

The Meaning of Ritual Communication in the Termination Procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examines the meaning of ritual communication in the termination procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu, marking a student's transition into a trainer or tradition bearer. Using a qualitative phenomenological approach, the findings show that the ritual is not just ceremonial but fosters unity, conveys symbolic meanings, encourages community participation, and ensures cultural continuity. Verbal and non-verbal interactions reflect spiritual values and identity. The ritual's transcendental dimension strengthens connections with God and ancestors. Through symbolic interactionism in the termination procession, elements like *jambar* rice, white cloth, *langiran*, black-and-white headbands, and incense shape students' perceptions (*Mind*), internalize identity (*Self*), and instill a duty (*Society*) to preserve Silat Cikak for future generations.

INTRODUCTION

Rituals are an important part of Indonesian society that not only reflect cultural values, but also serve as a means to build social and spiritual identity. Through the implementation of various rituals, community groups can construct and preserve their customs (Rumahuru, 2018). Therefore, communication is an inseparable aspect of rituals considering that through communication, cultural and spiritual values can be exchanged and strengthened between individuals and groups. Ritual communication has a very important role in strengthening social and spiritual relationships between individuals and groups. The communication process that occurs in rituals helps individuals and groups to understand each other's shared values, traditions, and greater life goals. In the view of James W. Carey (1992), ritual communication is about sharing, connecting, making friends, and having the same beliefs.

One form of ritual communication that still survives and develops in community culture is pencak silat. More than just a method of self-defense, pencak silat also functions as a means of forming character and social identity (Candra, 2021). In practice, pencak silat is not just a sport, but also contains noble values that are passed down from generation to generation through schools and communities (Fazli, 2023).

Among the many styles of pencak silat that have developed in Indonesia, one that has strong roots in local culture is Silat Cikak Bengkulu. Rooted in the social life of the Malay community of Bengkulu, Silat Cikak has developed since 1965 as a method of self-defense from external threats. Not only as self-defense, Silat Cikak also reflects the values of the Bengkulu community who uphold courage, resilience, and local wisdom. Traditional Silat Cikak Bengkulu has been present in the midst of society from the beginning to the end in the process of occurrence towards perfection. The land has only a sloping foot, The sea has a small cup, The mountain has only a thread, The sky has only a single umbrella, The circle rope has not been connected, Still broken in the middle, it is difficult to stand and stand straight, Hands are swung, balance can only be a single umbrella, prostrate to sembako, the earth learns to right and left. The four corners of the rope are guarded, the movement is regulated according to time to determine the truth.

The advice taught in Silat Cikak is also very deep, such as the advice of padi which teaches humility and not to follow the arrogant and easily shaken nature of lalang. Recognition of the existence of Silat Cikak was further strengthened in 2000 when it was officially incorporated and joined the Indonesian Pencak Silat Association (IPSI). This step not only strengthened the position of Silat Cikak in the national pencak silat world, but also emphasized its role as part of Indonesia's intangible cultural heritage.

Silat Cikak Bengkulu has a tiered learning structure, starting from basic, skilled, to advanced. Each level teaches more complex techniques and values, so that only students who have reached an advanced level can take part in the termination test ritual. This termination ritual has been part of the tradition since the school was founded, as a form of final evaluation for students before they are recognized as mature martial artists. Students who successfully pass the

termination process are called Anak Limau Cikak, a special title that reflects the highest level in learning Silat Cikak Bengkulu. The termination ritual process begins with the senior trainer escorting the student to the small belabar, a special arena that is small and only big enough for two people, surrounded by a bamboo fence. In the small belabar, students will be presented to the Head of Belabar and the Grand Teacher to undergo a traditional ritual called langiran.

Based on the observation results from the documentation in the *Pesona Indonesia - Cikak* program broadcast on TVRI Bengkulu, the termination procession was carried out with full respect for tradition and still maintaining its authenticity. The termination test ritual in the Silat Cikak is not just a physical test, but also a means of inheriting existing cultural values. Students are tested in various techniques that they have learned, such as steps, catches, blocks, and locks both with bare hands and sharp weapons. The termination procession marks a student's achievement in learning and mastering Silat Cikak, as well as being a marker of the perfection of his spiritual journey.

