

*e-Journal of Linguistics*

**ECOLINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE OF KERAPINGAN CULTURE**

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**Abstract**

This article is designed to explore the problem of the *rapingn* crops encoded in the form of words, phrases, sentences and even discourse. This scientific study raised several issues, such as How do people manage *raping* plant as one of the supporting community cultural activity? How *kerapingan* forms of expression are seen as ideas, thoughts, and ideology of the environment in which they live? What are the meanings contained in the expression of *kerapingan*? What are the functions of *kerapaingan* expressions relating to the relationship between people and *raping* plants?

This paper aims to describe the *raping* crop management, *kerapingan* form of expression, the meaning contained in *kerapingan* expression, and function of *kerapingan* expressions. To explain the problems of the study, eco-linguistic framework is used. The principle of eco-linguistic theory is a way of managing *raping* crop diversity to create a mutually dependent relationship between the public and *raping* plants, insects, and other plants. The framework of interaction and interdependence create also mutual respect, and respect between human beings and the natural surroundings, *raping* plants, bamboo plants,

insects, such as wasps, and animals such as ferrets. To obtain such data, interviews and observation methods were applied

Keywords: *Culture, Kerapingan, eco-linguistics*

## 1. Introduction

The life of Manggarai community group is very dependent on palm trees in Manggarai language called *raping*. One of the tribes in Manggarai cultivates this plant traditionally. The community is Kolang tribe who live in west Manggarai. They consider that *raping* is plant of life because it grows around the human settlements.

As stated earlier that the community of Kolang cultivate the plant in a way that is inherited by their ancestors. The plants are treated to a variety of public interests, such as the construction of the house. The fibers *wing* of plant or *lebe wunut* are processed for the roof of houses, especially traditional custom house called *mbaru wunut*. The leaves are processed into the roofs of houses and huts in the fields. The midribs are used to flank wooden fence or in the yard and in the fields, its fibers are made for fastening fence, and the fruit stems are easily processed to get juice or mince 'sweet drinks' and *tuak*.

Cultural activities mentioned above are encoded verbally taking the forms of lexicon, phrases, sentences, and even discourse. Lingual signs that describe the environment in which people live are interacting, interrelated, and interdependent. This is in line with the so-called by Sapir that it is the vocabulary of a language that most clearly reflects the physical and social environment of its speakers (Fill, 2001:2)

*Kerapingan* phrase is related to cultivation of *raping* including verbs, nouns, adjectives, sentences. However, this article merely presents some verbs, nouns, and adjectives. First, the verbs can describe *raping* processing activities. In the treatment process there are some verbs such as *tekan* 'puncture', *irih* 'cut', *landu* 'seduce' *tong* 'catch up', *Tuke* 'ascend', *caling* 'replace'. Secondly, some adjectives that describe the quality of processed products, such as beverages, sugar and the nature of *raping* stems and fruits. The

products include *mince* 'sweet juice', *metel* 'strong', *pait* 'sour', *bakok* 'white'. Properties of plant stem are *cirang* 'hard', *ngoel* 'flabby', *harat* 'sharp', *miteng* 'black' and *benge* 'fragrant'. The third is a noun. This category includes two groups: noun group and noun phrase. Groups of noun: *raping* 'palm tree', *Wunut* 'fibers', *ndara* 'fruit laden', *longko* 'fruit', *leka* 'pelepah', *saung* 'leaves', *lombong* 'shoots'. Noun phrase: *saung leka* 'palm leaves', *lombongtuak* 'palm shoots', *gola malang* 'sugar' *loke gola* 'sugar cubes; *tuak mince* 'sweet drinks', *sopikolang* 'drinks from kolang', *mbaru wunut* 'fiber houses', *wase wunut* 'fiber ropes', *ndaraTewa* 'fruit stem ready to be processed'

*Raping* or palm is a tree that can live and grow in the highlands about 800m<sup>2</sup> above sea level. This plant has the advantage, that the roots are very strong to keep the density of the soil so that the soil is protected from erosion or landslides. These plants usually live in the watershed and slope of 40 degrees. *Raping* is very useful for human life, especially for Kolang ethnic in Manggarai. In general, the palm tree has a multi-purpose, among others, for house materials, such as *wunut* 'fibers'. *Wunut* is used for the roof of the house, especially the traditional house. From those words, a compound is created, that is *mbaru wunut* 'thatched roofed house', the same *wunut* is spun into *wase* 'rope' to tie *kaba* 'buffalo', *jarang* 'horse' and *kena* 'fence'. The leaves are used for the roof of the house, the young fruit is tapped as a source of raw materials for making *golamalang* 'sugar cube'. In short *raping* tree is very useful for humans.

