

# Local Wisdom of Javanese Wedding *Siraman* Tradition in Gondangrejo, Karanganyar District

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## Abstract

This study aims to describe the local wisdom of offerings in the Javanese wedding tradition in Karanganyar Regency in terms of ethnolinguistics. This research is a qualitative research using the Spradley ethnographic method. Collecting data using participatory observation and interview techniques. The collected data were analyzed using an ethnoscience analysis model. The results of the study show that the local wisdom of offering Javanese wedding traditions in Gondangrejo District knows at least 11 names of offerings in the Javanese wedding ceremony tradition.

**Keywords:** ethnolinguistics, local wisdom, offerings

## Introduction

Java Island has various variations in its language and culture, the emergence of these variations is due to the different geographical conditions of the island of Java. These differences can be found in the language and culture in the mountains which will be different from the language and culture in the lowlands. For example, in terms of language there will be differences in vocabulary, sentence forms and other verbal and nonverbal expressions. These various verbal and nonverbal expressions are also influenced by other aspects of life such as mindset, habits and customs.

According to Uhlenbeck (in (Abdullah Wakit, 2017) Javanese language and culture are divided into four parts, namely Surakarta, Banyumas, East Java and Pesisir. This research focused on the language and culture of the Surakarta part, in the Karanganyar Regency area to be precise. The area was chosen because not a lot of ethnolinguistic research has been carried out.

Indonesia is a country that has a wealth of diverse cultures, traditions and customs spread from Sabang to Merauke. The wealth possessed by the Indonesian people is not only natural resource wealth, but the Indonesian people also have other wealth such as ethnic cultural wealth. The Indonesian nation is spread across the archipelago and each island has different tribes. This makes Indonesia has a diverse culture. One of the cultural products that is still being preserved as a cultural heritage, especially among the Javanese, is the traditional wedding ceremony. In the Javanese island tradition, marriage is a very sacred process. Javanese traditional weddings have many processions that must be carried out by both the bride and groom and also the bride's family. The many Javanese traditional wedding processions are not necessarily just to enliven the wedding, but there are many meanings contained in each of these Javanese traditional wedding processions. Marriage is something sacred. There are so many prohibitions and rules that must be obeyed while undergoing the wedding ceremony. The Javanese people are a society that still strongly adheres to the traditions inherited from their ancestors, this is evidenced by the many rituals they carry out, starting from the traditions of marriage, pregnancy (seven months), birth and death.

The wedding ceremony is always something sacred, majestic and full of emotion. Purwadi (2015: 172) argues that the marriage ceremony is an activity of self-cleaning (bathing) which is held before the *midodareni* ceremony, which is a ceremony held the night before the wedding ceremony. Marriage is something that is considered sacred both in terms of intention, purpose, form and equipment for ceremonies

that require really thorough preparation. The values contained in each series of implementation paths and equipment all become important because they have their own meaning and significance. The siraman ceremony, taken from the Legend of Raden Panji and Dewi Chandrakirana from the Kediri kingdom, is the origin of the siraman ritual in a series of traditional Central Javanese wedding rituals.

Gondangrejo sub-district is one of several sub-districts in Karanganyar Regency, which is a village that is still thick with its customs and these customs are still preserved by the Javanese people because they are still very thick with the cultural heritage of their ancestors, customs that are usually carried out by the Gondangrejo people when going to to marry off their sons and daughters is to hold a siraman ceremony.

The wedding celebration also has a unique culture, namely making offerings. This is inseparable from the trust of the people in Gondangrejo District who still adhere to traditional wedding customs by making offerings placed near rice and water sources so that the springs do not dry out. Not only placed in places where rice and water sources are placed, offerings for weddings are made up to eleven offerings placed from various places, and the contents of the offerings are rice and cakes made by the organizers of the wedding ceremony, for example, *apem* cakes and other wet cakes depending on the cake. what is made and not specific to the cakes or snacks used to make the offerings. The method of making the offerings is also accompanied by special prayers, first the offerings are made together and prayed by the shaman after that the offerings are divided into eleven and placed in the places provided. The ancient tradition of the Javanese people by making offerings on the day of the wedding ceremony, from the time of their ancestors to an era that has developed like this, people still carry it out. The offerings are in the form of food from abundant crops to be served by the ancestors, so that the wedding procession can run smoothly and avoid catastrophe and to be used as a starting point for reinforcements. This teaching from their ancestors still exists today. Usually, the person in charge of giving the offerings is someone who is considered the elder of the village, and the procession of offerings is accompanied by prayers so that the event goes smoothly without any hindrances.

