Semiotic Construction in Promoting Intercultural Communication: A *Tiba Meka* Rite of Manggarai, Indonesia

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Abstract: Semiotic construction has an enormous influence on the latest studies in promoting intercultural communication. Understanding all symbols of traditional rites and fostering mutual respect, compassion, sympathy and empathy for other cultures is understood as a new angle. Moreover, semiotic construction is a contact tool for cultural qualities. This research aims to explore and reveal the multicultural values that are contained in the *tiba meka* rite. The analysis examines 50 custom spokespersons over the period of February to December 2019 and uses interviews, stationery collection, field notes and audio-visual recordings. Three research results concerning the *tiba meka* rite were found. First, semiotic meanings used in *tiba meka* rites are semiotic expressions that invite national or international outsiders, government guests, religious leaders and community leaders. Second, the philosophy relates to the theory, personality and morality of economics behind semiotic spoken words. This philosophy is influenced by the following main philosophies: pragmatism and indoctrism. Third, the *tiba meka* rite's multicultural values include respect, gender, politics, solidarity, faith, tolerance, political, social, economic, authority and familiarity, and these values promote intercultural communication. The six steps used by the Manggarai people to welcome outsiders include these concepts.
Keywords: intercultural communication, semiotic construction, *tiba meka* rite

INTRODUCTION

Semiotics is often encountered in everyday life; humans not only express their common sense literally but also through symbols and signs. A symbol is viewed as a good method of articulating insights to deliver hidden multicultural and philosophical values, norms and messages to the interlocutors, including the *tiba meka* rite in Manggarai, Indonesia. Indonesia is an archipelago nation where diverse forms of ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural groups coexist, and it has many cultural rites and spoken languages. Different traditions are exhibited by how they greet visitors, how they dress, their rules of politeness and many more factors. The Manggarai are an ethnic group from West Flores in Indonesia, and their speech community has various rites that provide fundamental multicultural norms and philosophic values (Jama et al.). Their traditional clothing, attributes and various utterances are closely related to semiotic expressions.

Semiotics is viewed as studying all types of signs and symbols, as well as what people mean and how people react to objects or concepts they refer to (Chandler). Semiotic construction has been found in all forms of cultural traditions in this region, such as the *tiba meka* rite, *caci* dance, marriage proposals, death, birth name, customary laws and harvest rite (Menggo). These symbols and signs convey hidden messages to the wider community or interlocutors.

Ethnic groups all over the world display their cultural colours, which makes other people admire them and implicitly encourages others to sympathise and empathise with them (Foroutan; Kobzeva et al.; Menggo and Suastra). Semiotic construction in cultural rites is an ideal option for the traditional spokespersons, as it ensures that all cultural and philosophical values are easily understood by interlocutors from different cultural backgrounds. A traditional spokesperson is required to display the meaning of the symbol with the appropriate code so that interlocutors can read the symbol and understand its meaning (Mudjiyanto and Nur). Semiotics can be understood from the words, images, sounds, dances and gestures that are presented by a certain ethnic group, which provide rich and accurate information about the hidden values (Isnaini et al.)

Semiotics plays an important role in transferring the hidden values that are contained in a certain rite. Denotation and connotation are the main methods of interpreting the values in a rite. There are two layers of

interpreting semiotic expressions, namely denotation and connotation (Barthes) . Denotation means what and who is being depicted in the images, words, sounds and gestures, and connotation focuses on the implied meaning. This study uses both layers to analyse the multicultural and philosophical values that are represented in the images and utterances delivered by the spokespersons of the *tiba meka* rite.

Semiotic expressions in the *tiba meka* rite have tremendous power in stimulating the psychology of guests to unite them with the native villagers. The gestures and utterances that are presented display uncountable multicultural values. The use of semiotics demonstrates the language function in traditional rites. It has been suggested that the traditional spokespersons display their hidden multicultural values functionally. Functional communication indicates the inter-dependence of the language function, traditional rites and human life. Knowledge about language functions creates a strong basis for a speaker to communicate better (Hassen; Menggo et al.).

Semiotic construction examines the linguistics and ideological and cultural values that are presented by a certain ethnic group. It is a method of analysing meanings by looking at signs, such as words, pictures, symbols, gestures, colours and materials. A semiotic approach enables both senders and receivers to adapt to cultural diversity and become competent intercultural communicators (Sahraee). Semiotic construction is believed to be one of the most powerful and influential ways of thinking about the hidden cultural, social and ideological values and norms (Sharma and Gupta). They further claimed that semiotic construction encourages the receivers of the message to use cultural knowledge to read the message and formulate an appropriate response.

