

## Degradation and Reorientation of the Living Guidelines of the Indigenous Dayak Peoples of West Kalimantan

Salfius Seko<sup>1</sup>, Alphonsus Hendri Soa<sup>2</sup>, Lolita<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup> Faculty of Law, Tanjungpura University, Pontianak, Indonesia

### Abstract

Indigenous philosophy is the basis for customary law communities in building their community life. In order for the life of the community to run well, a value system is created to guide life that originates from religious, social, and cultural life in relation to the supernatural between humans and nature. The value system that guides the life of the indigenous Dayak community is experiencing a process of degradation. The basic and urgent problem lies in life teaching in the form of advice, advice which is summarized in traditional saying which is no longer an important teaching in society and in the family because of the influence of modernization and social institutions. It is necessary to reorient the system of values and institutions by teaching traditional proverbs. This study uses empirical legal research methods to collect data as material for research conducted, the results of data collection in the field show that proverbs are spoken languages that are often used by the Dayak community in various activities in the Dayak community, for example in traditional ceremonies, traditional meetings, customary dispute resolution, traditional marriages, giving advice to children and so on. The forms of proverbs used depend on the activities carried out by the community, for customary deliberation activities, customary dispute resolution, traditional marriages are in the form of sayings and sayings, while for teaching and advice to children are in the form of proverbs and parables.

**Keywords:** degradation, reorientation, indigenous proverbs.

**Correspondence:** Selfianus Seko, [salfius.seko@hukum.untan.ac.id](mailto:salfius.seko@hukum.untan.ac.id), Faculty of Law Civil Law Department of Tanjungpura University, Jl. Prof. Dr. H. Hadari Nawawi, Bansir Laut, Pontianak Tenggara, Pontianak, Barat Kalimantan, Indonesia, 78124

## 1. Introduction

Customary philosophy is the foundation for indigenous peoples in building their community life. There are two philosophies that become the foundation or foothold for indigenous peoples to build their community life, namely "communal morality" and "harmony". The philosophy of "communal morality" and "harmony" means that all aspects of life in indigenous peoples are based on community life and the totality balance between real life (the innate realm) and the supernatural (the inner realm). In order for the entire life system to run well, a value system is created that guides life originating from religious, social, and cultural life in relation to the supernatural with humans and nature (cosmos). The value system is called adat (a common term in indigenous peoples). Thus, all activities of indigenous peoples must be (Seko, 2023).

Depending on a rule or customary rules that guide life with political, economic, socio-cultural, religiosity/belief dimensions. The value system that guides the lives of indigenous Dayak people is experiencing a process of degradation. The fundamental and urgent problem lies in the teaching of life in the form of advice, admonitions summarized in traditional sayings are no longer an important teaching in society and the family because of the influence of modernization and social institutions.

In the indigenous community of the Tobag Dayak tribe, the problem lies in the lack of teaching in the family and community related to the value system, norms summarized in traditional sayings in everyday life, in living spaces, for example in large family gatherings, traditional events, and so on. Based on these problems, the author explained several findings in the field, including:

The family as a "learning space" is an ideal place to teach and instill in children the values and norms contained in traditional sayings. Traditional proverbs in the Dayak life tradition are not just beautifully arranged vocabulary, but in the form of social construction, namely, narratives arranged on the basis of social reality in the form of norms, cultural values, beliefs, and ideologies. Proverbs contain the meaning of expressions that have positive value, including advice to obey and obey parents, advice to be humble, advice to be fair, advice to be faithful and trustworthy, advice to be a good leader, advice to be polite, advice to be careful, advice not to forget their origins, advice to be social and tolerant, advice to be honest, and so on.

There is a huge gap between the old and the young due to the cataclysmic culture shock. Need to reorient the value system and institutions through teaching through customary proverbs. Proverbs are spoken languages that are often used by Dayak people in various activities in Dayak society, for example at traditional ceremonies, traditional deliberations, customary dispute resolution, traditional marriages, giving advice to children and so on. The form of proverbs used depends on the activities carried out by the community, for customary deliberative activities,

Settlement of customary disputes, and customary marriage in the form of proverbs and paleo, while teaching and advice to children in the form of sayings and parables. That means that the use of proverbs covers the joints of Dayak people's lives that have different goals from each other. The meaning of proverbs in various Dayak activities is integrated with value systems, norms, and ethics that explain the symbolic meanings behind straightforward, short, concise, and clear words. The choice of proverbs used in reorienting the value system is "Tabe kak Jebata Pejaji Penompa, Togoh Adat Sute Sangu" which is a traditional proverb in the Tobag Dayak Tribe family agreed upon at the 9th (nine) Dayak Tobag Customary Conference in 2017 in Seremban Village, Tayan Hilir District, Sanggau Regency.