This tree grows naturally. People cultivate it for years for the benefit of human beings. Currently *raping* tree is getting less in number. There are no slightest efforts to replant new trees to replace trees that have died though the trees reveal meanings, such as social, economic, and cultural meanings and multi-purpose for human life.

A number of studies have concluded these plants are multipurpose. Professor of Biology, University of Padjadjaran Bandung, Johan Iskandar (Kompas on Saturday 30 April 2011:16) states that palm trees are protector and balance the ecosystems and the countryside ecology. Its roots are very solid, deep, and spread out so it has an important function for

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preventing soil erosion. In addition, the roots also serve to store water, so that the palm tree can grow in arid areas. The *nira* 'juice' is used as an ingredient in traditional medicines, for example constipation, mouth sores, pneumonia, dysentery, and so on.

Reality shows that from the beginning until now no attempt of reforestation or replanting new trees to replace trees that have been destroyed and trees were cut for other purposes. In 1970-1971 Manggarai was stricken by starvation. Therefore, many raping trees are cut to take *owak* and *kuwang*, to be used as food. Since then, the population of raping has decreased until today. Symptoms of extinction of this tree, becomes a symptom of extinction of languages and cultures. From the perspective of ecolinguistics, raping population extinction symptoms brought the extinction of languages and cultures. It was a concern of ecolinguists and ecologist, and cultural linguists.

In addition to being a useful tree economically and culturally, *raping* is also beneficial to the stability of the soil on slopes and river banks, preventing erosion or landslides due to prolonged rain or *during* 'rain do not stop for seven days and seven nights'. Due to its great benefits, the tree should be preserved in order to preserve the ecosystem and ecology of the country side where the palms grow. If the trees grow and the population is increasing, then there is a harmonious relationship between man and the nature surroundings or environment. In other words, to keep the *raping* tree is just the same as preserving culture, including the language.

## 2.Problems

Based on the above background, some problems could be formulated including the followings,

- 2.1 How do the people of Kolang process the *raping* tree?
- 2.2 How is the form of raping expressions to express the speakers' environment?
- 2.3 What kinds of meaning are evoked in the raping expressions?

2.4 What are the functions of raping expressions in the dynamics of economic life of the speakers?

### **3. Aims**

The study is aimed at:

3.1 describing how the people of Kolang, Kuwus district, Manggarai Regency process the *raping tree*

3.2 explaining the form of raping expressions to reflect the speakers' environment

3.3 describing the kinds of meaning evoked in the raping expressions

3.4 explaining the functions of raping expressions in the dynamics of economic life of the speakers

### **4. Theoretical Framework and Research Method**

#### **4.1 Theoretical Framework**

Ecolinguistics is a subdiscipline of linguistics that is constructed from the collaboration of linguistic theory and ecology. And thus, the basic assumption of ecolinguistic theory refers to three parameters of ecolinguistics proposed by Haugen (1972), namely: diversity, interrelation, interdependence, and environment.

The Language diversity explains the internal relationship between the language diversity such as the lexicon *kerapingan* that creates interdependence lexical relation to produce the diversity of *kerapingan* that finally explains the environment of *kerapingan*.

Fill and Muhlhausler say that the description of linguistic theory must be started from the lexicon (words) which is an instrument recording the events of the physical and social environments. The diversity of vocabulary is due to the interaction of the one lexicon with other the lexicon bearing the diversity of meanings, ideas and ideologies. The lexical diversity also explains the diversity of both physical and social environment. Lexical process

is in fact a process of forming a new lexicon, in which interconnected and intertwined interdependence of new lexicon functions as a reflection of the natural environment, both biotic and abiotic.

