



## Cultural communication of sundanese communities at *seren taun* in cigugur, Kuningan West Java-Indonesia

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### Abstract

*Seren Taun* is similar to Thank Giving Day in western culture. It is harvest celebrations in Indonesia. It has various sequences of events that contain spiritual meaning and entertainment in the cultural arts such as the Procession of Disposal of Pests, *Buyung* Dance, Mashing Rice, *Ngarajah*, *Ngareremokeun*, and *Babarit*. *Seren Taun* has also been in a Calender of Tourism Event in West Java since 1976. This research is a study of communication ethnography that focuses on ritual events in transcendental communication meaning. The purposes of the *Seren Taun* are: (1) Communication Situation; (2) Communication Program; (3) Communication Acts and (4) Communication Patterns. This research is a qualitative research and constructivist paradigm. Furthermore, the analysis also refers to the theory of Symbolic Interactionism. Data, mainly findings from in-depth observations, interviews and textual analysis were collected from *Seren Taun* Traditional Ceremony. Research findings reveal the understanding of the Cigugur community about the communication patterns in the *Seren Taun* Traditional Ceremony in Cigugur, Kuningan - West Java - Indonesia.

**Keywords:** communication ethnography; simbolic interactionism; *Seren Taun*

### Introduction

Local knowledge is important for every member of society and every citizen in national life. Maintaining culture as a local wisdom enables everyone to understand the struggle of his/her ancestors in a variety of community activities. The values of hard work, no retreating, mutual help, should be taught to our children. Thus, character education through local knowledge should be introduced by teachers to their students in school. Research by Trisma Sukmayadi on "Development Character Education Based on Sundanese Local Wisdom" shows the importance of Sundanese values and local wisdom used as content in the curriculum which is integrated on subjects (Hasanah, Gustini & Rohaniawati, 2016) <sup>[6]</sup>.

Understanding local culture is often agreed with ethnic groups. The concept of ethnics themselves is often equated with the concept of ethnic groups that are favored to be seen as a special group. Ethnic specificity is obtained through intermediaries and interactions between cultures. (Saerani, Simatupang, Soedarso, *et al.*, 2014) <sup>[19]</sup>

The formation of noble values that are able to pattern people's behavior Indonesia is because of the role of customs which is so strong, which is becoming culture in people's lives. Although the customs and culture of each area different, but generally have the same essential values. Customary philosophy and culture that developed in various corners of the Indonesian homeland, on average instill good and positive attitude and behavior of morality. So how behave and behave to parents, children, siblings, neighbors, guests, strangers, society and even how to behave towards nature, plants and animals exist the rules. There is a customary guidance, there is a cultural formation, there are recommendations and his taboos. And the phenomenon is so thick in the life of the nation Indonesia. Thus, whether or not the formation of the Indonesian Nation's character was

realized this is very strongly influenced by local cultural values and customs that exist in every area. Belief in the habits and beliefs of the ancestors who awakened in the life of the community is able to become a medium for planting values in every individual in the community. So it becomes personality, traits, behavior, habits and attitudes that are quite character in life their social life is rooted in the local wisdom that grows around them.

The Sundanese dialect is used in Kuningan, but varies in terms of lexicons and articulations. Articulations and word choices can easily become an indication of a person's origin. The usage of Sundanese itself in the *Seren Taun* festivity is intriguing. The ceremony starts with the singing or reading of *raja* to pray for safety as a cue for opening or closing a traditional ritual. (Kurnia, 2014) <sup>[9]</sup>