The author is interested in studying the Ritual in the termination procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu from a communication perspective, considering that the termination procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu not only contains symbolic meaning in the use of ritual objects, but also reflects a communication pattern that is rich in spiritual and cultural values. This tradition is not just a customary ceremony, but also becomes a medium of transcendental communication that connects individuals with communities, ancestors, and noble values that are inherited from generation to generation.



Figure 1. Test of the Termination Procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu

Source: Research Documentation, 2025

This study focuses on the meaning of ritual communication in the termination procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu. In the implementation of this ritual communication, meaning emerges through symbols and the interaction process that occurs. To explore the meaning deeper, this study uses a symbolic interactionism perspective, which views meaning as a result of social construction formed through interaction and the use of symbols in everyday life. According to the symbolic interactionism theory developed by George Herbert Mead, social communication plays a role in forming meaning through interaction and symbols. Mead emphasized that individual identity and social awareness develop through symbolic communication, where a person understands himself

based on how he is perceived by others in the community. In other words, individuals form their self-concept through social experiences that involve understanding symbols and meanings accepted by society (Lili, 2022).

Despite the cultural significance of the termination procession, there are still gaps in understanding its communicative dimensions. Although research conducted by Triansyah (2020) has analyzed the symbolic meaning in the movements and procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu, the study only focused on movement patterns and standard techniques without delving into how ritual communication functions within the ceremony. The lack of academic attention toward the communicative and symbolic aspects of the termination procession has led to limited awareness of its deeper meanings. Many participants perceive the ritual merely as a formal requirement for advancement in Silat Cikak, without fully understanding the messages conveyed through its symbols and interactions. Without systematic documentation and interpretation, there is a risk that the ritual's communicative essence may be lost over time, especially as modernization influences younger generations' perceptions of cultural traditions. The shift in cultural practices and the potential misinterpretation of the ritual as a mere formality rather than a meaningful social and spiritual process further highlight the urgency of this research.

Until now, there has been no study that specifically examines the meaning of ritual communication in the termination procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu. This research gap is evident in the absence of analysis on how the ritual serves as a medium for constructing identity, transmitting cultural values, and fostering a sense of social responsibility among participants. The role of symbolic interactionism in understanding how individuals internalize ritual meanings and form their identity as warriors within the Silat Cikak tradition remains unexplored. Additionally, previous studies have not investigated how the termination procession functions as a communicative bridge between individuals, traditions, ancestors, and society. As part of a cultural heritage with strong spiritual and social dimensions, the termination procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu is not only a means to master self-defense skills but also a communication practice that reflects human relationships with traditions, ancestors, and the broader social environment. Therefore, researchers are interested in conducting this study to address these gaps and provide a comprehensive understanding of the meaning of ritual communication in the termination procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ritual Communication

The term ritual communication was first coined by James W. Carey, he said "In a ritual definition, communication is linked to terms such as sharing, participation, association, fellowship, and the possession of a common faith." (Asmara, 2021). According to Carey's perspective, ritual communication is about sharing, connecting, making friends, and having the same beliefs. Ritual communication is also often associated with expressive communication which is usually carried out collectively (Mulyana, 2018). In various ritual ceremonies,

each individual participates by saying words or doing certain actions that have symbolic meaning.

Rituals are often understood as repetitive activities or customs that are passed down from generation to generation, which also contain higher and transcendental values (Mulder, 2023). This ritual reflects a performance carried out voluntarily by the community and is considered a formal action that is maintained because it aims to mark and symbolize influence in their social life (Muhyiddin, 2019). This shows that ritual communication functions as a form of meaningful communication, using symbols in social interactions to convey messages.