In addition to a variety of lexicon there is also a variety of text and discourse about the environment, for example, the *raping* 'palm'. Raping is viewed as a tree representing a source of livelihood of people and a multipurpose tree. Therefore, the tree has a metaphor, discourse, tales. Those lingual forms serve to explain the relationship between humans and nature and the language and nature. In addition, the lingual forms have meaning, ideas, and ideology of the speakers of the ecological language. Haugen, 1972 (see Fill and Muhlhausler, 2001: 4) defined language ecology is a study on the interaction of the existing language with the environment. In this case the environment in question is the people who use a language as a code more important than a reference world.

## **4.2 Research Method**

### **4.2.1 Research Location**

The research location is Wetik a village located in the district of Kuwus, West Manggarai Regency. This place is one of the biggest *raping* tree cultivation in the Kuwus District.

## **4.2. Data and Data Source**

### **4.2.1 Data**

The data that have been collected in the course of a study could be classified into two types, namely oral and written data. The oral data were obtained through interviews. The oral data are the informants responses that were narrated in the form lexicon of *kerapingan*, statements relating to the *raping* tree processing, such as how to tap palm wine. Oral data is often called primary data. In addition to written data obtained through observation, observation notes, for example, a record of the time of processing, the materials for

processing, and the means used during the processing. Written data is often called secondary data. Thus, the type of research data is of two kinds, namely oral data as the primary data and written data as secondary data.

#### **4.2.2 Data Source**

The data source of this research includes two sources, ie data obtained from direct oral interviews with the community groups of Manggarai whose livelihood are dependent on rapping tree. *Tua golo* ‘village chief’ and *Tua Teno* or custom functionary. In addition, secondary data were obtained from the literature and documentation relating to ritual speech of Manggarai

### **4.3 Method and Technique of Collecting Data**

#### **4.3.1 Method of Collecting Data**

The method used in this study is a qualitative method. Within the framework of collecting data, two ways are used, namely interviews and observations. The first is the method of interview. Several questions relating to the cultivation of rapping, the terms of rapping, and plants and insects that depend on the rapping tree are prepared. The researcher then approached the groups who cultivate *rapping*, both in the field, in Kolang, Kuwus district, West Manggarai Regency as well as in Bali, who happened to come on holiday to Bali. The method of interview is also used to collect both cultural and lingual data. It is supported by recording and note taking techniques. Recording and note taking are done with the permission of interviewees (interviewee), in addition to collect data on current / time to undertake activity of rapping tree processing to produce a variety of products in addition to their understanding of the meaning of the lexicon, phrase, sentence, text, and discourse of *kerapingan* as a reference value Results of the interview are cross-checked against observational data.

The second is the method of observation or direct observation. The researcher takes part in it along with the people who manage the rapping. The researcher observed the direct

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processing of *raping* up to enjoy the products, such as palm wine or *mince* and sugar sweet or *gola malang*. The technique used in this data collection is participant observation. Garna (1999: 67) argues that participant observation is applied in a way that the researcher observes the social activities in which the researcher himself is a member, or consider himself as part of society that feel things as perceived by the groups.

Observation participation was implemented through the strategy, namely (1) passive participation, researcher did not interfere in the activity of processing (did not have a specific role, although he was present in the speech events); The main techniques of this method is recording technique. The process of making *gola* 'sugar' and *sopi* 'alcoholic beverages' presented by the speakers were recorded on cassette tape, then transcribed. Transcription is done in two languages; Manggarai and Indonesian languages, along with a wide range of information relating to nonverbal activities, for example: how to sit while tapping *nira*, gestures, and a variety of supporting devices to make *gola* 'sugar cube'.

#### **4.3.2 Technique of Collecting Data**

At the time of interview the researcher noted and recorded using a camera and handycamp. Note taking are often incomplete. Therefore, it is necessary to have a record from camera and handycamp. Recordings are played back and recorded accurately. This activity is referred to as transcribing the recorded data. Data transcript was compared with a record of the interview.

At the time of observation, the researcher and assistants observed and took notes on *raping* processing activities. The record result was revised repeatedly until no lost of information

#### **4.4 Data Analysis**

The data of Kerapingan lexicon that have been collected are grouped by coding in accordance with problems. It needs to be done as a form of identification to the forms,

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meanings, and functions of the lexicon, the relationship between the lexicons and the loss of raping species. The data have been grouped were analyzed by using qualitative methods. This method of analysis is based on naturalistic paradigm proposed by Garna (1999: 59). Accordingly, the interpretation of meaning must be based on the socio-cultural context of Manggarai ethnic communities, especially farmer groups that manage raping. Thus, this study is expected to provide a statement close to the natural conditions of Manggarai ethnic character.

