

HEALING MANTRAS OF BANJARESE AND THEIR PORTRAYAL OF SOCIO-CULTURAL VALUES

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Abstract: This study is set as an attempt to study Banjarese healing mantras as part of oral literature that needs to be preserved. Mantras are now prone to loss because more and more people no longer believe in them. In this study, the healing mantras are collected through documentation and interview. In terms of documentation, there are three books related to Banjarese Mantras that we examine to collect the data. In terms of interview, the respondents are chosen using purposive sampling from three regencies in South Kalimantan. The interview in this study is semi-structured interview. The collected data are analyzed using Anthropology approach focusing on structures, functions, and socio-cultural values behind the healing mantras. The results of the study show that structurally Banjarese healing mantras are commonly opened and closed by Arabic words showing Islamic values. Seeing from their functions, Banjarese healing mantras are casted to heal 21 issues regarding to health. In relation to socio-cultural values, the Banjarese healing mantras show that nature and Islamic teaching play important role in Banjarese people's lives.

Keywords: *healing mantras, local values, language, culture*

INTRODUCTION

Language is crucial part of culture because it is the medium through which cultural transfer from one generation to the next one is possible. Oral literatures including mantra are intertwined with cultural values. Mantra refers to a set of words believed to be magical that by casting it the casters will be able to reach their intended purposes. Those who believe in mantra are those who acknowledge there is a big power out there that can help them. In other words, mantra believers acknowledge that they are powerless as a human and need help, be it from God or others.

In Banjarese context, mantra is controversial in because of conflicted belief whether or not using mantra means betrayal to God. Because majority of Banjarese people are Islam followers, many of them are afraid of casting mantra. They are afraid of believing in other super powers than the Almighty Allah. Believing in such things equal to *syirik*, that is the unforgiving biggest sin in Islamic belief. Moreover, the advanced technology and a more modern life make most people, especially young generation, no longer believe in mantra.

The status of mantra in Banjarese society right now is prone to be forgotten. That is why the study on Banjarese mantras needs to be taken as an attempt to preserve their existence. In this study, the Banjarese mantras becoming the object of study are limited to healing mantras.

Back then when casting mantras was still a common practice in society, healing mantras were believed to be the answer of many health issues. In this study, the language used in healing mantras is analyzed using Anthropology approach. Anthropology deals with the interconnection between language, culture, and society. Through this approach, a text is not only analyzed based on its context but also its context. Context here refers to social values underlying the society where the text is produced or used. Through Anthropology approach in this study, healing mantras are investigated to reveal their structures, functions, and reflected social values.

RESEARCH METHOD

The design of this study is descriptive qualitative. This study is descriptive in nature because its main objective is to describe, analyze, and interpret existing phenomena in society. This study is also qualitative because it aims to reveal socio-cultural values of Banjarese as reflected in the healing mantras becoming the data. It is in line with Mack (2005, p.1) who stated that a qualitative approach is applicable for research with values, opinions, habits, social contexts of certain population as its main data.

Data in this study are healing mantras collected through documentation and interview. This is in line with Creswell (2009) who stated that “Qualitative researchers typically gather multiple forms of data, such as interviews, observations, and documents, rather than relying on a single data source.” There are three books about Banjarese mantras that we examine to collect the data. The interview in this study is semi-structured interview. We choose the respondents for the interview purposively in three regencies in South Kalimantan namely Hulu Sungai Tengah, Hulu Sungai Utara, and Tapin. After the data are collected, the healing mantras are categorized based on their functions. The structures of healing mantras in each function are then analyzed based on their lexical choices. The interconnection between healing mantras and socio-cultural values of Banjarese society is interpreted by relating lexical choices (co-texts) of the mantras and their social contexts.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The study of oral literature using Anthropology focuses on three scopes of discussion: interconnection, valuability, and continuity. Interconnection deals with material elements of oral literature. Valuability deals with meanings, cultural values, and functions of oral language. Continuity deals with efforts taken to maintain the oral literature as part of local tradition of certain society. The analyses in this study are only focused in interconnection and valuability. It is because the objective of this study is not to take any measure to maintain the continuity of mantra practices. What we aim to do through this study are to describe material elements of healing mantras, to categorize functions of healing mantras, and to reveal socio-cultural values of Banjarese people as reflected in the investigated mantras.

