

## ETHNOGRAPHY OF COMMUNICATION: THE ANALYSIS OF DELL HYMES'S SPEAKING IN BALINESE WEDDING PROPOSAL

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### ABSTRACT

*The present study conducted a qualitative descriptive method regarding ethnography of communication to analyze a Balinese wedding ceremony of a Balinese couple using Dell Hymes's SPEAKING mnemonic. The research resulted that there was a relationship between speech event regarding Balinese wedding proposal and Dell Hymes' SPEAKING mnemonic. The results showed that Balinese wedding proposal of a Balinese couple was held in Bale Dangin (setting) and people sat in a semicircular including father, mother, sibling, and also some close relatives such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, and so on (participants) to make an agreement to hold a wedding ceremony (ends). The sequenced of the proposal was started by proposee's spokesman who delivered the opening then it was continued by the proposer's spokesman (act of sequence). They were all in serious situation (key) by the use of code-mixing in delivering the speech (instrumentalities) to ensure about their commitment to live together (norms of interaction and interpretation). The genre was proposal which showed serious claim of reasoning of an action.*

**Keywords:** *ethnography of communication; Dell Hymes's SPEAKING; Balinese; wedding proposal*

### INTRODUCTION

People were naturally born as a part of social beings in their social environments which encourage them to join or get involve into social activities (Morgan, 2015). In doing

their social activities, certain tool is required to help them communicate. In order to understand each other, language and communication become means of communication and tools of thinking in

which humans understood of and evaluate social life based on their specific and local beliefs regarding what exists and values as the way on how behavior should be done. (Carbaugh and Boromisza-Habashi, 2015). Here, language is used as a part of communication. Moreover, Language can be in forms of spoken or written as well as verbal or non-verbal language. When communicating, people will mostly use their own native language to easily communicate with others since first language that they have are known well. Siregar et al. (2018) claims that there will be no society using no language referring to a close relation between language and society. In short, when people involve in social activities, communication cannot be refused and the existence of language is helpful in interaction. Thus, Communication occurs when people start to interact with other and share their ideas. In addition, communication is theoretically a way of sharing knowledge or point of views and of maintaining social relationship

(Matei, 2009). Petrova (2016) argued that, our language reflects our culture, psyche and mode of thought.

There are a lot of components in communication that may influence the effectiveness of communication itself. It means that being to speak any language correctly, people should not only consider the use of grammar and vocabulary, but the context where the language used is also of significance. Since communication requires language and interaction, learning a language is also of importance in which people also should consider learning the culture. This is in accordance with Dell Hymes (1972) who proposed a framework that there is no one-size-fits-all for communication. People are communicating in a different way and the idea of communication is also changeable. Therefore, Dell Hymes (1972) introduced the mnemonic of SPEAKING in which those include setting and scene (S), participants (P), ends (E), act sequence (A), key (K), instrumentalities (I), norms of interaction and

interpretation (N), and genre (G). The eight components are culturally dependent and it could be used to navigate cross-cultural communication as well as facilitate an individual's speaking ability to speak up in any social situation. By understanding SPEAKING, people are able to tackle any communication situation and speech act in which they are also more effective in communication.

Communicative situation is the context in which communication happens. The examples including a religious service, a court trial, a holiday party, an auction, a wedding ceremonial, a train ride, or a class in school. Furthermore, every aspect of communication influenced by cultural differences which upon on individual cultures, or communities, on whose who are interested in studying ethnography (Goman, 2011). The situation could be changed based on the situation and location where it happens. The situation may still persist to be the same even with a change of location, and

may change in the similar location if contrastive activities are conducted there at different times. Moreover, in some cases, communication could be influenced by events, situation, and act, the context of communication occurs could be straightly different. In Balinese, communication commonly based on situation and event, or act. It's considered in the use of *Anggah-ungguh* or known by *Sor Singgih* in communication or communication politeness. In line with the statement, Suandari (2012), Suparma (2012), and Suwija (2017) proposed the existence of *anggah-ungguh* in Balinese Language in which explain about the use of *Anggah-Ungguh kruna* (level-word) in Balinese communication in which the existence of *Anggah-Ungguh* is of importance to be maintained as cultural means of Bali. In addition, in language use, control of emotion also assumed to be a wise attitude for Balinese in communication (Hadisaputra & Adnyani, 2012).