#### **4.5 Method of Presentating the Result of Analysis**

Results of the analysis are presented with descriptive methods, in line with the use of qualitative methods in the analysis (see Satorit, et al, 2009: 199). Various forms, meanings, functions implied behind the lexicon of *kerapingan* are used by ethnic communities of Manggarai are described with regard to cultural values, especially to attitudes, outlooks, beliefs, and life principles of the society, taking also into account the cultural changes that occur due to changes of understanding of *raping*.

Method of presenting the results of such an analysis, according Sudaryanto (1993: 145) is referred to as an informal method. Meanwhile, Miles and Huberman (1992: 17; Ola, 2003) call the descriptive analysis method as a narrative text that is commonly used in qualitative research.

### **5. Discussion**

#### **5.1 Processing of *Raping***

As mentioned above, that raping is one of the crops that are cultivated by Kolang society. These plants grow naturally. The spread of the plant was conducted by animals, that is weasel. After bearing fruits, the plants are used by the community for various purposes, among others, the fibers are used for roofs, the leaf bud for offerings decoration or *langkar* in Manggarai language, the fruit stalks that are still easily sliced are use to produce *nira* or *mince* in Manggarai language.

Tuak plant or *raping* has a very important role in terms of environmental preservation due to the fact that the plant has distinctive properties, just as the roots are capable of storing water for long. Therefore, where there are raping trees there must be water under the plant. Besides, raping tree can hold the water so there is no erosion. Therefore, this plant is very suitable to be planted in the area of mountain slopes and in watersheds to prevent landslides.

In addition, *raping* plants can benefit human life, namely as a material for making houses, such as *wunut* that is used for the roof of the house, called *mbaru wunut*. traditional house roofs in particular, the young fruits are processed into wine and *mince* and further processed into *gola* 'sugar cube' and *sopi* 'alcoholic beverages'. The following discussion includes : (1) Describe the lexicon of *raping* as a reflection of the physical and social environment of Manggarai language speakers, particularly the Kolang dialect; (2) Explain the meaning, ideas and ideology contained in the lexicon of *kerapingan*; (3) Describe the function of lexicon in the dynamics of economic and cultural (language) developments; (4) Explain the relationship between the lose of raping population and the lose of raping lexicons

## 5.2 Expressions of *Kerapingan*

Empirically, palm or raping tree processing activities is cultural activities of Kolang ethnic. All activities were recorded verbally in the form of words, phrases, sentences, even in the form of discourse. Verbal forms are signs or symbols that describe the relation, interrelation, interdependence between Kolang ethnic community with the plant of raping

Lexicons of raping that reflect the physical and social environment of Manggarai speakers, Kolang dialect are:

First, verb: *Tuke* 'up', *tekang*, 'chisel', *pante* 'seduce', *irih*'cut', *tong* 'bucket', *caling* 'change', *landu* 'sing', *kokor* 'cook', *teneng* 'cook', *inung* 'drink'. The raping verbs describe a series of processing activities raping. The verbs illustrate well how important it is and illustrate the close relationship between Kolang community with the plant. Therefore they

must keep the tree well. Verbs are very familiar with the Kolang community. In line with what is stated by Sapair band. Fill, 2001: 2), words, or phrases reflect the physical and social environments of speakers.

Second, some adjectives describe the quality of processed products, such as beverages, sugar and fruit stems and raping fruits. The products are *mince* 'sweet nira', *metel*, *pait* 'bitter', *bakok* 'white'. Properties of plant are *cirang* stem 'hard', *ngoel* 'flabby', *harat* 'sharp', *miteng* 'black' *benge* 'fragrant'. Adjectives relating to the processing of raping describe the quality of processed products and the characteristics of plants and processed raping.

