

Preservation of indigenous knowledge transfer in oral tradition of Seloko Adat Jambi

Rts. Tiara Hilda Safitri and Tamara Adriani Susetyo-Salim

Departemen of Library and Information Science, Faculty of Humanities,
Universitas Indonesia,
Depok, 16424, INDONESIA

e-mail: rts.tiara@ui.ac.id, rts.tiarahilda5a@gmail.com; tamaraas@ui.ac.id,
tamara_susetyo@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Indigenous knowledge is a unique local knowledge of local community that needs to be preserved for the next generation as traditional knowledge and must be kept explicitly as an Indonesia library heritage collection. One of the traditional knowledge that needs to be preserved is the oral tradition of "Seloko Adat Jambi". Seloko Adat Jambi is the delivery of messages or testimonies through speech in the form of pantun, advice and carried out from generation to generation. "Seloko Adat Jambi" is transmitted in the form of rhyme that has not been widely understood by the younger generation because the lack of knowledge transfers between generations even though this pantun has very important and historic values. The objective of this study is to identify how indigenous knowledge (IK) is being transferred and preserved by the community. This study uses a qualitative methodology by collecting data through observation, interviews and documentation. The findings of the study revealed that the knowledge transfer using SECI model was not reached the stage of internalization to the young generation. It was further revealed that younger generation plays a role in the dissemination knowledge in the Seloko Adat Jambi through videos and sharing to other communities. The study demonstrated that preservation of indigenous knowledge in Seloko Adat Jambi cannot be said to be successful in the stage of knowledge transfer to the younger generation.

Keywords: Indigenous knowledge; Oral tradition; Seloko Adat Jambi

INTRODUCTION

Indigenous knowledge preservation is used to maintain the authenticity of knowledge so that it can be used and preserved in the long-term. Maintaining knowledge is an effort to keep the accumulated knowledge still remains in an organization. Preserving the organization's memory is expected to reduce information loss so that indigenous peoples are able to maintain the capacity to take an effective action (IAEA 2016). Traditions cannot be separated from every line of Indonesian society life. Tradition is a hereditary habit (from ancestors) that is still carried out in the society (Indonesia 2018). While oral is the words that are spoken (Indonesia 2018). Therefore, the meaning of oral tradition is the delivery of messages or testimonies through speech in the form of pantun and advice that carried out from generation to generation. Oral traditions, by definition are recollections and living memories of the past that have been orally

transmitted, recounted and shared throughout culture. Oral traditions include not only oral history but also poems, myths, riddles, songs, stories, proverbs and legends. These are engraved in the minds and hearts of the old people who are moving archival repositories. They are libraries without shelves. Oral traditions are unwritten and their preservation depends entirely on the powers of memory of successive human generations (Kargbo 2008).

One of the oral traditions that are still used in Indonesia especially in Jambi Province is Seloko Adat Jambi. In Indonesia, it is called as se-lo-ka, which means the type of poem that contains teachings (satire and so on), usually consists of 4 rhythms which contain rhythms and contents; while ber-se-lo-ka have the meaning to compose or to say seloka (Indonesia 2018). Seloko Adat Jambi contains advice that is of ethical and moral value, as a means of social control - community, even politics and maintaining the harmony with nature and also as a way of life (Noor 2013). This oral tradition also contains rules of conduct and rules of law for daily life that must be obeyed and respected by the community. In addition, Seloko Adat Jambi also contains local wisdom, value systems, traditional knowledge, history, law and customs (DIKTI 2013) which are identical to the rules that have been written in the Qur'an. Seloko Adat Jambi is divided into the form of pantun, proverb and petatah-petitih (advice) such as: *Adat Bersendi Syarak* which means the foundation of Malay syar'i tradition or Islamic religion. *Syarak Bersendi Kitabullah* which states that our religion refers to the Quran as a basic rule. *Syarak Mengato Adat Uses* traditional values that must be carried out related to the sharia (Islamic law) without any conflict.

