

Research Article

Courtesy Negotiation in *Momuhaboi* (Meminang) Ceremony of Kadazandusun Society

Rosliah Kiting

Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris

Abstract: *Momuhaboi* (*meminang*) ceremony in the Kadazandusun community requires the arrangement of civilized words to enable negotiation to be done in the complete way of gracious manner. However, this tradition is increasingly forgotten because it is less used during *merisik*. If this situation persists then the legacy of the chosen words used exclusively for this ceremony will disappear. This is a major loss to the Kadazandusun generation as the bearer and conservator of the nation's heritage. Therefore, this study was carried out to collect the words that are often used during negotiations in *momuhaboi* (*meminang*) ceremony by Kadazandusun community. Data is obtained through fieldwork by interviewing and recording the old generation who have gone through the *merisik* rites in the past. The researcher also attended several *merisik* ceremonies at this time for the purpose of collecting data. The data were analyzed using cognitive semantic theory for the purpose of categorizing words with elements of euphemism. Then, the data is reported in descriptive form. The data analysis found that the Kadazandusun community used words of euphemism so that the communication process can be carried out in a civilized manner. This makes the negotiations to know the background of both parties, determining the resources and customs so that it is conducted in a harmonious atmosphere. The study found that the Kadazandusun community was rich in euphemism in negotiations during *merisik* and engaged. The legacy should be preserved in order that the culture can be inherited by the next generation.

Keywords: Kadazandusun, euphemism, *momuhaboi* and custom

Introduction

Momuhaboi or *meminang* in the Dusun community is an important ceremony before marriage. In this ceremony, the negotiation is a very important scene so that the agreement was reached for marriage. According to Haron Din in Noriati Rashid (2007), the engagement is a preamble for a wedding which is called the *Khitbah*. The ceremony is held in a closed and not announced like a wedding. That is why it only involves the nearest family. This process is carried out by sending a representative who always consists of a close relative such as an uncle or close family friend who serves as a spokesperson. The use of the representative in this ceremony is considered as polite and decent way (Azlina Hashim, 1996). However, in the Kadazandusun community, manners in this ceremony have been far different from today's practice. The young generations who are involved in this engagement ceremony are more prone to follow outside cultures until their own cultural virtues are fading away. This led the researchers to conduct research related to manners in *merisik* as well as the engagement rites of Kadazandusun community to show the nation's heritage. Courtesy in the negotiation ceremony was the main focus of this study to enhance the civilization of the nation so that it was not immersed in the era of globalization.

Literature Review

Meminang means the man's family or his representative voiced their desire to marry a woman. Proposal is a process for finding and obtaining a woman's consent to marry (Abd Kadir, 2002) says that a woman is entitled to agree with the proposal if she gives her consent. If the proposal is rejected, then the man should be willing to look for another candidate.

In other words, the purpose of the proposal is to ensure that the woman you want to propose is not the other person's fiancée. In the event of a proposal on the other person's fiancée, the proposal shall not be continued (Abdul Munir Ismail, 2013).

Haron Din (1991) explains that the proposal is when the man tells the woman about his purpose and wish. This event is held privately and not announced such as weddings. Engagement only involves the immediate family. This is because the proposal ceremony is a private family matter. The ceremony aimed to propose the girl officially and the proposal should be known and endorsed by the families of both parties. This means the man's desire for the woman has been officially informed to the family. According to Noriati A. Rashid (2007), a well-prepared event of proposal is a clear indication that the girl has a perfect dignity and self-esteem. In addition, this ceremony illustrates the noble values of society that adheres to religious teachings as it is done in complete manner by both parties. The engagement ceremony also marks the beginning of the preparation for marriage (Robani Haji Yusuf, 1984). In this regard, Wan Abdul Kadir Wan Yusoff (2000) explains that the engagement ceremony is a custom because it is bound by more formal rules and complete arrangements. The arrangement of the Malay engagement ceremony made this ceremony to have a systematic structure as described by Noriati A. Rashid (2007).