The third is a noun. The category includes two groups: a group of nouns and noun phrases. Groups of nouns: *raping* 'palm tree', *wunut* 'fibers', *ndara* 'fruits', *longko* 'fruit', *leka* 'midrib', *saung* 'leaf', *lombong* 'shoot'. Noun phrase: *saung leka* 'palm leaves', *lombong tuak* 'palm shoots', *gola malang* 'sugar cub' *loke gola* 'sugar cubes wrapping'; *tuak mince* 'sweet palm wine', *sopikolang* 'drink from kolang', *mbaru wunut* 'fibers house', *wase wunut* 'fiber rope', *ndara tewa* 'fruit stem ready to be processed'. Noun group in the *kerapingan* expressions describe parts of plants and products of plants concerned.

Thus, expression of *kerapingan* consists of some form of lexicons, the verb, adjective, noun, noun phrase. All these forms describe a series of activities of raping processing and the products. In addition, the lexicon of *kerapingan* describes the quality and nature of the plant and processed raping.

### **5. 3. Meanings evoked in the expression of *kerapingan*.**

As explained earlier, the expression of *kerapingan* describes the series of social and cultural activities of the Kolang community, Kuwus District, West Manggarai. Therefore, the expression of *kerapingan* in the form of lexicons have three types of meaning, namely social, cultural, environmental meanings.

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First, the social meaning of *kerapingan*. Lexicons relating to the processing of nira and utilization of the plant mostly describe the identity of Kolang tribe or community group of Kolang. For example *kokor gola* expression which means to cook sugar, Pante tuak 'tap raping'. Both of these expressions describe the habit of cooking sugar only done or done by Kolang community.

Second, cultural meaning in the expression of *kerapingan*. As explained earlier *kerapingan* expression is a form of cultural activities of Kolang society. For example the expression of Pante tuak 'to tap raping' describe all the habits of the people of Kolang to meet daily needs. The activity of tapping *raping* is a source of life and the results of that work is in the form of tuak, palm wine, consumed every day or consumed during certain ceremonies.

Third the expression of *kerapingan* has environmental significance. Verbs of *kerapingan* describe the close relationship of Kolang community with *raping* plants. At the time people (men) do *Pante tuak*, they have to sing so that the plant won't get hurt so that the plant keeps providing its nira smoothly. All lexicons of *kerapingan* mentioned above clearly depict a very harmonious relationship, mutually dependent relationship and the intensity of the interaction of humans and their environment.

Fourth, economic significance. *Kerapingan* expression embodied in lexicons explains activities of processing *nira* into sugar cubes, *mince*, *tuak*, and *sopi*. The products are consumed by the family and sold at high prices. The sale is in the form of money used to finance education, health, and other purposes in the family and society.

#### **5.4 Function of *Kerapingan* Expressions**

*Kerapingan* expressions that appear in the social and cultural events have a set of functions. First as a means of verbal communication in expressing the activity of a group of people to another group. In addition, as an information channel to interact within their own group or ethnic community.

Second, the phrases serve as an identity of the group or tribe, for example Kolang tribe. For example lexicons: *gola*, *gin*, *mice*, *kokor gola*, *Pante tuak*, all indicate that they belong Kolang ethnic.

The third function of the environment. *Kerapingan* expressions that have been described earlier explain interactions, relationships, interdependence between communities of Kolang with the environment, particularly with *raping* plant. For example, the phrase *mbaru Wunut* means house with fiber roof. Such houses are very durable, but flammable. It proves how the Kolang society is very dependent on the *raping* plant and there are still other examples that prove how Kolang community are associated with the plants.

The fourth function is economical. *Lexicon kokor gola* 'to cook sugar' dan *Teneng sopi* 'to make sopi' indicate the activities of making money. In addition those expressions show how big the profits the Kolang community could get from the business of *kokor gola* or *teneng sopi*.

## 6. Conclusion

*Kerapingan* culture is an activity of cultivating and processing *raping* that are useful for human life particularly for the Kolang tribe. *Kerapingan* culture is recorded verbally in the form of words, phrases, sentences and even discourse. This article only presents small part of *kerapingan* expressions in the form of lexicons, such as *mbaru wunut* 'fiber-roofed house'. In addition, the phrase of *kerapingan* has a meaning which includes social, cultural and economic significances.

It is suggested to the local government, in this case the departement of agriculture to program *raping* tree cultivation in the region of Kolang and other areas that could be planted with *raping* trees.

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