Previous researchers found strong evidence to show that semiotic construction acts as a medium to understand how people construct the cultural and philosophical norms and social values in an ethnic group. In addition, it can generate a new perspective for new meanings in real interactions (Isnaini et al.; Kusuma and Nurhayati; Torop).

Recent empirical results have not firmly advocated for semiotic construction in fostering intercultural communication. Therefore, by discussing the multicultural and philosophical values in the *tiba meka* rite, this present work attempts to fill this gap.

Semiotic construction in intercultural communication is necessary in the current study. It is understood as a new angle to understand all symbols in cultural rites, such as verbal expressions, gestures, custom colours, use of materials, participants involved and turn-taking during speech, in a particular cultural group. Moreover, semiotic construction can explore the hidden multicultural, human and philosophical values that are presented by a certain ethnic group and attract interlocutors' compassion and empathy (Martinez; Ramadania and Arifin).

Some studies have shown that semiotic construction can offer a new insight into intercultural communication by developing socio-cultural activities, appreciating other people's local wisdom and activating cultural linguistics. For example, (Sharma) claimed that semiotic construction was a medium of communication towards cultural attributes, such as signs, codes, symbols, specific stories, norms, themes, myths or ideas, that can be interpreted critically from a multicultural perspective. (Erton) affirmed that semiotic construction plays a vital role in helping people to incorporate excellent cultural values into their community life and can preserve cultural identity in intercultural communications. Semiotic construction is a tool for examining meanings by looking at signs, such as phrases, pictures, sounds, utterances, symbols and fashions, that articulate numerous interpretations (Al-zubaidi and Abdullah). Additionally, they claimed that semiotics could stimulate one's linguistic and non-linguistic practices. Moreover, semiotic construction is used to strengthen human relationships in multicultural environments (Almirabi).

The above shows that there is a need for the current study, which contrasts and strengthens previous reports by analysing the findings of semiotic construction in the Manggarai people's *tiba meka* rite in eastern Indonesia.

This research seeks to examine and reveal the multicultural and philosophical norms in the *tiba meka* rite. To this purpose, the researchers proposed the following research questions:

1) How do people construct semiotic symbols in the *tiba meka* rite?
2) What philosophies do the semiotics used in the Manggarai people's *tiba meka* rite imply?
3) What multicultural values in the *tiba meka* rite promote intercultural communication?

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The *tiba meka* rite

Cultural rites have become part of everyone's lives. These rites are performed as a form of appreciation and reveal the hidden values that are implied in a particular rite. A rite is viewed as a tool to inspire or promote individual perception and behaviour that are socially appropriated in daily life (Yusoff et al.). Therefore, this practice is carried out to reintegrate the dichotomy of thought–action, which tends to differentiate between faith and actions or any number of other counterparts (Bell). Moreover, (Swami) reported that the primary function of a rite is to create and re-create the innumerable moral values and beliefs of a specific ethnic group. In eastern Indonesia, the Manggarai ethnic group possess a special, ancient rite called the *tiba meka*. *Tiba meka* rite functions to welcome and glorify guests who come to a certain village or institution, both guests who come from one country or across countries. *Tiba meka* emanates from the word *tiba,* which means 'accept' in an etymological interpretation, as well as 'hold', 'counter', 'agree' and 'welcome' and *meka,* which means 'welcome guest'. A newborn child is called *meka weru*, which means 'newly born guest' (Ndiung and Bayu).

In the Manggarai people's daily lives, there are three categories of guests that can arrive in a village. The first category of guests includes *meka lako léjong, meka lako liba* (guests who unexpectedly stop in a village), *meka pika barang* (travelling salesmen) and *meka ata kawé kaba, jarang agu meka masa waé* (guests looking for horses or buffalos and just drinking). Second, *meka sot poli reked* (guests who vowed to go to the village). The second category of guests includes people who go to a village due to family or village business, such as a government visitor, a religious man or the Non-Government Organization guests. The third category of guests includes *meka léjong toé reké* (guests who come without notice), such as explorers and tourists.

