

# The Performance of *Ruwatan* in Javanese Community: An Anthropolinguistic Approach

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**Abstract.** This study focused on the *Ruwatan* (cleaning the village) Performance of the Javanese community. The objective of the research was to find out the pattern of *Ruwatan* performance in the *Ruwatan* activity (cleaning the village) of the Javanese community through the concept of an anthropolinguistic approach that includes text, co-text, and context. further, it is used to describe the structure, stages, performance components, and functions of *Ruwatan* speech. The research data were video recordings, in-depth interviews and participatory observations. The method in this study using ethnography proposed by Spradley (1979, 1980) was applied in this study from data collection to analysis. The results showed that the *Ruwatan* performance contained in the *Ruwatan* process of the Javanese community was the performance of religion, tranquillity, order and comfort. The puppeteer's performance is the performance of acting as an intermediary between the human realm and the supernatural or supernatural realm by using offerings and spells containing supernatural powers in instructing, informing, and pleading with the Almighty.

**Keywords:** Performance, *Ruwatan*, Javanese Community, Anthropolinguistics

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## 1 Introduction

The study of performance is critical because humans have a unique way of conveying or expressing their thoughts and feelings. Each community must have a sign and indexicality capable of conveying information verbally or non-verbally. Humans also have performances in the form of happy, joyful, and sad expressions. For instance, if a child receives a gift from his parents in exchange for achieving a high test score, the child will display an extremely happy face and the most beautiful smile. In *Ruwatan*, this tradition is performed by a man to convey the message and significance of the activity.

Each community has its own unique method of expressing its creativity. There are numerous modes of performance, including dance, singing, rhyme, drama, poetry, puppeteers, puppets, offerings, and mantras. *Ruwatan* is one of the oral traditions found in the Simalungun area, Neighborhood X, Sinaksak Village. Oral treatment is used to deliver messages. The study of

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oral traditions is centred on the unity of form, content, and inheritance in their performances and all associated improvisations [1]. *Ruwatan's* performance can be seen through wayang performances delivered by a Dalang who can elicit an emotional response from the listener/audience.

*Ruwatan* is derived from the word ruwat, which means unsteady or unsteady. Meanwhile, cleaning the village and *Ruwatan* entails letting go of all forms of wrongdoing, disasters, and filthy things through offerings to the Creator of nature, as well as gratitude for all the life and peace that have been given. *Ruwatan* is a form of business for the Javanese community that aims to obtain blessings in the form of safety, health, peace, tranquillity, welfare, and happiness for oneself in particular and the family as a whole [2].

The implementation of this event is a routine village event that occurs each year in Selo month. According to Javanese philosophy, a clean village entails cleansing the village of all bad deeds, and following this village, the community of Neighborhood X is expected to be cleaned. Kelurahan Sinaksak will be safe, peaceful, fertile, and prosperous, and will always be under Allah SWT's protection. This event takes place at night and includes sacred situations and conditions such as the Dalang reading mantras as the leader of the *Ruwatan* (village cleaning) event, as well as offerings and puppet performances [3].

As a result, research on *Ruwatan* (village cleaning) in Javanese society employs an anthropolinguistic approach to examine oral traditions associated with regional customs. The purpose of this project is to identify speech patterns as a component of cultural practice that can be used to deduce meaning, function, values, and norms from an oral tradition and to develop a model for its revitalization.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **Performance**

This study is based on a performance concept, specifically oral tradition. Hymes, Finnegan, and Bauman are three experts who advocate for the term performance. The contemporary understanding of performance stems from an interest in the distinctions (uniqueness) of rhetorical and aesthetic techniques for conveying and detailing performances and audiences, with the idea that performance is not only context but also its essence [4]. The performance is a creative, tangible, and socially acceptable activity [5]. The performance is embodied and acceptable creativity [6]. The structure and formula of verbal and non-verbal elements of an oral tradition can be explained by comprehending the structure of the text, the co-text, and its context in a performance, such that comprehending the form entails comprehending the tradition's overall performance. oral. Anthropolinguistics analyzes through the lens of three parameters: interconnectedness, cultural values, and continuity [7].

The relationship may be vertically linear or horizontally formal. Formal relationships are those that connect the structure of a language or text to its context (situation, culture, social, and ideological contexts) and co-texts (paralinguistics, gestures, and material elements) about language and language processes, whereas linear relationships are those that connect flow structures to language and language processes. comparable to performance. The value corresponds to the meaning or function, to the standard of value, and finally to the indigenous wisdom of the studied aspects. The term "sustainability" refers to the state of an object under study, including its cultural significance and legacy to succeeding generations [8].