It is found in Sheppard's study (1972) that proposal and engagement in traditional Malay societies were carried out according to the prescribed custom. The ceremony was conducted through discreet negotiations to reach an agreement for both parties. Whether the proposals are accepted or

otherwise, manners in the speech remain as a priority. The word *meminang* is derived from an areca palm that describes a man and it is carried out by the man to the woman. The term engaged means that the proposal is accepted and the bond is when the woman receives the engagement ring as an agreement. Propose and engaged involved with gift giving which is known as dowry consisting of clothing, food (sweets) and betel container (*tepak sirih*). The acceptance of the engagement ring will change the status of women from single to fiancée, an isolation and transition in the life cycle.

Research methodology

This study uses qualitative method by conducting literature and field studies. The literature study is conducted as a basis for reviewing the aspects to be studied. Through this study, the authors obtained the early data relating to the selection of theories which is considered appropriate for the study. This method also enables authors to improve and enhance their knowledge in certain areas through the readings. Then the author conducts a field study to collect the required data. This is based by Leah's oral tradition study guide (1949: 398-339) and Taib Osman (1987: 5). Researchers also implement the guide from Shahrudin Abdul Rahman (1987: 106-111) for the collection process which consists of three stages, namely before, during and after study. During the field study, the authors conducted interviews and recording with the older generation of the Kadazandusun community who had gone through or witnessed *merisik* and engagement ceremonies among the community at some point in time. This conversation will be recorded and the transcription work will be done afterwards. After that, using Larson's translation strategy (1984) for the translation process which is the precise translation that expresses the same meaning as the meaning contained in the source text to Malay as a translation language. Adaptation and matching methods by Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) are also used for adaptation method which is a substitution of cultural differences in two languages. The data analysis process applies the qualitative data analysis guide by Othman Lebar (2012: 164-170) and Tesch (1990: 142-145) which includes transcription, translation, data arrangement, data understanding, categorizing, coding and subsequently presenting data. The data are presented in the form of descriptive reports.

Theory of Study

Euphemism is the expression of words that are taboo or perceived abusive with other words that are more direct or supposed to be more subtle (Syahdi, 2011: 46). According to Teo (1995), euphemism comes from the Greek word referring to a word that is softer or simpler, better or amusing and less straightforward attribution to say something that maybe considered as harsh, scary, insulting or disturbing other people's feelings. Euphemism can also convert taboo words into meaningful and not destroying oneself. When examined, the elements of euphemism is related to the concept of language politeness which refers to the use of everyday language that does not cause irritation, anger and annoying from the listener. According to Matsumoto (1998: 405 and

Mao, 1994: 453) in Noriati Rashid (2007: 46-47), the context of the Malay community emphasizes the concept of politeness involving sacrifices and being gentlemen that disregard their own interests and feelings in order to fulfill the demands of the society and its Islamic-based culture. In this study, the concept of euphemism is used to understand the ways of the Bundu ethnic group Kadazandusun community to express words that are considered harsh, scary, insulting, offensive or taboo in a more subtle, gentle, polite, less straightforward way to avoid offending the listener. The Model of Language Modesty by Leech (1983) is used to define the maximity of politeness in the language expressed through *talaala* poetry. Maxim of such politeness includes prudence, gentleness, modesty and consent.

Findings

The negotiation in the Customs of Momuhaboi (*Meminang*) in the Kadazandusun community gives full attention in manners of uttering words. This is because the importance of safeguarding and maintaining good and truthful words is strongly emphasized among the Bundu ethnic groups, especially in negotiating involving customs as in the engagement. Usually this conversation uses *talaala* poetry as a medium of communication with the use of good words that are polite and gentle as well as stating what is right. This conversation is practiced in the engagement ceremony for the Bundu ethnic group with several stages, namely *mihaboi-haboi* (*merisik*), and *momuhaboi* (*meminang*). According to informants of Bundu ethnic traditions, the couple's choice is determined by the parents. Any dealings of choosing a partner, *merisik* until the wedding are managed by the parents without the knowledge of both partners. The couple will recognize their husbands or wives on the day of the wedding. *Talaala* is used as a medium of communication to express the desire of the heart, giving a response whether to accept or reject or providing an excuse. All these *talaala* are communicated by parents or representative of the family members of the male or female. This *talaala* conversation is done during the *merisik* and propose (***meminang***) ceremony as in the next discussion.

i. Monguhot or mihaboi-haboi (Merisik)

Monguhot or *mihaboi-haboi* is the stage of the man's parent asking the woman's parent about their desire to marry their son with his or her daughter. This activity is done when both parents meet at *tamu*, in a reception or during the *gotong-royong*. The following is the *talaala* that can be expressed for the purpose of *monguhot* or *mihaboi-haboi*:

Piak oku piak oku,	I am chicken, I am chicken,
Mongoi oku togok-togok,	I am calling
Mokititinduk ii daa,	Begging for food
Turawung do siladon.	Unripe paddy

(Source: Kiting Gusiang)

The verse *talaala* described that the *togok-togok* is the sound of a chicken that is looking for food. This is a metaphor for a man who is looking for a partner. The man conveys the intention to propose if the woman is not married.