According to Carey's perspective, ritual communication is used to strengthen social and cultural relationships within a group through ritualistic symbolic activities. The key elements in ritual communication theory according to Carey include several main aspects. First, communication as maintaining togetherness, where ritual communication not only functions to disseminate information, but also strengthens social relationships and affirms beliefs and culture in a community. Second, symbolism in ritual communication, which involves the use of symbols such as dance, prayer, singing, and certain objects that have deep meaning, so that ritual communication becomes more than just conveying literal messages. Third, participation and association, which emphasize the importance of sharing collective experiences in rituals to build a sense of togetherness, as well as strengthen emotional and social bonds between individuals in a community. Fourth, communication and cultural sustainability, where ritual communication plays a role in maintaining and passing on traditions and cultural values from generation to generation, ensuring that culture remains relevant to each generation (Elsaid, 2021).

Symbolic Interactionism Theory

Symbolic interaction is a process in which individuals give meaning to the symbols that exist in their social life. In this theory, a symbol is anything that has meaning in social interaction, be it words, body movements, or certain objects (Derung, 2017). The essence of symbolic interaction is communication or the exchange of symbols that are given meaning by individuals in the social process. This perspective suggests that human behavior is not only influenced by the physical or social environment directly, but also by the meaning formed through interaction with others (Lili, 2022). Mead developed three main concepts in the theory of symbolic interactionism that are interrelated and form the basis of his thinking, namely Mind, Self, and Society. These three concepts play an important role in understanding how individuals interact and develop their social behavior.

According to Mead, the mind is a process of conversation or internal dialogue carried out by individuals with themselves. The mind is not an entity separate from society, but rather a social phenomenon that develops through social interaction. Thoughts emerge and develop in social processes and are an integral part of those processes. Mead emphasized that the mind is a product of social interactions that precede the individual himself (Citraningsih & Noviantri, 2022). The mind is not just a reaction to external stimuli, but rather a response

that involves reflection on social norms and expectations that exist in society. The mind can be interpreted as an individual's ability to process symbols used in social communication (Smith & Purwandi, 2021).

Self in Mead's view refers to an individual's ability to see themselves from the perspective of others. The self develops through social interaction, especially through symbolic communication that allows individuals to be aware of how others see them. The concept of self in Mead's theory is inseparable from the social process, because the self does not appear in isolation, but is formed in relationships with others (Mardiana, 2024). Mead distinguishes between two aspects of the self, namely "I" (I) and "Me" (I). "I" is the part of the self that is spontaneous and creative, which directs individuals to act based on internal drives. While "Me" is the part of the self that is shaped by social perspective, namely how individuals understand themselves based on the expectations and norms that exist in society. The interaction between "I" and "Me" shapes individual behavior, where "Me" directs and controls more structured and organized behavior, while "I" allows for freedom and spontaneity in acting (Smith & Purwandi, 2021).

While Society plays a central role in the formation of individual meaning and self. According to Mead, society provides a social context that allows individuals to interact, share symbols, and develop a shared understanding of meaning. Social interactions that occur in society allow individuals to form their self-concept, because individuals can only understand themselves in the context of social interaction with others (Wirawan, 2012). Society not only provides the symbols used in communication, but also determines how individuals interpret their social world.

Termination Procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu

The termination procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu is a very important final test in a student's journey to reach the trainer level or complete training. According to the Grand Master of Silat Cikak Bengkulu Muhammad Muid, in the Silat Cikak learning system, each student must pass three levels, namely basic, skilled, and advanced, each of which has a specific test. The termination is considered the highest test because it contains not only fighting techniques, but also spiritual and mental aspects that must be undergone by a student. The termination is also a symbol that a student is ready to carry out the task as a trainer, with abilities that are not only measured technically, but also courage and maturity in facing the final test.

The termination procession is carried out in a small belabar cage, which has symbolic and philosophical meaning in the Cikak tradition. This cage, with limited space, is surrounded by bamboo that is only about one or two meters wide. Here, students are tested to hone skills such as precision of movement, balance, steps, catches, and locks, both with bare hands and sharp weapons. Through breaking in a small belabar cage, a student is tested to face his physical and mental limitations, which determines whether they are ready to become a trainer, just an assistant, or must repeat the training.

