
JURNAL PENYA INDONESIA

Jurnal Bahasa Indonesia, Sastra, dan Pengajarannya

Volume 4, Nomor 2, Oktober 2018

ISSN: 22477-5150, e-ISSN: 2549-2195

CHARACTER EDUCATION IN LITERATURE: EXPLORING THE CULTURE OF MANNERS IN ETHNOGRAPHIC NOVELS

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ABSTRAK

The purpose of this study is to describe the culture of manners in ethnographic novels. A qualitative descriptive method was employed in this study, and the data were from three ethnographic novels, including *Namaku Taweraut* by Ani Sekarningsih (2000), *Manusia Langit* by J.A. Sonjaya (2010), and *Cinta Putih di Bumi Papua* by Dzikry El Han (2014). The data were collected from close reading and noting techniques, and were further analyzed by using Miles and Huberman qualitative data analysis; data reduction, data display, and conclusions. The result indicates that the culture of manners contained in ethnographic novels include respecting parents, respecting traditional authorities' decision, respecting visitors, greeting and introducing self, and speech ethics.

Keywords: character, cultural values, manners, ethnographic novels

PENDIDIKAN BUDI PEKERTI DALAM SASTRA: MENYIBAK BUDAYA TATA KRAMA DALAM NOVEL-NOVEL ETNOGRAFIS

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan mendeskripsikan budaya tata krama dalam novel-novel etnografis. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian adalah deskriptif kualitatif. Data penelitian bersumber dari tiga novel etnografis, yaitu *Namaku Taweraut* karya Ani Sekarningsih (2000), *Manusia Langit* karya J.A. Sonjaya (2010), dan *Cinta Putih di Bumi Papua* karya Dzikry El Han (2014). Untuk mengumpulkan data digunakan teknik membaca ketat dan teknik catat. Data yang telah terkumpul dianalisis dengan tiga tahapan analisis data kualitatif Miles dan Huberman, yaitu reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa budaya tata krama yang terdapat dalam novel-novel etnografis adalah menghormati orang tua, menghormati keputusan para pemangku adat, menghargai tamu, menyapa dan memperkenalkan diri, dan etika berbicara.

Kata Kunci: budi pekerti, nilai budaya, tata krama, novel etnografis

INTRODUCTION

Literature and culture are like the inseparable two sides of a coin that both are strongly related to humans as the producer and the user. Literature is produced by humans as a form of expression towards life phenomena. Culture, in contrast, is produced by humans as a knowledge manifestation to answer every life challenge and need in their group. Literature is used by humans to fulfill their desire towards beauty as well as to provide character embedment to them. Meanwhile, culture is utilized to fulfill their needs and make it as a guideline to behave in their group.

Both literature and culture, in essence, aim to direct people's behavior to become better. Literature is not only created to entertain people but also to give moral enlightenment for them to form human beings with noble character (Didipu, 2013: 102). Similarly, culture is the meaning arrangement that people interpret their experiences and guide their actions (Geertz, 1973:145). Therefore, the essence of literature and culture is to make humans as creatures with noble character.

One of the character values of local culture reflected in literary works is the culture of manners. For instance, manners in the Asmat, Nias, and Patipi Papua ethnic groups can be read in ethnographic novels. Through these novels, readers are able to identify, observe, and understand cultural diversities of a group of people, including the culture of manners that is upheld by the local community and it becomes a behavior guideline. Although it is not written like Laws, the culture of manners regulated in the order of tradition makes the local community live in peace and harmony.

Literary anthropology approach is employed to reveal the culture of manners in ethnographic novels. Literary anthropology is a literary discipline that specifically examines or analyzes various aspects of human culture in literary works. Its main objective is to reveal and understand different human cultures, represented in literary works. In this case, literary works are assumed as the representation of some cultural phenomena that surround the process of creating literary works.

Markowski (2012:88) argues that the characteristics of literary anthropology come from the fact that literature is a space where the nature of human is revealed, or in other words, human finds his essence through literature. This theory

emphasizes the importance of literature for humans themselves. Literature is born from humans' hands, containing various phenomena of their life, and is intended to be read by them. For that reason, when we read literature, we are like reading ourselves and others. Accordingly, in the perspective of literary anthropology, literary works are considered anthropological documents that tell us about the existence of humans (Maryl, 2012:183).

