

# Communication of *Ma'deceng* in *Silariang*: A Family Reconciliation Process on the Case of Elopement in The Island of Rajuni

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## Abstract

*This study aims to describe the communication process of Ma'deceng on the elopement of both parties between intercultural families. This study used a qualitative approach with descriptive research types. Data obtained through in-depth interview techniques using the analysis of Miles and Huberman. The research subjects were determined through purposive sampling and obtained 4 subjects consisting of two intercultural pairs of Bugis and Bajo tribes in Rajuni Ki 'village in Selayar Regency. The results of the research obtained were the initiative of the women's family to carry out Ma'deceng, the men accepted the invitation, carried out the selection of spokespersons from each of the two families, fulfilled the conditions discussed from both families, and carried out Ma'deceng procession. In reviewing the theory of face negotiation, this process is in collectivist culture variables in reaching decisions together.*

**Keywords:** Communication process of *Ma'deceng*; Interculture communication; *Silariang*

## Introduction

As a cultural product, marriage is a sacred ceremony with an agreement or contract, so that men and women become legally bound couples. Marriage is a cultural product where sacred ceremonies are carried out with agreements or contracts so that men and women become legally bound couples. Marriage is a process that justifies the relationship between men

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and women voluntarily, to create a happy family life. But there are conditions that must be met from the rules of religion, state law (constitution), and culture, to carry out a marriage process.

Every region in Indonesia has its own culture and characteristics to hold a wedding ceremony. In certain regions, cultural prerequisites are sometimes the main requirement for carrying out a marriage process. Not infrequently in the community, the desire of a couple who love each other to marry fails because it is not granted by the family on the grounds that cultural conditions are not fulfilled so that it is often to have a pair of people who love each other agree to elope.

Culture is a product of human reason that leads to behaving according to human reason, not arbitrary, doing good, knowledgeable, and such things, when culture is practiced, culture and culture are born and eventually form civilization (Kurnia, 2016: 6). The culture of local people sometimes regulates prospective husbands or wives to be chosen, the fulfillment of marriage requirements, pre-wedding events, and post-marriage activities. Marriage essentially unites two people who love each other. However, cultural rules suggest some considerations that must be fulfilled to unite the two loving people. These considerations include the social, economic, and cultural status of both parties to be married. Thus, the desire of two people who love each other to get married is finally difficult to do. In fact, sometimes it doesn't work as expected.

The phenomenon of the marriage of a couple who are not agreed upon the family because of the lack of cultural requirements often occurs in Indonesian society. The relationship cannot continue to marriage because it is not blessed by either party of the couple's family, or both of the couple's family do not approve of it. The reason for not getting blessings often makes couples to commit elope. In Bugis society, elopement is a taboo that lowers family pride, or known as *siri* '. There are three terms of elopement in Bugis society: *silariang*, *nilariang*, and *erang kaleng*. *Silariang* is the practice of elopement which is carried out by a man and woman on his own will to marry, the *nilariang* is an elopement practice which only comes from the will of the man and contrary to the will of the woman, and *erang kaleng* means from the syllable *erang* which means 'carry' and *kale* means 'self' so that it happens when a woman brings herself home to the man to invite him to commit elopement. The *silariang* becomes the option for Bugis tribe when both bride and groom do not get a blessing from their parents, therefore, they go to the marriage registrar by themselves and ask for the legalization of their marriage.

This *silariang* usually occurs for several reasons: including the opposition of an arranged marriage, do not have enough money to pay for the *panai'* that is too high, the high amount of dowry, the presence of castes in the family which rules that the royal descendants can only marry royal descendants, therefore, they can maintain their ancestral value, and the existence of witchcraft (Said, 2005: 3). *Silariang* gave disappointment on the part of both families and gave a sense of shame (*siri* ') among the Bugis people, especially on the women's family. *Silariang* is a practice that is not justified in *adat* so that sanctions will be given in accordance with the

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violations committed and according to the agreement of cultural practices that occur in the area of the area.

