

Revealing Bhanti-bhanti Tradition of Wakatobi People

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The tradition of *bhanti-bhanti* is an oral tradition that still exists in Southeast Sulawesi area of Wakatobi that contains the collective thoughts of Wakatobi people that is realised into performances.

“The presence of *bhanti-bhanti* tradition in Wakatobi is credited to the oral elements such as performance as well as schematic formula and composition,” said Sumiman Udu on Wednesday (10/8) during his doctoral promotion at Faculty of Cultural Sciences UGM.

Maintaining his dissertation titled *The Tradition of Bhanti-bhanti from Wakatobi: Schematic Performance, Formula, and Composition*, Sumiman mentioned that the performance of *bhanti-bhanti* tradition of Wakatobi is a cultural event that involves speakers and audience during same time frame. This is much defined by the speaker’s response and many contexts and responses from the audience. The audience that can respond to the context and the audience response are speakers that are liked by the Wakatobi people.

Sumiman said the formula is arranged based on formula patterns with the uniqueness in its own rights. The formula is sentences repetition and group of words repetition. The composition of schematic tradition is based on several things; one of those is the use of *bhanti-bhanti* formula as

development of bhanti-bhanti sequence, that is repetitions of sentence, group of words, and words. Arrangement of schematic composition is done by using the semantic relations between one verse to another, using interrogative sentence, giving answer to questions from other speakers, and responding to the present context.

“Schematic composition is made up based on contradictive statement to the previous verse, mostly having the theme of mother’s love, jealousy, politics, love, and reflection of the past,” he said.

The lecturer in Language and Arts from Universitas Halu Oleo in Sulawesi said that those three elements have a significant role to the preserving of the bhanti-bhanti tradition of Wakatobi. All have inseparable relations.

“Hence, the effort to sustain and develop the bhanti-bhanti tradition of Wakatobi should encourage various cultures that allow the presence of this tradition performance,” he concluded.

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