

# Communication Pattern in Barzanji Malam Mulud Tradition Found in Bringin Ngaliyan during Covid 19

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**Abstract.** *Mulud* tradition is still preserved by Bringin's community with cultural, religious, and ritual activities. This activity is carried out so that the cultural environment of the Bringin community is maintained. However, the existence of this covid makes communication pattern in this tradition slightly changed. This study aims to explain the influence of covid-19 on communication patterns in the *Mulud* tradition. This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach with ethnographic studies of communication, to explaining the use of language towards society during covid-19 pandemic. Data were obtained from the book Maulud Al-Barzanji which transcribed and translated for each word to sentences. Data analysis was performed by using *agih* and *padan* method by Sudaryanto. The Fox's theory is used in this research to pars the description pattern and spell structure. The result showed that al-Barzanji book which has been analysed there are eleven poems with communication patterns which include the use of metaphors that show a sense of welcoming, praising and glorifying the Prophet Muhammad. Another results show that the covid-19 had impact to *mulud* tradition which are: the number of participants decreased, the tradition of eating together is replaced by providing rice box and additional reading of the *Qunut Nazilah* prayer so that the community is protected from disease.

## 1 Introduction

For Indonesian Muslims, the term “*maulid*” or “*mulud*” is familiar. This Mulud tradition has been carried out for years and has become one of the traditions that developed in Indonesia. The term “*maulid*” comes from Arabic, which means birth. This term is usually associated or juxtaposed with the birth of the Prophet Muhammad. This commemoration birth of the Prophet Muhammad is not a tradition carried out when the Prophet was still alive, but a tradition after the death of the Prophet Muhammad. For Muslims, this tradition is a form of respect and remembrance of the examples of the Prophet Muhammad in the form of cultural, religious, and ritual activities. It can be concluded that the Prophet's maulid tradition was carried out to commemorate the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad.

The Prophet's birthday celebrations are held in mosques, majlis ta'lim, Islamic boarding schools, and even home in Indonesia. The implementation of this event is carried out in a

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variety of ways, from simple to festive. For example, it uses a musical instrument such as a tambourine, and after the event ended, most Indonesians held a meal together. The Prophet's birthday is held in various events, such as the Prophet's birthday, mass circumcision, baby newborn, recitation, etc. Not only from a religious perspective, but the Indonesian government also respects this maulid tradition as a national holiday every 12 Rabiulawal in the Hijri calendar [1].

In this program of the Prophet's birthday, people read the Maulid Al-Barzanji, the book's name taken from the author's name, Sayyid Ja'far Bin Husain Bin Abdul Karim Al-Barzanji. According to Annemarie Schimmel [2], Maulid Al-Barzanji was written in prose and poetry equipped with praise and prayers to the Prophet containing the life story, the history of the birth, and several other things about the Prophet Muhammad. This book is truly a literary work rather than history because it emphasizes the beauty of the language. After reading Maulid Ad-Dhiba and Al-Barzanji, the community ended with a prayer. Usually, it was followed by a meal together to maintain social relationships and strengthen brotherhood between Muslims.

In the Al-Barzanji book, the "*Mahallul Qiyam*" section is an exciting part. When the recitation of *Mahallul Qiyam* is in progress, all the congregation will stand up from their seats to pay homage to the Prophet Muhammad as the most glorious servant of Allah. Standing up to honor something has become our tradition, and people even stand to respect inanimate objects. They seemed to feel the presence of the Prophet Muhammad. After the congregation is standing, usually one person will go around to other congregations to apply perfumed oil. It signifies welcoming the Prophet with fragrance.