Usually when being asked for proposal, the woman's side will give a humble answer that their child has nothing special as life-time security after marriage as in the following talaala:

Ombolog oi ombolog oi	Oh bird, oh bird
Kada sako tindai dogo	Do not perch on my place
Sumako tindai wokon	Perch on somebody's place
Tu kiraan do pintodon	Which has a branch to step

(Source: Kotirin Guntamas)

According to informants, the woman's side who is being proposed strives to keep the custom with not being too eager to accept when someone comes to ask for her hand in marriage. Therefore, the above mentioned talaala means that the woman's side humble themselves by saying that their daughters have no skills such as doing work on the farm or making handicrafts that can be used as source of income. Sometimes the poem is the words of euphemism that a woman's family does not agree with the man who comes to propose her. Therefore, the arrangement of the chosen words in this talaala verse as a way of rejecting politely so as not to offend the entourage.

If the man has been determined to get the girl, the negotiation will continue with the following talaala:

Haro raan do pintodon	A branch to step
Amu oku ii tisako	I don't want to perch
Hiti no tisako oku	I would like to perch here
Tu kayu dot mindai-indai	Because of the famous wood

(Source: Angar Aging)

Talaala is an expression of the man's affirmation that the woman from that family will be chosen after being observed and found suitable for their son. This talaala conversation illustrates the determination of the man for merisik.

The woman's side usually will degrading herself in physical aspects by saying that she is not as beautiful as any other girl who is the dream girl of every man. This is to avoid being humiliated after marriage or regret because the girl she married was not as beautiful as his dream girl or not hardworking as he wished for. Therefore, the female family will say the following talaala:

Bukid ku moninduk sirung	My hill paddy plantation is small
Timbang id pulau Bantayan	Can be seen from Bantayan island
Paras ku tirung-tirungon	I hide my face (cover)
Ruminantayan miruhang	Because it is not beautiful

(Source: Kolindok Rombon)

The man would assert and determine that the woman to be the right choice by saying the following talaala:

Ogumu no kayu tomod	A lot of usual wood
Ai haro tonuon ku	Not even one I pick
Iso no kayu bina	Only one strong wood
Onuon kud pomilang	I take for my parang casing

(Source: Kiting Gusiang)

Kiraan do pintodon	A branch to step
Amu oku tisako	I don't want to perch
Hodi tisako oku	That is where I want to perch
Tu koyu dot mindai-indai	A famous tree

(Source: Kiting Gusiang)

The phrase 'I take to make a parang casing' is an expression of euphemism which means taking the girl as a legal wife. The phrase 'kayu dot mindai-indai' is the abandoned wood during the initial cleaning of paddy cultivation. Usually this wood consists of selected wood for a building material during the opening of the farm in the future. This wood is described as a distinguished man or woman, has special features that are suitable for the proposed woman and that is why he or she is being chosen among many women or men in the surrounding area.

Sometimes the woman's side will choose a partner who has property or career as a security after marriage. If the man who comes for monguhot (bertanya) is known as a poor man or has a bad attitude like a lazy person or a drinker then the woman will convey the expression in euphemism to reject the proposal by saying that he requires a man with possessions and attitudes both as a security of life to their daughters as in the following talaala:

Sunsuyon mabu-habu	Unstable bridge
Amu oku kosunsui	I cannot go through
Hodi tisunsui oku	That is where I want to go
Tu lugu tompinahaton	Because of the hard wood

(Source: Lucia Gambilid)

