study was focused on speech or the narrative sound. The text of *bakayat* tended to utilize several aspects beyond languages, such as: song and how it was translated which affected the storytelling. The function and change in function of the *bakayat* text were analyzed using the function theory developed by Merton (in Kaplan and Manner 1999: 79), which states that there are manifest and latent functions. In addition, the theory of functions proposed by Bascom was also used to analyze the latent function as well as to see a change in its function. To

Accreditation:--

analyze the meaning of the *bakayat* text, the semiotic theory proposed by Umberto Eco (2009) was used. It is stated that aesthetics is related to non-semiotic aspects of art, such as: the psychology of artistic creativity, the relation between artistic and natural forms, definitions, physical-psychological of aesthetic satisfaction, analysis on the relationship between art and society (Eco, 2009: 40-41). Eco also explains that each code has elements which are not possibly used aesthetically. Semiotics can be used to interpret several signs including the *bakayat Sasak* as a cultural practice.

III RESEARCH METHOD

This present study is a qualitative one, which is intended to understand the phenomenon of what is experienced by the research subject. This research was conducted at several locations in the island of Lombok, especially at Mapak village. The data source was the performance of *bakayat* by the performer of *bakayat* and Sasak people. The data were in the form of audio recordings completed with photos, audio and interviews from the informants (actor) and the viewers / listeners. The data in this study were collected through participatory observation, in-depth interview, group discussion which was held before and after the performance as well as documentation.

After the data were collected, the data were transcribed and translated into Indonesian before being analyzed interpretatively and qualitatively. The main data included the text of *bakayat* discourse performed at the village and its relationship with the context as well as customary and religious rituals performed by the Sasak community as a whole as a nonverbal environment underpinning the *bakayat* meaning. The data were analyzed inductively. The results of the analysis were presented formally and informally.

IV RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis in this study, it can be described as follows. *First*, the historical development of *bakayat* Sasak was characterized by the emergence of Islam in Lombok which contributed to the significant meaning of the *bakayat* existence. The development of Islam in Lombok was followed by the work of Islamic literature such as

Accreditation:--

Javanese and Malay literary works as the medium for learning Islam in order to strengthen the people's faith. *Bakayat* as a spoken-text tradition was created by utilizing the Islamic Malay literature accepted in the Sasak community. It spread through many aspects such as the religious, cultural, political, and social aspects. Such aspects could not be separated from the historical record of the Sasak people in the time of the existence of *bakayat* spoken-text tradition.

The development of *bakayat* tradition contributed to the rise of the community fanaticism of the importance of Islamic nuanced art. *Bakayat* was not only used as a medium for learning Islam and preaching in mosques or schools, but it was used as the ritual in some customs and religious of the Sasak people. The *bakayat* tradition was not available in the forms of *cassette tape*, *video cassette*, *VCD / DVD* documented by the local government and was not commercially sold. There was no official group or organized group of performers of this tradition that had permanent members. They gathered before the performance began. The ideology which is intended to purify Islam assumes that this tradition contains old belief and syncretism such as *bid'ah* and *khurafat*. The practice of *bakayat* tradition which was considered the spoken-text tradition was no longer relevant to the Islamic teaching in *kafahway*. *Bakayat* in its development had entered the realm beyond tradition; starting from when the local government held *bakayat* competition in the anniversary of a district or a particular national commemoration day.

Second, the structure of the *bakayat* text, as a spoken text, had a form of presentation and narrative structure. The form of the presentation of the *Bakayat* text was classified based on the usage, reference, and communication channels. The *bakayat* text structure, as a narrative text, was the story, as shown by KNY, which consisted of several episodes. In the story, the *bakayat* text was delivered orally in a narrative way as proposed by Gerard Genette (1988: 13-20). The rhythm of the narrative text of *bakayat* was delivered through typical song rhythm of *bakayat* and translated into *sasak* by *pemace*, followed by *cerek* and *nyarup* which described the mood of the performer or readers. The telling style of the story of *bakayat* text could be seen from the reader's mood which was illustrated by the storytelling style as a form of the articulation of the *bakayat* text.

Accreditation:--

Dateng dateng malaekat Jibrail tipaq leq nabi Allah Yusuf terus iye bebase malaekat Jibrail to leq nabi Allah Yusuf ee Yusuf ni kudatengan kunyampeang salam deside Allah Ta'ala tipaq leq side iye unin malaekat Jibrail saq to leq nabi Allah Yusuf.

(Come ... come the angel Gabriel to meet prophet Joseph, then Gabriel talk to the prophet Joseph, "**O .. Joseph my arrival is to convey the message of Allah Ta'ala to you,**" said the Gabriel to the prophet Joseph).

