

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Human as social beings are creatures that interact with other humans. In their interaction, humans use language as their tool to communicate with others, language as a code, sign, or communication sound system that is approved by certain groups of people, individually or collectively using language as a communication medium for delivering messages, thoughts, goals, or meanings of something to be expressed (Suwardi, 2013).

There is a strong correlation between language and culture because language is a cultural product. Language is influenced by culture and vice versa. It can be concluded that everything about culture will be displayed in language. According to Koenejarangningrat (2008) state that language and culture are the two main things inherent in human life and are challenging to separate from human life. In the culture, can find many symbols in human life and those around us. However, many people do not realize that the signs found in our lives and culture have a hidden meaning and should be explored because sometimes symbol has their significance, by knowing the symbol and the importance of the use of the symbol can avoid any misinterpretation in the delivery of messages.

Semiotics is a science or method of analysis to study signs. Etymologically, the term semiotic comes from the Greek word "Semeion" which means sign. The sign itself is defined as something which, on the basis of

previously established social conventions, can be considered to represent something else. The sign was originally interpreted as something that points to the existence of something else. For example, smoke indicates a fire, a loud car siren wailing indicates a fire in a city corner. In terminology, semiotics can be identified as a science that studies a wide range of objects, events, all cultures as signs. semiotics is concerned with anything that can be expressed by a sign. a sign is anything that can be taken as a signifier that has an important meaning to replace something else. Semiotics is a linguistic branch that examines the signs present in human life so that these signs can be explored and analyzed. Semiotics is related to everything, which can be considered a sign. Semiotics involves research not only from what we have referred to as 'signs' in everyday speech but about anything that 'stands for something else. In the semiotics sense, the signs are in the form of words, images, sounds, movements, and objects (Sobur 2013).

A culture can also be learned through a semiotic approach because a culture consists of many signs such as symbols, images, words, texts, etc. Furthermore, there are two important theories relating to signs. First, Saussure's theory focuses on linguistic signs (such as words). An example of Saussure's theory is a sign on the shop door is an open word. The term open is a marker, and then Signified is the meaning or concept of the store ready to start a business in the minds of those who see it can understand its conventional meaning (Sobur, 2016:7). Second, Peirce's theory has three elements sign (triadic). He calls them signs themselves (representamen), objects, and interpreters. An example: The traffic lights sign for a stop would consist red light facing traffic at an interaction

(the representament), vehicle halting (the object), and the idea that the red light indicates that vehicles must stop (the interpretant) in our daily life many symbols that we find and has a meaning, and we need to understand it to understand the situations (Hoed, 2011:20).

In culture, many symbols deliver a meaning of the purpose based on the situation or event, we need to understand it to get the whole idea about the culture we found. Indonesia is a pluralistic country with many cultures because there are 300 ethnic groups in Indonesia Artha J. D (2021) Culture is a heritage that must be maintained and preserved because the culture is an identity of each tribe or society. As a young generation, we must know the importance of maintaining our culture so that the era of globalization does not erode it, so we slowly lose the culture that is our identity.

Wanokaka is one of regions in East Nusa Tenggara Province to maintaining its culture. One culture still preserved by the Wanokaka community is a traditional marriage, in the Wanokaka language, commonly known as *halaku Lippa Deki mawinni*. *Halaku Lippa Deki mawinni* is a language term widely used by male families in the Wanokaka community when they want to take a woman to be his wife. To take a woman in Wanokaka community, the groom or the groom's family must pay a *willi* 'dowry' to the bride's family.

Willi 'dowry' is a set of dowry or valuables gifts given by the *moani* (man) or the *oali Jaji moani* 'male's family' to the *oali jaji mawinni* 'female's family' as a form of appreciation or respect for the woman's family in the Wanokaka

community and also as an official sign that the woman has been proposed and has become his and cannot be disturbed again by other men.

The high value of the dowry to be paid by the groom's family is a second thing, meanings that regardless of the amount of dowry determined by the bride's family, the Wanokaka people in general and the groom's family in particular, they will try to fulfill it, this is because the male family values or prioritizes women's self-esteem compared to a large number of *willi* to be paid.

The reason for choosing this title is because the writer was very interested in conducting this research to reveal the forms of *willi* and the symbolic meanings of the *willi* forms in traditional marriage, which is practiced in the Wanokaka community, especially in Mamodu Village. With the title **“Semiotic Analysis of *Willi* In Traditional Marriages In Wanokaka Community, West Sumba Regency.”**

1.2 Research Problems

Based on the background of writing, these research problems are as follows:

1. What are the physical forms of *willi* in traditional marriage in Wanokka Community?
2. What are the symbolic meanings of *willi* forms in traditional marriage in the Wanokka community?

1.3 Aim (s) of Study

1. To find out the physical forms of *willi* in the traditional marriage in Wanokaka community.
2. To find out the symbolic meanings of the *willi* (dowry) forms in traditional marriage in Wanokaka Community.

1.4 Significance of Study

The Significance of this research were:

1.4.1 Implication

This implication helps to answer research problems that support the theory by Pearce's (1931) about the physical forms and symbolic meaning (signs, objects, and interpretents).

1.4.2 Application

1. This research is expected to be useful for several parties, including the community in Wanokaka Regency, West Sumba to maintain and preserve the existing culture and traditions.
2. This research can be used as material for consideration for students as motivation in the future for the self-advancement of students and the English Language Study.