The above talaala indicates that unstable bridge would have made it difficult for a person to pass through it as a metaphor of someone's life is in disorder because it does not have a career or property that can guarantee his life. The situation of a man makes it difficult to find a living partner because the woman's side is worried if they are married, their daughter will live in poverty and misery in the future. If the man wants to continue his intention to get the woman then the man will try to persuade by saying that even though at that time he has no property but he will continue to work hard to meet the needs of his wife and children later. The male entourage will give their trust to the women that their child is industrious and able to accommodate their families later by saying the following talaala:

Susunan po toi nangat ku	No comparison which I brought
Gulu tuhun ko tandaha	Wake up early than the rooster
Ponginbolobou ku bolo	He went to the plantation early in the morning
Do mongonggom do ninipot	He went back home late in the evening

(Source: Kiting Gusiang)

For the Kadazandusun community, hardworking is based on maximum daily use of the day. Therefore, hardworking in the

above talaala is illustrated by the attitude of going to the farm early in the morning and return home late in the evening. The use of these words is intended to avoid pride attitude by conventionally expressing using the hardworking word that sounds like bragging of oneself. With this attitude, the man should be able to accommodate his family life in the future. This is a guarantee for families to put their trust in the future of their children who will get married and building a family together with the man.

Another one that needs negotiation in momuhaboi ceremony is when dealing with a woman with many siblings. When the man is asking (mongohut), the woman's side will ask again to the man's entourage which one of her daughters that he wants to be his wife. Then the man's side will give an answer saying that they will choose a mature girl as well as the following characters such as hardworking, polite, beautiful, friendly and so forth by conveying the following talaala:

Ponduran minipalud	A bamboo cross fountain
Sopinum-inumai	I try to drink both
Honggo nopo toomis	Which is sweet
Sorosopon ku yudan	I will drink until to the spring

(Source: Kiting Gusiang)

Haro sogohon	There is a bamboo fountain
Tolu sandabar	A cross three
Ponosorosopo tudan	I try to drink it until its source
Nga iso no ii toomis	Only one is sweet

(Source: Lucia Gambilid)

Both of the above talaala use several fountains to portray that there are many females in the sibling. The water metaphor refers to the family ties that cannot be separated. In this case the girl has a family bond that cannot be separated by the similar characteristics. Metaphor of sweet water refers to maturity such as sweet and delicious fruit to be eaten after it is ripe. This is a description of the suitability and advantage of choosing a mature wife as a candidate. In addition, there is a custom in the Kadazandusun community for woman who married before their older sister or brother. This custom is called 'cosoguluanan'. According to the custom, a man or woman who is married before his or her brother or sister is obliged to give money or gift to his unmarried sister or brother. The value of this gift is not determined but according to the negotiation and capability of the giver. When the consent is given when in a mihot-uhot or mihaboi-haboi (merisik), then the man will promise to come to the house of the woman for momuhaboi (meminang). The talaala used in negotiation in proposal will be discussed later.

ii. Momuhaboi (Meminang)

Momuhaboi means sending a messenger for proposal to the woman's house. Usually in the Kadazandusun engagement, the man sends their entourage to the woman's house. The entourage consists of adults who are experienced in Kadazandusun customs and have a relationship with the man so that it becomes easier to identify the brotherhood bond in future negotiations. Among the most important of the

entourage is the village chief or custom leader, both the male parent or the closest aunt and uncle. Likewise with the members who need to be present on the female side.

When the man's entourage arrives at the courtyard of the woman's house, the woman's side will welcome their arrival by the following talaala:

Sampangkis-pangkis o kosumandakan	Chaos of the girls
Songrikot-rikot id karamaian	Attending an event
Osonong tagung ounsikou kinorikatan	Melodious sound of gong to welcome the arrival
Kopisanangan kosuabon kumaa toinsanan	Good morning to all

(Source: Kiting Gusiang)

This is followed by talaala that is expressed as an honour to the guests. Following is the talaala which is a question about the purpose of the entourage as follows:

Solunsugai ku po lo tumo dahai	I install the fountain at our plantation
Asakan ku parai Kundinga	I will plant with Kundinga paddy
Ounsikou tomod ginawo dahai	We are very happy
Nokorikot kou mogolimbuha	You come for a visit

(Source: Lucia Gambilid)