The offerings aim to give charity to relatives and neighbors for the abundance of crops from God Almighty when a wedding is being celebrated, so that the bride and groom are safe. Therefore, there are many minorities who think negatively and there are also those who think that a culture of offerings in traditional Javanese marriages must be carried out. Offerings are only provided at weddings and are only made when weddings are held.

This culture cannot be eliminated by written legal rules, because it includes customary norms that exist in the local community which have the aim of maintaining the values, habits, and cultural norms of the former ancestors. Indeed, there is no penalty for violating the cultural ritual offerings, but their belief is very strong because it is based on phenomena that have occurred, such as the presence of a rotting smell on freshly slaughtered meat at weddings and drinking water that is not clear when served without offerings. That is what makes their minds unable to think logically and choose to believe in myths. In terms of cultural offerings, it has become customary law written by the people of Gondangrejo District and has binding rules for every member of the community and does not dare to abandon this tradition.

Ethnolinguistics is a discipline that is now quite popular. Pioneered by a man named Franz Boas, ethnolinguistic studies are now widely used by researchers to describe various linguistic and cultural phenomena. As a scientific discipline that studies language and culture, ethnolinguistics has several other terms. For example, in America, ethnolinguistics is better known as *linguistic anthropology* (anthropological linguistics) or in another variant it is called anthropological linguistics (Abdullah Wakit, 2017). The use of the term ethnolinguistics itself is more popular in the European region (Durati, 1997).

The verbal form is a form that is lingual or related to language. Verbal form includes vocabulary, phrases, clauses, discourse, and other lingual units. Verbal expressions can also be manifested in terms, proverbs,

names, fairy tales, folklore, and so on, while nonverbal forms are forms that cannot be spoken or spoken. Nonverbal forms include images, symbols, colors, codes, photographs, carvings, gestures, and so on (Abdullah Wakit, 2017). The difference between research in the Gondangrejo area, Karanganyar Regency and other regions is that in the Gondangrejo area, which previously had very strong customs and had many sacred places that had to be given offerings, but because of Covid-19, this area was limited in carrying out cultural traditions which have been continuing. walking becomes hampered because of the limitations of keeping a distance between individuals with each other. The researcher did not take other areas because other regions do not have many sacred places that must be given offerings, such as the Gondangrejo area, Karanganyar Regency.

This research is included in the type of qualitative research. In providing data, this study used purposive sampling with participatory observation and interview methods. Before using this method, the researcher first made a list of questions and selected five traditional informants from Gondangrejo District who work as make-up artists and *dukun manten*. One out of five informants became key informants, while the other four informants became selected informants. Furthermore, the participatory observation method is carried out by participating in ikt and in informant activities at the wedding venue. The instruments in this study included make-up artists, bridal dukuns and the surrounding community who used this tradition. We can find make-up artists who are competent and still traditional, because if the make-up artists are modern they no longer use various offerings to present at sacred places in the Javanese wedding splash tradition. Then the community was also involved in this research because it is the community that has positive and negative impacts with the presence or absence of offerings in the Javanese bridal shower tradition. When conducting participatory observations, the researchers also asked questions to informants about the process of preparing traditional offerings, including asking various things related to the equipment they used. Therefore, it can be said that the interview method used by the researcher coincided with the participatory observation method. The interview method that the researcher did was by using note-taking techniques and recording techniques. The recording results are then summarized, while the recording results are first transcribed and sorted according to the needs of the researcher. The data obtained was then validated using the triangulation method and key informant analysis. The method is carried out by clarifying the data that the researcher has summarized from the results of participatory observations and interviews. This method is carried out to check the validity of data related to the mention of names, references, data acceptability, and others. The validated data were then analyzed using the Spradley Ethnographic research method with an ethnoscient analysis model. Spradley's ethnographic method was chosen because it is more focused on finding out how various societies organize their culture in their minds and then use that culture in life. The Spradley ethnographic method in this study is supported by an Ethnoscience analysis model which aims to find the categories of thought of indigenous peoples, in this case, salt farming communities in the research location. This is related to the use of various traditional salt cultivation technology tools which are expressed verbally in various forms of lingual units. The data that has been analyzed is then presented with formal and informal methods. The formal method presents the results of the analysis using a formula using signs or symbols, while the presentation of data analysis using the informal method is carried out using words, including the use of technical terms.