With the many cultural differences in Indonesia, this study of the *Maulud Nabi* tradition in Indonesia is fascinating, both from a verbal and non-verbal perspective. Research on the Prophet's birthday previously has been conducted before by several researchers, such as Wahidi, on the culture and religion of Islam in the archipelago, which examines the traditions of the Prophet's birthday in Sundanese land. In this research, Islamic teachings can be stated as vital if the teachings are traditional and cultural events amid an Islamic society. Even though there are differences in the implementation procedures and community responses, this tradition shows that they are genuinely dialectic with the community. That is where the Prophet's birthday is considered to have a good influence in society so that this tradition is still ongoing today and even in the future. Another research on the celebration of the Prophet's birthday was carried out by Syarifudin, by connecting the social context of the North Barabai community with the development of the cultural value of social studies education. This research was conducted by applying the noble cultural values in the people of the Hulu district of North Sumatra. The results showed that the role of social relations and the development of social studies education values were as behavior guidelines, values as social control, and values as social protectors. In addition, the culture of deliberation to obey the leader, cooperation, fostering harmony, maintaining friendship are the social contexts implemented based on the Prophet's birthday [3].

Furthermore, Mansur's research entitled "Interpretation and Overinterpretation of Ja'far Ibn Hasan Al-Barzanji's Mawlid Al-Barzanji." In this study, the Prophet's birthday was widely responded to by Muslims in Indonesia. This positive response is inseparable from the fulfillment of the interpretation requirements, which demand a similarity in the world view between the author and the translator or interpreter. On the other hand, the interpretation of Maulid Al-Barzanji by those with different perspectives on religion and ideology will result in negative responses and judgments. This interpretation which was considered excessively, then led to the rejection of part of Maulid Al-Barzanji by Wahhabism and Salafism groups [4]. Another study by Khasanah applied Fox's theory as a reference in analyzing the data. This research focuses on describing and analyzing the meaning of the mantra "poan thrust dopeq" used by the Kedang community during migration rituals. The results of this paper

stated that the mantra contains an expression of respect and appreciation to God for nature that has been given to the people of Kedang [5].

Other ethnographic research conducted by Maryanti discusses the ethnography of communication in the thugun bath tradition in Pelangko village, Kelayangan sub-district, Indragiri Hulu District, Riau Province. This tradition is carried out for celebrating newborns. The tradition is carried out in the parents' house together with extended family and neighbors as guests. A ceremony is a form of gratitude to Allah, accompanied by wearing a bracelet for a newborn baby, then reciting prayers and mantras [6]. Furthermore, Faisal's research found two diction used in the mantra: general and exceptional diction. The general diction contained in the mantra includes *paku*, *engkayu*, *ikan lauk*, *lakak lakak*, *pantuk*, *merdeka*, *kemuda*, *panah*, *entamba*, *lalu*, *pucuk*, *rusuk*, *rantai*. Meanwhile, special diction includes *antu pedera*, *burung imuk*, *burung raya*, *semada*, *simbang babi*, *serambi*, *kirai*. In this study, three meanings are analyzed, including the meaning of personality, religious meaning, and social meaning [7].

The researches above entirely discuss the ethnography of communication that exists in Indonesian society. Whether it is verbal or non-verbal communication. However, no one has ever discussed the communication patterns in the mulud tradition. Therefore, the authors are interested in examining how communication pattern of the mulud in the Bringin village of Semarang and analyzing the *Mahall Al-Qiyam* reading in the *Al-Barzanji* book.

## 2 Method

This study discusses communication patterns in the culture of the Mulud in Bringin village, Ngaliyan Semarang. This field research uses a qualitative approach obtained in the form of primary data with field observations and interviews, while secondary data is obtained from the book *Maulud Al-Barzanji* [8]. Data analysis was performed using the *agih* and match method by Sudaryanto [9]. The equivalent technique used here helps sort out each word: praising and metaphorical prose. In addition, researchers also conducted interviews with local religious leaders to find out more about the culture there and to deepen the translation and study of data. In analyzing words, the decomposition of the author's description pattern and structure uses the theory proposed by Fox [10].