Seloko Adat Jambi is not used in daily conversation. People can only hear Seloko in certain occasions such as in traditional ceremonies and meetings, especially in marriages tradition. Seloko Adat Jambi is used throughout the Jambi Province, but there are some differences in the words choice and pronunciation according to the region. Seloko Adat Jambi is only used by a certain group, for example the Jambi traditional leaders or the members of Seloko Adat Jambi community. This tradition is rarely used by the community because it contains an expression and supposition which is difficult to grasp. In addition, the selection of diction also tends to use comparison or parable (Mislan 2012). To be able to learn this tradition, it is necessary to study Malay culture too, communicate with the teachers or parents who are knowledgeable in the field of Malay religion and customs, and attending traditional ceremonies or other traditional meetings regularly.

Seloko Adat Jambi is very important in its existence for the Malay people's life because it has noble values from our ancestors. Its existence until now indicates that Jambi culture is still maintained by the community. Therefore, preservation is needed in order to keep the identity of the local community. With the limited knowledge possessed by Jambi City's younger generation related to the history of oral tradition, and the are no knowledge transfer available, it make them only able to listen to the seloko speakers without understand the meaning even though the values in it are very important . Therefore, this study aims to determine the process of transferring the information and internalizing the knowledge to the young generation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous Research

Evawarni's research in 2015 entitled "Seloko as the Living Guidance of the Malay Community of Jambi" examines how to interpret the values of seloko adat jambi and make it as way of life. This study aims to know how is Seloko Adat Jambi provides an advice and rules for the realization of a harmony in society. It also find out how the traditional customs of Jambi teaches the relationship to God. This research focuses on moral values that are useful for Jambi Malay society. The results of this study are explained that Seloko Adat Jambi not only regulates the relationship between human with human but also explains the relationship between human and their God. If these moral values were remain obeyed and carried out by the community, then a peaceful of and peaceful life will be created. Seloko Adat Jambi is a tradition that is very attached to the community and is a main feature of Jambi Malay community.

Knowledge preservation

Basically knowledge preservation includes two main activities, namely capturing and storing knowledge to the tendon of the knowledge (knowledge repository) so that it remains a part or memory of a society (Stevans 2008). Knowledge capture is the process in obtaining knowledge and converting knowledge from tacit knowledge into explicit or from tacit knowledge into tacit knowledge but now the important of indigenous knowledge is no longer exist especially in the young generation perspective because of their the lack of understanding and consciousness to know their own culture better (Nicolas 2000).

SECI and Knowledge Creation

There are four models of knowledge conversion from Nonaka, which are: socialization, externalization, conversion, and internalization. First, socialization involves the conversion of tacit knowledge into new forms of tacit knowledge. Second is externalization, which involves the conversion of tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge. The third conversion process, labelled combination, involved the integration of different forms of explicit knowledge to create new forms of explicit knowledge. Finally, internalization involves the conversion of explicit knowledge into tacit knowledge (Ikojiro 2012)

Strategy to preserve oral tradition

Oral traditions, by definition, are recollections and living memories of the past that have been orally transmitted, recounted and shared throughout culture. Oral traditions include not only oral history but also poems, myths, riddles, songs, stories, proverbs and legends to name but a few. These are engraved in the minds and hearts of the old people who are moving archival repositories. They are libraries without shelves. Oral traditions are unwritten and their preservation depends entirely on the powers of memory of successive human generations (Kargbo 2008). Oral tradition has three special characteristics. First, oral tradition is not the same as oral language. Oral tradition is

broader than oral communication that is known in linguistics. However, if it is viewed in the terms of linguistics, the notion of oral tradition is "said and heard". Secondly, the research on oral tradition is carried out based on oral communication, but it can be recorded through written and electronic recording device. Data written is also obtained from old manuscripts that previously recorded in oral communication. Thirdly, oral tradition texts may have a similar background to the written texts (MPSS 2015). The Seloko Adat Jambi oral tradition is still dominated by the elderly people. This condition is a sign to the lack of interest of young generation to promote the oral tradition of Seloko Adat Jambi. They have been exposed to the foreign technology and culture. If they did not care, they will lose their identity. Therefore, the preservation of their indigenous knowledge through knowledge transfer is needed to maintain the originality of their local knowledge.