## 2. Method

In this study, empirical legal research methods are used, namely a legal research method that serves to see the law in a real sense and examine how the law works in the community. While the approach used is a descriptive approach. According to Sukmadinata, descriptive research is a research characteristic that reveals specifically various social and natural phenomena that exist in people's lives. The specifics referred to in this case are closer to the relationship, impact, and the way in which it is resolved. So, descriptive research is a way to describe a particular situation, subject, behavior, or phenomenon (Sukmadinata, 2006).

## 3. Results and Discussion

Research on the reorientation of the value system in the customary proverb "tabe kak Jebata Pejaji Penompa, togeh adat sute sungu" in the indigenous Dayak Tobag community through social institutions is expected to provide 2 (two) interrelated benefits, namely: First, theoretical benefits, namely contributing to the development of customary law and references for other researchers who are interested in customary law studies, especially Customary Law.

Dayak Tobag. Second, practical benefits, namely strengthening social institutions as learning spaces for young people and formalizing traditional mottos as a guide for young people in conducting social interactions in society.

The current of modernization has given a culture shock, especially for millennial youth. Alfin Toffler said that such shock can cause a person or group of people to lose orientation in life. The loss of life orientation in the form of the degradation of the value system and norms, namely customary customs and laws that are used as guidelines and guidelines in regulating the order of life and association in indigenous peoples. The degraded value system is in the form of reduced respect (tabe) which is one of the trilogy of Dayak life. Respect (read: tabe) is shown by a child towards his parents or someone younger towards his older sibling in a horizontal dimension. In the vertical dimension, respect is shown by man to Jebata Pejaji Penompa, because man realizes that he is weak and helpless and dependent on Jebata (God). The degradation of values in young children is mainly revealed in self-expression in the form of speech, deeds and actions. Young people often talk to older people without paying attention to the right vocabulary to say, as if they were talking to people of the same age, for example the words "iko (you)" and "we" (you, meaning Father, Uncle, Bibik, brother, brother). The word "iko" (you) is more appropriate to be spoken to people of the same age, while the word "we" (you) is more appropriate to be said to older people as a form of respect. In Dayak social customs, a person must have an attitude of 3 (three) "T", namely (know yourself (know who he is), know basa (know manners) and know budi (know to return favors). If someone does not know and practice the 3T attitude, it is considered a person who does not know civilized (people who do not know the rules of custom). And that attitude is a highly reproached attitude in civilized society.

The word "tabe" in the language of the Tobag Dayak Tribe is quite difficult to translate into Indonesian. There is no equivalent word that can explain the meaning of "tabe" in more detail. However, literally the word "tabe" can be interpreted in Indonesian which means roughly the same as "excuse me, ask for blessings, ask forgiveness for feeling helpless / weak, courtesy to pass someone older, respectful greetings".

Based on its basic concept, the word "tabe" has two dimensions, namely horizontal demension and vertical dimension. At the horizontal dimension level, the word "tabe" is spoken

or intended to salute older people in terms of age and genealogy. While in its vertical dimension the word "tabe" is addressed to Jebata, Pejaji, Penompa. The word "tabe" is to show respect as well as ask for forgiveness because man feels himself weak and helpless before Jebata (understood as the Creator). Therefore man shows condescension before Him, because man realizes himself to be fragile, helpless. Because of his helplessness, people begged Jebata to give him help (Seko, 2008).

In the social context (horizontal dimension), the word "tabe" is often used in the daily life of the Tobag Dayak community, in the indigenous community, "tabe" indicates a respectful attitude towards older people (in terms of age and family tree of grandparents). This respectful attitude shows the ethics of life for Dayak people, that for Dayak people respecting their elders is polite / civilized and knows customs as a guide in life in the midst of indigenous communities.

This "Tabe" is a value system that becomes a guideline or ethics in life in society in relation to vertical and horizontal dimensions so that the social order in society is better ordered, mutual respect and love between the young towards the old and human respect (feeling himself weak) to Jebata (God).

To carry out a massive and planned reorientation of the value system, the presence of customary institutions becomes urgent. Customary institutions are an extension of indigenous peoples as well as guardians and parents, starting from Lawang Agong, Pesirah, Jaya, Temenggong, Pati Adat and Customary Consultative Institutions. So this customary institution has a pre-enforceive function, rather than a repressive function.