## 3 Result and Discussion

The tradition of the Prophet's birthday in Bringin village is carried out from 6th Rabiul Awal to 12 Rabiul Awal after the evening prayer. The Bringin people perform evening prayers in the congregation at the Miftahul Jannah mosque, located in the village of Bringin Indah. There are differences in communication patterns before and after the *Maulid* tradition during the Covid-19 pandemic compared to before the pandemic. Before the Prophet's birthday, the first difference is that there is a recitation of the *Qunut Nazilah* prayer at the fourth rak'ah of the Isya prayer, as in general, *Qunut* prayers are performed at dawn prayers. In the recitation of the *Qunut Nazilah* prayer, the Bringin people are kept away from the dangers where the environment is in a bad situation.

After performing Isya prayer, the congregation then sits in a circle on the edge of the mosque at a distance. Then it was continued with reading the *Al-Barzanji* book led by the local *ustadz* by reading praises and *dhikr* accompanied by a tambourine musical instrument. In the reading of this book, the *Mahallul Qiyam* section becomes an exciting event because the congregation stands up from their seats. This is done because it is believed that when the recitation of *Mahallul Qiyam* the Prophet Muhammad came down to attend the *Maulid*, the

congregation stood up to welcome Him. The following are the readings of *Mahallul Qiyam* carried out at the Prophet's birthday:

- (1) *Yâ nabî salâm 'alaika, Yâ Rosûl salâm 'alaika*  
'Oh Prophet Muhammad, oh Rasul, peace be with you'.
- (2) *Yâ habîb salâm 'alaika, sholawâtullâh 'alaika*  
'Oh beloved of Allah, peace and blessings upon to you'.

The two sentences above are the opening forms of *Mahallul Qiyam*. The first sentence begins with a greeting for the Prophet Muhammad marked with the words *Ya Nabi* 'O prophet' and *Ya Rasul* 'O Rasul,' in which Prophet Muhammad is a Rasul and a model Prophet of Muslims. Then continued with the phrase *salâm 'alaika*, which means good luck to You; good luck refers to the Prophet Muhammad SAW as a form of respect for Him. Then sentence (2) contains two sentences of opening praise, namely first *ya habîb salâm 'alaika* 'Oh lover, best wishes to you,' where the Prophet Muhammad is Allah's lover who must be upheld, followed by the *alaika* greeting so that the Prophet gets prosperous. The form of praise for the second opening of *sholawâtullâh 'alaika* 'mercy of Allah for you, where all the people who recite these two opening sentences hope the Prophet Muhammad will get the welfare and love of Allah.

After the opening or welcoming of the greetings to the Prophet, the following readings contain praise to the Prophet. Some of these praises contain metaphorical meanings that are adapted to ancient language styles, which intend to uphold the name of the Prophet Muhammad as follows;

- (3) *Asyroqol badru 'alainâ, fakhtafat minhul budûru*  
'The full moon has risen illuminating us, fading other full moon'.
- (4) *Mitsla husnik mâ ro-ainâ, qotthu yâ wajhas-surûri*  
'I have never seen beauty like you, a cheerful faced person'.
- (5) *Anta syamsun anta badrun, anta nûrun fauqo nûrin*  
'You are like the sun, you are like a full moon, you are a light above a light'.
- (6) *Anta iksîrun wa ghôlî, anta mishbâhush-shudûri*  
'You are like expensive gold, you are the light of the heart'.

The four sentences above contain praise for the figure of the prophet Muhammad SAW by using a metaphorical language style that holds a special meaning. All sentences describe the presence of the prophet Muhammad in *Mahallul Qiyam* with a parable of extraordinary appearance and greatness. Sentence (3) contains two sentences of praise which describe the figure of the prophet who is likened to the full moon of *Ashroqol badru 'alainâ* 'the full moon has risen to shine on us,' the implied meaning of the praise uttered at *Mahallul Qiyam* in the hope of getting intercession from the prophet who is likened to the full moon. It was like when the prophet Muhammad appeared, all the other full moon lights faded with the use of the phrase *fakhtafat minhul budûru* as a form of praise for how radiant and incredible our prophet is so that it is likened to the full moon. Sentence (4) is another form of praise addressed to the prophet Muhammad with a sentence which means 'I have never seen a beauty like you, a cheerful faced person,' people who praise the prophet here glorify the prophet with the phrase 'I have never seen beauty like you' as if the prophet is the most beautiful thing that has ever been seen, then continued with the phrase *qotthu yâ wajhas-surûri* 'cheerful faced person,' people praised the prophet Muhammad that the prophet was someone with a cheerful