Oneway to preserve IK as expressed by Hart (1995) "An oral traditional is the passing of knowledge from one generation to the next generation orally". Although in its application IK looks very easy to share but requires the right strategy in preserving the oral traditions of Seloko Adat Jambi as explained in (Bank 1998) such as:

- Recognition and identification, determination is not easy in the situation and may involved social and technical analysis
- Validation includes the terms of relevance, reliability, function, effectiveness and redirection.
- Record keeping and documentation, in view/view of usability expected from the use of information technology, audiovisual recording narration, description or other of forms
- Storage, involves categorization, indexing which links to other information, make it accessible and used can then be used as a repository in the form or search and maintenance
- Transferring, how transferring make it available to potential user as testing in new environments
- Dissemination, to the wider community a appropriate communication channels

Oral tradititon of seloko adat jambi

Seloko Adat Jambi oral tradition is an original oral tradition from the Malay community, which is contain traditional knowledge that is obtained from generation to generation, passed down from grandfather to father, father to children, or others. It can be stopped or disguised because they are rarely heard or rarely expressed in public spaces and in the family environment (Noor 2013). This tradition is influenced by Islamic literature and culture because it was born and developed during the Malay Sultanate of Jambi which was one of the Islamic kingdoms. Seloko Adat Jambi belongs to an active poetry or teaching poem that teaches human about the concept of Hablumminallah (relationship between human and God) and Hablumminannas (relationship between human and human. Seloko Adat Jambi has a classification depending on the problem presented

which focuses on the message to the reality of human life. In the past, tribal functionaries were done the seloko in impromptu way (directly) without any notes or text. It is because seloko is daily communication for the Jambi community. Therefore, they have to memorize the phrases that are suitable and appropriate to be used in every occasion. In contrast to the present, the seloko speaker must know when and what events they will attend in order to have the preparation to deliver the seloko that relevant to the event. This preparation can be a training which is done every week if the speakers have joined in the seloko community. It can facilitate the speaker to become more fluent in pronouncing the seloko sentences. Jambi Seloko tribal speakers are called Datuk (designation for men) and Datin (designation for women), Datuk and Datin's abilities can be obtained from several ways, including: natural talent, handed down from parents, studying at datuk and reading seloko books. Knowledge transfer between Datuk and Datin can be a creative ways to another speakers to produce new proverbs and proverbs that are suitable to the present.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study uses a case study with a qualitative approach. Data were collected through interviews, observation and documentation. Semi structured interview were conducted with open ended questions and recording it. Interview were done to know the History, the rules for the use, the process for the knowledge transfer, and the difficulties for transferring and disseminating of Seloko Adat Jambi. Observation also conducted by seeing directly the knowledge transfer as well as watching the videos related to Jambi Seloko Adat. Documentation was conducted in the form of recordings and field notes. The informants were those who expert in the Seloko Adat Jambi tradition. The first informant is Drs. H. Hasan Basri (the leader of Seloko Adat Jambi communities "Depati Setio Adat Clump"). The Second informant is Reza Pahlefi (the member of Seloko Adat Jambi communities "Depati Setio Adat Clump"). Data analysis was conducted by qualitative data analysis through data collection, data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawing (Miles, Huberman and J. 2014). Research data collected, then sorted according to themes and theories. The data is then presented with an analysis based on the appropriate theory, and then conclusions are taken. Data validity used in this study is spend prolonged time in the field (Creswell 2014). The author was born and raised in the Jambi city, so she can understand better how was the problems occur and also can interact directly with the informants. The duration of collecting data is from Oktober-Desember, 2018.