Structures of Banjarese Healing Mantras

Mantras in Banjarese, including the healing ones, commonly have three parts: opening, body, and closing. While body is compulsory, opening and closing parts are not always found. The healing mantras in Banjarese are generally opened with *Bismillahirrahmanirrahim* that is translated as ‘In the name of Allah, Most Gracious Most Merciful’. There also found one mantra – the mantra aimed to stop bleeding – that is opened with *Allahumma si lantang bumi*. *Allahumma* is Arabic language meaning ‘our Allah’, and *si lantang bumi* means ‘the One who

own the world'. Seeing from the opening, it is clear that most healing mantras in Banjarese are started with the acknowledgment of their casters towards the greatness of Allah, the only God in Islam. This shows mantra casters' and mantra targets' position as the weak.

The body part of every healing mantra is commonly composed by rhymed words. These words may either have meanings or merely be a set of meaningless rhymed words. The rhymed words in the first part of the body then followed by hopes or intentions of mantra casters. Based on our interview, these rhymed words were the opening part of the mantras before replaced by Arabic words showing Islamic values such as *Bismillahirrahmanirrahim*. This replacement is made as an attempt to acculturate Hinduism, where mantras believed to be important part of, and Islamism so that the casters, who are mostly Muslims, are not afraid of betraying their faith shall they cast mantras for any reason.

Similar to opening, the closing part of Banjarese healing mantras generally includes Arabic words showing Islamic values. Most of the healing mantras are closed with *Barakat laa ilaaha illallah Muhammadarrasulullah*. *Barakat* is a Banjarese word showing the causal of something. *Barakat laa ilaaha illallah Muhammadarrasulullah* shows that the mantras can only work by the faith of the casters to Allah and Muhammad as His Messenger.

Functions of Banjarese Healing Mantras and How to Use Them

In this study, the healing mantras of Banjarese serve 21 functions. Each function has certain way of how the mantra shall be casted. The detailed explanation of the functions and how to use Banjarese healing mantras is given in the table below:

FUNCTIONS	EXAMPLES OF MANTRAS	HOW TO USE
1. To heal stomachache	<i>Bismillahirrahmanirrahim</i> <i>Ruk manggaluruk</i> <i>Rik manggalirik</i> <i>Asalnya di ari mantuk ka ari</i> <i>Asalnya ka angin mantuk ka</i> <i>angin</i> <i>Asalanya banyu di banyu</i> <i>mantuk ka banyu</i> <i>Insya Allah hilang</i> <i>Barakat La ilaha illallah</i> <i>Muhammadarrasullah</i>	This mantra shall be casted by the healer or Islamic spiritual figure (In Banjarese society usually called as <i>habib</i> or <i>tuan guru</i>). When casting the mantra, oil shall be scrubbed in the painful stomach. The healer or <i>habib/tuan guru</i> pray to God to help the patient be well soon. This mantra shall be casted three times. The healer usually took several young guava leaves to be boiled, and the patient is asked to drink that.
2. To heal hyperthyroidism	<i>Tapa, tapu, takuk</i> <i>Ah! Mati takuk</i> <i>Nuun, wal qalami wama</i> <i>yasturun</i>	The mantra shall be casted before a glass or a bottle of water, and the patient shall drink the blessed water afterward.

<p>3. To cast away foreign object that got in the eye</p>	<p><i>Giling-giling tantadu Tantadu kahujanan Tagiling mata hantu Hilangkan kalimanan</i></p>	<p>The mantra shall be casted when there is foreign object that got in the eye by the person him/herself.</p>
<p>4. To heal <i>samak</i> (the pain in certain part of the body without us knowing the reason)</p>	<p><i>Caricit burung caricit Hinggapnya di batang tawar Datu mana nang manyumpit Bismillahirrahmanirrahim aku menawar</i></p>	<p>This mantra shall be casted by the healer or <i>habib/tuan guru</i> while messaging the part of body that feels pain.</p>
<p>5. To heal ulcer</p>	<p><i>Bismillahirrahmanirrahim Tahi cacak, si tahi burung Ikam kukacak, ikam kukurung Insya Allah inya kada jadi Barakat La ilaha illallah Muhammadarrasullah</i></p>	<p>This mantra shall be casted by the healer or <i>habib/tuan guru</i> three times in a row before a glass or a bottle of water. The blessed water is used to clean the ulcer. The abscess is then gently pressed over and over using right hand's thumb clockwise. Lime betel is then applied to cover the ulcer while casting the mantra.</p>
<p>6. To help when fishbone struck in the throat</p>	<p><i>Bismillahirrahmanirrahim Jun, jun lali dipatuk burung tatut Tajun ka balai Katulanagan iwak garih laut Lawan sagala iwak Barakat La ilaha illallah Muhammadarrasullah</i></p>	<p>This mantra shall be casted by the healer or <i>habib/guru</i> to help someone with fishbone struck in his/her throat. The mantra is casted three times before a glass or a bottle of water. The patient shall use the blessed water that has been blessed to rinse his/her mouth and to drink.</p>
<p>7. To heal chickenpox</p>	<p><i>Bismillahirrahmanirrahim Allahumma solli ala Muhammad Allahumma solli wa sallim Barakat La ilaha illallah Muhammadarrasullah</i></p>	<p>This manta is usually casted by the healer or <i>habib/tuan guru</i>. This mantra shall be casted over and over again in order for all chickenpox spots to disappear soon.</p>
<p>8. To heal heart disease</p>	<p><i>Bismillahirrahmanirrahim Asal kadada Kembali kadada Barakat La ilaha illallah Muhammadarrasullah</i></p>	<p>This manta shall be casted by the healer or <i>habib/tuan guru</i> over and over again while waving black sheet toward the patient. The ritual is usually done in the down.</p>
<p>9. To remove poison</p>	<p><i>Hai sangiang baruhuk</i></p>	<p>This mantra shall be casted three times. Those who cast the mantra</p>