*Seren Taun* is a thanksgiving celebration by farmers after a frenetic year of work. This celebration usually takes place in a week. It culminates on 22 *Rayagun*. It is the last month or the 12th month in the calender of Sundanese (Saka). *Seren Taun* held in Paseban Tri Panca Tunggal building. Thousands of people from remote areas of West Java will come every year to the *Seren Taun* Traditional Ceremony. Society will come without announcement because it has become a tradition. Paseban Tri Panca Tunggal building is the proper place to hold *Seren Taun* because this cultural heritage building was approved by the Director General of Culture in 1976 as a historical heritage place. It is not only for *Seren Taun*, but this building design is also loaded with symbolic values. Paseban Tri Panca Tunggal has meaning. Paseban is from the word *pasebaan* as a place to gather. Tri is from *Sanskrit* language which means 3 (three). Panca is from *Sanskrit* language which means 5 (five). Then, Paseban Tri Panca Tunggal is a place to unite the three determinations namely *Cipta* (Patent), *Rasa* (Taste) and *Karsa* (intention). These are manifested in behavioral

attitudes through activities. This building is from East to West as illustration of the journey of human life. There is a beginning and an end. This building has symbolic meaning in almost in all the designs, both the outside and the inside of the building.

The main essential of *Seren Taun* is about the gratitude to God for the life in the past year and welcomes the New Year with joy and hope. God has given life and human should be grateful. This ceremony does not belong to certain religious belief, but it merged into one group from Muslims, Protestants, Catholics, Hindus, Buddhists and *Sundawiwitan* (local belief). *Seren Taun* is the expression of thankfulness to God for the life and expression of joy over the coming of the new year. *Seren Taun* is aligned with the *Thanks Giving Day* in the Western culture. It is similar to harvest festival In Indonesia. *Seren Taun* has various series of events that contain spiritual meaning and cultural meaning through procession of disposal of pests, *Buyung* dance, mashed rice, *Ngarajah*, *Ngareremokeun*, *Babarit*, *Angklung Buncis*, etc. *Seren Taun* has also been a main tourism event in calendar of West Java Tourism since 1976 (Gumilang, 2013) [3].

Cigugur is located in the Kuningan, West Java. This village is one of the tourist destinations in the Kuningan. This traditional ceremony is related to the environment because the ceremony uses materials from nature in Jugainti. The ceremony itself is a "moral demand" for humans to respect nature (Royyani, 2008) [18].

Kuswarno (2008) [10] explained that communication ethnography is an assessment of the role of language in the communicative behavior of a society as well as a detailed effort regarding the patterns of behavior of a tribe in Ethnology. Communication activities consist of events, activities and situations in the *Seren Taun*. This traditional Ceremony involves Ethnographic Communication patterns such as language and communication. These parts are complementary. It is difficult to understand language and communication as separate parts.

Ethnographic Communication is a detailed method to recognize patterns of behavior of a society in a particular ethnology. This method can explore how humans (researchers) explain the way of life of other humans such as ways in how researchers look at the other to tell the other humans. It cannot be separated from the dominant cultural context in the life of a community (Mulyana, 2007) [15].

Culture has several forms. First, it is the form of culture as ideas, issues, values, or norms. Second, forms of culture are as activities or patterns of human activities in geographical distance, lack of communication facilities and modern technology, lack of social interaction with other communities, and adherents of ancestral beliefs and primitive thought (Hamidy, 1991) [4].

By understanding the learning aspects and for the purpose of analysis on the concept of culture, the elements of culture must be addressed universally as well as the contents of all the cultures that exist in the world, which are: (1) religious system and ritual ceremony, (2) systems and community organizations, (3) knowledge system, (4) language, (5) arts, (6) economic system, (7) technology system. (Alam, RMT, & Affandi, 2019) [2]

The similarities of culture within the perception may allow the similar meaning to a social object or an event through the way of communication, the state of communication, language and style and nonverbal behavior. There are many aspects and elements of culture to determine communicative

behavior because culture is complex, abstract, and general. One of the socio-cultural elements is perception. (Prayogi & Danial, 2016) [17]

The word culture has been defined by many anthropologists, but this definition still refers to components such as: values, habits adopted by society, for example language, rules, tools and technology to make the things we use, what we use and eat, organizations followed and institutions in a community (Harashani, 2018) [5].