Nung aiso paha toomis	If there is no sweet honey
Aiso i sodom do muntun	No ants around
Nung aiso o kinomulok	If there is no drink
Nga aiso tulun rumikot	No one will come
Nga siou nopo dokoyu	But I apologise
Tu kouyu oku do muhot	Because bravely asked
Do haro doti hontolon	Surely there is a purpose
Dokoyu do tuminimbaba	You are coming

(Source: Kiting Gusiang)

The entourage of the man will respond with the following talaala:

Randagan ku sinurikitan	My bujak has hair
Sinukud ku luminimbaba	I become a stick to meet
Mongoi pogi timbaba	I come to meet
Nga haro no sambaon	Because I have a purpose

(Source: Surinding Bondi)

Piak oku piak oku	I am chicken, I am chicken
Mongoi oku togok-togok	I want to ask for food
Ulan kanto potindukon	Hopefully given food
Turaung do siladon	Unripe paddy

(Source: Kotirin Guntamas)

Borusat oku tintapon	I am the bait
Tombial oku Kanarom	Fish bait at Kanarom river
Ulan toi om obinsulung	Hopefully something will get trapped
Lontoi lomi panarom	Big fish

(Source: Kiting Gusiang)

The above talaala is a statement of the purpose of entourage,

namely as a chicken who hopes to peck a new, sweet and delicious rice. The new rice which is definitely fragrant and delicious is a metaphor for the maiden while the pecking chicken describes the man who comes to propose the maiden. This talaala has a similar meaning with the next talaala which is to set up a trap and hope to catch a big fish as a metaphor for the purpose of getting the woman to be a partner to their son and agreed by the woman's side.

Although the above talaala have been expressed during mihaboi-haboi but usually it will be repeated again when they come officially for momuhaboi as part of the custom. This profoundly symbolizes the Kadazandusun community's virtue when receiving guests at their home by asking the purpose of the visit so that they can be served according to their needs. This is because the guests who come to the house have various purposes such as asking for treatment, food assistance, advice and so on. Therefore, this should also be done to ensure the real purpose.

After the man's entourage mentioned the purpose of the entourage, the woman's side will ask the question regarding the seriousness of the man to propose the woman through the following talaala:

Sada piara amu ii obolou doot do mato :Pond fish is impossible to end the lust of the eye

Mogot daa osimpod no o tupa : Lucky if the fish was caught

Okon ko iso no sada id kowoigan :Not only one fish in the river

Nga amu kou toi modosi do kotomboigan? :However aren't you afraid of the ghost river

(Source: Kiting Gusiang)

Kotomboigan or river ghost shows the challenges and risks that may be encountered when looking for fish in the river. It is related to the challenges that may be encountered in manalakoi or momuhaboi (meminang) such as nopung (berian) that are requested beyond the ability that may cause the rejection of the proposal or the possibility that the woman's side is imposing heavy conditions so that the man find it is difficult and call it a day. Often the entourage who come for the proposal are ready to face the challenges and risks and are determined to pursue their intentions by expressing the following talaala:

Nokobontol oku palanuk I meet a deer
 Maso ku do mongomot While I am harvesting
 Tapu-tapu nangu om kolonuk I will not surrender before I try
 Umbalan kasari ii bo do monguhot Just try to ask

(Source: Kolindok Rombon)

Talaala is a statement of the man's entourage that they are aware of the challenges and risks they may face but the attempt to get the woman as a prospective daughter-in-law will continue and ready to accept the challenge until it succeeds. Like a lime, though it is said to cause burns but when it is used with appropriate quantities and the right way,

it will not have a bad effect. Similarly, the effort of the man's entourage to propose if it is done with a wise and prudent negotiation, it will definitely get the expected results. Regarding the sincerity of the man, the woman will ask questions about the rationale of the man for liking her. The man will give an answer by the following talaala:

Sogumau id sondoton Lemon grass on the flat soil
 Rantabo ku ri om rantabo I cut and cut
 Iso po ri i nindai ku Only one I leave
 Tampon ku do suminukod My peers

(Source: Kolindok Rombon)

Talaala is the confession of a man that many girls that he found in his own village or from a distant place but she is the only girl that he loved most because she is his peer. The choice of a partner among the peer is related to the custom of Bundu ethnic that suggests that partner should be of equal age or younger than the man. In addition, they must have known each other. It is therefore easier to understand and adapt after marriage.