The benefit of this research is the emergence of ethical awareness of the value system that lives and grows in society as a guide in establishing life within the community / indigenous community, so as to create a more ethical and civilized social life. Based on this fact, the research design to reorient the value system uses Focus Discussion Group (FGD) towards groups in society / community to absorb people's thoughts, expectations and responses.

A traditional proverb or language of expression is a way to explain an experience, understanding and thinking of a person or group of people with an event he experiences with God, the environment and others. To better understand this meaning, the author elaborates several theories relevant to this study.

### **3.1. Structuralism Theory**

According to Levi Strauss, the structure of social life is independent, which limits human behavior and beliefs. For Strauss, man has a characteristic that points to his definition of existence, language. Language comes from the unconscious dimension of the human mind, as well as culture, so the structural features of social organization are a reflection of the language used. This results in the fact that the human mind structures the world, language, and social organization (behavior) in the same way (Jones, 2009).

In line with Levi-Strauss's thinking, Faocault also placed language at the center of culture. However, he saw language as a system of ideas related to each other, which gave knowledge about the world. Furthermore, Faocault said that the way to know a reality is to create a discourse. Thus, discourse is a power that can force humans to know something, as creative subject-agents. The way to exercise the power is through 2 (two) ways, namely: first, the power must be exercised (Jones, 2009). to embody discourse; Secondly, power is exercised by discourse, since it determines the identity of the subject (about what is thought, known and acted).



The traditional proverb contained in the traditional proverb "Tabe kak Jebata Pejaji Penompa, Togoh Adat suet Sungu", is a proverb pointing to a social reality which is an idea to explain a certain meaning of the Tobag Dayak tribe, telling a certain thing about an ethic of living in an association in the community while also describing a social reality contained in words that are learned and inherited.

These words are a sensory experience of Dayak Tobag people with the surrounding nature, with those who create them and with others as a life experience that gives meaning that as Dayak People, they must respect Jebata Pejaji Penompa and respect for parents or people older than themselves. Thus, he (Dayak People) will be in harmony with nature and with others.

### 3.2. Functionalism Theory

Durkheim said that to understand the existence and character of social structures through comparison with the origin and work of biological organisms (organic analogy). He described a social system such as the human body that in the human body all organs work interdependently on each other. Each organ performs its function for the entire system (Jones, 2009).

This social system works to create stability of social order. Society is a collection of individuals who work in a system to maintain social stability. Organisms are composed of several components that play their respective roles. When each component moves on its own, the organism will malfunction or fail to function (Jones, 2009). Conversely, if the institutions in society play an irreplaceable role or perform the necessary functions, then society is in a stable and satisfactory state (Jones, 2009).

The proverb "Tabe kak Jebata Pejaji Penompa, Togoh Adat Sute Sungu" is a value system that is structured and integrated with the social system that exists in the Tobag Dayak community. As an integrated system, this value system can only work if it is supported by other organs, namely the social system that exists in society, namely individuals and family and community institutions. The value system can only be run as a guide or ethic of life of the Tobag Dayak tribe, if the social system in the Tobag Dayak community can work as an integrated system, including families, customary institutions and religious institutions, and so on.

### 3.3. Hermeneutics

The central figures of Hermeneutics are Martin Heidegger and Georg Gadamer. Heidegger's thought deals with *Wesen der Sprache* (the nature of language), with language will be able to bring out the closeness of thinking and *Sein*. Language is not just a means, but a "language of nature", meaning that an answer, response or response and is not a manipulation of ideas. Thus, language means the process of conveying the meaning, identity of an object, the characteristics and properties of objects expressed by a person. Therefore, man must say something in order to point to the manifestation of the nature of language. Language is an expression of 'das sein', 'das sein' causes people to think. With language humans can communicate. Language is man's openness to 'das sein', thinking and expressing something is 'sein lassen'. So language and thought are the spaces where events 'das sein' or 'ada' occur (Kaelan, 2002).

Gadamer in his book *'Warheit und Methode'* explains that to 'understand' it is impossible without language. "Understanding is a fundamental human attitude, so the

essence of 'understanding' has ontological relevance. According to Gadamer, language is a reality that is inseparable from life experience, understanding, thought or 'das sein'. Thus, language mediates hermeneutic experience (das Mitte), as a horizon of hermeneutic ontology. Gadamer goes on to say that 'being' appears to man, then something happens and manifests in language. So to understand it means to hold a conversation with 'ada', so that wherever humans have conversations (Bertens, 1981) (Poespoprodjo, 1987).