The relationship between individuals and culture influences one another. Culture is created and maintained through the communication of individual. Collectively, their behaviors create culture as basic rule in society. It must be obeyed by the member of society in order to become part of the unit. There are close relationships between communication and culture in some ways: 1) If it were not for the ability of humans to create symbolic language, there would not be developed into knowledge, meaning, symbols, values, rules and regulations. These are the rule in the organizational and community relations. Thus, it is not possible to pass down cultural elements from generation to generation, as well as from one place to another without communication; 2) There are adjustment in special ways such as the patterns of thinking, behavior, frame of reference of the individual. They are not only demanded by the social system in which, with whom, and how communication takes place, but they also determine how to code the message or meaning. Society will interpret the meaning of the code. In short, the overall behavior of an individual's communication depends mainly on culture.

Transcendental Communication is a manifestation of intelligent to discover the laws of nature and existence of human communication with God. There is the existence between humans and the power beyond the ability of human thought due to unconditional affection. Transcendental communication offers a unique style, personality, and character to the current communication process to provide peace. In this context, transcendental communication is not neutral but rather favors safety and peace. The foundation of strength in studying, understanding, and knowing is focused in the human heart. Heart or feeling as a spiritual center has ability seventy times better than the sense of ratio. (Winangsih, 2015) [20]

Based on this background, researchers are interested to discuss an issue entitled "Cultural Communication of Sundanese Communities at *Seren Taun* in Cigugur, Kuningan, West Java".

### Methodology

Basically, the inherent nature of ethnographic research is holistic-integrative. It is intended to be able to provide an explanation as a whole and are interrelated from the social object (culture) studied. Culture has been considered as a whole, which consists of parts inseparable. Therefore, it can be said the interaction of parts from culture have come together (Kamarusdiana, 2019) [8].

Ethnography of communication is a branch of Anthropology. More specifically is a derivative of language ethnography. Hymes (1962) introduced this as a new approach on patterns of communication behavior as an important component in cultural systems. These patterns function are related to the patterns of other components system among holistic cultural contexts (Murriel, 1986). In its development, Hymes was more inclined to the term

ethnography of communication. The basic understanding on the background of reference and language in culture is the communication. It is not the language. Language develops in communication. Language will not have meaning if it is not communicated. This research uses an ethnography approach. Ethnography is like a strategy or style in research that provides space for researchers to explore cultural aspects inherent in society to interpret a social reality (Mashuri, 2019) <sup>[13]</sup>.

In general, an ethnographic approach emphasizes participatory observation methods to observe the material phenomena of people's lives over the long term. This research used a cognitive anthropology approach. This perspective emphasizes that ethnographic research does not always necessarily take a long time because the use of ethnographic interviews allows for more exploring, describing, and organizing the knowledge and experience of informants about their culture (Mashuri, 2019) <sup>[13]</sup>.

Data, mainly findings from qualitative approach were analyzed by descriptive methods that specifically refer to the ethnographic qualitative research. Method Qualitative is used as a reference in the research phase to obtain data in the form of audio and writing of the subject and behaviors that can be observed (Nisa, 2019) <sup>[16]</sup>.

Based on Creswell, ethnography has main elements: 1) it uses a detailed explanation; 2) storytelling is as the reports style; 3) it explores cultural themes, especially themes related to roles and behavior in societies; 4) it is about everyday life (it is not special events that have often been the center of attention; 5) the overall report format is a combination of descriptive, analytical and interpretive; 6) the result of the explanation is not agent of change, but it is the way to change because of its force (Kuswarno, 2008) <sup>[10]</sup>.

In addition to the ethnographic framework, there are also characteristics inherent in ethnography. Ethnographic characteristics include: first, explore or researching social phenomena. In this context, the events that occur inside certain communities are studied in depth. Second, unstructured data. As social research with community objects, of course the data is sourced the certainty of the community cannot be measured, because of the data as empirical data that tends to differ in interpersonal perceptions and social group. Third, a few cases or samples. The approach used in ethnographic research using an inductive approach, that is the conclusions obtained are based on being specific to being general. Fourth, Data analysis and interpretation of human meanings and actions are carried out (human action). This is the most interesting part of ethnography, which is interesting conclusions on the attitudes and social behavior of a society (Kamarusdiana, 2019) <sup>[8]</sup>.