## Finding And Discussions

For the people of Gondangrejo Subdistrict, when holding a wedding procession, they usually do not escape from the slametan ritual and offering culture. Selametan is a ritual not only used for weddings, but also for child births and circumcision. Selametan is a form of gratitude to God Almighty for what is obtained by someone who carries out the slametan procession, while offerings are food served to spirits so that the wedding ceremony is given a smooth running and avoided disaster or rejection. Offerings are usually made at weddings and are considered by the local community as a mandatory custom and must be carried out so that something undesirable does not happen. The existence of offerings in ancient times was carried out by

the ancestors and has been passed down until now. This custom must be carried out because according to their belief there are spirits that inhabit the place where the wedding ceremony takes place. Like the kitchen where they cook rice and side dishes that will be served to guests. Offerings play an important role in the cooking process. They think that there is a ghost in the cooking area who will eat the food. Usually the essences in food will be taken by spirits so that when humans eat them they will taste bad and tend to be stale. According to their belief, the spirits waiting in the kitchen are Genderuwo. Basically spirits also have characteristics like humans, they have jealousy, envy, anger and happiness. In maintaining the relationship between humans and spirits so that the wedding ceremony is given smoothness and safety, offerings are made as a form of greeting the spirits. The offerings are issued so that the spirits do not interfere with the wedding procession, and are given the smoothness as desired and to avoid disaster. Therefore, every time the village community holds a wedding ceremony, they must issue offerings as a sign of their gratitude as well as preventing disaster. It is from here that the history of making offerings at a wedding ceremony in Gondangrejo District began to emerge.

In this discussion, researchers see many phenomena that occur in Gondangrejo District with a unique culture. One of them when carrying out a wedding ceremony. The wedding party was held at a local resident's house by inviting several relatives and neighbors to pray for the prospective bride and groom to be given happiness and harmony in building a household. In the wedding procession there is a culture that cannot be separated from the people of Gondangrejo District from ancient times until now which still survives and is passed on to the younger generation, namely the giving of offerings in Javanese traditional weddings. There are various kinds of offerings in the life of the Javanese people, one of which is offerings in wedding celebrations. Apart from that, there are also offerings for death and birth, which are known in terms of the Javanese human life cycle, namely: *Metu–Manten–Mati* (birth-marriage-death). In holding in-laws events *wedding* celebrations – the Javanese people recognize certain conditions and offerings. The ancient tradition of the Javanese people has complete procedures for marriage; before the wedding, the day of implementation, and after the wedding. Even though times are developing, the habit of maintaining traditions is still firmly held. Each offering has its own meaning. Even the way of preparation and presentation is different. The richness of meaning in this offering depicts the wheel of life, the twists and turns and ups and downs of human life, from birth to death. The following are the offerings that are usually served at traditional Javanese weddings:

### Offerings in the Sound System



Sound system is a system that was built to help provide a sound that is bigger than the input it has. This larger size can be many times depending on the components in the sound system itself. Someone who will hold a wedding usually provides a sound system so that the wedding can be enjoyed by the wider community. Because the goal is to be enjoyed by the wider community, there must be careful preparation, so that there are no obstacles in the sound, the people of Gondangrejo District believe that every place has

someone waiting, therefore, so that the occupants of the place where the sound system will be installed are not disturbed, it is provided offerings to honor the inhabitants of the place. The offerings on the sound system contain sugar, rice and eggs, bananas and market snacks.

### Offerings placed in front of the house The front of the



House is a part of the house that is believed by the Javanese people as a place for good fortune to come, therefore the Javanese people in the Gondangrejo sub-district provide offerings in front of the house so that no spirits dare to disturb the fortune that will come, at this wedding fortune in question is someone who comes to give a blessing to the bride and groom. The offerings in front of the house contain flowers and so on.

### Offerings at a place to cook rice



The place for cooking rice is a location used to cook rice and other foods that will be served to invited guests, the people of Gondangrejo sub-district believe that a place where offerings are not provided for cooking will have spirits that take a taste of each dish and make the food it is bland and has no taste because the taste has been taken by the spirits. Therefore, offerings are provided at the cooking area to replace the food of these spirits. If offerings are not given, there will be food that spoils quickly or the food you make doesn't taste good. The village community believes that if there is a spirit that inhabits the place where people have a wedding celebration. This is because the myth is very strong and is a culture in ancient times. Actually, the village community believes in Allah SWT, but according to them, if they liken something that happened, there must be an intermediary. Like when we make a pilgrimage to the tomb of the Prophet or Wali who is considered close to Allah SWT. In fact, basically we are not asking for help from the Wali or the Prophet, but we are asking for help so that the prayer we ask for is granted through the intermediary of the Prophet or Wali who is close to Allah SWT. For every community in Gondangrejo District, if they have a wedding, they will definitely use offerings as a form of rejecting reinforcements to avoid any disturbances. The offerings at the place for cooking the rice contain bananas, *opo-opo*, market snacks.

