

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE ANALYSIS OF PALM TREE MYTH IN PEDAWA VILLAGE, BANJAR DISTRICT, BULELENG REGENCY

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ABSTRACT

Pedawa Village, located in Banjar District, Buleleng Regency, owns a myth about the palm tree growth in the village, which was told from one generation to another. The myth becomes guidelines for the villagers which is still applied at the present day. The purpose of the research is to break down the myth based on its narrative structure forms. To break down the myth the theory of narrative structure from Roland Barthes and Alan Dundes is used. Through the analysis process, it is revealed that this myth consisted of main function and catalytic function. Aside from that, the myth is also consisted of motifeme structure. The two breaking down processes proved that the myth fulfills the temporal and causality order.

Keywords: myth, Pedawa, palm tree, narrative, structure

INTRODUCTION

Pedawa Village is located in Banjar District, Buleleng Regency, Bali. Pedawa Village is one of four villages whose people adhere to the Bali Aga or Bali Mula beliefs, the initial beliefs of the Balinese people before the arrival of Hindu beliefs from India which spread across the archipelago. The four villages are Sidatapa Village, Cempaga Village, Tigawasa Village, and Pedawa Village. The locations of these four villages are close together in Banjar District with geographical landscape consisting of mountains and hills.

The people of Pedawa Village rely on the agrarian sector products such as cloves, coffee and palm sugar. Aren, or “*jaka*” in Balinese terms, is a commodity that reflects the identity of Pedawa Village produced on a home industrial scale. The basic ingredient of Pedawa palm sugar is produced from *nira* (palm tree sap), cooked using traditional methods. *Nira* is cooked on the stove until it becomes a thick liquid sugar. This sugar liquid is then cooled in a half ball shaped mold made of coconut shell until it hardens and becomes sugar, ready to be marketed and consumed. In general, this type of sugar is known as palm sugar or brown sugar. In Bali, palm sugar is also known as *gula jaka* after the name of the tree.

The myth of the palm tree’s growth in Pedawa is a part of socio-cultural activities, which further affect the village’s economic growth. The myth palm tree’s growth in Pedawa originates from a misunderstanding between the natives of the area now known as Pedawa and a trader from Java. The Javanese trader offered palm tree seeds that can be used for various purposes. The natives were interested and ordered *bluluk* fruit (palm fruit seeds) to be delivered the next time the trader visit. The trader thought they ordered in large quantities while the locals actually only wanted to order one seed to for themselves to cultivate. Hence there was a misunderstanding about the amount the natives bought. The trader was very disappointed since he brought so many seeds with him. He found an area in the village and threw all his palm tree seeds in anger. He also made a *pastu* (curse) that the palm tree would grow as a wild tree (unwanted weed), growing wildly without being able to be controlled let

alone exterminated. It is because of the curse that the palm trees can grow freely in Pedawa without much care from the farmers.

The myth of the palm tree above is in the form of narrative folk prose. The motive in the story of the growth of the palm tree in Pedawa Village will be explored further. The motives in question are the elements of a narrative story (Dananjaja, 1991: 53). As mentioned, the motive in a text story refers to the elements of the story that are prominent or unusual. These elements can be in the form of objects, concepts of prohibition or taboo, fraud, extraordinary animals, to certain structures such as sacred numbers. So, associated with the story about the growth of palm trees in Pedawa Village, it is suspected that there are several motives that can be obtained through the analysis of the narrative structure of the prose story.

Native oral literature is often found in various forms. According to Danandjaja (1991: 21), oral literature can be in the form of folk language, traditional expressions and riddles, folk poetry, and folk prose stories. In short, regional oral literature such as the myth of the palm tree in Pedawa Village takes the form of narrative prose. Furthermore, the study of narrative prose structure in oral literature also examines the units or elements that make up the entire myth. In an analysis of narrative structure, the researcher examines whether the narrative is just a set of words or whether a narrative has a structure or pattern so that it can be formulated (Barthes, 2010: 80). In this case, narrative structure refers to certain rules and units.

The structure of the narrative influences the function of the literature text. In other words, an analysis of the form or structure of a discourse does not stop at the division of units, but also examines the function of each of these units. So, it can be inferred that each unit is functional (Barthes, 2010). Narrative structures have a communicative function which is to be conveyed to the public and carried out in accordance with the situation of the people who own the literature. In this case, what needs to be answered in this study is whether each unit has a function or whether the entire units are grouped based on its function.