### ***Ruwatan***

*Ruwatan* (village cleaning) is a tradition that dates back to pre-religious times. *Ruwatanis* performed solely by those who believe in it. Because not all Javanese adhere to and believe in this tradition. Thus, this *Ruwatan* is mandatory for those who believe that by performing it, their lives will be blessed with good fortune, as the purpose of *Ruwatan* is to eliminate bad fortune in life.

Javanese society is renowned for its diverse and countless cultural traditions, including daily, monthly, and yearly customs that are universally present in Javanese cultural traditions. It is extremely difficult to detect and explain in detail the variety of cultural traditions that exist in Javanese society, as there are numerous types of traditions.

*Ruwatan* is a term used in Javanese culture to refer to traditional sacred ceremonies. *Ruwatan* (purifying the village) refers to the act of liberating oneself from danger. The danger of danger comes from Batara Kala's surveillance, which in language can also meantime.

*Ruwatan* is also interpreted culturally as an effort to postpone the onset of distress. Thus, *Ruwatan* is typically implemented through the performance of a *Wayang kulit* story episode about Batara Kala's arrival to collect his father's promise, who is none other than "The Almighty" Batara Guru. His father Sang Batara Guru once convinced him not to swallow the entire world to satisfy his worldly desires, promising that he would provide him with prey or bait when the promised time came. Murko, which translates as greed, is the creature that controls the world's lust.

Similarly, some implementations are carried out simply or on a large scale, during the day or at night. The order in which the ceremony is performed, the equipment used, the offerings and the spells used all vary, but the purpose of the ceremony remains the same: to liberate the person receiving treatment from calamity.

### **Requirements for *Ruwatan***

*Ruwatan* required the Javanese community in Neighborhood X (ten), Sinaksak Village, to gather at the Village Hall and prepare the necessary conditions for the *Ruwatan's* implementation. These terms and conditions are comprised of offerings [9]. Plantains,

*ambengan* (rice, *urap*, eggs, and fruit), *Ingkung* (fried chicken), red porridge (with brown sugar), white porridge (only porridge), blue porridge (with food colouring), yellow porridge (with food colouring), and black porridge are all included in this offering (porridge with charcoal). The Javanese will then provide one white chicken and one black chicken that is still alive for the event's release. Additionally, there will be a *Mbatur* (puppet performance) in the *Ruwatan*, which will be performed by a *Dalang* (a central and important figure in the *Ruwatan* ceremony).

### 3. Method

This research was conducted in Sinaksak Village's Neighborhood X. This study employs an ethnographic method, which consists of 12 interview steps and 12 observation steps [10] [11]. In-depth interviews and participatory observations were used to collect data. The best way to think about ethnographic interviews is as a series of friendly conversations conducted by the researcher when introducing new elements to assist informants in responding as informants [12].

### 4. Result and Discussion

*Ruwatan* is a Javanese tradition that is still practised once a year. *Ruwatan* is an annual tradition that takes place at the village hall, in the field, and the large hall. The purpose of holding a *Ruwatan* is to communicate to the community that this *Ruwatan* is being conducted formally. That is, *Ruwatan* is a cultural tradition that seeks to liberate people from danger (catastrophe) and to educate them about the meaning of *Ruwatan* through attendance at a formal event. *Ruwatan* can be studied through an anthropological lens, specifically through performance.

#### *Ruwatan*

##### a. *Ruwatan* Opening

- Dalang : *Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh* (greeting).  
 Javanese : *Waalaiumsalam warahmatullahi wabarakatuh* (respond the greeting).  
 Dalang : *Baiklah. Saya akan memulai acara Ruwatan. Yang kami hormati orang tua kami dikampung ini, para tokoh masyarakat Lingkungan X Kelurahan Sinaksak. Pada malam ini kita berkumpul di tempat ini bersama-sama untuk memanjatkan doa kepada Allah SWT memohon keselamatan, kemakmuran dan kejayaan untuk kampung kita yang biasa kita sebut Ruwatan* (Okay. I will start the ritual. What we respect is our parents in this village, the community leaders of Neighborhood X, Sinaksak Village. Tonight we gather in this place together to pray to Allah SWT asking for safety, prosperity and glory for our village which we usually call *Ruwatan*).  
 Javanese : (Everyone is silent and nodding)  
 Dalang : *Mari sama-sama kita niatkan dengan tulus dan ikhlas, semoga acara kita ini dirahmati oleh Allah SWT, dan sekaligus meneruskan adat kebudayaan kita sebagai orang Jawa, dan tidak lupa pula kita mendoakan agar arwah para leluhur mendapat tempat terbaik di sisi Allah SWT* (Let's both intend sincerely and sincerely, hopefully our event is blessed by Allah SWT,

and at the same time we continue our cultural customs as Javanese, and don't forget to also pray for the spirits of the ancestors to have the best place in the sight of Allah SWT).

