
THE RELATION OF FORM AND ASPECT OF NON-VERBAL SYMBOL OF GAWAI DAYAK RITUAL WITH DAYAK SOCIETY LIFE TRADITION AND ITS USE IN REGIONAL LITERATURE LEARNING IN WEST KALIMANTAN

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ABSTRACT

Gawai Dayak ritual is one of cultural products of Dayak tribe. The intended Dayak tribe in this study is Dayak tribe who lives in West Kalimantan. On its performance, this ritual is dominated with various symbols. Whereas what becomes the focus of this study is non-verbal symbol that is physical symbol, symbol that can be seen or even be touched. Through this study, the writer is going to see how is the relation of the form and aspect of symbol with the life tradition of Dayak society in West Kalimantan. Aspect in this study relates to non- verbal symbols as a signal which is signing something, whose presence contains a certain meaning as a cultural system of a group of society. Then, the writer analyzes how is the use of the result of the study on regional literature learning and its kind, remembering that all this time there has not been some utilization of local context to enrich Regional Literature learning and other similar lessons. This study uses descriptive qualitative method with semiotic approach. Whereas the data used in this study is Gawai Dayak ritual. The data source in this study is ritual process of Gawai Dayak. The data collecting technique in this study uses observation and recording technique.

Keywords: Gawai Dayak Ritual; Non-verbal Symbol; Utilization; Regional Literature Learning

INTRODUCTION

Gawai Dayak is one of typical cultures owned by Dayak tribe in West Kalimantan. The essence of the performance of Gawai dayak ritual is an expression of gratitude to the *Jubata* (God) upon the success of harvest (rice harvest). It is corresponding to

Herlina's description (2016: 512) that Gawai Dayak ritual is a ritual which is aimed to express a gratitude because they have given with abundance of the yields (rice yields), whereas the intended culture here in this study likely tends to a concept that culture is something which is symbolic in nature. Dockery (2009: 9) "*culture is defined for the purposes of this study as the set of beliefs and values of an identifiable group of people that have been transmitted through generations, and that are manifest in distinctive symbols, languages and practices*". Culture is a set of belief and values of something which is identified by a group of people and continued through the generations, and which is embodied in symbol, language and practice. White stated that culture is an organization of phenomenon-action (behavioral pattern), object (equipment; something which is made by equipment), ideas (belief, knowledge), and sentiment (attitude, "value"), which depends on the use of symbols "*culture is an organization of phenomena—acts (patterns of behavior), objects (tools; things made with tools), ideas (belief, knowledge), and sentiments (attitudes, "values") — that is dependent upon the use of symbols*" (1949: 139-140). The concepts of the two experts require that culture is a tradition which is embodied on the use of symbols and other thing.

Symbols which are used on performing of Gawai Dayak ritual generally have relevance with the real daily life of Dayak tribe. A symbol for Dayak tribe generally is a media among human beings, and also between human being and the Creator. Thus, here the writer sees that a symbol for Dayak tribe generally is a cultural system because it contains some important ideas related to the Dayak tribe's mindset in general. Beside as a cultural system, the symbols on the performance of Gawai Dayak ritual are also used as a social system. As a social system, those symbols have a function to maintain the order in social interaction of custom (*adat*) society of Dayak tribe. Remembering the importance of role and function of a symbol in custom society of Dayak tribe and the lack of study that directs it result to the symbol in order to enrich learning in literature field, the writer tries to fill this empty space in order that Gawai Dayak ritual which is a routine activity held one a year in West Kalimantan can be felt its benefits in the education world.

Jarvis, et al (2003: 4) described that "*the process of learning has generally been understood to be the process through which individuals go in acquiring their knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, beliefs, emotions and senses*". Learning is a process to gain

knowledge, skills, values, beliefs, emotions and understanding. This process of learning is a result of interaction of various environmental conditions of the learners. It is corresponding to the description of Mulyasa (2009:

225) that learning is an interaction process between learners and their environment so there will be a change of behavior happened towards a better state. Sugandhi (in Ahmad, 2016: 111) stated that in learning, there are some elements, including learning objectives, learning subject, learning strategy, learning media, learning evaluation, and support. Based on the above description, Gawai Dayak ritual by using some symbols which is a kind of tradition in the life of custom society of Dayak is very useful if it is made to become a part of the learning elements.