Myths are different from other oral literature or folk prose stories, such as legends or folk tales. William Bascom (in Dundes, 1984: 5) describes the differences between the three types of narrative prose based on the timing. The event of folklore can happen at any time, or outside the normal time standard, which is characterized by the phrase marker *once upon a time* which does not specifically refer to a particular era. Meanwhile, myths take place before, until, or right at the creation of the world and other natural phenomena. Lastly, legends refer to stories that took place after the world was created. Because the time setting takes place after the creation process (which is still ongoing today), legends sometimes don't necessarily have a definite ending for the characters.

Furthermore, Bascom also defines folklore as fictional narrative prose. Folklore has no dogma or traces of history, may or may not have occurred, and is not taken seriously. Meanwhile, a legend is a narrative prose that is believed to have really happened by speakers and listeners, but takes place in a time setting that is close to the current era. Myth, on the one hand, is a form of narrative prose that is believed to have truth in the community who owns it, which happened in the past. Myths are told with the aim of being believed, have dogma, are sacred, and associated with certain rituals.

On the other hand, Danandjaja (1991: 50) explains that the division of folk prose stories based on the categories explained above is only an ideal type. In fact, these oral stories have more characterization from one type of prose, making it difficult to decide a story to fit only to one category. For this reason, a folk tale is determined by its type based on consideration of which category's characteristics are more dominant.

The concept of myth slowly began to shift as the time flows. Myths are basically used to convey a moral message, but as the time flows, the values of myths can be replaced by rational science-technology values (Yunis, 2010: 26). On the other hand, myth is known as an emotional bond between society and its environment, providing opportunities and choices for the community. That means the moral message contained in myth is something that is not forced into daily life, but still offers a wisdom and ethics so that each individual can control his attitude.

Each narrative unit in the story is also called a sequence (Barthes, 2010:94). Each of these sequences can consist of a number of motives or units of meaning, whereas in the study of fiction, each story unit is given certain symbols or notations. Barthes classifies story units into two functions, namely the main function and the catalytic function. The main function in the story has a role to determine the storyline or plot, while the catalyst acts as a link between the main functions. In other words, the main functions fill the story space as a whole, then the gaps between them are filled by the catalytic function.

The sorting of story units may be done based on temporal order or logical order, or it can also be referred to as chronological order. Meanwhile, story units may also be sorted based on causality. Both types of sequence of story units can be found in a fictional text. According to Forster (in Nurgiyantoro, 2012: 47), the causality sequence plays a role in forming the plot, while the temporal sequence forms the story. Outside of fictional texts or stories, pure chronological or temporal elements exist in diary texts, while pure causality can be found in argumentative texts.

A paper worth to mention in accordance to this research was a paper which analyzes another Balinese myth in terms of its narrative structure. The paper entitled *Teks Naratif dari Mitos Keris Ki Gajah dalam Tradisi Ngrebeg* written by Anak Agung Ayu Meitridwiasiti in 2018 analyzes its intrinsic structure of the myth owned by the people in Tabanan Regency. The paper, however, analyzes a myth that is already written in traditional *lontar*. The paper also only analyzes the structure based on its intrinsic structure, accompanied with literature convention, namely geanologic and mythologic convention (Meitridwiasiti, 2018). On the other hand, this research is based on oral literature, which would explain why the writer is focusing on its form structure after the myth is transcribed into narrative text.

Meanwhile, the causality sequence model was introduced by Dundes (in Danandjaja, 1991) through a structural analysis method. This model can be used to prove that folk prose stories have structure and are not messy. This model can consist of two motives (sequences), four motives, up to six motives. These motives can be sorted by the formula: *Lack (L)*, *Lack linguinate (LL)*, *Interdiction (Int)*, *Violation (Viol)*, *Consequence (Conseq)*, and *Attempted Escape (AE)*.

METHODS

The design of the research model used in this study is a qualitative research model to reveal a phenomenon in descriptive form. The data in this study consisted of primary data and secondary data. The primary data in this study is the oral data on the mythical story of the Pedawa palm tree told by an informant. This data is also supported by interviews with other informants. Another source of data is observing the process of harvesting palm sap until it is processed into palm sugar, which contains various rituals and traditions for palm producers throughout the process. Meanwhile, secondary data comes from a literature review that has a connection with the traditions and myths of the aren tree in Pedawa Village.

The data source is an individual who later becomes an informant, so that the informant is someone who is a community leader who is able to provide the information needed in this study. Purposive sampling technique was used to select a number of informants based on certain considerations, in this case, based on the informants' knowledge and expertise in providing information. Based on these considerations, the prospective informants to provide information are the people who work as farmers and palm sugar producers in Pedawa Village.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Chronologically, the myth of palm tree in Pedawa is divided into several parts, as follows:

The story begins with the arrival of a Javanese trader who promoted a tree from his origin. The tree was said to have a lot of uses and function.