face and full of charm, generous with a smile polite. So that praise is expressed in a conceptual metaphor.

Sentence (5) contains a parable of the nature of the prophet Muhammad using the sentence *Anta syamsun anta badrun* 'You are like the sun,' the form of the sun is depicted with the figure of a prophet because of its rays that can illuminate all nature and humans. Sentence (5) closes with the following compliment, *anta nûrun fauqo nûrin* 'you are the light above the light,' where the meaning refers to the figure of a prophet who is likened to being more radiant than sunshine. Sentence (6) contains praise which likens the prophet to pure gold which is expensive with the recitation of *Anta iksîrun wa ghôlî* and *anta mishbâhush-shudûri*, which means that you are the lamp of the heart because the likeness of a lamp is a light in the dark.

Of the four contents of *mahallul qiyam* in the book *al-barzanji*, parables are used to describe the figure of the prophet Muhammad SAW, where the language style used is a metaphor in the form of a bright full moon, the sun shining on the earth, gold is expensive, and a lamp that illuminates the darkness.

Furthermore, *mahallul qiyam* continued by praising the specialty of the prophet Muhammad who received revelation and was exalted, from the readers of this book, in the following *lafadz*:

(7) ***Yâ habîbî yâ Muhammad, yâ 'arûsal-khôfiqoini***

'Oh my beloved, oh Muhammad, oh bride of of the east and the west lands (world)'.

(8) ***Yâ mu-ayyad yâ mumajjad, yâ imâmal qiblataini***

'Oh strengthened Prophet (revelation), oh exalted Prophet, oh Qibla direction priest'.

(9) ***Man ro-â wajhaka yas'ad, yâ karîmal wâlidaini***

'Anyone who sees your face must be happy, oh noble people both parents'.

Sentence (7) is the opening expression of the prayer *Yâ habîbî yâ Muhammad* 'dear my Beloved, dear Muhammad', the sentence begins with the praise of 'lover,' which refers to the context of the prophet Muhammad as Allah SWT's lover. *Yâ* 'arûsal-khôfiqoini 'Oh bride then follows the sentence of praise to the land of the east and west (world).' This sentence means that the prophet Muhammad became a role model for all people worldwide, all over the continent, both from east and west. Then sentence (8) contains praise for the superiority of the prophet Muhammad who has received revelation from Allah, the prophet who is exalted by all humanity, and the prophet who is the leader of the whole world. Praise to the prophet Muhammad is increasingly emphasized in a sentence (9) with the expression 'whoever sees your face must be happy'; the meaning is that the prophet Muhammad brings a message of peace to humanity. Anyone who looks at his face will be happy and peaceful; there is no resentment or anger in his heart.

Furthermore, *mahallul qiyam* was closed with prayers and hopes from the community to the prophet Muhammad SAW; the closing prayer *lafadz* is as follows.

(10) ***Robbi farhamnâ jamî'an, bijamî'ish-shôlihâti***

'Robbi have mercy on us all by being able to carry out all good deeds'.

(11) ***Wa sholâtullâhi taghsyâ 'adda tahrîris-suthûri Ahmadal hâdî Muhammad shôhibal wajhil munîri***

'Prayer of Allah may be poured out on Ahmad the guide, namely the Prophet Muhammad, the owner of a shining face'.