Ethnography is an approach of studying language and the social interaction (Carbaugh & Boromisza-Habashi, 2015). Culture and linguistic anthropology become the central of a whole in ethnography (Bonvillain, 2016). Ethnography is part of linguistics anthropology as they are endlessly interacting in a fieldwork (Howell, 2017). In ethnographic research, observation towards the data is done directly into the field and it emphasizes a more active role including several cognitive modes, such as observing, watching, seeing, looking at, and scrutinizing (Gobo & Marciniak, 2011). Further, interviews and surveys are also considered as essential data in the ethnographic research as it is conducted through listening and asking several questions to obtain conversations of the participants involved in the research (.ibid). In ethnography research, two or more data sources are triangulated either simultaneously or in iterative sequences. For example, a period of document analysis and participant observations may be followed

along with some interviews and some more observations. During unstructured interviews, the interviewer tends to maintain the conversation focused on a topic meanwhile, giving the time for the respondent to explain the main of the discussion (Bernard, 2011). Therefore, ethnographic data are able to cover a broad ontological range from data which are classified into hard and objective documents to data which are classified soft and subjective memories and experiences (Pool, 2017).

Previously, there were several research related to the topic of Dell Hymes' SPEAKING which were conducted. The first previous study was conducted by Ray and Biswas (2011), the analysis of this research dealt with examining the cultural and social sediment which influenced the communication of 15 participants, and analyzed by reflecting towards Hymes' SPEAKING Model. The research found that, every statements of the studied conversation

were delightful and bright. Moreover, indicates that social status as well as occupational status influenced by the language or mode of speaking, and variability of communication or perceptibility of communication was depended on those social or cultural traits. Another research has been done by Umeziwa (2017), her study was intended to prove that there is viability of Dell Hymes' S.P.E.A.K.I.N.G model in the analysis of natural and natural discourse which also presented in actual speech event. Her research found that some aspects of communication have not been captured in Hymes' theory, in which, for instance facial response, gesture, moves, and non-linguistics but meaningful signs.

Previous studies proposed that Hymes' SPEAKING model could be used to analyze flow of communication in a meeting conversation involving homogeneous interactive persons; however, in second previous study contradict with Hymes'

SPEAKING norms conception which some aspects are not in coverage of Hymes' SPEAKING norms conception that was found in an actual speech event. According to background of the study, the present research was quite different from that two previous research which was intended to examine an ethnography of communication research regarding Hymes' SPEAKING mnemonic. Furthermore, the setting was conducted in a Balinese wedding proposal as there was no studies found which were focusing on ethnography research towards a Balinese wedding proposal. Therefore, the present research formulated the research question: how are SPEAKING norms applied by both spokesmen of proposer and proposee in Balinese wedding proposal? The research objective focused on describing SPEAKING norms which were applied by both spokesmen of proposer and proposee during Balinese wedding proposal in order to examine the emergence of cultural different understanding between proposer and proposee

in Balinese wedding since the events, situation, and act, the context of communication, influence the flow of communication in certain situation especially in Balinese wedding proposal.

### RESEARCH METHOD

The study employed a qualitative descriptive method referring the purpose of the study which focused on describing SPEAKING norms applied by both spokesmen of proposee and proposer in Balinese wedding proposal. Therefore, the present study focused on ethnography of communication.

Ethnography discusses about interactions among people as the research attempts to understand the way people study, see, and define their world; furthermore, ethnography also relates to the idea of holism, cultures, and tackles the whole (Nader, 2011). Since, the study concerned on ethnography, the present study conducted a theory from Dell Hymes (1972) who introduced SPEAKING theory as a reference

in ethnography of communication. An ethnography of communicative event is a description of all relevant factors in order to understand how the objectives of a particular communicative event are achieved. Hymes employs the word SPEAKING as an abbreviation for all factors that he considers to be relevant in which there are 6 units of communication considerations of a particular society culture, such as speech community, speech situation, speech event, communicative act, communicative style, and ways of speaking. In this paper, the discussion will focus on analysis of Dell Hymes's SPEAKING in Balinese wedding proposal.