Next, the woman's side will present a talaala that symbolizes custom of modesty by saying that her child has a shortage and needs to be educated in order to become a good wife and mother. In addition, his son is still young, sensitive and less patient as in the following talaala:

Ponginsan kou manalakoi Please inform that you come to propose
 Ootung kou do tinggoron Maybe you propose a fierce girl
 Dot aa ii om kapamansaran Maybe lazy
 Pomosun moningot Or a thug

(Source: Kiting Gusiang)

The word 'bee' as a dangerous insect but is still needed by humans because its honey is useful for health. Bee is a metaphor for the woman who has some weaknesses but for the sake of love, the man will still try to get her as a living partner. In this talaala, the woman's family says that this girl is in dire need of guidance to be a responsible daughter in-law, wife and mother at some time. It is similar with the next talaala, the woman's side humbled themselves by saying that their daughters were not competent in doing household chores. Therefore, the mother or female representative apologizes because their daughter does not have any skills in life. He was like a worm that was only wrapped in a leaf or a curled millipede and did not know how to do any work or even referred to as lazy. All of these expressions symbolize the virtue of the Kadazandusun community by revealing elements of euphemism as a wise way of negotiation so that the man's side knows the expectations of the woman's family. This is to ensure that their children are not humiliated or tortured solely by their weakness but should be guided properly so that the marriage will last long even though they are subject to various challenges in life. The following talaala is answered by the man's side as follows:

Mantad to monginsuduon We return home from searching for firewoods

Piraanon to id monggis	We include a hard branch wood
Iyoon ampayan dahai ii	We will take care of it
Kipulut do poposon	Like caring for our own children

(Source: Kiting Gusiang)

Monggis is a kind of wood used as firewood. The above talaala is the man's claim that they will educate and care for the daughter-in-law like their own children that are likened to taking the wood tree should be accompanied by their branches for fuel. After this negotiation, the woman's side will convey the following talaala as an agreement to the proposal;

Sunsuyanai-sunsuyanai	Make a bridge, make a bridge
Bawang do misoborong	To cross a river
Ulan kanto om kopiromut	Hopefully we can be united
Turiding koliliang	They are still young

(Source: Angar Aging)

Sunsuyon (titi) is placed at the river which connects both sides of the river. This expression is the figurative of the relationship between two families through marriage. The woman who agrees with the proposal will say build a bridge meaning that they are ready to bind the ties through marriage. Turiding koliling means a newly created musical instrument as a figurative to a young woman and man but compatible to get married.

Once the woman has given the consent to accept the proposal, the man's entourage will be invited to the house for further discussion until the ceremony is completed and the engagement custom is carried out. The engagement bond should be completed by the village chief after reaching an agreement of customary arrangements such as the number of nopung (berian), expenses for weddings and the customs related to the marriage. Customary provisions in the Kadazandusun clan vary from place to place. Usually the custom is inherited from the father and mother of the girl. Among the customs that apply are family bond affairs. If there is a family relationship between the male and female, then this family relationship must be settled customarily by paying 'pitas'. The amount of payment depends on the closeness of the bond. However family ties with siblings and first cousins are not allowed to marry while second and third cousins are also not encouraged to marry. Then the village chief explained the engagement custom to both couples. In the engagement period, the man is not allowed to sleep his future wife. During that period, if the woman is pregnant then both will be subjected to sogit by paying a buffalo to the villagers of both sides. Men are not allowed to cancel the engagement without reasonable cause. If the man violated the custom, all the expenses during the engagement and the dowry need not be paid by the woman. On the other hand, if the woman decides to cancel the engagement with no reasonable cause she will pay double the expenses and the dowry of the man. This shows that for the Kadazandusun community, men are the heads of families and responsible for the family welfare. The act of women of cancelling the engagement means that she has done two mistakes. First, she has offended the man and the other one seemed that she has insulted the dignity of the

men. She has to pay double if she is found guilty.

After the negotiations of the custom and bond of engagements have been completed, the guests will be invited for a feast. The men's entourage will return to their house before sunset. This is to prevent unwanted events such as accidental deaths. Accidents may be caused by drunkenness when the event ended until late at night. If that happens, the engagement is automatically will be cancelled. Therefore, this situation should be avoided by governing such custom.