The guests that are usually welcomed are *meka sot poli reked* (guests who promised to visit a village). This group of guests is divided in several categories (Pandor). The first is *meka sot tegi lité* (guests) in traditional ceremonies, namely *meka penti* (thanksgiving visitors for the rite of harvest), *meka randang tana* (invited guests for clearing a new land in the village), *meka kudut te caci wagal* (thanking the guests for the rite of marriage), *meka cai meka weru kot meka céar cumpé* (name of a rite for a

newborn child), *meka congko lokap* (guests at the opening of a traditional village house) and many more. The second is *meka ba tombod kamping ité* (guests needing villagers), such as *meka mai tegi ité kudut ngo gori disé* (guests welcoming villagers to their rites), *ulu wae mai sida* (the family of the wife calls for prayer and assistance) and *woé mai lamar wua tuka dité* (the family of the man who came to propose to his daughter). The third is *meka ema pemerinta, agama, agu meka toko masyarakat* (government, religious and public guests). They generally provide material and spirite support or aid for the growth of the village.

This study focuses on evaluating semiotic construction in the *tiba meka* rite of *tiba meka ata sot poli reked* (guests who promised to visit a village). The semiotics presented in this rite provides philosophical, multicultural, human, anthropological, sociological and psychological values (Ndiung).

Use of Semiotics in Intercultural Communication

The founders of semiotics are generally regarded as Peirce and Saussure (Nöth). They proposed the following two major theories: *semiology* (Saussure's term) and *semiotics* (Peirce's term). However, the term 'semiotics' is currently commonly used to cover the entire field (Nöth). Nöth's concept strengthens the understanding that semiotics is a space of human consciousness that can create and expand into any number of dimensions. For example, (Parasecoli) investigated the use of semiotics for food and travelling in an intercultural communication context. Parasecoli claimed that semiotics could help speakers to achieve a better understanding of behaviours related to culinary encounters, such as how the waitress serves and understands the menu ordered by guests. Additionally, he added that in the travelling field, semiotic codes are commonly used by tourists to understand their destination, as this understanding enables them to enjoy themselves and have fun. Moreover, semiotic knowledge can enable them to read the directional signposts on the highway. Research by (Parasecoli) confirms that semiotics includes everything that can be considered a sign. Signs are taken as phrases, pictures, sounds, odours, tastes, actions, fashions or other materials.

Although many people are unable to communicate their cultural values verbally, they can communicate using non-verbal symbols. The analysis of symbolism and sense could be described as semiotics (Black et al). Symbols bridge a variety of concepts, point to shared understandings, emotions and

cultural information and assert the personal and social identities of a particular ethnic group. The symbolisation is a basic human need, and this differentiates humans and other living things (Lubis and Khasiah).

Semiotic language is required in cross-cultural communication, as it can disclose hidden cultural and philosophical values. Cultural symbols can be accurately communicated using appropriate semiotic languages. However, the ability of a speaker to communicate according to the cultural norms and values depends on the speaker's adaptation process (Utami). Semiotics act as a problem-solver in this context by helping to interpret the various symbols that are expressed.

Semiotic culture is used as a communication channel to deliver specific cultural values. Cultural semiotics are a source of politeness norms in intercultural communication (Hassen). According to Hassen, politeness rules or principles are language- and culture-specific rather than universal. Hassen added that semiotic items not only include speech but also non-linguistic signs.

Semiotic construction is further strengthened by (Nasution et al.), who provided a cultural semiotic in the *Manten* celebration in Indonesia. They claimed that semiotic construction is a learning medium that promotes learners' critical thinking in cross-cultural communication. According to them, the cultural ideologies and values of the *Manten* celebration should be explicitly included in the teaching materials so that students, as the next generation, can interpret and maintain the cultural and ideological values contained in that ceremony. They added that cultural values are not only expressed through words but also through symbols. Therefore, the semiotic symbol is understood as a symbol that is determined by its dynamic object in the sense that it must be truly interpreted. Moreover, an understanding of semiotic symbols is a central process of intercultural communication. Through the cultural semiotics that are presented, people with different cultural backgrounds understand the ethics, beliefs, norms and ideological values of a particular ethnic group. This idea allows students to gain intercultural skills through intercultural awareness. Therefore, cross-cultural comprehension should be taught in classes (Lwanga-Lumu; Ratnasari; Róg et al.).

Communicating with non-linguistic symbols has tremendous power in everyday interactions. Cultural values and norms of certain ethnic groups are conveyed more comprehensively than words/utterances. This concept

is required in intercultural communication to create appropriate and effective communication. Intercultural communication refers to the interactions between individuals from different cultural backgrounds and is generally conducted in an informal, face-to-face setting (Sarangi; Tiono). Moreover, language and culture are tightly linked, and intercultural spokespersons are strongly suggested to use non-verbal symbols to avoid misinterpreting cultural barriers.