METHOD OF STUDY

This study employed a qualitative descriptive method to present the culture of manners contained in ethnographic novels in detail. The data were from three ethnographic novels, including *Namaku Teweraut* by Ani Sekarningsih (2000), *Manusia Langit* by J.A. Sonjaya (2010), and *Cinta Putih di Bumi Papua* by Dzikry El Han (2014). The data were collected from close reading and noting techniques. Close reading was used by reading the novels intensively while identifying the data. The identified parts of the novels were further noted and given information.

The collected data were analyzed by utilizing the stages of qualitative data analysis by Miles and Huberman (1994:12), which are data reduction, data display, and conclusions. *Firstly*, the noted data were selected and sorted as in line with the focus of the study. All data related to manners in the novels were separated from other data, and classified as in compliance with the forms of manners. *Secondly*, the selected and sorted data were interpreted and described based on their characteristics. Moreover, data display is in the form of a detailed description and analysis. *Thirdly*, drawing conclusions. In this stage, verification and revision will be carried out if additional data that support the interpretation and analysis are found.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Rules or norms prevailed in the society demand them to have manners, politeness, and speech ethics. The example of the culture of manners, politeness, and speech ethics can be figured out in the norms of Asmat, Nias, and Patipi Papua ethnic groups, as follows.

The culture of manners has become obligatory demands for every person of Asmat ethnic group. Their manners include respecting parents, obeying traditional authorities' decision, respecting visitors, greeting and introducing self. These rules are embedded in every Asmat person, so that the harmony and togetherness among them are always maintained from the past until today. Here are some examples of Asmat people's manners in the novel *Namaku Tewateraut*.

nDiwi cannot be shaken. He thinks that he does not need to respond to my objection. His decision is the fixed rule. As a long-standing custom, his words are the most correct 'word' and must be obeyed (Sekarningsih, 2000:64).

Parents' decision should be respected that it is the rule that applies to the Asmat people. Everything that has been decided and set out by parents becomes an obligation to be done. Although sometimes it is different from their children's heart, everything that parents have decided should definitely be carried out. In such a case, whether the decision is right or wrong, it is the children's responsibilities to respect and obey it whole-heartedly. It is without question that parents' decision is for their children own good. It is impossible for them to do bad things to their children. All of this teaches children to obey their parents because when they have children later, they will also do the same thing. As a result, the culture of respecting parent's decision will always live and adhere to the Asmat people.

In addition to parents, the Asmat people should also obey the decision of the traditional authorities. The characteristics of the Asmat people who live in groups make them always depend on their leader. What has been decided by the leader should be performed undoubtedly. This what makes them always live together in peace and harmony because wherever they are, their brotherhood will always bind togetherness.

nDiwi directly points me and Akatpits to fulfill Mama Rin's request that ends up with noises among old wives. It becomes a source of protest among families and communities led by Akatpits. This where the warlords and traditional leaders play

a role. Deciding. That it should not be appropriate to question the departure of Akatpits, rather, the local people should be proud that their town is represented by one of them (Sekarningsih, 2000:76).

Traditional leaders include the warlords are the top traditional leaders in Asmat. They are chosen based on the mutual agreement of the community as in line with their ability in thinking and fighting. They are the representatives of the Asmat people. All decisions related to people's life management are the traditional leaders' duties and responsibilities. The local people have entrusted everything to them. What the traditional leaders have decided is commonly believed to be the best decision. As a consequence, there is no excuse for some people to refuse or feel objected to every decision taken by the traditional leaders.

A manner upheld by the Asmat people is respecting visitors. This is shown in below data.

When the Yosim round ends, the Asmat boy still bows to salute and take her hand, bringing Rin back to her place and thanking Dr. Albat.

Something warm broke on the edge of Rin's eyes. Unclear. Between a sense of emotion and admiration that suddenly falls down. *Ah, who says that the Asmat people do not know about manners and gratitude (Sekarningsih, 2000:22).*

The data indicate that the Asmat people's manner of appreciating and respecting visitors is highly upheld. Although it is only symbolized by dances, the culture of respecting visitors has become an obligation for every person in Asmat. The geographical location surrounded by forest as well as their pattern of life does not make the Asmat people have an antipathy to others who come to them. Instead, they consider the visitors the ones that must be respected and protected during their time in Asmat.