There are several procedures which were conducted by the present researchers in order to obtain the data. Finding an appropriate data related to the research which was going to be conducted is the first essential procedure. Since the research concerned on a wedding proposal of Balinese family, the wedding of a Balinese couple was

decided as the location and the proposal day were suitable for the researcher. Further, the data were collected by being participated in the event while observing the event which had relation to the problems had been arranged. Taking field notes is the next step of gaining data as the researchers were able to keep crucial information from the observation. In addition, ethnographic data can be in various forms, such as hard data and soft data in which the hard data includes verbatim transcripts of interviews while the soft data includes physical artefacts like photographs or lists; furthermore, it also includes memories and impressions of the ethnographer (Pool, 2017).

The data obtained were then analyzed in ethnographic research by firstly translating the data into a transcription in which it was done by translating videotaped records of observations into written form. When translating the data, the researchers integrated the transcripts with the field notes, including observations of and reflections

about the participants, the setting, and so on in order to reduce many specific observations into categories referring to the use of Dell Hymes's SPEAKING mnemonic involving setting and scene (S), participants (P), ends (E), act sequence (A), key (K), instrumentalities (I), norms of interaction and interpretation (N), and genre (G). This process is notable as coding the data.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the present research, Balinese wedding proposal from a Balinese couple was presented in term of Dell Hymes's SPEAKING mnemonic involving Setting and Scene (S), participants (P), ends (E), act sequence (A), key (K), instrumentalities (I), norms of interaction and interpretation (N), and genre (G). The first Dell Hymes's mnemonic was setting and scene (S) in which the wedding proposal took place in a wide area without any chairs and tables and they all sat in a semicircular. They took place in *bale dangin* (open area located in the east of

Balinese's house Balinese pattern house).

The day of Balinese proposal is chosen according to *dewasa ayu* decided and believed by the elders or clergymen as a good day or an appropriate day in Balinese's calendar to a ceremony. The scenes are generally between semi-formal and casual, sometimes, at first, it was started from a very serious situation changed into joyful and sad.

The participants (P) of Balinese wedding proposal from the wedding of a Balinese couple involved the proposer or the groom (the man) and the proposee or the bride (the woman), both of their parents, some close relatives (grandparents, uncles, aunts, etc.) and also the spokesmen.

The ends (E) referred to matrimony as the wedding proposal of Balinese had goal to hold a wedding ceremony.

The act sequence (A) was showed from the proposer's spokesmen who delivered an opening as well as the proposee's spokesmen also delivered the opening. Systematic statements or questions

to the parents and both proposer and proposee were done and ended with an agreement for the next wedding schedule (when the proposer came, and after ceremony would take the proposee to his house). Then, proposer's spokesmen delivered closing and conducting ring exchanges by both proposee and proposer.

The Key (K) from the Balinese wedding proposal showed serious, semi-formal, committed, and tense situation.

The instrumentalities (I) involved oral speech (in Balinese language), using Balinese greeting, some code-mixing between Balinese and Indonesian, body gesture including eye-contact of the proposer and proposee. The dialect from the families, both the proposee) and the proposer, came from Badung.

Norm of interaction and interpretation (N) in Balinese proposal were accepted as a serious commitment. The interaction was done alternately and every argument led to give advice; furthermore, it



caused strong emotion in both participant. At the end of the process, the proposer and proposee were exchanging wedding ring.

The Genre (G) of the wedding proposal was absolutely a proposal.