The closing sentence in *mahallul qiyam* is closed with the sentence (10) *Robbi farhamnâ jamî'an, bijamî'ish-shôlihâti* means 'Robbi have mercy on us all by being able to carry out all good deeds' where this prayer implies that humans expect the blessing of Allah as the

God whom almighty power to give them a sense of *istiqomah* in carrying out good deeds throughout life, perfect deeds in the form of celebrating the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad. (11) *Wa sholâtullâhi taghsyâ' adda tahrîris-suthûri Ahmadal hâdi Muhammad shôhibal wajhil munîr* has the meaning 'sholawat Allah may be poured out on Ahmad the guide, namely Prophet Muhammad the owner of a shining face' which means that prayer of Allah may be poured out to Prophet Muhammad who has a face. Shining and glowing face here means that the Prophet Muhammad possessed the extraordinary *charisma* that Allah gave. The closing sentence contains a hope where humans who recite the recitation in *mahallul qiyam* expect Allah to bestow mercy on the Prophet Muhammad SAW because we as humans get intercession from him.

The process of reciting *mahallul qiyam* in the *maulid* event of the Prophet Muhammad SAW was carried out simultaneously by all people present to celebrate the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad. Before entering this reading, the community started by reading prayer and praise to the Prophet. Then when the process of reciting *mahallul qiyam*, the whole community is required to stand up as a token of appreciation for the presence of the Prophet Muhammad in the middle of the assembly. No one is allowed to sit while reciting *mahallul qiyam*. Apart from violating tradition, this attitude is considered disrespectful to the great Prophet Muhammad SAW's lord during the Prophet's birthday celebration. After the reading of *Al-Barzanji*, the event was closed with a prayer reading led by a local religious figure.

The last event in the *maulid* tradition is eating together, commonly known as *tumpengan*, which contains yellow rice in a cone shape and complete side dishes in the form of fried chicken, tempeh, tofu, and eggs noodles, and vegetables. The rice shaped in a cone has the meaning of the majesty of Allah, the creator, while the yellow color in rice represents pleasures such as birth, marriage, finance, and so on. Then the side dishes and vegetables symbolize the contents of this beautiful universe which are presented so that humans remain grateful and love their nature, both animals and plants. *Tumpengan* is usually served using a bamboo *tampah* 'winnow' coated with banana leaves. *Tampah* bambu itself describes the land we walk on, which is vast as the base of human life, while banana leaves symbolize human habitation that every human being should be grateful for.

However, the tradition of *tumpengan* has disappeared since the existence of Covid-19, which was replaced by giving blessings. Directly, the essence of the celebration of the *maulid* tradition in society has undergone large-scale changes and restrictions. The philosophy of rice blessing cannot be ideally matched with the philosophy of *tumpengan*; however, in maintaining the tradition of the Bringin community, they still hold the Prophet's birthday with established protocols such as using a mask, sitting at a distance, and using a hand sanitizer before entering the mosque.

## 4 Conclusion

With the Covid-19 pandemic, the communication pattern in celebrating the Prophet's birthday in Bringin-Ngaliyan Semarang, Central Java, has changed significantly. First, a reading of *Qunut Nazilah* was carried out at the last *rak'ah* in *Isya* prayer during the Covid-19 period. This is done because Bringin's people want to be aware of the world attached to a pandemic to stay safe from any dangers. Second, the recitation of *al-barzanji* when *mahallul qiyam*, usually done 'without distance,' becomes a 'distance.' However, the distance during *mahallul qiyam* does not diminish the content of the praise, prayers, and hopes of Muslims for the Prophet with metaphorical expressions. Third, the tradition of *Tumpengan* with cone-shaped yellow rice and complete side dishes at the Prophet's birthday was removed during the Covid-19 pandemic and replaced with a blessed rice box. However, large-scale restrictions during the Covid-19 pandemic did not prevent the Bringin-

Ngaliyan community from celebrating the Prophet's birth starting from 6 Rabiul Awal to 12 Rabiul Awal, of course, by implementing established health protocols.

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