Rajuni Island, Takabonerate District, Selayar Regency, South Sulawesi Province, is where the Bugis and Bajo tribes live side by side. Often residents of two tribes on the island held a marriage. However, because of the fulfillment of culture, it is not uncommon for two people who love each other on the island not to be blessed by their marriage and to conduct a marriage. The silariang often occurs in Rajuni Island due to these two different tribes. Women from the Bugis tribe and men from the Bajo tribe, or women from the Bajo or Bugis tribe, then also there is a possibility the men came from another tribe apart from the island. To the people of Bajo, the silariang is called *baku bawa lari* while for the Rajuni people, it is called silayyang. The elopement that often occurs between Bugis female and Bajo male in the Rajuni island is considered a violation. This couple may go and live in other area but still, they are considered to violate the cultural rule both in Bajo and Bugis. For Bugis people in Rajuni island, the silariang couple will not be taken as their descendant by the family. Another punishment might be in the form of killing the husband by the woman's family because he is considered has humiliated the family. While for the Bajo, the silayyang practice will be punished to pay the dowry three times higher than the original one, or else, they will never take them as a family again.

The Bajo people see marriage as an embodiment of the holy intention to form a family from which descendants will be born as the next generation and heirs of cultural values. If a man wants to marry a woman, then he and his family will propose to the woman's family. In this process of bidding, there is a process of 'bargaining' to determine how much dowry will be paid by men based on descent tracking both parties calculate this dowry from the social strata based on the descendants of both men and women, but this practice has rarely been implemented. The process that is often carried out is that the man immediately takes away the woman, who is usually then kept in the home of his parents or one of his family, only after that the wooing process is carried out. This method, called the 'baku bawa lari' by the Bajo community, is considered to be shorter and simple and woman will find it difficult to avoid proposals from the man (Baskara, 2016: 137). In the perspective of the community, especially in the inter-family environment, silariang can be improved by doing the process *ma'deceng*. By fulfilling the conditions contained in *ma'deceng*, customary penalties that were previously obtained but then the couple can redeem it and resolve the family bond.

*Ma'deceng* is an event that brings together two families from a crossing couple such as a proposal ritual. In the *ma'deceng* ceremony, the families who propose for and those who are being proposed sit together, talking about the best days of determining *ma'deceng*, the value of dowry, and shopping money (*panai* '). *Ma'deceng* process cannot be done immediately, the two families must talk in very detail and serious manner. This is because the two families previously had conflicts over the behavior of the crossing couple, giving rise to a distance between the two families. The *ma'deceng* or *mappa 'deceng* become a symbol and a venue for the reunification of two family members who were distant and forgiven the perpetrators. *Ma'deceng* means

improving, namely the improvement in the relationship between the two families who have been crossed, and this can occur when the family has fulfilled the requirements requested by women. Whereas mappa'deceng is an event process attended by invited guests, the family closest to the program begins the arrival of the male and the spokesperson to come to the women's house with the agreed conditions and the event is opened by religious leaders or village priests and ends with shaking the hand of the invited guest.

This communication process determines whether or not a male perpetrator being forgiven. Therefore, the role of the spokesperson at the ma'deceng meeting can affect the decision to forgive or not the men, and the procession of ma'deceng can proceed. Based on the explanation, the researchers were then interested in examining the communication process in a cross section on Rajuni Island, Taka Bonerate District, Selayar Regency, South Sulawesi.

### **Research Method**

This study uses a qualitative approach. This approach is to find out the phenomena that occur among the community, namely the communication process of ma'deceng on the elopement in Rajuni Village. In this study, an in-depth understanding is required to understand the communication that occurs within the community. This research focuses on efforts to understand the communication process of ma'deceng in Rajuni island. This communication process is related to the elements in communication, namely communicant, message, channel (media), communicator, and feedback.