Semiotic and Ideology

In defining the reality of everyday life, semiotics serves as ideological functions. Humans are *Homini lupus,* which means the makers of signs. Humans find meanings in the creation and interpretation of signs. Ideology is viewed as a strong basis to show how meanings are made and how reality is represented in the form of signs. Ideology can assist humans to become more aware of the mediating role of semiotics in constructing social realities.

French philosopher Destutt de Tracy suggested using the term 'ideology' to characterise the science of ideas, namely the discipline that would enable people to understand their prejudices and biases. Therefore, ideology is viewed as a sequence of ideas that shapes people into particular socio-historical contexts and promotes the prosperity of certain groups (Cavalaro; Nöth). Ideology turns an individual into a social person, and, in this context, it is a mode of thought through a specific cultural rite. Each cultural group develops and builds its life through ideology. Ideology is the ideal way to construct semiotic expressions.

Semiotics is a doctrine of signs that contribute to reading and interpreting the signs that are presented in cultural spaces (Lele). Ideology regulates how semiotic attributes work regarding racial profiling and assessment. This idea strongly indicates that semiotic construction is an ideology of cultural identity. Semiotic expressions may help people to reveal what they do not know and build on what knowledge they have. A sign is an ideological phenomenon and that all ideological phenomena have semiotic meanings, and no ideology exists without signs (Lukin). Additionally, (Lukin) claimed that philosophy is omnipresent and goes beyond what people can understand. Ideology can be presented in several different contexts. The context of the situation gives people the means to connect the text to the context of society, where the reason for the role

and roots of any philosophy is provided. This claim is in line with (Nöth), who stated that ideology is a value-neutral way of any cultural or social sign system. (Kelly) noted that ideology is viewed as an important debate where people are culturally inspired and express multicultural ideals and opinions based on the specific culture of discourse.

Ideology comprises the beliefs, values and opinions that form the way an individual or community thinks, behaves and practises in regulating practices and moral behaviours (Barker). Ideology influences the perceptions of an individual situation and event. In this context, ideology is viewed as a tool to assist us as humans in constructing our thoughts and controls our interpretation of an inevitable reality. Similarly, (Therborn) defined ideology as shaping our understanding about what exists, what is good and what is possible. These concepts are strengthened by the ideology proposed by (Takwin), who affirmed that ideology is a set of ideas that guides people in their efforts to achieve their specific aims. These notions clearly demonstrate that ideology plays an important role in constructing semiotic languages. Ideology is an umbrella term for people to construct semiotics accordingly to achieve meaningful intercultural communications.

METHODOLOGY

Approach and method

This research used a phenomenological-based qualitative approach. The qualitative approach aims to investigate the natural environment to interpret phenomena (Satori and Komariah). This study employed a phenomenological research method to observe people's experiences. This study took place in Manggarai, West Flores, Indonesia from February to December 2019 and included 50 *tiba meka* spokespeople from ten villages.

Participants

The research participants included 50 participants who were Manggarai and *tiba meka* speakers. The 50 individuals were chosen as informants using purposive sampling and snowball techniques.

Instruments

Based on the study's features, the researchers were the primary tool of this research. This definition correlates with the notion suggested by Lincon

and Guba (Satori and Komariah), who confirmed that people can be tools for data collection because they are dynamic, adaptive and use their senses. Secondary devices, such as interviews, a compilation of documents, field notes and audio-visual records, supported this principal instrument.

Research process
After collecting the data, the next step was to perform a data analysis. A qualitative data analysis was used using the following phenomenological method: first, the researchers identified and categorised the collected semiotics; second, the researchers reduced and removed the semiotic results; third, the researchers grouped and gave each semiotic construction an ideological theme; and fourth, the researchers identified the data. After collecting and grouping all the data, they identified and analysed the data based on the theory used in this research.

Data analysis procedure
The semiotics data that was obtained was viewed from the classification-based form, which allowed the researchers to analyse the meaning and function of semiotic construction. The next step was an analysis to build the meaning or ideology behind the semiotics. The informants were placed in a face-to-face seating arrangement. Every question was chosen for the interview list by the researchers, and the informants could respond freely according to their experiences. They were aware of the semiotics of the *tiba meka* rite.