- 1) *Asal mula jaka di Pedawa, ade dagang uli Jawe, Ia ngaba a biji bluluk, tarianga kene, "Ne blulukene yen ba jadi, rone dadi anggon, kulitne dadi anggon, basangne dadi anggon sago, dukne masi dadi anggon. Tapi de ngadep tuak. Gula ane kapatutan ane dadi adep."*

Translation:

The origin of palm tree in Pedawa, there was once a trader from Java. He brought a fruit seed of the palm tree, while saying, "This seed, if it grows, the leaves can be used, the skin can be used, the trunk can be processed into sago. But do not sell the sap as wine. It is the sugar you should sell."

- 2) *Ane uli dini nepukin dagang uli Jawane ento matempah ia bluluk.*

Translation:

The villagers who saw the trader then ordered the seed.

- 3) *A kalesan, liwat seratus biji ia misi, ane besik totonan maaji aji a talen. "Nah abaang be dini a pondong, ka beli besik aji a talen."*

Translation:

One branch, consisted of a hundred seed, one that priced for one *talen* (25 cents). "Well then bring them as many as one quintal, and shall I buy one for 25 cents.

- 4) *Makelo-kele to ane uli Jawe totonan teka ye ngaba bluluk a pondong jaran ia ngaba. "I raga nak meli tu a besik. Adi a pondong ngaba, meli tu a besik."*

Translation:

Over time, the Javanese trader came back bringing one quintal of seeds, that he brought on a horse. The villagers were confused, “I just want to buy one seed, why did you bring a quintal, when I just want to buy one?”

- 5) *“Nah yen keto beli be a besik ne, karene kal ka kutang, kualo cai ka pastu ne,” keto kone dagange ento. “Dini di Pedawa kabrarakan pang mentik di Pedawa pang linggahange. Pidan masi tuak jak gulane adep, sing dadi ngadep tuak. Yen adep tuake, kajemak buin tuake,” keto sabdane ane medagang bluluke to.*

“Well then, you can buy this one, and I will throw the rest, but I shall curse you,” said the trader. “Here in Pedawa I scatter the seeds, and shall they grow here so the village will be full of them. Whenever the sap and sugar are ready, you may not sell the sap as wine. Shall you do it, I will take back the sap,” shouted the trader, cursing the village.

- 6) *Sangkal jani turun temurun ento lantas jani, sajaan to yen ngadep tuak, satu lumur to ngadep tuak, ane di jakane sing bisa ngiris.*

Translation:

Therefore at present day, after many generations, the curse happens to be true. If one sell the sap as wine, even for just one glass, the sap in the tree will dry, hence unable the farmer to harvest it.

In dividing the story structure based on each of their function by Roland Barthes, the six points written above can be categorized as the main function. These six points are the main story which forms the core or basis of the myth, and are agreed upon by various versions of the story which were told orally. From the various versions of storytelling by the informants, there are several things that are not in the main function of this myth. These parts of the story are not the core of the story, but are spoken by the speakers in their own style of storytelling. This catalytic parts remains functional, but its function is limited to maintaining the correlation between the main functions. Therefore, the catalytic function is weak, unilateral, and cannot stand alone (Barthes, 2010: 95). In other words, the catalytic function fills in the gaps between the main functions.

The existence of the catalytic function itself, as can be found in the myth of the palm tree, may arise because there are differences in the style of speech by the speakers from Pedawa Village. In the series of stories above, the events or sequences of the story are connected by a bridge between one sequence to the next by several markers which are then referred to as catalysts. In other words, this catalyst serves as a binder for the narrative unit, as explained below:

- a. Place Markers

The origin of palm tree in Pedawa, there was once a trader from Java.

“Here in Pedawa I scatter the seeds, and shall they grow here so the village will be full of them.”

From the quotations above, it can be seen that the sentence refers specifically to the location where the myth occurred and the place of origin of the characters. Although this placemark does not interfere with the plot or context of the occurrence of the mythical palm tree, the mention of this place has the importance of confirming that

the location of this mythical event is believed by the local community and does not happen anywhere else.

b. Time Marker

Over time, the Javanese trader came back bringing one quintal of seeds, that he brought on a horse.

Therefore at present day, after many generations, the curse happens to be true.

In the first quotation, the timing of 'over time' does not exactly indicate the interval between the fourth and fifth sequences, but still has an important role to bridge the fourth main sequence to the next sequence. The time gap in the quote allows a logic in the story that after some time has passed, the villagers who originally ordered one quintal seeds changed their minds to buy just one seed in the hope of cultivating their own sugar palm plants. This time marker also serves to indicate the temporal sequence of the story.