Iye unin firman deside Allah Ta'ala lalo bait sambut Zuleha no bait ye jok bale iye ling pe ling malaekat Jibrail saq matur tipaq leq nabi Allah Yusuf malaekat Jabrail no.

(Allah Ta'ala said, "**Take SitiZulaeha and Fetch Zulaeha at home**" said Gabriel to the Prophet Yusuf).

Source: quoted from the text of 09.10, the performance of *bakayat* in Mapak village, Mataram.

Both the texts above explain that the figure represents the *performer* acting as the Gabriel the angel who delivered the message of Allah Ta'ala. The reader of the story told Prophet Joseph that Gabriel came to see him to speak the word of Allah to order Joseph to pick up Siti Zulaeha and marry her immediately because God had blessed them both in marriage in the sky.

Third, *bakayat* as one of the spoken-text traditions of the Sasak people has several functions, both manifest and latent functions. The *Bakayat* Sasak manifest function is the function as the media for preaching Islam, while the latent function is the function as educational media, social media, economic media, and as media for preserving the customs. Such functions were decreasing lately. The change in function was caused by the emergence of new articulation in society towards the cultural practices such as the entertaining function that was related to the social identity, local knowledge, and competition. The change in function which is associated with the local knowledge is shown in the following text.

Two or three days after that

Na jari na iye saq te turut isiq ite saq jari te, pertame-tame te paran gawe dai, siq kedue gawe beleq siq ke telu rebaq jangkih sangkaq telu jelo pegawe nabi Allah Yusuf oleq gawe dai keriapan ling teparan gawe beleq jelon gawe ling teparna ne rebaq jangkeh pedaq abu ne base lauq na iye ntan nabi Allah Yusuf ampoq te turut isiq iye sebegawean te sampe dateng lengan gawe daiq gawe beleq terus jok rebaq jangkeh, semeno ntan nabi Yusuf saq te turut isiq ita ne.

(That is our tradition that we have inherited until now, firstly it is a small party (*gawe dai*), the second one is *gawe beleq*, the third one is *perebaqjangkih*. That's

Accreditation:--

why it is held in three days as prophet Joseph did in the past. The initial procession is a small party followed with big parties then it is ended with *rebaqjangkih*; in South Lombok language it is referred to as *pedaqashes*. That is the Prophet Joseph's heritage. All of these traditions were inherited from Prophet Joseph when He held marriage).

Source: quoted from the text 27 and 28, *bakayat* performance in Mapak village, Mataram.

The quoted text above articulates the saga text from the view of Sasak culture and customs in order to maintain harmony and continuity of the marriage customs which are implemented by the Sasak community. The story teller deliberately conveyed the text in order to make the good habit in the community implemented continuously to preserve the indigenous culture as a form of local wisdom.

Fourth, referring to the function of *bakayat* in Sasak people from the sociocultural context, it implies several meanings. They are religious meaning, social, historical, political, and aesthetic meaning. The religious meaning is concerned with the greatness of Allah SWT and as the supreme ruler of the universe and as the source of moral and spiritual strength to preserve the community's life. The conceptualization of religious preaching in *bakayat* has developed into several meanings among the Sasak people. All of these are described in the *bakayat* text of Prophet Joseph through the religious customs and behavior of the character. The character in the story taught social aspects, the history of prophet, how to become a leader from the political aspect, and aesthetic atmosphere when *bakayat* was delivered.

Fifth, the articulation of the religious values and social discourse in *bakayat* Sasak was integrated into the story of Prophet Joseph which is told in various texts as in the Qur'an, the Old Testament, Takepan Sasak, Qissas al Anbiya, and some books which contain different descriptions. In *bakayat* Sasak, the source of the written text was created from *Qissas al anbiya book*. This book is an adapted book. The verbalization of the *bakayat* text is the way of articulating the saga Malay texts. In the verbalization of the *bakayat* text, the concepts used by the performer of *bakayat* in its presentation are the song, *cerek*, *nyarup*, translation and interpretation / review. The form of its delivery was formed as a unity with the meaning of the text. Every performance gave new meaning to the text

Accreditation:--

presented, including the dominant meaning of the singleness of God, the meaning of the text *bakayat negotiations*, *bakayat* text ambiguity and the meaning of the *bakayat* text rejection. The existence of *Sasak bakayat* led to some perspectives in society. It was claimed that the existence Sasak religious rituals deviated from the Quran and Hadith. Therefore, the tradition was stated to be *bid'ah hasanah*. If this opinion grows among the young generation without any attempt to find a solution to it from the stakeholders, sooner or later this *bakayat* tradition will get extinct.