Javanese : (Everyone is silent and bows their heads while praying)

This situation demonstrates that the performer is the leader of the *Ruwatan* and is accountable for the current state of affairs. As the event's leader, the performer is fully responsible for maintaining order during the traditional *Ruwatan* event, including issuing instructions to remain calm and solemn throughout the event's execution. By instilling mutual respect, respect, and understanding through observation and participation in the *Ruwatan* tradition. This attitude is critical for the comfort and tranquillity of the *Ruwatan* tradition's operation.

### **b. Providing Offerings**

Dalang : *Saya minta kepada seluruh masyarakat Jawa di Lingkungan X Kelurahan Sinaksak untuk membantu saya menyiapkan sesajian yang akan kita berikan kepada leluhur kita* (I ask all the Javanese people in Neighborhood X, Kelurahan Sinaksak to help me prepare the offerings that we will give to our ancestors).

Javanese : *Baik Dalang kami akan menyiapkannya* (Yes Dalang, we will prepare it).  
(prepare offerings, in the form of plantains, ambengan (rice, urap, eggs and fruit), Ingkung (ungkep chicken), red porridge (with brown sugar), white porridge (only porridge), blue porridge (with food colouring), yellow porridge (with food colouring), black porridge (porridge with charcoal).

The Dalang continues to monitor what will be served to the ancestors in the hope that the Javanese community of Lingkungan X, Sinaksak Village, will not make any mistakes in the offerings. Additionally, the community can follow the event closely and comprehend the significance of the offerings made. Through in-depth interviews, the community has established that the *Ruwatan* event is rooted in a tradition of mutual respect and appreciation for mutual safety, ensuring that no one feels marginalized during this event [13].

### **c. Mantra *Ruwatan***

#### **The First Mantra**

*Niat ingsun dorono ratus*

(I intend for Acknowledgement)

*Sepul putu gondo srum sipados*

(White rice that smells good so that intentions come true)

*Wadah lima kang jati waseso*

(where the true five rule power)

*Nyuwon panuwonipoh wong sekampung keselamatan lan kesejahteraan*

(Village residents ask for safety and welfare)

The first Mantra states that *Ruwatan* must begin with a sincere and pure intention. And must make an offering to the Ancestors. All Javanese residents of Neighborhood X in Sinaksak

Village share a common goal: safety and welfare. and we sincerely hope their prayers are heard and answered.

### Second Mantra

*Kanggo mintu oro leluhur kangwes kundur neng zaman langgengan*  
(worn by the ancestors who have returned to the Age of eternity)

*Mulo kulo suwon sageto nijabai kalian kulo sedoyo*  
(So we ask that our prayers be answered)

*Engkang manggeng wonten lingkungan X kelurahan sinaksak pekarangan*  
(all those who live in the X neighborhood of the Sinaksak Village, Yard)

*Karto iso engkang kulo panggeni, lan masyarakat umum nipon*  
(What we live in and society in general)

*Kanti sawap nipon Gusti engkang moho kuasa joyo-joyo*  
(Until the prayers asked by the almighty Gusti)

The second mantra is an intensification of supplication to ancestors who have already attained immortality. The meaning of the mantra is also connected to the first mantra, which is for the safety and welfare of the entire community of Sinaksak village's Neighborhood X. Additionally, I pray to Allah, the Almighty.

### d. Closing

Dalang : After completing all the series of events, the puppeteer will give an additional performance, namely by performing Wayang  
Javanese : (Shout out by saying Hurray and clapping)

As a result of the preceding event, it can be concluded that the closing event was an additional event designed to entertain all Javanese residents of Sinaksak Village's X neighbourhood.

### 5. Conclusion

According to these findings, the community's performance during the *Ruwatan* event is religious, calm, orderly, and comfortable. The puppeteer's performance is defined as the act of mediating between the human realm and the supernatural or supernatural realm through the use of offerings and spells endowed with supernatural powers. instruct, inform, and intercede with the All-Powerful. Thus, *Ruwatan* instils in all Javanese residents of Neighborhood X Sinaksak Village a belief in a religious form regarded as a means of releasing, dispelling, or liberating someone from danger.

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