From the various tradition rules that have been described, it is clear that the Asmat people uphold the rules, prevailing in the local cultural context. From the perspective of other cultures, there may be some Asmat tradition rules that are not

in accordance with generally accepted. However, for the Asmat people, all of those rules are normal and must be implemented. By applying those rules, they have one feeling and perception in living their life.

Geographical location surrounded by forest and river does not necessarily make the Asmat people live without any rules, norms, and ethics that bind their behavior pattern. Those rules are taught and applied to every Asmat person, starting from the family environment, such as respecting parents. Manners and ethics in the family environment have become an obligation for every child to his parents. It is also performed in the Asmat family environment. In the novel *Osakat Anak Asmat*, several examples of children's manners and ethics to their parents are mentioned.

"Since when do you change the rules not to say goodbye to the whole family in the house?"

"I got to go, *ndiwi*."

"It is a prospective leader. Having manners and discipline. Please go. Study diligently! (Sekarningsih, 2002:4).

"Do not always upset your parents with bad attitudes. Pay attention to the process of natural phenomena growing in balance. The sun is still rising from the east, the effect of the moon on the tides of water, the type of fish that lives based on the level and nature of water, the type of water, the type of animal, the type of plant that breed according to the process of natural law. All things are on its axis "(Sekarningsih, 2002:43).

In addition to living in a larger community of one ethnic group, the Asmat people also live in clans or groups. Either in a large community as one ethnic group or small clan or group, manners and ethics have become the foundation of thinking and behaving, so that togetherness and harmony among its members are always preserved. Manners and ethics should be embedded earlier in every Asmat child in order that they later can live with all members of other groups. The embedment of ethics and manners is started since a child lives and associates with his family. If in a small group, for instance, children in the family are already familiar to manners

and ethics, and this habit can also be brought later when they grow up and live in a larger group.

“Education in *jew*, the traditional house, teaches them to respect ancestors, not to worship idols. This is to remind people that without ancestors, we would not be born and live. Without *endewand ndiwi*, or our mother and father, you would not be on this earth, enjoying the sun’s beauty, hearing the birds chirping, feeling fishes’ ignorance in the grip. You cannot taste the delicious grilled sago. The form of gratitude is expressed by commemorating the deceased. Obeying rules. Cannot cut down trees in any places. Cannot kill animals as you want to. It is because your ancestors would be in anger. He punishes you with his punishment, which is directly afflicted by the villagers,” Enakap, his father, advising Osakat (Sekarningsih, 2002:5).

After the age of twelve, every Asmat child has started to enter the traditional house of *jew*. Inside the house, they are taught various traditions dealing with manners and ethics in a group, and all rules that the Asmat people must obey. For that reason, Asmat is one of the ethnic groups in Indonesia that upholds manners and ethics to the living people and the deceased as well as the rules, intended to keep their natural balance and environment, although geographically it is surrounded by forest and river.

People in Banuaha have a unique habit in treating their visitors by preparing *tuak* (local fermented alcoholic drinks). This is unique because some people who do not get used to drinking will be considered unethical. Nevertheless, such drinks given to the visitors are the symbol of an honor for them. *Tuak* is routinely consumed by men in Banuaha because it is easy to get and is considered a good way to establish friendship and intimacy among them. That is why *tuak* is considered a medium for Banuaha people to salute the visitors.

However, *tuak* is not a common drink for some visitors. It is only given to male visitors that Banuaha people consider them parts of the community. It signifies that new visitors are not necessarily provided *tuak* to drink. It is only served to

visitors (in the sense of outsiders of Nias) who have settled in a relatively long time, so that they are considered parts of Banuaha people. In that case, drinking *tuak* together becomes a symbol that the visitors are no longer a stranger to local residents, but are already the residents. By doing so, they do not need to feel uncomfortable or reluctant to be in Banuaha because they are already considered an "insider".

"Why does not it start now?!" he asks seriously. "We are very pleased with Bang Mahendra's good intention," he continues, handing a glass and *tuak*.

"Take it, Nak Hendra," Ama Budi says. "It is an honor for you" (Sonjaya, 2010:81).

Mahendra has been in Banuaha for almost a year. He then decided to devote himself as a volunteer teacher who would teach in Banuaha. When he met and conveyed his intention to the principal, he was offered a glass of *tuak*. It is regarded as an honor to the visitors by the people of Banuaha. Not only when he was at the principal's house, but Mahendra was also routinely served *tuak* when he was at school that is sent by his friends and neighbors. It is unique or even is considered inappropriate to some people outside Banuaha. Nonetheless, it is a culture; it is what always they do. *Tuak* is the expression of Banuaha people in respecting and appreciating their visitors. It is a symbol of intimacy among them.