While the ethnographic approach is an approach that involves researchers in social interactions or activities in which observers generally participate as part of research in the field (Moleong, 2017) <sup>[14]</sup>.

## Discussion

The formation of noble values that are able to pattern people's behavior Indonesia is because of the role of customs which is so strong, which is becoming culture in people's lives. Although the customs and culture of each area different, but generally have the same essential values. Customary philosophy and culture that developed in various corners of the Indonesian homeland, on average instill good

and positive attitude and behavior of morality. So how behave and behave to parents, children, siblings, neighbors, guests, strangers, society and even how to behave towards nature, plants and animals exist the rules. There is a customary guidance, there is a cultural formation, there are recommendations and his taboos. And the phenomenon is so thick in the life of the nation Indonesia.

Thus, whether or not the formation of the Indonesian Nation's character was realized this is very strongly influenced by local cultural values and customs that exist in every area. Belief in the habits and beliefs of the ancestors who awakened in the life of the community is able to become a medium for planting values in every individual in the community. So it becomes personality, traits, behavior, habits and attitudes that are quite character in life their social life is rooted in the local wisdom that grows around them (Affandy, 2017) <sup>[1]</sup>.

Martin and Nakayama (2004) review how communication affects culture. It was explained, that culture would not can form without communication. Patterns communication that is certainly in accordance with cultural background and values will describe a person's cultural identity. Many aspects or elements of culture can affect one's communication behavior. This influence arises through a process perception and meaning of a reality (Istiyanto & Novianti, 2018) <sup>[1]</sup>.

## Communication Activities of *Seren Taun*

The celebration made Djatikusumah, his family and the people of Cigugur and its surrounding areas, politically recognized by the local government of Kuningan as part of Kuningan's tradition and culture, causing the discriminatory treatment they have gotten to end. Djatikusumah was indirectly edifying his position as the customary elder and simultaneously cultivating the Sunda Wiwitan culture. He therefore became an agency, who was in opposition to the government (in terms of the statute of five legitimately recognized religions by the state), despite never confronting them formally. He let the celebration of *Seren Taun* instead become a festival, which would be attended by guests from different countries and catch media attention. This led to a change of perspective of the local government of Kuningan, who at first did not recognize the existence of Djatikusumah, but then rendered *Seren Taun* into a cultural activity, which now is carried with pride.

Djatikusumah also gathered different tribes from the Sundanese region, which also embraced the Sunda Wiwitan, to celebrate *Seren Taun* together. By way of the congregation of the marginalized groups after the New Order era, Djatikusumah threw in an oppositional statement against the government and the statute of the five legitimate religions. Therefore, this can be seen as a way of conquest or domination either from the government apparatus or from the mainstream religions. In dealing with the government's hegemony and the power of the mainstream religions, Djatikusumah came to a solution that can be accepted by all parties at one hand, and on the other hand fortifies Paseban's position and role as a place to proliferate Sunda Wiwitan creed. *Seren Taun* and its celebration in Cigugur is a riveting case, which demonstrates how nation's process of hegemony can be halted by cultural negotiation.

*Seren Taun* is an ancestral communication medium to preserve culture to the next generation of local customs through language. It is visualized into dances, arts, rituals



and also prayer songs. Prince Sadewa Madrais Alibasa Kusumawidjyaningrat distributed for generations to generations in Cigugur community. It has been explained before that this research uses the Communication Ethnography method to find out the unique patterns of communication in a particular community or ethnicity. Ethnography of communication discusses language and culture in a particular community context. So that ethnography of communication is not only discussing the link between language and communication or the link between language and culture, but it discusses these three issues at the same time.