Related to Regional Literature Learning and other similar learning, the research background which is taken by the writer is inadequate utilization of local culture of West Kalimantan as a part of literature learning, even Cunningsworth (1995: 5) confirmed that a criteria when someone selecting textbooks is that the material is suitable with the context where the books will be used. Whereas the focus of this study is referring to the Sugandhi's description above which is more specifically discussing the utilization of research result in relation to the utilization of the result of a study to enrich the learning material in Regional Literature subject or other similar subjects. Prayitno also described that the source of teaching material can be from the environment, works/ cultures, etc (1999:

343). Prayitno added that environment as a source of learning can origin from physical, social, demography, economy, politic, knowledge and technology, art and culture and religious elements (1999: 347). It is similar with a study of Chiang and Lee (2015) which discussed about Millet festival which is used as the teaching material to build traditional knowledge and to be integrated with western knowledge.

The effort in utilizing the local context in this study, beside it is based on the fact in the field of the inadequate utilization of everything related to the environmental context around the learners, especially in West Kalimantan, it is also based on the writer's interest to Ki Hajar Dewantara's thought. Dewantara stated about some clauses which were given priority in education, for example every equipment, effort, and way of education should be appropriate with the nature of situation; the nature of situation is stored in the customs of each people (Dewantara, 2013: 15). Besides that, Dewantara

stated that in the national education it should give attention to the base of our life, which continuously lived in the arts, civilizations, religion requirements, or in the book of stories (fairy tales, myth and legend, chronicles, etc).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is a descriptive qualitative study by using semiotic approach. According to Ali and Asrori (2014: 121), qualitative research is an approach in a research which is oriented on a natural phenomenon or symptom. Huberman and Miles analysis model becomes the writer's choice because there are various data which are presented on every performance of Gawai Dayak ritual. The first step of Huberman and Miles data analysis model is data reduction, that is the writer's step to simplify the data obtained, the second step is data presentation, that is the data reduction process should be reviewed as the base of interpretation, the third is drawing conclusion or verification, that is the writer's step to draw a conclusion with some stages of coding, formulating themes, grouping, and presenting story in written (Huberman and Miles in Denzin and Lincoln, 2009: 592).

Data in this study are non-verbal symbols and physical symbols as the signs of a culture. Thus, the writer uses semiotic approach to explore more deeply the meaning which is caused by the using of a certain symbol on the performance of Gawai Dayak ritual. Semiotics is a science that discusses signs (Toha, et al, 2010: 130), whereas Cruse (2006: 2) stated that semiotics is a study of signs in general, which covers all kinds of sign, either visual, gestural, etc. The coverage which belongs to signs is described by the signs of Salimi, et al (2016: 588) that "other kinds of sign include non-verbal movement, metaphor, symbol, and even physical artifact".

The data in this study is Gawai Dayak ritual, whereas the source of the data in this study is in the form of human resources and non-human resources (Endraswara, 2012: 207). Human resources are data which is sourced on human being, in the form of words and action, whereas non-human resources is data from outside human being, which can be books, documents, reports, and photos. As for the data collecting techniques used in this study are observation, interviews, and recording techniques.