Starting from the opinions of Martin Heidegger and Goerg Gadamer, the traditional saying "Tabé kak Jebata Pejaji Penompa, Togoh Adat Sute Sungu" is a life experience, Dayak Tobag's understanding of 'ada'. A saying that wants to express and explain the meaning of a certain thing is also a thought that becomes the space of an event about 'being'. Events, life experiences, understandings are a reality experienced by Dayak Tobag related in his relationship with God and others.

### 3.4. Reorientation

The meaning of the word Reorientation according to the Big Dictionary Indonesian online -re-o-ri-en-ta- si /réorientasi/ n review of insights (to determine attitudes etc.). So freely, the word reorientation can be interpreted as a review of an insight or attitude that is taking place in society. In the context of cultural values, what will be reviewed is the cultural values that develop in society. The re-assessment is intended so that human behavior does not deviate from the value system that already exists in society.

In this regard, Kluckhohn in Pelly fattened that cultural value is a concept of a vast living space in society, regarding what is most valuable. These concepts are interrelated with each other and work as a cultural system. Functionally, the value system encourages individuals or groups to behave as prescribed, because those behaviors serve a common goal. The value system becomes a guide that is firmly attached emotionally to a person or group of people, instead it is a life goal that is strived for. Therefore, changing the human value system is not easy, it takes time. Because the values that are fought for are the ideal manifestation of the value system in society. Basically, the Cultural Value System is a system of values that are agreed upon and embedded in a society that is rooted in a habit, belief, custom, law with certain characteristics that are different for behavioral references. The Cultural Value System has 5 (five) main problems according to Kluckhohn in Pelly (1994), namely:

- a. The nature of life
- b. The nature of human work or work
- c. The nature of man's position in time and space
- d. The nature of man's relationship with the greetings, and
- e. The nature of man's relationship with his fellow man

## 4. Conclusion

The basic problems of the degradation of the customary value system in young people in the Dayak Tobag community include several things such as the existence of a large gap between young people and the elderly so that value formation does not work well. In addition, the occurrence of culture shock due to the unpreparedness of the value system instilled in young

people has led to a reduction in the role of family and social institutions that occur today. This is important to reorient the value system that becomes a reference in solving problems that occur. Some things that need to be done include affirmation of commitment to the importance of ethics of life in society, institutional involvement as a system as a learning space for the importance of value systems, formalizing life ethics contained in traditional sayings as a guideline for life. Especially in the simplest way is the teaching of life in the form of advice, proverbs, admonitions summarized in traditional sayings is no longer an important teaching in society and the family because of the influence of modernization and social institutions. The form of proverbs, advice, and advice used depends on the activities carried out by the community, for customary deliberation activities, customary dispute resolution, customary marriage in the form of proverbs and pameo, while for teaching and advice to children in the form of advice. That means that the use of proverbs, advice, and advice covers the aspects of Dayak people's lives that have different goals from each other. The meaning of admonition in various Dayak activities is integrated with the value system, norms and ethics that explain the symbolic meanings behind straightforward, short, concise and clear words

### References

- Arhoi, Alfons L. (2013). *Ator Adat Dayak Tobag, Lembaga Muswarah Adat Dayak Tobag, Tayan*
- Bertens, K, (1981). *Filsafat Barat dalam Abad XX*. Gramedia:Jakarta.  
*Hilir*. Tayan: Lembaga Muswarah Adat Dayak Tobag.
- Jones, Pip. (2009). *Pengantar Teori-Teori Sosial : Dari Teori Fungsionalisme hingga Post- Modernisme*. Jakarta: Obor.
- Kaelan. (2002). *Filsafat Bahasa: Realitas Bahasa, Logika Bahasa Hermeneutika dan*
- Poespoprodjo, Wasito. (1987). *Interpretasi*. Bandung: CV Remaja Karya.  
*Postmodernisme*. Yogyakarta: Paradigma.
- Seko, Salfius. (2003). *Skripsi: Religiositas Adat Munjong*. Pontianak: Universitas Panca Bakti
- Seko, Salfius. (2008). *Tesis: Peradilan Adat sebagai Sarana Penyelesaian Sengketa*. Pontianak: Universitas Tanjungpura.
- Sukmadinata. (2006). *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif*. Bandung: Graha Aksara.