RESULTS

According to the World Bank (1988), indigenous knowledge preservation is based on the six activities, among others:

Validation

The original knowledge is the assessment of knowledge in the Seloko Adat Jambi referring to the relevance, functionality, and originality of the source so that it can be

said as a local knowledge. The culture and customs that inherent in Jambi City's community make them to form a group of community that aims to preserve the seloko oral tradition . Seloko Adat Jambi is the original oral tradition from Jambi Province. It is proven by the stipulation decision of the Government through the Ministry of Culture and Education that Seloko Adat Jambi as intangible culture of the Indonesian heritage. Datuk Hasan Basri also said that the Seloko Adat Jambi may not be changed as the original text because it is an ancestral heritage (Basri 2018). Traditional values contained in seloko adat jambi such as;

"Bulat aek dek pembuluh, bulat kato dek mupakat"

This seloko means discussion.

"Tudung menudung bak daun sirih, taup menaup bak benak ketam, sokong menyokong bak aur dengan tebing"

This seloko means respecting older people.

Seloko also has the value of simplicity, and politeness as the contents of the Traditional Pillars, which are appropriate, appropriate, reasonable, and polite. This value is still believed and implemented in the Jambi City community as expressed by Datuk Drs. H. Hasan Basri (Basri 2018).

There are traditional values that must be preserved, among others, preserving oral culture, preserving the ability to remember seloko sentences, preserving seloko communication skills, and preserving local wisdom. This tradition also contains the value of modesty, obedience, decency, in accordance with customary pillars. The oral tradition of Seloko Adat Jambi is a traditional heritage and its existence is maintained and preserved for the continuation of the seloko adat jambi oral tradition. This oral tradition was born from the ancestors of the Jambi Sultanate, which was later applied in the life of Jambi community. Seloko Adat Jambi is the most polite way in communication and has been used by parents since ancient times. Seloko consist of allusions, expressions, and advices that can be used to resolve problems. Seloko is also used in wedding processions, ranging from introductions to solemnization of a marriage. By the presence of Law No. 5 of 1979 concerning Village officials that eliminated the election of "Rio" (village head) based on the local wisdom rule that "Rio" should have the ability in the seloka tradition. Since then, the knowledge and capabilities of the community in the seloka have begun to decrease, because the leader is someone who does not understand the tradition and seloka. Those then make the function of Seloko as an important communication and preservation of the regional heritage is being eroded. So the function of Seloko as a medium of communication and preservation of regional heritage eroded by increasingly advanced electronic information flow. This situation led to the concern of Datuk Hasan Basri towards the loss of datin regeneration (people who is fluent in seloko). Therefore, since 2008 Datuk Hasan Basri began making Customary Learning Studio which was later called as Depati Setio Traditional Tribe in 2012 to this day.

Recording and documentation

Knowledge transfer of Seloko Adat Jambi from tacit knowledge to explicit has been made in a form of new media such as multimedia and audiovisual in order to keep up with the technological developments. Knowledge transfer of Seloko Adat Jambi from tacit knowledge to explicit has been made in a form of new media such as multimedia and audiovisual in order to keep up with the technological developments. This activity can maintain the originality of seloko adat jambi without changing its content and meaning. Datuk Hasan Basri also revealed that (Basri 2018) the book that has been used as a guidebook to learn seloko in Jambi City is the only book that he compiled with his team and until now have not been professionally published to the wider community. The book is only printed and reproduced for the Jambi community. Seeing this reality, regional libraries have an important role in mapping the local knowledge to meet the community need for regional information. In addition, Jambi city community can give their contribution to the library by storing their knowledge that they have in any form. This knowledge can be converted into printed and electronic books so that it can be used by many people.

Storage

Preserving local knowledge that has been recorded and documented requires the role of the library in managing the dissemination in order to be used and retrieved by other people who need it. The government can also take the initiative to promote the tradition such as organize festival and carnival events to celebrate the anniversary of Jambi city. The government also set the rules in government regulation No.4th 2014 as a strategy in preserving local knowledge.