In accordance with the purposes in this study, researchers wanted to know communication activities which explain the communication situation, communication events, and communication actions in the *Seren Taun*.

### **Communication Situation at *Seren Taun* in Cigugur, Kuningan - West Java**

In *Seren Taun*, there are two communication situations at ritual such as transcendental and local entertainment venues. The main ritual in *Seren Taun* contains symbolic and spiritual meanings such as: *Damar Sewu*, *Dadung Celebration*, *Pests Disposal Procession (Miceun Hama)*, *Seribu Kentongan*, *Pwah Aci* dance, *Ngareremokeun*, *Rajah Pamuka*, *Ngajayak* and *Nutu*.

The development of the era produces more entertainment arts in the *Seren Taun* every year. It shows indigenous peoples as dynamic society but also still maintain the ancestral mandate. *Seren Taun* is accompanied by various kinds of musical instruments typical of West Java such as *Saron*, *Bonang*, *Jenglong*, *Rebab*, *Goong*, *Drum*, *Gamelan Kacapi Suling*, *Gamelan Goong Renteng*, and *Angklung*.

In *Seren Taun*, it still uses *Sinden* or Narrator to explain the symbolic meaning about the ritual or dance of dancers. The audiences can understand more deeply about the meaning of the *Seren Taun* Traditional Ceremony. There are also prayers by *Sinden* as the symbolic of gratitude of God. It uses *gamelan* and rhythm from the music of *Kacapi Suling*.

### **Communication Events at *Seren Taun* in Cigugur, Kuningan - West Java**

Communication events are set of components that begin with the general purpose of communication, same general topic and involve participants that generally use the same variety of languages, maintain the same tone and the same rules for interaction in the same setting. A communicative event is declared completed when a participant changes, a period of silence or a change in body position. The researcher uses the "SPEAKING" component of Hymes as the main focus to get clearer answers from the *Seren Taun* such as:

#### **a. Setting & Scene**

In ancient times, *Seren Taun* Traditional Ceremony was divided into two events namely ritual and non-ritual. Ritual can be *Damar Sewu*, *Dadung Celebration*, *Pests Disposal Procession (Miceun Hama)*, *Thousands of Kentongan*, *Pwah Aci* dance, *Ngareremokeun*, *Rajah Pamuka*, *Ngajayak* and *Nutu*. The non-ritual events of entertainment programs for the community are *Puragabaya Gebang Dance*, *Kaulinan Barudak Lembur Dance* and *Kacapi Lawak Garut "Segar Grup"*, *Angklung Performance of elementary school 1 Cisantana*, *Rampak Gendang Dance*, *Panglawungan Tembang Sunda*, *Nyiblung*, *Wayang Dalang Cilik*,

*Tarawangsa* performance, *Helaran Culture*, *Saung Lisung* art performance, *Badaya Gebang Dance*, *Jamparing Apsari Dance*, *Kaulinan Barudak Lembur Dance*, *Angklung Kanekes*, *Angklung Buncis*, and *Buyung Dance*.

In the past, participants of the *Seren Taun* were required to meditate and fast because *Seren Taun* was not arbitrary traditional ceremony. But at this time, only dancers are required to fast before the traditional ceremony. The purpose is to be more able to concentrate and to open the *Cakra* in the body. The *Cakra* are the opening of the aura and energy in the dancer's body.

*Seren Taun* is an illustration of the life phase of a pleased agrarian community because they have been given harvest for a year. Society is very grateful to God for the blessings. A typical ornament is consisted of some substance to indicate the fertility of the land in the Cigugur such as rice ornaments, fruits, tubers and etc. The rhythm of music is from the lively to the solemn. Thus, people is interested to see it.