The first stage in the termination procession begins with the handover of the student by the trainer to the grandmaster, which signifies that the student is ready to take the final exam. After that, the grandmaster gives advice to the student who will take the termination. This advice serves as spiritual guidance that prepares the student to face the exam process with a calm heart and focused mind. One important aspect of this procession is the burning of incense or incense which serves to cleanse negative energy and create a more sacred atmosphere, so that students can more easily connect with the spiritual aspect of the Silat Cikak. In addition to the incense burning ritual, there is also a lime or lime slicing ritual which has a symbolic meaning in being kept away from danger or warding off disaster. After that, the procession continues with the escort of the student to a small belabar cage which signifies that they are entering a stage full of challenges. In the cage, the langiran ritual is performed as a form of warding off disaster so that the exam runs smoothly, as well as the cutting of the white cloth which signifies that the student is ready to free themselves from past attachments and is ready to accept new challenges. The final tests faced by students in small learning cages will test their ability to withstand every attack, as well as their maturity in dealing with various situations full of tension and risk.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative approach with a phenomenological method, which was chosen because it aims to explore the understanding of the meaning of ritual communication in the termination procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu. The qualitative approach focuses on understanding and interpreting social phenomena from the perspective of the subjects studied (Sugiyono, 2017), thus enabling researchers to understand how communication in this ritual forms symbolic meaning, spirituality, and cultural values that are passed down between generations. The phenomenological method is used because this study focuses on the subjective experience and meaning given by individuals to ritual communication in the termination procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu. According to Moleong (2018), phenomenology helps understand how individuals interpret their experiences in a phenomenon and how that meaning is formed through social interaction and symbolism. With this method, the study seeks to uncover how ritual communication in the termination procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu forms individual identity, strengthens cultural values, and ensures the sustainability of tradition through symbolic interactions between professors, lecturers, trainers, and students of Silat Cikak Bengkulu.

The subjects of the study consisted of Grand master, Head of Belabar, Trainers, and Students who had participated in the termination procession, while the object of the study was the meaning of ritual communication in the termination procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu. Primary data sources were obtained directly from the research subjects involved in the procession, while secondary data sources included documentation such as photos, videos, and notes or archives related to Silat Cikak Bengkulu activities. Data collection was carried out through observation, interviews, documentation, and literature studies. Data analysis in this study followed three main stages according to Miles

and Huberman, namely data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. To ensure data validity, researchers applied source triangulation to verify and compare information obtained from various sources at different times and with varying methods.

RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of Ritual Communication in the Termination Procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu

Based on the results of the research conducted, the researcher concluded that the termination procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu is the final stage in a student's journey. This stage signifies the student's readiness to move on to the next level, either as a trainer, successor to the tradition, or an individual who has completed the learning process and is ready to practice their knowledge in everyday life. The termination procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu can be said to be a ritual because it has a series of stages that must be carried out starting from delivering the student to the trainer to the implementation of the exam and the thanksgiving of nasi jambar. As explained by Lang & Kunt (2024), rituals can be understood as a collection of actions or processes that have symbolic meaning, to achieve certain goals in a cultural, social, and religious context.

Based on the perspective of ritual communication put forward by James W. Carey, ritual communication is about sharing, connecting, making friends, and having the same beliefs (Asmara, 2021). The termination procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu is included in the form of ritual communication because in this procession the members share cultural values, strengthen social relations, and maintain and pass on the same beliefs from generation to generation. According to James W. Carey's theory, there are key elements in ritual communication that can be used to study ritual communication in the procession of the termination of Silat Cikak in Bengkulu, as follows:

Communication as the Maintenance of Togetherness

According to James W. Carey, ritual communication functions to maintain and strengthen social relations in the community (Elsaid, 2021). In the context of Silat Cikak Bengkulu, the termination procession is not just a formal ceremony, but a means of strengthening togetherness and respect between members of the silat community. The presence of the grand master, Head of Belabar, trainer, and students in this procession has a symbolic meaning as a form of legitimacy and blessing for the students who undergo the procession, showing that this ritual connects individuals with their traditions and communities.