Dell Hymes's SPEAKING could be also clearly seen from several lines of conversation between the proposer's and proposee's spokesmen during the wedding proposal supported the analysis of abovementioned findings. In the beginning of the wedding proposal, the proposee's spokesman delivered the opening by saying:

*"Om Swastiastu. Duwaning niki sampun galah acara jagi kawitin tityang, aturan tityang mebaos nggih."* (Om Swastiastu. It is the time to begin the ceremony. Please proceed.)

The proposer's spokesman also systematically answered by delivering the opening by saying:

*"Sedurung tityang ngaturang amatra, ngiring dumun nunas kerahayuan ring Ida Sang Hyang Parama Kawi*

*saduluran maturin Om Swastiastu."* (Before I deliver my intension, let us pray to the Almighty God.)

From the conversation above, the emergence of opening remarks from both proposer's and proposee's spokesmen showed the instrumentalities (I) from Dell Hymes's SPEAKING mnemonic in which the sequence of the conversation was started by Balinese greeting as well as gratitude to the Almighty God showed that the wedding proposal was conducted in oral speech.

Furthermore, the wedding proposal was continued by the proposer's spokesman stating main intention of their advent:

*"Dadosne tityang sepengrauhne irika wantah kusumaya jadi nunas, ngerereh anak alit'e iriki, jagi rorodan tityang jatuh karman tityang sareng tityang medue, jagi jangkepan tityang mealaki rabi asapunika."* (My intention is sincerely begging to propose a girl here. My nephew, I will unite as a husband and wife.)

The proposee's spokesman then answered by also stating main intention of the wedding proposal:

*"Tityang medua cucu sampun mejanten pada cinta, tityang ten malih manjangan irika. Dumadak wenten petemonipun mepekuren manda ngerahun kepengelekas."* (My grandchild has fallen in love for each other, I will not argue about that anymore. I wish there is fate for them to be husband and wife that hopefully leads to better change.)

Both the proposer's and the proposee's spokesman discussed about the sequence of the wedding as they had agree to hold the wedding ceremony.

*"Sakewanten, ngelantur niki tityang matur saking penglingsir saking ring margi, disampunan mangkin ajak tityang ngaleran i putu ngelorodan tityang, disampune ipun ring kaler wantah mebiye kaon dumun. punapi asapunika? mangdaning ipun makekalih pang preside ipun kemargiin ngalih nape pengupa jiwa."* (However, I beg

to the elders to take Putu to the north for wedding ceremony, after she gets there, mebiye kaon will be held at first to efficiently organize the time for them to continuously work, won't we?)

*"Yening cingakin tityang ampun siap ring tetujon nak alit jagi muputan ring sekala niskala kenten malih 6 rahina, tanggal 5 dadosne nggih."* (I see that the purpose wants to finish in both sekala niskala in 6 days, specifically in 5th date.)

From those conversation, it showed the emergence of Dell Hymes's SPEAKING specifically the act sequence (A) and the ends (E) in which the conversation showed the act of purposing as the ends referred to the purpose of the wedding proposal was achieved by conducting a wedding ceremony.

At the end, both spokesmen delivered a closing which was started from the proposer's spokesman said:

*"Nggih yening sekadi asapunika. Nah ampurayang yening wenten iwang tiang*

*sekadi napi sane orahang tiang, tiang nunas geng rena sinampura. Om Shantih, Shantih, Shantih, Om.*” (That’s all. I’m sorry if there is any mistakes for what I have stated. I’m truly sorry. Om Shantih, Shantih, Shantih, Om.)

While the spokesman of the proposee answered by saying:

“Kanggeang puputang dauh driki nggih. Om Shantih, Shantih, Shantih, Om.” (I think it is enough for now. Om Shantih, Shantih, Shantih, Om.)

According to the abovementioned Dell Hymes’s SPEAKING as well as several conversation of the spokesmen from the wedding proposal, it could be generalized that there were at least 6 topics which were being discussed during Balinese wedding proposal in which it was consisted of both the proposee’s and the proposee’s spokesman delivered the opening, stated main intention, discussed about the sequence of the wedding, and delivered a closing.

Dell Hymes introduced the mnemonic of SPEAKING involved setting and scene (S), participants (P), ends (E), act sequence (A), key (K), instrumentalities (I), norms of interaction and interpretation (N), and genre (G).