#### **1. Participants**

In *Seren Taun*, participants can be speakers or listeners that involved in the *Seren Taun*. There is a narrator to inform the audience about the symbolic meaning in each series of events, then *sinden* and song accompaniment of the *jentreg kacapi suling* (characterizes of Sundanese) always go along with every ritual of the *Seren Taun*. Traditional figures and religion figures prays from their own beliefs, as well as all Cigugur communities and communities from outside the region and abroad. *Seren Taun* is held for the public where there are no specific conditions to be participants and audiences. The show can also be attended by children.

#### **2. Ends**

Ends are the purpose of the event. It is also the interaction of the society. It is expected function of the event's final outcome. According to the following explanation, the researcher assumes that Ends is a description of the expected purpose and function of the *Seren Taun* especially in a series of ritual events such as *Damar Sewu*, *Dadung Ceremony*, *Pests Disposal Procession (Miceun Hama)*, *A Thousand of Kentongan (Seribu Kentongan)*, *Pwah Aci Dance*, *Ngareremokeun*, *Rajah Pamuka*, *Ngajayak* and *Nutu*. The *Seren Taun* is held by the Cigugur community as an expression of gratitude for the harvest for a year, which is divided into rituals and non-rituals. The final function of the *Seren Taun* is expected the Cigugur community to inherit the knowledge and meaning about the *Seren Taun* with their generations. Thus, this local wisdom inheritance must be preserved in Kuningan, West Java.

#### **3. Act Sequences**

Act sequences contain communicative action sequences and messages due to the action sequence. Researchers assume that act sequences are a description of the sequence of actions in the *Seren Taun* Traditional Ceremony. In the *Seren Taun*, there are stages namely: 1) *Damar Sewu* is the procession stage of the opening ceremony at night; 2) *Thousand Kentongan* and *Disposing of Pests* are the procession stage of the opening of the second event in the morning; 3) *Entertainment arts events* is visualized through rituals, dances and prayer songs for three days; 4) the peak event is on 22 *Rayagung Saka Sunda* year, there is a *Ngajayak* procession, interfaith prayer, *Nutu Pare* or pounding rice together. In the *Seren Taun*, there are symbolic meanings which have their own meanings as follows: 1) *Worship* is pray to God as a symbol of gratitude

and permission from the God for life; 2) *Nyawang* is meditation about the nature; 3) *Nyakra Bumi* means a symbol of promise to the earth and the motherland; 4) *Jalashtra* means to establish good relations between people with softness of heart and soul. Thus, peace can be maintained; 5) *Nyiblung* means adopting the custom of the Cigugur community, especially young women and mothers when taking water in the source of the water; 6) *Silanglang* adopts meaningful activity of girls in the water. They play and loose hair in the nature but it is not popular in this era.

#### 4. Keys

Keys are spirit of speech act implementation. In *Seren Taun*, there are narrators and *sinden* to convey the message of a dance or procession during the event. *Seren Taun* is not categorized as *ruwatan*, but it is only for gratitude and good. Thus, the performers at the *Seren Taun* such as dancers and music players have to be able to visualize it well in order to convey the message. In addition, dancers and music players are required to have a healthy physical condition and uncontaminated mind because this is a sacred traditional ceremony.

#### 5. Instrumentalities

Instrumentalities focus on the practice of messages, the languages, non-verbal languages, objects, hairstyles, and *gestures*. Non-verbal languages are facial expressions. Instrumentalities are a description of the language used, gestures, and objects as a complement in the *Seren Taun*. At *Seren Taun*, it uses Sundanese language. In this traditional ceremony, the gesture of audience of the event is a visualization of the agricultural life of the Sundanese agrarian community in ancient times. The movements are various and different in each ritual. It depends on the certain message and the meaning. There are movements of *nyawang*, *keupat*, *nyakra bumi*, *jalashtra*, *nyiblung* and *silanglang*. These movements have a symbolic meaning. In the series of events, the musical instruments are mostly used musical instruments from the West Java such as *Saron*, *Bonang*, *Jenglong*, *Rebab*, *Goong*, *Gendang*, *Gamelan kecapi suling*, *Gamelan Goong Ranteng* and *Angklung*.