Perlindungan dan upaya pelestarian

This effort was carried out by the Depati Setio traditional tribe as a learning place pioneered by the elders (Datuk) so that will develop the new young seloka speakers (Datin) as their jargon "lapuk li - beganti li" which means regeneration, as well as their vision "sebuek, duo pakai, tigo wariskan" which means to make, to use and to transmit (Basri 2018). The second effort is to create an integrated technology to improve the dissemination of the information by utilizing the government facilities such as the official web owned by the jambi city government. Seloko Adat Jambi needs to be added as a new feature on the web and also provide the audiovisual recordings that can show the process of the seloko adat jambi oral tradition. Books, videos, and other documentation related to the seloko activities also need to be made.

Transfer knowledge

Knowledge transfer is a concept of information sharing which is discussed in the field of social science. Knowledge transfer is the learning process of a community based on their experience. Knowledge transfer at the individual level has the meaning as a process of duplicating knowledge from the source of knowledge to the recipient (Wikipedia 2018).

The formation of new knowledge is an ongoing process that requires interaction between tacit and explicit knowledge. This interaction is called the *Four Modes of Knowledge Conversion* process. Conversion is a social process among people, not born from a person. The four knowledge conversion processes are socialization, externalization, combination and internalization (SECI) which formed a knowledge spiral (Ikojiro 2012).

1. *Socialization*: Datuk Hasan Basri and his colleagues shared their experiences about Seloko Adat Jambi by telling directly to the young generation as the member of the Depati Setio traditional tribe and invited them to practice directly. The apprentices learned this tradition not by spoken words or written textbooks but by observing, imitating and practicing the works of their master.”
2. *Externalization*: Datuk Hasan Basri provided all materials related to Jambi Seloko Adat from the history to the rules. In addition, he also translated the materials to the sentences so that the members can easily understand. Externalization is supported by two key factors. First, the articulation of tacit knowledge that involve techniques that enable people to express his or her own ideas or images both through deductive/inductive analysis and through abduction with figurative language. The second factor involves translating the tacit knowledge of customers or experts into readily understandable.
3. *Combination*: Datuk Hasan Basri and his team have made a guidebook which is more concise and easy to understand for the people who have just learned about Jambi Seloko Adat. In practice, combination relies on three processes. First, explicit knowledge is collected from inside or outside the organization and then combined it. Secondly, the new explicit knowledge is disseminated among the organization members through presentation or meetings. Thirdly, the explicit knowledge is edited or processed in the organization to make it more usable.
4. *Internalization*: One of the methods which are applied by the setio indigenous tribe is learn to memorize in pairs. Then the memorizing results will be presented in front of their mentor. If their mentor said that they have successfully memorized and recited the seloka very well, then they can practice it in traditional event. Using this method, the younger generation in the community will absorb the information faster. Consequently, the internalization process will run successfully. In practice, internalization relies on two dimensions. First, explicit knowledge has to be embodied in action and practice. Secondly, explicit knowledge can be embodied through simulations or experiments to trigger learning by doing.

Dissemination

Dissemination of the wider community adds the developmental dimension to the exchange of knowledge and can impact on knowledge transfer (Bank 1998). At present Seloko speakers always document every event that they have been attended in the form

of videos which are then uploaded to the video sharing and social media account they have. There has been no assistance from the government to make an official account that can accommodate the documentation. But the government has always facilitated to introduce Jambi Traditional Seloko through cultural festivals at the regional and international levels. Based on the information provided by Datuk Hasan Basri, the Jambi Seloko Adat will get official recognition by the Indonesian Ministry of culture as the Jambi City Cultural Icon.