FORM AND ASPECT OF SYMBOL OF GAWAI DAYAK RITUAL

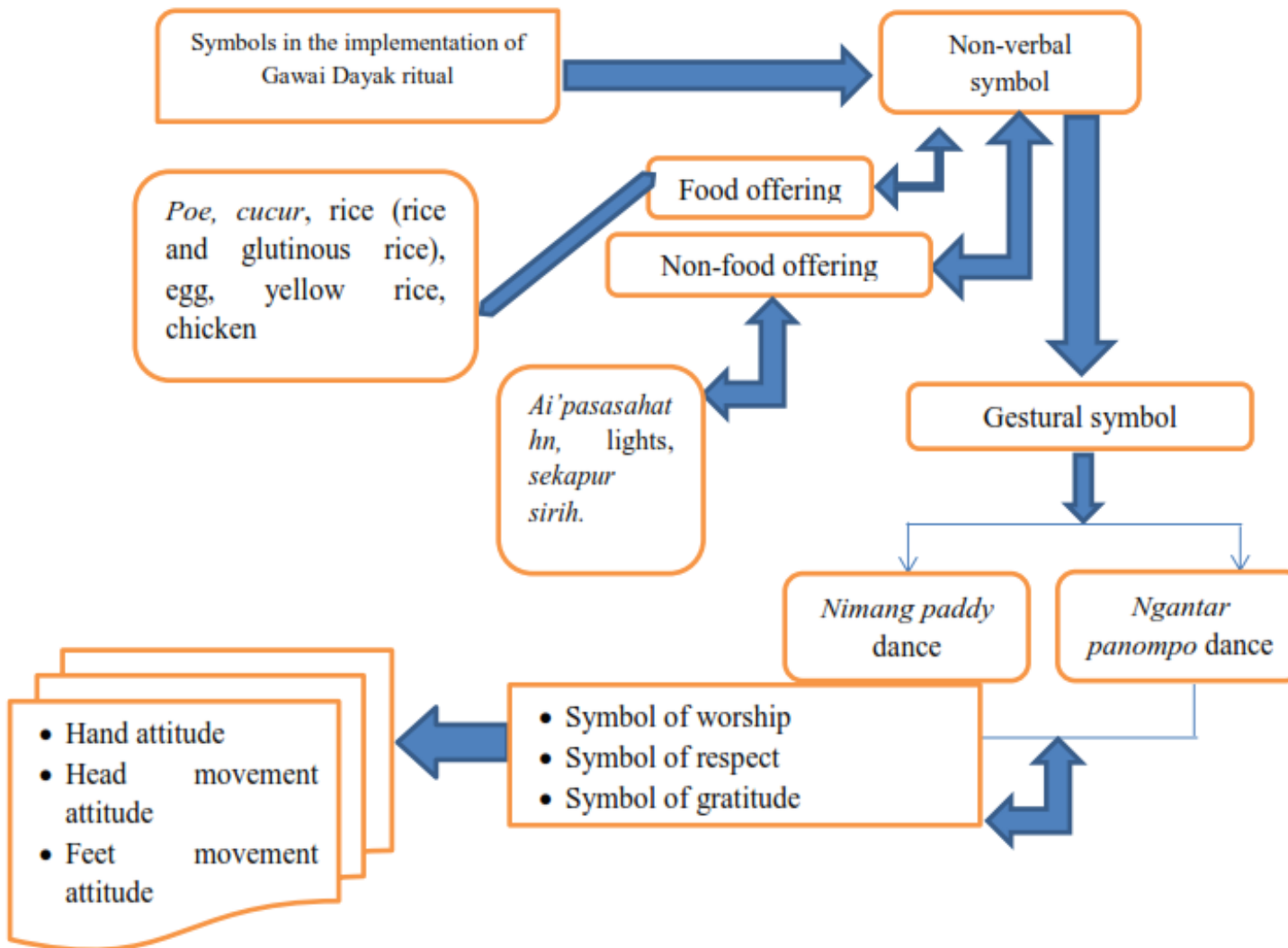
In the performance of Gawai Dayak ritual, there are many symbols used. Those symbols contain a certain meaning and function. Every symbol is a sign or emblem of something outside the symbol itself. Symbols which are used on the performance of Gawai Dayak ritual principally are the embodiment of the way of life of Dayak society. It can be seen from the symbols used, which are generally often founded on their daily life. Thus, an understanding on the meaning of the symbols which are used on the performance of Gawai Dayak ritual will bring to an understanding of the way of life (customs) of Dayak society, especially Dayak in West Kalimantan.

Form which is referred in this study is referring to the origin material of the making of offerings (*sesaji*), which is termed with symbol, not referring to the physical form of the symbols used here. Based on the pre-observation stage in the field, the form of non-verbal symbol on the performance of Gawai Dayak ritual consists of three forms, including symbol of food, symbol of non-food, and symbol that is presented through gesture at the time when performing some ritual dances. Symbol of food is a symbol or offering which is made from food materials. According to Nurdiarti (2017: 120), food does not mean merely fulfilling life necessities only, but also contains a relation of social, economy, and politic. Then, non-food symbol is a symbol or offering which is made or provided not from food materials, whereas symbol which is performed through gesture is a symbol which comes from the body movements of the dancers who perform the ritual dance.