#### 6. Norms of Interaction and Interpretation

The local norm in Cigugur led them to always carry out the *Seren Taun*. The main reason of pluralistic society in Cigugur society is not *Seren Taun* but it is a manifestation of the high plurality of the Cigugur Society. They will always remember that everything is a blessing from God. The gratitude is realized through the *Seren Taun* Traditional Ceremony itself. Furthermore Francis Wahono (2005) explains that local wisdom is the intelligence and strategies for managing the universe in maintaining ecological balance that has been tested for centuries by various disasters and obstacles and human negligence. Local wisdom does not only stop at ethics, but reaches norms and actions and behavior, so that local wisdom can become like a religion that guides humans in behaving and acting, both in the context of daily life and in further human civilization (Masduki, 2015:295-310)<sup>[12]</sup>

#### 7. Genre

The genre focuses on types of events such as poetry, mythology, proverbs, talks, or commercial messages. In order to expressing gratitude to God, the ancestors and local elders used rituals at the *Seren Taun* through processions and prayers in the songs (*raja*). *Seren Taun* is a representation of the thanksgiving of Sundanese agrarian society in Cigugur. Human beings in this life must give

acknowledgments to God for the years that have passed and receive blessings in the years to come. *Seren Taun* has mandated meaning by the ancestors.

#### Communication at Seren Taun in Cigugur, Kuningan - West Java

*Seren Taun* has its own differences as a characteristic of Cigugur. Cigugur is the only place with pluralistic and inhomogeneous state of society in the *Seren Taun* Traditional Ceremony. All groups participated from farmers to government officials. It is a place for every religion such as Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism and local beliefs in Indonesia.

Besides that, there are unchanged events processions such as *Dadung* ceremony, Pests Disposal Procession (*Miceun Hama*), *Pwah Aci Dance*, *Ngareremokeun*, *Rajah Pamuka*, *Ngajayak* and *Nutu*.

In addition, the communication is also comprehended in non-verbal language such as in ritual dances and arts. Sacred dance is a heritage of ancestral traditions that is often exposed through non-verbal language. The philosophy of this sacred dance is based on the belief in ancient times. They preferred to convey their advice through symbolization. It was not only in the dance, but also through old buildings or reliefs. Thus, they hope that the messages can be more remembered and absorbed in the hearts.

#### Transcendental Communication In Seren Taun Cigugur, Kuningan –West Java

In the ritual communication, this includes procedures in the cultural arts of *Seren Taun*. They are loaded with verbal and non-verbal messages in the practice. Previously, it has been explained that ritual communication may be difficult to understand for people outside the community. However, it will still be a human need even though its practice changes for the sake of identity as an individual, as a social community, and as an element of the universe. In this ritual activity, it allows participants to share emotional commitment and become an adhesive for their cohesion as well as devotion to the group.

Communication in the ritual is explained through transcendental communication. Transcendental communication is the way of thinking about natural laws and the existence of human communication with God. Meanwhile, it is between humans and the power that exists beyond the ability of human thought whose existence is based on unconditional affection. (Winangsih, 2015)<sup>[20]</sup>

If it is focus on the transcendental communication explanation in the *Seren Taun*, the transcendental communication of Cigugur indigenous people is manifested through rituals in the traditional dances, prayers through songs and processions as descriptions of gratitude to God and nature. It can also be illustrated that transcendental communication in the *Seren Taun* is an expression of gratitude for the local community of Cigugur for their harvests for a year and hopes for the next year to be even better. The traditional ceremony was created based on the daily life of the Cigugur community and also the mandate of the ancestors. It is a philosophy by Prince Sadewa Madrais Alibasa Kusumawidjayaningrat.

In the intrapersonal and interpersonal orientation, transcendental communication has two dimensions, namely vertical and horizontal dimensions. In the horizontal dimension, transcendental communication is the process of

expressing meaning between human lives. An understanding of *Seren Taun* is shared to the Cigugur community through people who believe that the *Seren Taun* is one of the good things as hereditary. Local community preserves and maintains each other. Thus, *Seren Taun* is distributed to generations through rituals and non-ritual events.