The type of research used is descriptive research, which studies the problems in society and the procedures that apply in society, procedures that exist in society and the views of a phenomenon with the characteristic describe in explaining all a situation and event under study so the researcher will draw the reality that happened in the field. The time of the study was conducted in mid-2018. The research site was carried out on Rajuni Island, Taka Bonerate National Park, Selayar Regency, South Sulawesi, which has two tribes, namely the Bugis and Bajo.

The subjects in this study were the families of couples who had done the ma'deceng, who lived in Rajuni Island with Bugis and Bajo tribes. The researcher will conduct a purposive sampling and appoint four subjects from the family of the silariang couple. The four subjects are Indo "Massa'e" and "Ja'bar" and "Ngai" and "Husen". This study will use two techniques in data collection, namely using in-depth interviews and documentation. Data Analysis Technique uses Miles and Huberman analysis techniques by collecting data, condensing data, after which data will be presented, and making conclusions.

### **Finding and Discussion**

In this section the researcher will discuss the communicator and communicant in the process of ma'deceng, the messages from the process of ma'deceng which consist of social messages and message styles, the media in the ma'deceng that includes spending money (panai

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'); dowry (sompā); and shroud. In addition, researchers will discuss the process of ma'deceng from the perspective of Face-Negotiation Theory. Based on the explanations of the pairs "Indo Massae" and "Ja'bar" and "Ngai" and "Husen", the communicators of the ma'deceng process which consist of parents and relatives of their father and mother sides. There are no specific criteria in choosing the communicators in the process of ma'deceng. Based on the results of interviews conducted, the appointment as a communicator was because that person is considered a public figure.

The social message of the process of ma'deceng, in this stage, is not a problem related to ethnic differences between them, but things that are regulated as rules agreed upon by the two tribes have been violated from both sides so that it becomes a customary consequence. As a result, a fight took place up to the attempted murder because it gave disappointment to the female family. Of the two crossing pairs studied, the women's family took action to cut or stab with long machetes to the perpetrators. As for the Bugis tribe, for the Bajo, silayyang (silariang) is not only a shameful behavior but also an act of violating adat because the wishes of the couple themselves are united but without the blessing of the family.

From the two cultures in the narrative of the subject of the study, the initiative to invite the ma'deceng process first was proposed by the female family, which would then be followed up by the male family to meet the female family and discuss the process of the maeng. That way the house of the female family becomes the right position to carry out the ma'deceng event. The ma'deceng gives an opportunity to improve the siri 'or embarrassment by doing mappa'deceng. During this stage, the family invitation is a form of apology and to settle the pride of the family back. Mappa'deceng is like a proposal event, those who propose and those who are proposed sit together in a friendly situation, discussing the feast to hold to fix the issue after a conflict of elopes (Aurora, 2017: 184). The ma'deceng provides lessons for the people about how to apology and forgive and to improve the relationship.

Through interviews conducted, it is known that the negotiation process is done in a compromise style. As an explanation, in the interview process, it was revealed that even though from the Indo Masse' initially did not accept the ability of the groom who was only able to pay *panai* money of 5 million, in the end, there was a compromise and agreement for the good of the pair. Similarly, on the part of the Ngai family, when there was a delay in time that caused great anger from the woman's side, the male speech style was able to convince the woman that the process of ma'deceng was aimed at the common good. In the end, a mutual agreement was reached between the two parties to implement mappa'deceng. In the silariang pair, they were directed to obey the instruction of the family because they are unable to do anything for the wrongdoing they did, so they only follow orders from the family.

The media in the ma'deceng procession consists of spending money (*panai*'), a mahr (sompā), and shroud. *Panai'* money becomes a hereditary custom and is a form of appreciation from the male family to the female family even though this fee is not as much as a wedding party because they have tarnished it with mistakes, namely by conducting silariang. Generally, the

amount of cash in the mappa 'deceng program is lower compared to the usual marriage. For the Bajo, this money can also be interpreted as a fine he gives to the female family for making a mistake with 'Baku bawa lari' (sialyyang).