The setting (S) refers to the time and place regarding the concrete physical circumstances in which speech takes place. Meanwhile, scene refers to the abstract psychological setting, or the cultural definition of the occasion based on the participants as they are able to change the level of formality or kind of activity they are involved.

According to the wedding proposal of a Balinese couple, the day of Balinese wedding proposal was decided by the two families as they asked the elders and clergymen to decide *dewasa ayu* known as a good day to hold a ceremony in Balinese’s belief. In Balinese wedding, mostly good days was carefully decided as they believed

that a good day would bring joyful and blessing for those who held the ceremony.

As the day was decided, the proposer as well as his family come to the proposee's house since the wedding proposal was held in the proposee's house. In Balinese wedding, it was a pride for the the proposee when she was treated in such a way. This was also intended to show that the proposer, in this case, had strong willingness to have a marital commitment. Therefore, the proposer should come to the proposee's house to propose her.

The proposer's family prepared an open space to hold the ceremony as all of the families and close relatives of both families could sit together without any chairs and tables. It had intention to show the equality among the family as well as build the relationship to unite different families since the wedding proposal involved not only the proposee and the proposer but also all of their families and the relatives. Further, they sat in semicircular as it was purposed to both of the

families to be able to easily communicate and also introduce the proposer's relatives to the proposee. It also showed the equality in the process of the marriage proposal as both of the families could take similar part and responsibility to the ceremony.

The wedding proposal was a semi-formal scene. At the first of the meeting, the event went seriously as they introduced themselves respectively and explained the purpose of their advent. When both of the families had an agreement, the scene changed into both happy and sad in the same time.

The participants (P) can be in many various combinations, such as: speaker and listener, addressor and addressee, or sender and receiver who own certain specified roles in social life. In the Balinese wedding proposal setting, the participants included speakers and listeners. Both families who attended the ceremony were father, mother, sibling, and also some close relatives such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, and so on.

People who sat in the first semicircular were commonly those who involved in the procession of the marriage involved the elders and then followed by the relatives. There were also two spokesmen who act as the media between the proposer's and the proposee's family to meet an agreement regarding the wedding proposal. The spokesperson was usually a man who usually had a lot of experience in dealing with customary events. Commonly, the spokesmen were chosen from the eldest in the family, but sometimes, it also could be a clergymen or chief of the village.

The ends (E) refers to outcomes which is recognized and expected from an exchange; furthermore, it also refers to personal goals that participants seek to complete on particular occasions. This end also happens in a marriage ceremony which expects a certain social end, at the same time, each participants of the ceremony may own his or her own unique goals in getting married. Generally, in Balinese wedding

proposal, as it is purposed to have an agreement to hold a wedding ceremony for both the proposer and the proposee, the ends refer to the notion of matrimony. Further, the end actually referred to have commitment between the two families specifically between the proposer and the proposee in which they would like to confirm that this phase would be continued to the next marriage proposal and finally to the marriage itself.

The act sequence (A) refers to the actual form and content of what are the participants said, for instance the words choice, the gesture, and the relationship between the words and the actual topic. Every event, for instance daily conversation, or formal event present different forms of speaking including various kinds of language and things talked about. The sequence of pre-marriage in Bali referring to the wedding proposal of a Balinese couple divided the process by firstly opening the conversation by the proposee's spokesman to welcome the

proposer's family and allow the spokesman of the proposer's to deliver the intention of their arrival. It then continued by opening statements from the proposer's spokesman. Furthermore, the conversation continued to delivers statements or questions to the spokesmen and elderly from both side: the proposer and proposee. Besides, the event was also used to give advises, messages and wishes for both the proposee and proposer in which it is done by the proposee's spokesman. The conversation ended up on the further agreement regarding the next wedding schedule that was going to be held. It was clearly seen that the spokesman from the proposer's states the further process after taking the proposee to the proposer's house and the exact date of the formal marriage ceremony. At last, the proposer's and proposee's spokesmen delivered closing remark and continued by the process of ring exchanges done by the proposee and proposer.