Verbal communication in this procession, such as the request for the student's blessing to the grand master and trainer, is not just a formality, but also an expression of respect and seriousness. The blessing given is not just permission, but also a prayer and hope for the smooth journey of the student. Meanwhile, non-verbal communication such as school greetings and shoulder pats from the grand master are symbols of moral support and self-confidence. The procession of eating together also reflects the values of togetherness and brotherhood without hierarchical barriers.



Figure 2. The procession of eating with jambar rice
Source: Researcher Documentation, 2025

This shows that the termination procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu can be understood as ritual communication that functions to maintain and strengthen social relations, strengthen shared beliefs, and ensure the preservation of traditions and cultural values in the silat community.

Symbolism in Ritual Communication

Ritual communication not only conveys messages, but also represents the values, norms, and cultural identity of the group (Elsaid, 2021). James W. Carey emphasized that rituals involve meaningful symbols, such as dances, prayers, or certain objects, which strengthen social solidarity and shared understanding. In the termination procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu, various elements such as nasi jambar, lime, white cloth, machete, and incense are not just tools, but symbols of spiritual values, strength, and protection. This symbolism makes the procession more than just a physical action, but a symbolic communication rich in meaning. In line with Ahda & Hamida (2023), the meaning of these symbols is implicit and understood in the context of the Silat Cikak Bengkulu culture. Only members of the school who have a traditional attachment can capture the deep meaning of each element in the termination procession.



Figure 3. Symbols in the Termination Procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu
Source: Research Documentation, 2025

Symbols and meanings of messages in the termination procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu include:

- a. Jambar Rice consisting of rooster and turmeric rice is not only a food dish. Rooster symbolizes bravery and determination, which are very important for a martial artist. While turmeric rice signifies the courage and bravery of a martial artist, as well as a form of gratitude to God for the achievements that have been achieved.
- b. Lime (Lima) is used in the langiran procession and has a symbolic meaning as protection and prayer to Allah so that the martial artist is protected from disaster and calamity. Lime that has been carved or tattooed with a rectangular shape symbolizes balance. While the lam alif shape on the lime indicates a request for protection from Allah.
- c. Sedingin leaf has a symbolic meaning as calmness and clarity of mind. This leaf signifies the mental and spiritual readiness of a martial artist in facing all challenges that will come. Sedingin leaf also teaches the importance of maintaining inner balance, thinking clearly, and not letting emotions or anger control oneself.
- d. The belantan bowl symbolizes readiness to receive knowledge and blessings given by the teacher or trainer, and reminds the fighter of the importance of maintaining purity and cleanliness in the heart and mind.
- e. The white cloth symbolizes that the student has successfully completed a lesson and is ready to face the physical exam in the small Belabar cage. After instructions from the Great Master, the cloth was pulled until it broke. The broken cloth is then given to the students as a sign that they are ready to continue the exam in the small Belabar cage.
- f. Knives, machetes and kerambits are used in the procession as a symbol of a test of dexterity and agility. These sharp objects also contain the meaning of testing the physical and mental toughness of the martial artist. Knives, machetes and kerambits can also be seen as symbols for cutting all forms of obstacles or obstacles that exist in the journey of a martial artist's life.
- g. The incense used in this procession is a symbol of respecting permission to the ancestors and asking for blessings. The burning of incense produces an aroma that is believed to purify and cleanse the place and the people involved in the procession. Incense is also a medium to communicate with the spiritual world and ask for protection and guidance in undergoing the silat cikak termination procession.
- h. The black and white headband in Silat Cikak has a deep meaning. The white color symbolizes cleanliness, while the black symbolizes the soul of a warrior. In addition to being used as training equipment, this headband also indicates the level of ability of the student.
- i. Small Belabar cage is a place for advanced training after big Belabar. Small Belabar cage is an arena for honing skills and dexterity in silat techniques, such as catching and refining knives or machetes. With limited space and surrounded by bamboo, small Belabar illustrates the

challenges and limitations that students must face in testing their physical and mental abilities during the termination procession.