Aspect in this study is referring to sign. Offering as a symbol, is a sign that showing something whose presence contains of a certain meaning as the cultural system of a certain group of society. Sign is a thing which consists of other thing or giving a different dimension on the thing (Berger, 2010: 1). Whereas Eco (1976: 7) states that sign is everything which can be used to become a meaningful thing, that replaces the other thing. It indicates that in a sign, there is a thing that states the other thing.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The following is a brief description on the forms of symbol which are used in the performance of Gawai Dayak ritua



Picture 1: A Description of Symbols of Gawai Dayak Ritual

1.1. Relation between the Form and Aspect of Symbols and the Live Tradition of Dayak Society

a. Food Symbol

Food symbol likes what the writer has described above, is a symbol that is used as offering, which is made from daily food materials of Dayak society in general. Those symbols are worships, which is intended to be given to the *Jubata* and the spirits of the ancestors. For Dayak society in a certain region, such as Dayak in Landak Regency and around it, those symbols must be provided in the worship. The relation

with the tradition of Dayak society life in West Kalimantan, the food offerings are often used because they relate to Dayak society's livelihood in general, that is farming.

Poe is a kind of food which signifies the position and the role of Men of Dayak among the Dayak society itself. This analog is based on the shape of this food, which is like a bamboo because the container of this food is made from bamboo. Thus, *Poe* resembles or is similar with one characteristic owned by men. In the performance of Gawai Dayak, *Poe* should be available when it is made to be a worship to the *Jubata*, which signing that the men of Dayak is considered important and has to present in Dayak society. Its making process is difficult, so it is rarely that the women of Dayak do it. It gives sign that in family, the men of Dayak bears heavy duties related to their role as the head of family.

The next offering is *cucur*. *Cucur* is an emblem of Dayak women. *Cucur* in the performance of Gawai Dayak ritual gives a sign of the presence and also recognition of the role and function of Dayak women in farming field. Begin from opening a field (garden) until the final stage that is harvesting. The emblem of *cucur* refers to the shape of *cucur* which is round and plumping at the center side. The shape of *tumpi* or *cucur* has a similarity with one characteristic owned by a woman. Besides it is seen from the shape of this food, it is also seen from the party who has duty in making this kind of food. *Cucur* in Dayak society is a cuisine which is made by Dayak women, thus, this food gives a sign of the presence of Dayak women in Gawai Dayak ritual. Generally, the presence of *poe* and *cucur* in the performance of Gawai Dayak ritual are indicating that in live tradition of Dayak society in general, the men of Dayak and also the women have a certain role in their effort to fulfill their daily needs. Thus, the use of two kinds of offering must be provided as the representatives of either the women or the men of Dayak.

The use of usual rice on the offering of the performance of Gawai Dayak ritual gives a sign of the beginning of new stage in Dayak people's life. It is corresponding to the use of new rice in the performance of Gawai Dayak ritual, whereas paddy (at the Gawai Dayak ritual has been processed become rice) is a live symbol for Dayak tribe. Related to the live tradition of Dayak tribe in West Kalimantan, paddy/ rice relates to

Dayak society's belief that is the food of heaven people (Seli, 2016: 84). Because of that, in the life of Dayak society in general, farming is an activity which is continuously done until now.

The use of gelatinous rice gives a sign that the custom society of Dayak gives priority to unity and the existing strong custom willpower inside Dayak people. This signing is based on the nature of glutinous rice that if it has been cooked, it will be sticky and difficult to be separated. In relation to the life tradition of Dayak society, it is illustrated from the field opening process until harvesting.

The next is the use of egg. Egg for custom society of Dayak signifies the agreement of Dayak custom society. This sign refers to the shape of egg which is round. Round signifies the roundness in the agreement. Agreement is illustrated from the planning of Gawai Dayak activity. A month before the performance of Gawai Dayak, the committee and the customary chief holds some stages of discussion. Those stages of discussion have become a tradition, either when holding Gawai Dayak ritual or when going to open new farming field.

The next is the use of yellow rice. Yellow rice on the performance of Gawai Dayak ritual signifies the existence of request for salvation. At this context, yellow rice is believed capable in eliminating all unexpected thing including its dangers. Almost on every activity, yellow rice is used for the same purpose by scattering it around the audience who are attending the activity. The last is the use of cockerel. Cockerel at the performance of Gawai Dayak ritual is a sacrifice which is given by human being to the God (*Jubata*) and also for the spirit of ancestor.