RESULTS

Based on the research questions, three research findings were related to the *tiba meka* rite. First, the semiotic expressions used in the *tiba meka* rite are semiotics to welcome government, religious leader and community leader guests. Second, the philosophies behind the semiotic terms contribute to economic theory, personality and morality. The two key philosophies, pragmatism and indoctrism, are shaded by this philosophy. Third, the multicultural values that are embodied in the *tiba meka* rite are respect, gender, politeness, togetherness, religion, tolerance, politics, social, economics, authority and familiarity. These principles are included in the six steps of welcoming the guests of the Manggarai people, which

are as follows: 1) *réis de di'a* (well received); 2) *raés agu régés cama laing* (various joys and peacefulness); 3) *téing cepa* (physical and moral unity); 4) *inung waé kolang cama laing* (have a coffee together); 5) *reweng ce gewek* (requesting encouragement); and 6) *baro di'a* (requesting protection from guests). The following tables display these values in detail.

Step 1: *Réis de di'a* (well received)

Table 1. *Réis de di'a (well received)*

Rite steps	Semiotic types	Semiotic construction	Connotation meaning	Guest category	Ideology
Opening greeting.	Spoken words.	*Yo... Ema*/Ema pastor**, neho langkas kéta nawa dami anak dom, ai ita ité sengaji ema pemerinta/pastor. Mésén agu langkas nawa dami, manga ranga'd ité sengaji cé béo ho'o.*	Sir, we're very pleased with your presence. Our spirit is glad that you have come to our place.	Government. Religious leader. Community leader.	Identity.
	Spoken words.	*Ema .., bengkes kéta nai dami mendi anakm cé'é béo ho'o manga ranga ditét sengaji. Naka lami ité ného wua pandang, kapu ného wua pau.*	Sir, we gracefully welcome you and our heart is glad. We welcome you with great pleasure, like mango and pineapple fruits.	Government. Religious leader. Community leader.	Identity. Moral.
Prime activities.	Spoken words.	*Lelesn kébé, tadangn salang lako ditét sengaji, nanang kaut te cumang mendi anak'm cé'é béo ho'o.*	You have been on long excursions, mostly in the hills and the abyss because you want to meet us in this town.	Government. Religious leader. Community leader.	Moral.
	Spoken words.	*Ema, am lolong waé roho, tanda waé bajang itét sengaji, Ole…ema, oné waé's situ laud ta…agu oné leso's salé'd.*	Perhaps you drank the turbid water, and hopefully everything disappeared with running water and sunlight.	Government. Religious leader. Community leader.	Moral.

Rite steps	Semiotic types	Semiotic construction	Connotation meaning	Guest category	Ideology
Closing.	Spoken words.	*Hoo kin manuk bakok agu tuak kepok dami mendi dom.*	It is a white rooster and palm wine to welcome the visitor.	Government. Religious leader. Community leader.	Moral.

*) The word *Ema* (father) can be replaced by *Ende* (madam), or both can be used depending on whether the guests who come are male or female. *Ema* and *Ende* are used for guests of the government and public figures.

** The word *Ema pastor* (priest) is used for a Catholic religious leader.

Three steps are considered in Table 1. During the first step, the welcoming spokesman began the opening greeting. A speaker in a village is a traditional actor and a respected man. For the second step, the villagers expressed joy because guests had been in their village. A traditional spokesperson constructed various semiotics using spoken words to symbolise the villagers' admiration for the presence of guests. For the third step, the closing is delivered by a traditional spokesperson using spoken words. Other semiotic types, such as a white rooster, palm wine, long white shirt, *destar* (head cloth), *songket* (cloth) and a traditional dance group, are signs that the guests will be happy with the villagers, as shown in Figures 1 and 2 below.

Figure 1. *Tiba meka* dance

Figure 2. Palm wine and a white rooster

Moreover, both men and women perform the rite. *Tuak bakok* (palm wine), *lalong bakok* (a white rooster), traditional hat, traditional songs and a shawl are other types of semiotics that are used in this rite, as shown in Figure 3 below. A spokesperson from the receiver inside is a man, while a woman is in charge of wearing a scarf and hat for the guests. A hat is

reserved for male guests, while the shawls are for both male and female guests. The shawls have the following motifs according to the guests' sex: komodo dragon motifs for men and floral motifs for women. Guests are expected to receive certain items and respond to constructed semiotics. In this rite, an interpreter is needed if the guests are non-Manggarai.