Speech ethics is shown by Patipi people in Papua. Delivering an opinion is the rights of every person, yet it must be well-arranged in manners. It is the traditional rule applied to Patipi people. Such a rule includes speech ethics to young and old people. There are four speech ethics found in the novel *Cinta Putih di Bumi Papua*. *Firstly*, do not interfere in parents' conversation. *Secondly*, young people should respect and listen carefully to what parents talk about before giving an opinion. *Thirdly*, do not talk as long as parents do not give permission to talk. *Fourthly*, obey parents' words or commands.

A taboo thing to the people of Patipi is if there are children or young people who like to join in parents' conversation. Those kinds of people are considered not having manners. For that reason, such rules have been taught to every child in Patipi,

and make them get used to it. Parents in Patipi have their own way to tell a child to be quiet when they are talking, or rebuking someone who wants to interfere in their conversation. It is by giving eye signs and hand movements, not in a spoken way. Eye signs and hand movements have become symbolic messages for children to be quiet and not to interfere in parents' conversation. Such a non-verbal communication has universal meaning for Patipi people, so that they all understand the meaning of the signs.

Safri is in an outburst of anger, seeing his father comes alone. Nueva must be sulking; she will not leave the room. He is already standing with stiff face, ready to take Nueva to the living room. Yet, Fatagar gives him a sign with his eyes and a few hand movements for Safri to be silent and just listening to the parents' conversation (El Han, 2014: 63).

Although only with eye signs and a few hand movements, everyone in Patipi understands this as an order and even a warning. These signs are considered to have greater strength than a verbal warning. They seem to tell everyone to sit down, and just listen to what is being discussed by parents, then speak to give an opinion. It is one of the evidence that noble cultural values in Patipi Papua are highly upheld, intended to regulate the behavior of each member of the community so that they can live in harmony.

Safri almost shoots up hearing Werfra's statement. But again, his father's sign has a magical power, punching his entire bloodstream. Safri is quiet. He is very sorry. Why does that sign have to be powerful? Whereas if his father talks in spoken language, he dares to answer, even denies (El Han, 2014:69).

To deliver opinions, tradition has regulated it well. Listen to the parents speaking; then after being allowed, you can speak. This pattern is generally accepted in Patipi. No one denies the rule because it is the mutual agreement in their tradition. Besides, such a traditional pattern is still maintained and lived by the Patipi people because it is considered to have a positive effect, especially on the young generation.

By this traditional rule regulating the speech ethics, the young generation will more understand morals, ethics, and manners.

“Please, Anak Atar,” an elder says. “Give your opinion” (El Han, 2014:335).

This is the example of the elders’ expression in Patipi who invite Atar to deliver his opinion. It is one of the speech ethics prevailing in Patipi. Traditional rules do not mean that it confines the young generation not to give their ideas. Instead, they can do so after being allowed. After speaking or delivering their ideas, the final decision is made by the elders. Everyone can provide opinions, yet the elders and traditional leaders will decide everything. After being decided, everyone should obey the decision. It is one of the speech ethics of Patipi people in Papua.

CONCLUSION

This study has found out five culture of manners contained in ethnographic novels, including respecting parents, respecting traditional authorities’ decision, respecting visitors, greeting and introducing self, and speech ethics. Manners are the part of traditional norms or laws that apply to almost every culture.

In ancient times, there were no laws that generally regulated life patterns and procedures for social interaction. Each cultural group was only governed by traditional orders with local cultural values and only applied to local people, indicating that each cultural group had its own rules, norms, or traditional orders to regulate life patterns and social interaction procedures of the local people.

This shows that literary works can be one of the transformation media of noble values of the local culture. Therefore, the essence of literature and culture is to make humans as creatures with noble character.

Suggestion

Further studies should be conducted that specifically reveal noble cultural values of local people in literary works. This is significant to build up people’s awareness of the essence and substance of literary works as the media of local

culture-based human's character building. Additionally, the concretization of manners culture figured out in this study can be used as one of the references in learning literature, particularly related to revealing cultural values in literary works.

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