Conclusion

The euphemism in the negotiation of engagement is an education in keeping and maintaining good and truthful words in the Kadazandusun community. This illustrates that this ethnic emphasise on language politeness during negotiations to establish family ties through marriage. The characteristics of good words can be seen through the attitude of mutual self-esteem. This illustrates that this ethnic community practices high self-esteem. Honesty and courage in expressing the wishes of the heart, namely the wish to propose show the use of good and truthful words because this kind of conversation is not merely a joke but has a definite purpose. Practicing negotiations to reach the consent of matching their children reflects the attitude of cooperation practiced by this ethnic group. The importance of the leader's role such as the village chief and the head of custom in this engagement negotiation is an overview that this ethnic community practices patriotism.

The privately held proposal of negotiation by both parties in the practice of Kadazandusun community has a specific purpose. The main purpose is to convey the male intention towards the female formally through her parents. This shows the determination of the man to marry the woman and gives respect to her parent. The act of conveying the desire requires the blessing of both parties. The desire which is conveyed officially is also an honour by the man to the girl as having a perfect dignity and self esteem. This clearly illustrates the order of the community of people who adhere to the religious teachings of both parties.

Additionally, the proposal processes done privately aimed to protect dignity. The act of announcing the engagement by either the male or female in the Dusun society is viewed as a disrespectful conduct. Such acts seem to be excessive. Custom like this is given less attention in today's society, but there are those who show up the engagement ceremony in social media like Facebook, instgram, blog and so on. It should be understood that the process of the engagement has its own challenges especially in obtaining the consent of both parties. Failure to reach an agreement means the engagement will not be conducted. This can be degrading and embarrassing especially if it has been disseminated first. This is one of the reasons why it needs to be done privately. This nobleness should be preserved to maintain the sanctity of the engagement as well as in accordance with religious teachings. Language politeness in negotiations is essential in educating the community in order to become courteous, respectful to people regardless of religion, race and position. The agreement in marriage allows the spouses to live their

lives more comfortably because the reason for this marriage is to be respected by both parties and implemented suitably with local customs. Advice provided by families, custom leaders and village heads in negotiation become an important guidance for both partners to build a happy family. This custom preservation is in line with the Malay proverb 'let the child die, but do not let the custom die' which indicates the importance of respecting customs for the harmony of fellow human beings. This illustrates the attitude of the Kadazandusun community who love unity, peace and cooperation in life.

Rujukan:

- [1] Abdul Munir Ismail. 2013. Adat perkahwinan masyarakat Jawi peranakan India Muslim di Pulau Pinang. *Jurnal Antarabangsa Dunia Melayu* Jilid 6 Bil.2
- [2] Amman Sirom & Benedict Topin. 2017. Kadazandusunoloji om Rinait. Penampang: Koisaan Publications
- [3] Benedict Topin. 2017. Kadazandusun our Sacred Identity. Penampang: Koisaan Publications
- [4] Haron Din. 1991. *Manusia dan Islam* Jilid 2. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka dan Kempenterian Pendidikan Malaysia
- [5] Inon Shaharuddin Abdul Rahman. 1987. *Puisi Rakyat dan Analisis*. Kertas Kerja Seminar. Anjuran Kementerian Belia dan Sukan Negeri Sabah.
- [6] Larson, M.L. 1984. *Meaning- Based Translation: A Guide to Cross- Language Equivalence*. London: University Press of America.
- [7] Leah, M. (ed.) 1949. *Dictionary of Folklor, Mythology and Legend*. New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company
- [8] Noriati A. Rashid. 2007. *Kesantunan Melayu dalam Majlis Pertunangan* (Edisi Kedua). Tanjong Malim: Penerbit Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris
- [9] Robani Hj. Yusuf. 1984. Bab Nikah, rumusan Kuliah-kuliah. Melaka: Percetakan Suria.

Informant:

- [1] Angar Aying, 72 tahun, Kg. Toboh Ranau, Sabah
- [2] 2. Kiting Gusiang 72 tahun, Kg. Toboh Ranau Sabah
- [3] Kolindok Rombon 100 tahun, Kg. Tiong Tamparuli, Sabah
- [4] 4. Kotirin guntamas 69 tahun, Kg. Tongipan Tamparuli Sabah
- [5] 5. Lucia Gambilid 68 tahun, Kg Ranggalau Lama, Kiulu Tamparuli Sabah