Figure 3. The *tiba meka* rite is carried out by both men and women

Step 2: *Raés agu reges cama laing* (various joys and peacefulness)

Table 2. *Raés agu régés cama laing (various joys and peacefulness)*

Rite steps	Semiotic types	Semiotic construction	Connotation meaning	Guest category	Ideology
Greeting.	Spoken words.	*Ema/Endé, husur toé dumpu, hamar toé manga kudut mose mane gula dami anakm cé béo ho'o.*	Yeah, sir, don't be shocked by our limitations in this village	Government. Religious leader. Community leader.	Economy.
Intimacy atmosphere.	Spoken words.	*Ema/Endé, ho'o kami mendi anak dom, lonto torok padir wai réntu sa'i kapu agu naka ité.*	We gather and sit down together because when you visit our village, we are very happy and excited.	Government. Religious leader. Community leader.	Identity.
	Spoken words.	*Ema/Endé, toé manga méséd békék agu gelu dami mendi anak'm te kapu agu éko ite.*	Sir, we want to lap you in our arms, but we have a small body. You're so much bigger than us, and	Government. Religious leader. Community leader.	Moral.

Rite steps	Semiotic types	Semiotic construction	Connotation meaning	Guest category	Ideology
Closing.	Spoken words.	*Ema/Endé ..., ho'o tuak réis agu manuk kapu dami anak dom.*	we're really small. Sir, this white cock and this palm wine are to help you to relax and unwind.	Government. Religious leader. Community leader.	Moral.

Three stages are considered in Table 2. The first stage is the welcome, in which visitors are greeted using the word *Ema* (father). This term indicates the patriarchal culture of Manggarai people. A typical speaker would express their humanity with this greeting by explaining the village's situation to those who do not possess comprehensive and detailed knowledge. The second stage is a sign of intimacy. During this stage, a traditional speaker explains how the guest is known to the villagers. The third stage is a sign of approval. A traditional speaker invites the guest to join the villagers and enjoy the atmosphere of enthusiasm with *tuak réis* (welcome wine).

Steps 3 and 4: *Téing cepa* (physical and moral unity) and *inung waé kolang cama laing* (have a coffee together)

The third step is the celebration of *téing cepa* (physical and moral unity). This process focuses on making a betel nut a sign of intimacy. The women serve the betel nut. The betel nut is used as a symbolic welcome in the Manggarai community after welcoming the guests. Betel nuts are combined with betel lime and would be chewed slowly. This symbolises that the Manggarai people's brotherhood is not temporary but long-lasting. In addition, the betel nut symbolises family. Discovering the betel nut enables the guests to enjoy the atmosphere of fellowship in a Manggarai home. *Inung waé kolang cama laing* (have a coffee together) is then served as a drink after the offering of a betel nut.

Step 5: *Reweng ce gewek* (requesting encouragement)

Table 3. *Reweng ce gewek (requesting encouragement)*

Rite steps	Semiotic types	Semiotic construction	Connotation meaning	Guest category	Ideology
Greeting.	Spoken words.	*Ema/Endé, porong néka babang agu langat landing toé baca taragm.*	Sir/Madam will be shocked to see that our face does not shine.	Government. Religious leader. Public leader.	Economy.
Recognition.	Spoken words.	*Ema/Endé, néka koé babang mendmi ai don bodok, toé ngancéng baca.*	Perhaps Sir/Madam is upset because we can't read.	Government. Religious leader. Public leader.	Moral.
	Spoken words.	*Ema/Endé, néka koé ruak agu rabo ai ami mendi anak'm ngondé holes mejéng hesé.*	Do not be upset with us because of our pity, sir/mother.	Government. Religious leader. Public leader.	Moral.
Closing.	Spoken words.	*Ho'o kin tuak dami mendi anakm kudut tegi reweng ce gewek ditét sengaji.*	This is our wine to ask you for your precious encouragement.	Government. Religious leader. Public leader.	Moral.

Three steps are considered in Table 3. The first step is the greeting, opening excuse and sir/madam, which is a sign for the guests' honourable welcome. The excuse demonstrates the greatness of the influence of the visitor who visited the village and explains the village's minimal economic condition. The second step is knowledge, where the speaker talks frankly about the real issues of the village's society, namely the level of education and the lazy way of working. The third step is the closing step, which is when the speaker gives the guest palm wine to symbolise the sincerity of the villagers and asks the guest to offer some positive views on their village's growth.