	<p><i>Ikam jangan handak mamangsa lawan diaku Aku tahu asal kejadian ikam Anak raja baruntik Sangiang garahak Sangiang garuhuk Garahak, garuhuk Hai sangiang baruhuk Bajuah ikam Jangan paraki anak Adam Ikam kusumpah Berkat La ilahailah Muhammadurrasullah</i></p>	<p>will blow the water after the mantra is casted. The blessed water shall be given to the poisoned person to drink.</p>
10. To treat snake bites	<p><i>Nur sakala kuning Nur sakala putih Matikan namg kuning Hidupkan nang putih Aku mamatiakan si wangi Ngaran ularnya Sartuk Saidina Ali</i></p>	<p>This mantra is casted to remove the venom of snake. The mantra can be casted by the bitten person him/herself or someone else.</p>
11. To reduce the effect of being in contact with caterpillar	<p><i>Tang kalam mudik ka hulu Naik ka tabing disundat babi Napa asal hulat bulu Alisan kaning tulisan nabi</i></p>	<p>This mantra is casted by the person in contact with caterpillar him/herself so that he/she will not get any effect of the contact.</p>
12. To calm down the baby that cries too much	<p><i>Sinar, sinur Barjam, barja Tundung bisik sangkala</i></p>	<p>This mantra is casted by parents or traditional masseur.</p>
13. To heal tumor	<p><i>Bismillahirrahmanirrahim Hai guntur pacahkan tukul ini Barakat La ilaha illallah Muhammadar Rasullallah</i></p>	<p>This mantra shall be casted by the person with tumor him/herself. The mantra is casted while pressing the part of body with tumor when lightning and thunder strike.</p>
14. To heal gastric	<p><i>Mardika, mardiku Wasika, wasiku Bajuah ilmu Aku tachu asal kajadian ikam Jin taraum Bila kada bajauh Ikam kusumapahi</i></p>	<p>This mantra can be casted by someone else or the patient his/herself.</p>
15. To heal sawan (small ulcer usually found in kids' skin)	<p><i>Banyu manunggang di atas awan Aku tahu asal ikam</i></p>	<p>This mantra shall only be casted by the healer or <i>habib/tuan guru</i>.</p>

Darah bisul menjadi sawan

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| 16. To heal elephantiasis | <p><i>Bismillahirrahmanirrahim</i>
<i>Jaluhu, jalukup, kipsat</i>
<i>Uguk, ugur</i>
<i>Sang maharaja baruntik</i>
<i>Barakat La ilaha illallah</i>
<i>Muhammadarasulallah</i></p> | <p>This manta shall only be casted by the healer or <i>habib/tuan guru</i>.</p> |
| 17. To reduce fever | <p><i>Bismillahirrahmanirrahim</i>
<i>Allahumma sholli ala</i>
<i>Sayidina Muhammad</i></p> | <p>This manta shall be casted by the healer or <i>habib/tuan guru</i> to reduce the fever of the patient. This mantra shall be casted before a glass or a bottle of water three times. The patient shall drink the blessed water. The remain water is scrubbed all over the body until it lasts.</p> |
| 18. To cast away kapidaraan (the illness due to spirit disturbance) | <p><i>Bismilla hirrahmaa nirrahiim</i>
<i>Tawar Allah</i>
<i>Tawar jibril</i>
<i>Tawar Muhammad</i>
<i>Tawar saribu hidangan</i>
<i>Ulih si Jin Aprit</i>
<i>Keluar batu tawar</i>
<i>Barakat laa ilaaha illallah</i>
<i>Muhammadarrasulullah</i></p> | <p>The mantra shall be casted while blowing the water with <i>pidara</i> (Indian jujube) leaves.</p> |
| 19. To help mom during labor | <p><i>Bismilla hirrahmaa nirrahiim</i>
<i>Bungkalang bungkaling</i>
<i>Tampurung bulu-bulu</i>
<i>Takalang tapaling</i>
<i>Ka luar tadahulu</i>
<i>Barakat laa ilaaha illallah</i>
<i>Muhammaddarrasulullah</i></p> | <p>The woman who is in labor shall drink the water that has been blessed with this mantra.</p> |
| 20. To stop bleeding | <p><i>Allahumma si lantang bumi</i>
<i>Hangat ari ranggang bumi</i>
<i>Hujan ari rapat bumi</i>
<i>Bin kulibin bihun</i>
<i>Siit si (sebut nama orang yang luka parah)</i></p> | <p>The bleeding person shall drink the water that has been blessed with the mantra.</p> |
| 21. To heal all diseases | <p><i>Bismillahirrahmaanirrahiim</i>
<i>Rik manggalirik</i>
<i>Ruk manggaluruk</i></p> | <p>This mantra is casted before a glass or a bottle of water. The</p> |