This tradition has rooted in the daily life of Dayak tribe, especially in performing some activities related to *Jubata*, the offerings with cock are always prepared or if they are expecting something or begging for something to the *Jubata*, there will always be something to be sacrificed.

b. Non-food symbol

Ai'pasasahathn in the performance of Gawai Dayak ritual is a sign of self-sanctification from the unintended things. Its relation to the life tradition of Dayak society in general is when performing other rituals where water is a media which is often used. It also relates to the belief system which is believed by Dayak society in general, who assume that in

the land world, water world, up world and down world there exist some power that rules those places.

The next is the use of lights. The lights at the performance of Gawai Dayak ritual is an emblem of lights in the life of custom Dayak tribe. The lights for the prayers being said when *panyagathn* is chanting the prayer so that it can be delivered to the *Jubata*. The next symbol used in the performance of Gawai Dayak ritual is *sekapur sirih*. *Sekapur sirih* is an emblem of social relation of Dayak society. This emblem means hospitality. In Dayak society's daily life in general, *sekapur sirih* is served when socializing with the neighbors and guests who come. Thus, for Dayak society in general, *sekapur sirih* is a symbol of familiarity and friendship.

c. Gestural Symbol

The first gestural symbol existed in the performance of Gawai Dayak ritual is a symbol which comes from the ritual dances, they are *Nimang Paddy* dance and *Ngantar Panompo* dance. *Nimang Paddy* dance is a dance with a purpose to deliver paddy to the *dango*, whereas *Ngantar Pangompo* dance is a kind of dance which is performed with a purpose to give a relief to the family who is undergoing the Gawai Dayak ritual. The relief given is in the form of donation of food material such as rice, vegetables, etc.

There is only one movement when the dancers perform *Nimang Paddy* dance with movement variation which is focused on the legs, head, and arms movement. The arms movement of rocking the *paddy* and the head rather looking down and also bending the legs pose makes the body poses rather bending over. This movement is a symbol of a respect to the paddy. This movement is based on the belief that paddy has a soul, so that its existence should be respected. Beside the respect to paddy, this dance also contains worship to *Jubata*. It can be seen from the dancers' movement by rocking the paddy while bending their body over then move the arms up while the head is looking up. The movements of the dancers are an embodiment of the belief of Dayak society in general.

Simple movements are also shown by the dancers when they are performing *Ngantar Panompo* dance that is back and forth movement. When moving forward, the dancers are looking down while moving forward, whereas when moving backward, the gesture of the dancer is looking up while moving both the arms. Its relation with *Ngantar Panompo* activity is that these movements is a symbol of submission and what will be used in

the Gawai Dayak is something which comes from *Jubata*. Thus, the forth movement while looking down can also mean as a statement of modesty on something which has been had. The forth movement while looking down means that the submission of *panompo* activity is subject to the belief they believe as a thing which comes from the *Jubata*, whereas the meaning of back movement while looking up and lift the arms above have a meaning of thanking for all given (*panompo*) which comes from the *Jubata*.

1.2. The Utilization of Research Result on the Learning of Regional Literature and Other Similar Learning

Learning is a process of student's interaction with the teachers and learning source in a certain learning environment (Act of Republic of Indonesia Number 12 of 2012 on Upper Education). In the effort to increase the quality of education, the appropriately creative interaction media is interaction with various things which are closed to utilize various pattern of culture as a part of the character that should be introduced to the learners. It refers to the Prayitno's description that source of teaching material can come from the environment. Some points can be explored from the result of this study that is something related to social, art and cultural and religious condition. Knowledge related to three conditions has participated in giving contribution on how to form the learners' character. The relation with the characteristic of teaching material in literature is that in literature, students are provided with various kinds of knowledge in order that they are able to develop their spiritual and emotional intelligentsia (Siswanto, without publishing year, 173).

Spiritual intelligentsia is an ability of a person who has transcendent prowess, a high consciousness to live the life, using the spiritual sources to solve live problems, and is virtuous. Spiritual ability makes a person to be capable to have relation with God, human being, nature and himself (Siswanto, without publishing year, 173), whereas emotional intelligentsia is a competence to understand himself and others, including independence, resilience, creativity, productivity, honesty, bravery, openness, place himself with meaningfulness, and manage himself (Siswanto, without publishing year, 172).