V CONCLUSION, FINDING AND SUGGESTION

Based on the analysis of the historical development, structure, function, meaning, and text articulation of the *bakayat* Sasak, it can be concluded that *bakayat* is the literary spoken-text tradition; it is delivered narratively and becomes the aesthetic media for articulating various social discourses.

Bakayat as a spoken-text tradition has a long history. In its development the tradition was influenced by the dynamic change taking place in society. The emergence of Islam in Lombok significantly contributed to the meaning for the existence of *bakayat*. *Bakayat* Sasak was widely recognized by society, especially the Muslims *waktulima* and was used in several traditional and religious rituals. However, the impact of globalization and new Islamic ideologies caused *bakayat* to become a marginalized tradition and to get extinct in the future.

Bakayat text structures can be classified based on the usage, reference, communicative channels, and the narrative structure. *Bakayat* text structure, as a narrative text, consisted of some episodes. The episodes were presented in accordance with the purposes of the implementation of *bakayat*. The structure of the text was seen from the written text of speech or the narrative voice. The storytelling style used a song followed with translation. The structure of the text form such as narrative, the rhythm of the storytelling,

Accreditation:--

and storytelling style described the mood of the *bakayat* performer. The reader described the text through the rhythm of the song accompanied with *cerek* and *nyarup*, while the storyteller translated and interpreted the text with his style as a narrator and the character at the same time.

In the *bakayat* Sasak the text and characteristics of the Sasak culture social context got mingled and had several functions. The functions included the function as media for religious preaching as *manifest* function and educational function including the projection system, social media, economic media, media for preserving traditions and customs as the *latent* function. The development of the owner of the tradition and external influences caused *bakayat* to be articulated. This led to change in the function of *bakayat*, such as the entertaining function which described the social identity, local knowledge, and competition.

The function of *bakayat* Sasak in the social and cultural context as well as the study of texts, cultural code, and aesthetics implied that the meaning of the text *bakayat* cannot be separated from the story of Prophet Joseph. This involved religious meaning, social, historical, political, and aesthetic meanings. The religious meaning revealed the greatness of Allah, the Almighty God with all His commandments. The conceptualization of the religious preaching in *bakayat* changed into social, historical, political and aesthetic meanings among the Sasak people.

The articulation of the religious value and social discourse of the *bakayat* text took place through the understanding of the text which was associated with the ritual performed and gave new meaning to the text. The text was interpreted by showing the dominant meaning of the singleness of God, the meaning of the text *bakayat negotiations*, the *bakayat* text ambiguity and the meaning of the text *bakayat* rejection. In addition, there were several pro and cons responses from the Sasak people toward the *bakayat* tradition with different arguments.

This study presents the findings which are formulated as follows.

- 1) There was change in the practice of reading *bakayat* in the last three decades. By using the articulation theory in the analysis, it was found that *bakayat* tradition was originally performed for religious preaching, and was used to articulate social problems. The socio-

Accreditation:--

cultural aspects articulated in *bakayat* made this tradition more contextual with the religious life of the community.

- 2) The novelty of *bakayat* function is that it focused more on the change in function that occurred as the articulation of the owner of this tradition. In this present study, it was found that the *manifest* function was no longer used. The latent function changed because there was rearticulation of the *bakayat* text. The function that changed resulted from the political aspect such as the emergence of entertaining function, competition, local knowledge, and social identity. The function was not based on the original function of this tradition as implied by Bascom and Alan Dundes. Therefore, the analysis on the functions in this study is more comprehensive.

- 3) Empirically, it was found that the development of *bakayat* was not fully using the typical Malay song. Since the 1990s, the song began to use the sasak song and *macapatan* which was commonly used as a form of creativity in *pepaosan* by the *bakayat* performer. It made *bakayat* more creative, preserve the local song, closer to its community and young people. Furthermore, *bakayat* was also performed in mosques but now the presentation can be found in various places, such as at the houses of Sasak people and on the stage of competition.

Some suggestions related to the present study areas follows. First, the researcher and culture observer should help preserve the spoken-text tradition of Sasak people through various studies. It is getting extinct. It is expected that there is a solution to synchronizing the tradition with globalization and technology in order to anticipate the extinction. Second, educational institutions as one of the institutions should be responsible for maintaining the continuity of the several cultural practices of Sasak people; they are expected to preserve it through teaching and learning activities at various levels of education. Third, the government and society are expected to participate in preserving the *bakayat* Sasak spoken-text tradition through the implementation of religious customs, competition and parade of spoken-text art. The government can periodically

Accreditation:--

organizesome competitions and it is suggested that Sasak people should preserve the traditional religious rituals by organizing *bakayat* as a complementary ritual.