Step 6: *Baro di'a* (requesting protection from guests)

Table 4. *Baro di'a (requesting guests for protection)*

Rite steps	Semiotic types	Semiotic construction	Connotation meaning	Guest category	Ideology
Thankful greeting.	Spoken words.	*Ema/Endé, bengkes nuk dami séngét curup di'a dité. Ai mai dité te pandé jari ami laing.*	Sir/madam, we are glad to receive your advice from our heart. Your arrival will boost and fill our life with expectations.	Government. Religious leader. Public leader.	Moral.
Expectation.	Spoken words.	*Ngaji dami mendim, léwé lé, depa sena mosé dité lobo lino ho'o.*	Our prayer to Heaven, you are blessed with a long life and business success, so we can interact once more in the coming years.	Government. Religious leader. Community leader.	Moral. Economy.
Apology.	Spoken words.	*Ema/Endé, néka koé na'as ata toé kop tombo, neka koé pingas sanggéd kéng atas toé singgard Oné waés laud oné lesos saléd sangged situ.*	Sir/Madam, if our utterances and acts don't make you happy, we're sorry sir. Don't hide those in your heart and mind. Everything will be thrown away by the sun and river.	Government. Religious leader. Community leader.	Moral.
Closing.	Spoken words.	*Ema/Endé, ho'o kin tuak baro sala dami mendim.*	Palm wine as a token of our apology and sincerity.	Government. Religious leader. Community leader.	Moral.

Four steps are considered in Table 4. The first is a polite thank you as a guest symbol. The speaker, who represents the people of the village, thanks the visitor for being willing to meet with and be friendly to everyone. The second is optimism, which represents the people of the villages praying for their visitors to be blessed with a healthy life and success so that the guests can visit the residents again. The third is regrets and apologies to the visitor by the representative. As a sign of the sincerity of the apology of the people, the speaker offers the guest palm wine.

The data obtained from the *tiba meka* rite strongly indicates several multicultural and philosophical results that must be taken into consideration. The results of the semiotic expressions in the *tiba meka* rite (Tables 1–4) show that 20 *tiba meka* spokespersons constructed eleven types of semiotics, namely spoken words, a white rooster, palm wine, gestures, traditional song and dance, traditional hat and shawl, long and white shirt, *destar* (head cloth) and *songket* (cloth). The three philosophies behind them were employed during the six stages of the *tiba meka* rite.

DISCUSSION

The guest is welcomed using multicultural and philosophical values for all events, which encourages interactions across cultures. The role of the speaker in establishing an adequate semiotic construction in the process of internalising multicultural and philosophical values is crucial, even though in this culture not all visitors are welcomed by this rite. Individual visitors, elected officials, religious groups and guests of community leaders are generally welcomed by this tradition.

Respect, gender, politeness, togetherness, religious, tolerance, politics, social, economics, authority and familiarity are the multicultural values that are contained in the *tiba meka* rite. These values are important for fostering the Manggarai people's intercultural communication (Menggo). In this rite, the guests are glorified without considering their gender, social strata, ethnicity, religion or race. The Manggarai people are eager to show their openness, intimacy, humility, honour, responsibility and courtesy towards a guest. Furthermore, (Vaagan) reported that local values, identities and initiatives strengthen global awareness of several topics, such as religious tolerance, cross-culture sensitivity and cross-cultural communication and collaboration. Additionally, (Sumiati) claimed that local culture has

become the basis of intercultural communication, such as tolerance, empathy, openness, positivity, equality, mutual respect and appreciation towards one another.

The core value of the local culture is guidance in life (Kartika). Kartika further claimed that local cultural values highlight how speakers are encouraged to promote mutual respect, tolerance, sympathy and empathy toward other cultures. Cultural values comprise important knowledge and skills that are necessary to communicate effectively across cultures, both domestically and internationally. Values that are contained in a certain culture facilitate speakers as effective intercultural communicators. In terms of the *tiba meka* rite in the Manggarai speech community, (Ndiung and Bayu) stated that the *tiba meka* rite is a special practice that welcomes the visitor and facilitates intercultural contact, such as enhancing brotherhood and fostering hospitality.

The rite of *tiba meka* is replete with communicative texts that execute language in semiotic terms. Metaphorical utterances are the dominant type of semiotic language that are used at each stage of this rite. Moreover, metaphorical utterances display connotation meanings, which indicate the Manggarai speech community's culture of indirect communication and glorifying guests. In line with this idea, (Barthes) developed the theory of connotation as a basis for studying and building theories about culture. Besides that, (Johansen and Larsen) claimed that a connotation has several interconnected meanings, including in cultural semiotics. According to them, cultural semiotics are understood as signs of cultural habits, codes, actions, norms and values. Furthermore, a white rooster, palm wine, traditional dance, songs, traditional hat, shawl, *songket* (cloth) and other material forms are types of semiotics that are constructed in each *tiba meka* rite.