### Offerings placed in the kitchen



The kitchen is a place used to cook dishes that will be served to invited guests, just like the place where rice is cooked, but in the kitchen the focus is on side dishes that will be served to invited guests, unlike the place where rice is cooked, namely special cooking rice to be served.

### **Offerings placed in the bridal makeup room**



Makeup room is the place where the makeup artist uses to make up the bride and groom. Every bride definitely wants the best results for her makeup. So, it's not uncommon for the bride and groom's makeup artist to undergo several rituals before undergoing the make-up process. Yes, it sounds a bit mystical, but that's the reality, especially weddings using Javanese customs. The paes interpreter must have special skills and expertise accompanied by prayers and offerings. The paes interpreter must also have sufficient income and have a respectable status. They are also known as Dhukun Manten. They will fast for a minimum of 3 days before doing bridal makeup to produce good makeup.

### ***Jayengan* offerings (a place to make drinks)**

*Jayengan* is a place to make drinks (*gawe wedang*). The *jayengan* place is usually in the corner of the house which has a large space. The people of Gondangrejo sub-district believe that every sweet drink there is always a creature that wants the sweet drink. Therefore, at the *jayengan* place, offerings are always provided to deal with things that are not wanted. For example, in the Gondangrejo sub-district, there was once a bride and groom who did not provide offerings at the *jayengan* location. In fact, it was true that there was an unwanted incident, namely the drink that had been made changed color to become cloudy and the taste was never sweet, even though a lot of sugar had been given. Therefore, after this incident, the people of Gondangrejo sub-district will never try not to provide offerings at their wedding.

### **Offerings in the corners of the house**



Corners of the house are locations usually used by spirits to hide, therefore there must always be offerings in every corner of the house to respect the inhabitants of that corner. Usually the house has 4 corners on each side.

### Offering wells



A well is a location as a source of water. At the well there is usually a well guard, the people of Gondangrejo District believe that every well guard also asks for offerings. Wells are believed to be places to hide springs/sources of life.

### Offering *prapatan*



*Prapatan* is a location in the form of an intersection, which usually connects one street to another. It is not uncommon for a collision to occur at a crossroads. Therefore, the people of Gondangrejo sub-district usually provide offerings at the crossroad so that unwanted things do not happen.

### Offerings of *wit gedhe*



*Wit gedhe* is a large tree. Every tree there is always someone waiting. In order for the marriage to run smoothly, the people of Gondangrejo Sub-District provide offerings which are placed on the big tree. In every village in the Gondangrejo sub-district there is always a large tree, which is usually in the form of a *wit ringin*. Usually these offerings are placed under the banyan tree so that the tree attendants do not disturb the continuation of the wedding ceremony.

### Offerings in the bridal



In the bridal chamber, offerings are placed with the aim of appreciating the caretaker of the room. Because the bridal chamber is used to produce offspring, offerings are provided so that the guardian of the room does not disturb the bride and groom.

### Conclusion

This research yielded some local wisdom of offerings in the Javanese wedding tradition, namely the various offerings in the Javanese wedding splash tradition.

The local wisdom of Javanese wedding offerings is a form of preserving Javanese culture and is a legacy from our ancestors. Offerings at weddings are dominated by culture that is inherited from our ancestors and is a custom or habit that has lasted from ancient times to the present and cannot be abandoned. Their background is to use offerings at weddings as a custom that simply wants to respect Javanese culture.

The meaning of offerings is as a intermediary to pray for the bride and groom to be given safety and aims to refuse reinforcements so that unwanted things don't happen and has the meaning of giving alms to relatives



or neighbors in a wedding celebration. If the offering culture has bad intentions then the offering culture will be eliminated and vice versa if it has a positive value then it will always be preserved by the community. This proves that this offering culture is still used by the community.

This research has at least succeeded in contributing to the inventory and preservation of linguistic aspects in the context of Javanese wedding offerings in Gondangrejo District. The researcher realizes that the research results presented in this study are still very limited. Research on the local wisdom of offering Javanese wedding traditions outside the Gondangrejo area still has great potential to be used as material for further research.

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