Meanwhile, the second quotation shows the present time, which serves as a marker that the merchant's curse still has an effect that is believed by the people to this day. In other words, it shows a cause-effect relationship between the myth and the tradition done by the people of Pedawa Village in the present day.

c. Characters Introduction

The origin of palm tree in Pedawa, there was once a trader from Java.

The villagers who saw the trader then ordered the seed.

The introduction of the story characters in both quotations does not specifically mention the names of the characters, but these introductions have the function of explaining clearly that there are two parties involved and conflicted in this story. One of the two characters, namely the trader, has an important role, namely as a carrier of a new plant and culture with the seeds he carries. This makes the merchant character a cultural hero, the character who brings new culture in myths generally found in Indonesia (Danandjaja, 1991: 52).

d. Story Continuation

Therefore at present day, after many generations, the curse happens to be true.

This story uses very little of story continuation sign, such as 'then', 'after that', etc. like other storytelling. However, the 'therefore' remark above shows a sign of causality which affects the daily life of Pedawa people in the present day, as well as being the closure of the story.

In a structural analysis of a folktale, apart from being broken down as a sequence to divide the story plot, the story can also be divided into parts known as motifeme. The division of stories into the motifeme system was originally used by Alan Dundes to prove that the stories of Indian tribes in America have structure and are not random (Danandjaja, 1991: 93). These stories can be divided into four motifeme or six motifeme. In the four motifeme structure, each motifeme has a role, in which the story begins with an interdiction, followed by violation, consequence, and attempted escape.

Meanwhile, in the six motifeme system, the story series has a role with the formula: lack, lack liquidated, interdiction, violation, consequence, and attempted escape. This system can be abbreviated by the formulas (*L*), (*LL*), (*Int*), (*Viol*), (*Conseq*), and (*AE*). In the

case of the myth of the growth of palm trees in Pedawa Village, the series of stories can be divided into these six motifemes, with the following description:

Table 1. Six motifemes of palm tree myth

Motifeme	Palm Tree Myth in Pedawa Village
<i>Lack</i>	A trader wanted to sell a palm seed.
<i>Lack liquidated</i>	The villager ordered a seed of palm tree.
<i>Interdiction</i>	The trader was told to bring a load of seeds the next time he came to the village.
<i>Violation</i>	The villagers apparently just wanted to buy one seed only.
<i>Consequence</i>	The trader cursed the village so that the area will be full of palm tree and the sap can be dry sometimes.
<i>Attempted escape</i>	The villagers made full uses of the palm tree and proceed to follow the prohibition so they do not fail to harvest the sap.

From the table above, it can be concluded that the myth the palm tree growth in Pedawa Village fulfills the temporal sequence as a narrative story as well as it fulfills the causality sequence. The later can be seen in the contradictions of the villagers who initially ordered a lot of seeds but then only bought one. This is what causes traders to be disappointed and curse the village area so that the palm trees grow and fill the area of Pedawa Village where the palm seeds were thrown. In other words, the trader's disappointment was not based on an empty wishful thinking that the villagers would buy a lot of seeds, but because it was the villagers who might have changed their minds in the interval before the trader returned to the Pedawa area, resulting in a loss and disappointment for the trader. The explanation in this myth proves that the order of causality cannot only be found in argumentative texts, but can also be found in narrative discourse to explain a phenomenon.

In addition, the motifeme (*AE*) where the people of Pedawa Village then tried to make uses of the palm trees that grow in the area reflected the guilt feeling of the Pedawa villagers. The motive (*AE*) itself, as an attempt to reverse the consequences (*Conseq*), is limited with the possibility of success or failure (Danandjaja, 1991: 93). In the case of the mythical palm tree of Pedawa Village, this effort yields both results, namely success if the farmers adhere to the taboos so that the sap becomes plenty, and fail if the farmers violate the taboos so the sap becomes dry, hence the failure. This myth has become a direct guide for present day farmers to always be careful of their actions and become material for self-reflection by reflecting on the experiences of their ancestors.

CONCLUSION

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the myth of the palm tree growth in Pedawa consisted both of main function and catalytic function. The catalytic function consisted of place markers, time markers, characters introduction, and story continuation. Aside from that, the narrative structure of this myth can be divided into six motifemes, which allow the writer to conclude that the myth not only occurs in chronological order, but it also occurs in causality order, since it has the cause-effect elements from the

conflict of the story. By breaking down this myths into several parts, it allows the researcher to see the discourse implied by the myth. To present day, the curse casted by the trader developed a new culture for the Pedawa villagers, and since then it becomes a guidance for the farmers in behaving themselves.

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