These semiotic communications draw on values, identity and the economic theory. Ideology has influenced how cultural identity is defined and conceptualised in the pluralism context (Kim). Ideology is a rationale of *tiba meka* spokespersons in the construction of the related and adequate semiotic communications. This understanding is in line with the concept proposed by (Ndiung). Ndiung believed that in *tiba meka* traditions, there are several philosophical beliefs, such as anthropological, sociological and psychological values, and those willing to live in peace would welcome visitors in this culture of expression.

Moral ideology is beneficial for Manggarai people. It is used to educate the younger generation to practise showing transparency, modesty, integrity and kindness towards guests. Thus, (Freeden) noted that the moral philosophy is used to self-justify, explain how our ideas or feelings are expressed and contribute to the development of adequate semiotic communication. The expressions of moral meaning are a way of supporting people in everyday conversation (Kanoksilapatham; Sua et al.). They claimed that moral value expressions could educate citizens in an ethnic group and teach them to be humble, compassionate, fair and polite to each another. These local values are necessary in an intercultural communication context.

Another semiotic that was used in this rite is the personality theory. Semiotics in the form of a metaphor, such as *ema/endé, bengkes nuk dami séngét curup di'a dité. Ai mai dité te pandé jari ami laing* (sir/madam, we are glad to receive your advice from our heart. Your arrival will boost and fill our life with expectations), demonstrates how the integrity of the villagers welcomes visitors. These metaphors have glorified the visitor, valued their cultural values and acknowledged their economic shortcomings. In line with this perspective, (Vengadasamy; Cortazzi and Jin) stated that for certain ethnic groups, metaphors are a conceptual construction. Similarly, (Pandor) affirmed that a semiotic analysis makes a critical liberative contribution in dismantling the dominative and ideological structures that often enter cultural spaces. However, Pandor further acknowledged that a semiotic analysis is sometimes unable to read and interpret phenomena in cultural spaces. This situation suggests that metaphorical expressions contribute to delivering cultural messages.

Semiotic structure is also used in metaphor form, such as *ema/endé, husur toé dumpu, hamar toé manga kudut mose mane gula dami anakm cé béo ho'o* (Table 2), which literally means 'yes sir, let us not be shocked at our constraints in this village'. This semiotic construction promotes the ideological meaning, which is the economy. Although community members honestly express their economic constraints, they continue to glorify outsiders. Economy ideology provides a way to build appropriate semiotic communications (McKinnon). McKinnon further believed that the metaphor construction was based on a powerful philosophy that aimed to make the communication culture useful and successful.

CONCLUSION

The *tiba meka* rite incorporates eleven types of semiotic constructions based on an ideological basis among the Manggarai, which is an ethnic group in East Indonesia. These semiotic constructions comprise spoken words (metaphors), a white rooster, palm wine, gesture, traditional song and dance, traditional hat and shawl, long and white shirt, *destar* (head cloth) and *songket* (cloth). Spoken words are predominantly used due to the culture, which includes indirect communication and glorifying guests. The semiotic expressions are used during each stage of this rite.

The philosophies that underline the semiotic languages in the *tiba meka* rite are split into two dominant ideologies. The first is the philosophy of pragmatism, which is the principle that governs the Manggarai people's daily lives when welcoming visitors. The second is the indoctrism philosophy, which is the indoctrism phase that educates the philosophical definition and notion of the Manggarai people's lives in welcoming visitors and establishing good relationships between humans, humans and nature, humans and spirits and humans and deities.

Respect, gender, politeness, togetherness, religious, tolerance, politics, social, economics, authority and familiarity are the multicultural values that are embodied in the *tiba meka* rite. These values have tremendous power in promoting intercultural communication and are encountered in the six steps of welcoming outsiders of Manggarai people. These steps are as follows: 1) *réis de di'a* (well received); 2) *raés agu régés cama laing* (various joys and peacefulness); 3) *téing cepa* (physical and moral unity); 4) *inung waé kolang cama laing* (have a coffee together); 5) *reweng ce gewek* (requesting encouragement); and 6) *baro di'a* (requesting guests for protection).

It is recommended that custom spokespersons of the *tiba meka* rite in this speech community should employ semiotic expressions to promote intercultural communication. Traditional representatives, the state officials, church figures and representatives of civic leaders are customary guests in this community of speech. This research does not study semiotic construction's role in welcoming outsiders, including the *ulu wae mai sida* (the family of the wife calls for prayer and assistance), *woé mai lamar wua tuka dité* (the family of the man who came to propose to his daughter) and other cultural rites. This gap should be discussed in future research.

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