The vertical dimension refers to communication between God and humans. In the interactions, people will feel God's presence because Prince Sadewa Madrais Alibasa Kusumawidjayaningrat created *Seren Taun* as reminder of the Cigugur community to be grateful. Thus, society has a strong cultural foundation.

The dialectical relationship between vertical and horizontal dimensions can be explained by remembering the three transcendental perspectives. It marks the communication of faith such as acceptance, response, and reaction. These terms refer to the human side of God's rule (Van Kooij & Rijnardus, 2008). In the perspective of acceptance, humans are pursued by God. In this case, it occurs in private conversations, *khotbah* (talks), praise or testimony. In this communication people experience signs of God's presence. *Seren Taun* describes the Oneness of God in the phase of human life. The community can feel the presence of God through the *Seren Taun*. This representation is in a series of events especially in transcendental rituals such as thanksgiving because they have been given plentiful crops for a year. In the perspective of response, humans look for God for example in the prayer. Prayer can be understood as an intrapersonal dialogue with oneself.

It is the mystery of the self intuitively experienced as a sign of commitment to God. *Seren Taun* in the Cigugur community is one of the commitments. In the *Seren Taun*, they can feel closeness to God. In the perspective of reaction, humans return to others to explain the meaning of faith in God. This reaction is statements, testimonies and personal work. The community learned to continually preserve *Seren Taun* as one of the characteristics of Cigugur culture. They distributed it to the generations. Thus, there is an assumption that *Seren Taun* was the creation of Prince Sadewa Madrais Alibasa Kusumawidjayaningrat. Paseban Tri Panca Tunggal Building is as a cultural center in Cigugur as well as the *Seren Taun* Ceremony. This place demonstrates young people to continue learning about culture as an important thing in life.

Likewise, the *seren taun* ceremony. In the context of the traditional life of Sundanese cultivators, *seren taun* is a vehicle to give thanks to God Almighty for all agricultural products carried out this year, while hoping that their agricultural yields will increase in the coming year. The ceremony began with the glorification of Nyi Pohaci Sanghyang Asri, the rice goddess in ancient Sundanese beliefs. The belief system of the ancient Sundanese people is influenced by the cultural heritage of the indigenous people of the archipelago, namely the animism-dynamism of venerable karuhun (ancestors) and natural forces, as well as being influenced by Hindu teachings. Ancient Sundanese agrarian societies glorify the natural forces that provide fertility for plants and livestock, these natural forces are manifested as Nyi Pohaci Sanghyang Asri, the goddess of rice and fertility (Malik, 2017:1-16)<sup>[11]</sup>.

## Conclusion

Society can find out communication patterns and their characteristics through communication ethnography.

Researchers discuss each unit of analysis in depth on Communication Ethnography such as the Situation of Communication, Communication Events, and Communication Acts. Thus, it forms a transcendental communication pattern.

Communication situation is a representation of communicative situation through verbal and nonverbal messages. Communication situations in *Seren Taun* can be comprehended during rituals and also entertainment arts events.

Communication events can be identified through the SPEAKING component explanation. It helps to find out more deeply the meanings of the symbols used in the *Seren Taun* especially on ritual events that cannot be changed Cigugur cultural norms.

Communication Act is the last unit of analysis in the Study of Communication Ethnography. In *Seren Taun*, there are statements and orders for the entire community. *Seren Taun* in Cigugur is the only place as pluralism ceremony. Thus, *Seren Taun* is a characteristic of Cigugur as plurality and blends into one without blasting religious, cultural and tribal customs.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the series of activities of *Seren Taun* is a form of gratitude of Cigugur society to God. It is a representation of obedience to the mandate of ancestors. There is a symbolic meaning through communication activities and visualized in the traditional rituals. Thus, it creates a social paradigm of custom through a transcendental communication pattern.

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