<i>Asal di angin</i>	patient shall drink the blessed
<i>Mantuk ka angin</i>	water to heal.
<i>Asal di ari-ari</i>	
<i>Mantuk ka ari-ari</i>	
<i>Asal di bumi</i>	
<i>Mantuk ka bumi</i>	
<i>Asal di banyu</i>	
<i>Mantuk ka banyu</i>	
<i>Barakat laa ilaaha illallah</i>	
<i>Muhammadarrasulullah</i>	

Sources: Sunarti *et.al.*(1978); Sulistyowati dan Ganie (2013); Tim Balai Bahasa Banjarmasin (2016)

Socio-Cultural Values Reflected in Banjarese Healing Mantras

Socio-cultural values in Banjarese healing mantras are interpreted through three aspects: lexical choices, media to help the healing process, and mantras' functions.

In terms of lexical choices, there are several words commonly used in mantra. The words related to nature, such as *banyu* (water), *angin* (wind), *guntur* (thunder), *awan* (cloud), and *burung* (bird) are mentioned in many different mantra for different purposes. This means that Banjarese people live close to and respect the nature. In addition, the most distinctive part in Banjarese mantra are the opening and the closing part. Many mantras, though not all, begin with *Bismillahirrahmaanirrahiim* or *Allahumma*. This incantation is usually chanted by Muslims before doing something. Many Banjarese mantras are also closed by the saying of *Barakat laa ilaaha illallah Muhammadarrasulullah*. This saying means that the casters are wishing for the blessing from God and Muhammad (PBUH).

Furthermore, it is also interesting to note that the role of nature in Banjarese people's lives is not only reflected through the words used in their mantras but also the medium used when the mantras are casted. Water is the most common item used when using mantra. The casters usually chant the mantra before a glass of water which then should be drunk by the ones who need it. Other items that are usually used as the medium is Indian Jujuba leaves and Lime betel. This means that Banjarese people believe that nature is the best medium to heal their illness or to protect them from evil deeds.

The socio-cultural values of Banjarese people can also be identified through the purpose of the mantras themselves. Mantra is believed to help people when they are sick, be it from a common illness such as stomachache and chicken pox, or such illness caused by evil intention from others. This means that Banjarese people still believe on magic or spiritual belief. Most mantras cannot be chanted by any people. It will only work if it is casted by the healer or Islamic spiritual figure (In Banjarese society usually called as *habib* or *tuan guru*).

By analyzing the lexical choices, the healing process and the purposes of mantra, it can be seen that nature is part of Banjarese people beliefs and lives. It is not only reflected through the words used in their mantras but also the medium of the mantras themselves. In addition, the

influence of Islamic teaching can be seen through the incantations used in most of mantras and the ones who can cast the mantras.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusions

From what we have found in the study, the conclusions that we draw are:

1. Banjarese healing mantras work only for those who believe that they have Allah the Greatest. This shows that the mantras are only media through which prayers are conveyed to the Lord. In other words, mantras are powerless; it's the casters' faith that helps them heal.
2. Linguistically, Banjarese healing mantras are composed in certain ways that show the art of Banjarese in the past in using language beautifully.
3. Culturally, Banjarese healing mantras reflect life values that become parts of Banjarese from past to present.

Suggestions

The suggestions that we make in relation to this study are:

1. Banjarese people need to stop seeing mantras negatively as either betrayal to Allah or outdated culture. Mantras need to be seen as one of oral literature treasures that are part of Banjarese people. As treasures, mantras need to be preserved – despite of believing in them or not.
2. Documentation of mantras is important since the documentation is the best way to keep the trace of Banjarese mantras, especially in the situation when they are hardly passed to the next generation orally.

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