The key (K), it refers to the manner, tone, or spirit for a particular message that is delivered, e.g., serious, precise, light-hearted, sarcastic, mocking, pompous, sad, formal, informal and so on. Key also can be defined as nonverbal action including body gesture, behavior, posture, and attitude in the process of the marriage proposal event. The connection between what the spokesmen is actually saying and the key that is used by them, tend to be a crucial attention since the listeners are likely to focus on the key used rather than the actual content that is delivered. In the wedding proposal, the key used by both proposer's and proposee's family including spokesmen, and proposee-proposer seemed to be serious, semi-formal, committed, and tense. In addition, the way a person delivers what she or he is going to say is very correlated with the key presented by them.

The instrumentalities (I) defines as the choice of means, for instance, oral, or written and the actual forms of speech

employed, e.g. dialect, language, or code.

The proposal was conveyed in an oral speech using Balinese language. The conversation was also opened by delivering Balinese greeting. Moreover, the spokesman from both proposer's and proposee's family sometimes did code-mixing between Balinese and Indonesian, e.g. *pengantin, keponakan, acara, kesibukan, keluarga, tambahan, sulit, yang penting, setuju, bebas*, and so on. For instance, the use of code mixing in the conversation, as follows:

*"Ten wenten nak jagi ngelarang ten wenten mekarye ane **sulit-sulit**."* (No one will prohibit, no one will make it complicated.)

*"Sampun manten ipun pada **setuju**."*  
(Both sides have agreed.)

The spokesman added the word "sulit" and "setuju" referred to Indonesian rather than using Balinese words to deliver his intention; therefore, the spokesman did code mixing during the conversation.

Furthermore, when the spokesmen of both the proposer's and proposee's family were talking, the gesture of eye-contact used by them are directly refers to who is spoken to. Dialect used by both families referred to Badung: the proposee and the proposer.

The norm of interaction and interpretation (N), in Balinese wedding proposal, communication was done alternately. Moreover, spokesman of proposee and proposer alternately spoke to propose their purpose for the future. In addition, in proposee side, this ceremony accepted as a parting of the proposee to her family. So that, the communication caused strong emotion at proposee's family. Since proposal was accepted as serious commitment of both sides to continue their lives together as a husband and wife, the commutation was led towards advising to the both side of proposee and proposer in order to ensure that they were ready for what they have decided. Advising contained deep emotion and everything being sad became

very important. At the end of the process, proposee and proposer was exchanging their wedding ring.

Genres, the final terms of Hymes' SPEAKING refers to classify types of utterance in which marked in specific to give contrast to casual speech. In Balinese wedding proposal, the genre of communication, was of course "proposal". This genre showed serious claims of reasoning of an action. Furthermore, the ability to attempt to persuade both proposee and proposer background of action became crucial thing to be mentioned in this kind of communication.

## CONCLUSION

The present research was intended to examine phenomenon regarding ethnography of communication to analyze a Balinese wedding ceremony of a Balinese couple using Dell Hymes's SPEAKING mnemonic. Based on the findings, there was a relationship between speech event

regarding Balinese wedding proposal and Dell Hymes' SPEAKING mnemonic. In addition, as an ethnographic research, the present research was expected to relate the communication and culture. As findings stated that communication led by the culture in Balinese wedding, in which every cultural traits have its own sequences of particular speech event. Moreover, in Balinese wedding proposal of a Balinese couple was sequenced as follows: The proposee's spokesman delivered the opening, the proposer's spokesman delivered the opening, the proposer's spokesman stated main intention, the proposee's spokesman stated the main intention, both the proposer's and the proposee's spokesman discussed about the sequence of the wedding, then the event was closed by both spokesmen who delivered a closing started from the proposer's spokesman. In addition, the present study is open for further research regarding the issue reflecting on the limitation of the analysis which may not involve some more critical



analysis of the issue which may cover some specific aspects relating to communication and culture (ethnography).

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