Mahar (*sompa*) is a condition recommended by the Islamic religion because both partners are Muslim. Sompa is also a form of appreciation for a woman who is ready to become a wife. Indo Masse 'received dowry in the form of 10 grams of gold and Ngai received a dowry in the form of rupiah. The next media in the procession is the shroud. The shroud is one of the materials in the funeral process that becomes a deposit for a woman in the future and as a symbol that death keeps coming to anyone.

Face negotiation theory explains how to communicate and manage different cultural conflicts that basically is triggered by various aspects of the individual's cultural identity. This kind of negotiation theory provides a basis for estimating how human complete works in different cultures. *Face* refers to the depiction of a person in front of others by involving respect, respect, connection status, loyalty, and similar values while visual works refer to human communication behavior that is used to build and protect their appearance and to protect, build, or threaten other people so that the culture is strong to become the identity of what is desired in the situation. (Littlejohn, 2012: 251). According to Hamka (in Hamid, 2007: 23), *siri* 'is dignity, prestige, and self-esteem.

This study has a match with face negotiation theory, the first point is different cultures in this study, which consists of Bajo and Bugis tribes. Existing conflicts are triggered by cross-sectional behavior called *silariang* which is a violation of customs from both cultures. The existing conflict resolution (*silariang*) must go through a customary process, namely *ma'deceng*. In the *Ma'deceng* stage, the event procession cannot be immediately carried out (*mappa'deceng*), before an agreement have been achieved by the family meeting of both parties. In this process, two spokespersons represent the two sides of the family. In the process of discussion between the two families and the spokesperson of each of the families manage the conflict that occurs which can be in the form of two cultural variables namely individualistic culture or collectivist culture.

The second point lies in the process that occurs in the Indo Masse 'and Ja'bar family who promote collectivist culture. The initial process showed that he was a part of his own tribe and culture. On the other hand, based on the purpose, he needed to point out the fulfillment of the group requirement. When seen from the process he is feeling part of his cultural group and region. Then it is seen in the aspect of the goal that prioritizes the achievement of group needs. There had been a hard discussion regarding the fulfillment of the conditions, the family from Ja'bar accepting the condition, even though he made it clear that his ability was only 5 million. To respect the decisions of the female family, the male family asked for a time by delaying the process until it was fulfilled.

When the meeting had a different view then one of them compromised the decision for the needs of the group and understood the intention of the Bugis tribe to offer the terms

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without any resistance from before. This process is called compromising category, which becomes the third point. Likewise, in the pairing process, Ngai and Ja'bar who have a different cultural background by conducting a silariang mean creating a cultural identity conflict from both sides.

In the process of ma'deceng, the meeting before the mappa'deceng discussed the fulfillment of these conditions. The Ngai family gave an offer then the Husen family admitted that their initial capacity was only 15 million which was not in accordance with the offer from the Ngai family of 25 million so that the man made the decision to postpone it again until the conditions were fulfilled. continuous compromising with collectivist culture. When the ma'deceng tradition will take place beforehand, some people will attend the meeting, so that the communication that occurs is not only individuals but also in the presence of several people as a part of group communication.

Group communication is a group of people consisting of two or three, even more, interacting with other groups or within their own group members. According to Adler and Rodman (in Bungin, 2009: 272), there are four elements that occur among them first, interaction in this process has an important role because of communication activities. Second, time with group communication implies that the long term characteristics of these groups are not owned by a temporary collection. Third, size by looking at the number of participants in the group, in this case, there is no exact measure of how many group members are. The last element is the purpose of meaning that membership in a group will help individuals who are members of the group can realize one or more of their goals.

The concept of integrated culture and communication, these two concepts cannot be separated based on the process or way of communicating across the human community or social group crossing communication using message codes, both verbally and nonverbally which are naturally always used in all contexts of interaction (Liliweri, 2003: 12). This means that the patterns and actions in culture are a form of communication carried out both individually and in groups so that interaction is established by understanding, understanding together. The process that occurs is a negotiation in a different cultural background but there is no guarantee that both of them can understand, accept, and even reject each other.