CONCLUSION

The oral tradition of Seloko Adat Jambi is a traditional knowledge that deserves to be preserved. It is because this tradition is very related to the local wisdom and ancestral heritage. The oral tradition of Seloko Adat Jambi has a long process to be transferred so that the young generation still knows until now. This tradition also has noble values which are obedience, politeness, communication skills, and religious values that should be preserved and studied by the young generation. An important stage in the preservation of oral traditions is to maintain the authenticity in order to keep its original meaning. Although it has not covered all the stages that exist in the Worldbank theory, there are fears that communities that use this oral tradition will be threatened with extinction. It is because the process of internalization in the younger generation is not going well. The author found some surprising things that Seloko Adat Jambi will get an official recognition by the Ministry of Indonesian culture as a cultural icon of Jambi city. This is proving that the Seloko Adat Jambi tradition is still preserved for generations and the process of dissemination by younger generation can be considered successful. The author recommends that relevant parties such as the government through the regional library can save Seloko Adat Jambi in audiovisual form, written documents and books. The author also hopes that Seloko Adat Jambi can become one of the local content subjects for schools.

REFERENCES

- . 2012. *Nonaka and Knowledge Creation Theory*.
- Basri, Drs. H. Hasan, interview by Rts.Tiara Hilda Safitri. 2018. *Seluk-beluk Seloko Adat Jambi* (November 2).
- Bown, A. Gilman and R. 1970. *The Pronouns of power and Solidarity*. Mouton: The Hague.
- Creswell, J.W. 2014. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 4th Edn. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.
- DIKTI, Program Khusus. 2013. *Pedoman: Kajian Tradisi Lisan (KTL) Sebagai Kekuatan Kultural Program Pengadaan dan Penelitian Ahli Tradisi Lisan*. Jakarta: Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Tinggi Departemen Pendidikan Nasional.
- Hart, E. 1995. "Getting Started in Oral Traditions Research." In *Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre*, 96. Canada: Yellowknife.
- IAEA. 2016. "IAEA Nuclear Energy Series." In *Comparative Analysis of Methods and Tools for Nuclear Knowledge Preservation*, 5. Vienna: IAEA.

- Ikojiro, Nonaka. 2001. "Managing Industrial Knowledge: Creation, Transfer and Utilization." Sage Publication.
- Indonesia, *Kamus Besar Bahasa*. 2018. *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*. <https://kbbi.web.id/tradisi>.
- Kargbo, John Abdul. 2008. "Oral traditions and libraries." *Library Review* Vol. 57 Issue: 6, pp.442-448.
- Miles, M.B., A.M. Huberman, and Saldana J. 2014. *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methodes Source Book*, Ed.3. USA: SAGE Publications.
- Mislan. 2012. Nazharat. "Kandungan Nilai Dalam Seloko Adat". *Fungsi dan Perannya dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat Melayu Jambi*. Jambi: Fakultas Adab IAIN STS Jambi.
- MPSS, Pudentia. 2015. *Metodologi Kajian Tradisi Lisan (Edisi Revisi)*. Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia dan Yayasan Asosiasi Tradisi Lisan.
- Msuya, J. 2007. *Challenges and opportunities in the protection and preservation of indigenous knowledge in Africa*. Africa: Intl. Rev. Inf. Ethnics.
- Nicolas, G. 2000. "Indigenous knowledge for development: Opportunities and challenges." *UNCTAD Conference on Traditional Knowledge*. Geneva: World Bank. 1-8.
- Noor, Junaidi T. 2013. "Seloko: Tradisi Lisan Masyarakat Melayu jambi (ditinjau dari sudut pandang sosbud), makalah."
- Stevans, A. 2008. *A different way of knowing: Tools and strategies for managing indigenous knowledge*. Libri.
- Wikipedia. 2018. *Agustus 21*. https://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transfer_pengetahuan.
- World Bank. 1998. *Indigenous Knowledge for Development*.
- World Bank. 1998. *Indigenous Knowledge for Development: a Framework for Action Knowledge and Learning Center*. Africa Region.