Based on the learning material content which writer discusses from one of learning media which is made by a teacher in PT IKIP PGRI Pontianak, that in literature learning, Regional Literature and other similar field, it is given with knowledge, understanding, and experience of the principle of archipelago classic literature study, related to the scope of archipelago literature study, which consists of the diversity of form and content, verbal and written tradition, transmission and transformation, utterance and performance, and the function aspect of archipelago literature. Based on the above description, this study is able to enrich the teaching material of Regional Literature or other similar subject on the main subject of verbal tradition and function aspect of archipelago literature. Based on the description of Fang (2011: 2) verbal tradition covers a very wide field, such as stories, utterance, proverb, songs, dances, customs, acts, puzzles, games, beliefs and festivals. As a tradition, in the use of non-verbal symbol there exist the form of dances symbol, and contains beliefs element, this can be seen from the use of symbol which is intended as an offering to be presented to the God (*Jubata*). Thus, the result of this study can be used as the teaching material on the subjects of verbal tradition.

Based on the study of emblem to the use of various non-verbal symbol of Gawai Dayak ritual, the result of this study can enrich the learning material of Regional Literature and other similar subjects on the discussion of archipelago literature, in other words the finding of the relation of form and aspect symbol which is then embodied in the form of tradition which attaches on Dayak society in general, has a function for the forming character of the learners through Regional Literature and other material learning. The function aspect can be discussed from spiritual and emotional intelligentsia forming aspect. The result of this study, related to the forming of spiritual intelligentsia can be related to the character forming which relates to the relationship between human and God, human with others, human with nature, and human with himself. Human and God relationship can be seen from the use of yellow rice as the symbol or emblem of the existing of plea in order to be saved during the performance of Gawai dayak ritual. The use of cockerel symbol as a kind of scarification which is given by human to the *Jubata* and the spirit of ancestors is an expression of gratitude. The yellow rice is used as a form of recognition that someone who can help and give safety is only the Creator (begging for salvation), lights is used as a symbol of light for the prayers which are delivered in order can be received by the Creator.

The function aspect which is symbolizing a relationship between a person and others is placed on the use of glutinous rice, *poe* and *cucur*. Those symbols are the symbols that indicate the relationship between a human and others. The glutinous rice signifies the unity among the Dayak custom society, whereas *poe* and *cucur* signify the recognition of the existence men and women of Dayak. Cooked *sirih* signifies a form of hospitality of Dayak custom society. The function aspect which signifies the relationship between human and nature is seen from the gestural symbol which is performed by the dancers. A gesture of rather bending the body over while bending the legs when the dancers performing *Nimang Paddy* ritual dance is a sign of respect to paddy (rice), whereas the gesture of moving the arms up and down while blocking the paddy (rice) with smooth movement is a signing of a high appreciation to the existence of paddy for their life.

The next is function aspect which is related to the emotional intelligentsia. The use of *poe* and *cucur* symbols on the performance of Gawai Dayak ritual is a symbol of a tradition that Dayak society in general are good in placing themselves with meaningfulness. *Poe* is a food which is made by men, whereas *cucur* is made by women. This selection is based on the difficulty level in the making process of these foods. The men have duty to make a kind of food where its making process more difficult, whereas the women of Dayak makes a kind of food where its making process is relative easy. This selection of job indicates that Dayak society generally is aware of their role and function in the society.

The use of egg is a symbol for the existence of openness to everything, especially which is related to farming problems. Dayak society is generally open and gives priority more on consensus when making a decision. From the descriptions above, the symbol relation and symbol aspect are interrelated. The tradition of Dayak society generally can be seen from various symbols which are used when performing Gawai Dayak ritual.

CONCLUSION

The symbol which used in Gawai Dayak ritual in West Kalimantan consists of three forms: food symbol, non-food symbol, and gestural symbol. Those symbols are closed related to the tradition of Dayak society in West Kalimantan, it is seen from the food symbols which are used closely related to the tradition in fulfilling their needs, or the way of Dayak tribe fulfills their daily need of food. Non-food symbols relate to the things which are often utilized in the daily life of Dayak society in general. Whereas

gestural symbol is some movements from the dances which describe the life tradition, especially related to farming aspects and religious aspects. The utilization of the result of this study is focused on verbal tradition discussion and the function aspect of archipelago literature. Gawai Dayak and its symbols which are used, is a form of verbal tradition of Dayak society in West Kalimantan. The non-verbal symbols which are used on the performance of Gawai Dayak ritual serve various functions. Its relation with the learning of Regional Literature is that the intended function aspect here is referring to the knowledge of attitude and values which live on a certain society.

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