Interpretation in intercultural communication can produce a good product when there is a lack of misunderstanding of information that dampens a conflict that might occur. The emergence of cultural differences in the implementation of adagium, namely the more different cultures of communication participants, the greater the chance of bias over intercultural meaning, conversely the smaller, even if there is no intercultural difference, the smaller or even there is no bias towards meaning among them (Liliweri, 2003: 46).

The agreement through effective communication will occur when both parties or more experience the same exchange of meaning and understand together. This condition occurs in the people of Rajuni Island, cultural differences with the Bugis and Bajo tribes produces cultural

conflicts, namely carrying out marriages that are not blessed or well known as elopement so that there is a possibility of potential emergence of conflict from both families.

Its influence not only on the family's internal group but on the wider group among ethnicity will be involved so that in this concept there is a negotiation process between the two cultures which becomes a symbolic exchange between the two groups. The criteria that occur in collectivist culture are: (1) tendency to respect society or groups of people rather than individuals, (2) this culture is considered in its control as our identity, (3) honor is determined based on how one refers to the values of the group and communication actions related to efforts to build a self-image are not self-oriented, (4) in managing conflicts, they are more willing to accept criticism, talk about the success of others and promise to work better according to the standards set by the group you are in, (5) fewer attacks on the person and they avoid more obvious issues but discuss more side issues, requiring a lot of time in the main process of the problem. (Morissan, 2013: 273-278).

*Ting Toomey* (in Rohim, 2016: 215) holds that people in every culture always conduct negotiating faces, the process of negotiating to get other people to see and treat us according to us, in this case, Identity becomes anxiety and uncertain because it is driven by the conflict that makes helpless or must accept. The difference between the two cultures (Bugis and Bajo) gives rise to differences in style in carrying out a conflict, in this process, there is the negotiation of image and self-esteem. In this process, cultural variables dominate the collectivist culture because it emphasizes the importance of group togetherness and the relationships of a group. In a situation where power distance affects the people, both subjects used mediators in managing conflict by taking someone who was equally respected. The Bugis tribe uses village priests and trusted families, so does the Bajo people who use one of the roles as a mosque administrator.

### **Conclusion and Suggestion**

Based on the results of the study it can be concluded that the communication process ma'deceng has gone through several stages. First, the woman's family initiative to invite them to revise the relationship that has been harmed by customary violations (silariang). Secondly, the male family accepted the invitation and chose a spokesperson as a representative of the male side. Third, the meeting is held in the house of a woman's family, each of whom is represented by a chosen spokesperson from each family. The point of the discussion is related to the fulfillment of the ma'deceng conditions including sompa (dowry), panai 'money (cash money), and shrouds of 1 pcs. Fourth, the fulfillment of conditions. Afterward, of the event (ma'deceng) is held at the house of the woman's family in the evening time, ended by shaking the hands of all invited guests for the mistake made. The acceptance of the two families with differences in the Bugis and Bajo tribes in the communication process has a similar understanding of the values regulated in the region, so that they share values that prioritize form collectivist culture, and reach decisions together.



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Based on the conclusions, the researcher makes suggestions in the form of academic advice and practical advice. For the academicians, this study is suggested as a reference in similar discussions for students, especially communication science. It is suggested that other prospective researchers will be able to develop this research not only about the communication process but also through phenomenology and ethnography approaches. Practical Advice, as through this study it is recommended for a group of Bugis and Bajo tribes in other regions, especially in the archipelago to continue to maintain the values of togetherness for the common interest so that they can minimize the rise of conflict due to cultural differences. It is recommended for other community groups to make this research as preliminary information or reading material for learning that the practice of silariang (elopement) for the Bugis and Silayyang tribes (elopement) for the Bajo is a customary violation so that in the future they can maintain the values regulated in the area that is.

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