Participation and Association

Ritual communication strengthens social relationships by creating a collective experience involving physical, emotional, and spiritual aspects (Carey). In the termination procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu, students, Belabar leaders, trainers, and grand master actively participate, not only in technical aspects, but also in building the mental and spiritual readiness of students. The Belabar leaders and trainers assess not only silat skills, but also the character and attitude of students, reflecting the values of the school. After the termination, students do not separate, but become more connected to the school, actively mentoring juniors, and contributing to Silat Cikak activities. This shows that ritual communication does not end after the procession, but continues to strengthen social ties within the community.

Communication and Cultural Sustainability

Ritual communication in the termination procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu plays an important role in maintaining the teachings, values, and philosophy of silat so that they remain sustainable. The grandmaster, head of Belabar, and trainer not only test the skills of the students, but also act as guardians of tradition who ensure that the silat knowledge is passed down while maintaining its cultural values. This is in line with James W. Carey's view that ritual communication not only functions as an exchange of information, but also as a means to maintain and strengthen traditions that are passed down from generation to generation.

The sustainability of culture in Silat Cikak is realized through several aspects. First, before the termination procession, students are assessed not only based on their silat technique skills, but also on their attitude and responsibility towards the school. Second, silat knowledge is not only taught in theory, but also through direct experience, so that each student can understand the deep meaning behind each movement they learn. Direct interaction between teacher and student is a key element in ensuring that the Silat Cikak tradition is maintained and passed down properly. After the termination procession, students who have graduated have the responsibility to maintain the honor of the school and guide the next generation.

The Meaning of Ritual Communication in the Termination Procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu

The meaning of ritual communication in the termination procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu can be explained through the perspective of George Herbert Mead's symbolic interactionism. Symbolic interaction allows individuals to give meaning to social symbols that are passed down from generation to generation. The results of the study show that the symbols in the termination procession are maintained as a means of transforming cultural values. This perspective also emphasizes that human behavior is influenced by the meaning formed through social interaction. In the context of Silat Cikak, the meaning of the termination

procession is constructed through symbols and interactions between grand master, Belabar leaders, trainers, and students. This procession takes place at night with a mutually agreed time, consisting of ten stages that reflect the cultural and spiritual values of Silat Cikak. Each stage becomes a medium of ritual communication that strengthens identity and social ties within the school.

a. Handover of Students by Trainer to the Grand Master

A symbolic transition moment from students who are still being guided by the trainer to being the responsibility of the Grand Master. Checking the equipment signifies the readiness, purity, and resilience of the students in undergoing the final stage of learning.

b. Giving Advice to Students Who Will Undergo Termination

The Grand Master gives advice on morals and ethics, emphasizing that success in silat is not only a matter of physical skills, but also maturity of attitude and mentality.

c. Burning Procession of Incense/Incense and Slicing of Lime (Lime)

The burning of incense symbolizes spiritual communication with ancestors, while lime functions as a means of purification and protection for students.

d. Escorting Students to the Small Belabar Cage

Students are taken to a narrow examination room that symbolizes physical, mental, and spiritual challenges. The presence of the examiner confirms that this test includes discipline, readiness, and resilience.

e. Ritual Procession of Opening the Small Belabar Cage

A symbol of readiness to face the final exam. The splash of lime juice, seding leaves, and belantan bowls symbolize spiritual purification and protection.

f. Implementation of the Langiran Ritual Procession

A ritual of self-purification with lime juice and seding leaves, aims to provide peace and protection before the exam takes place.

g. Implementation of the White Cloth Cutting Procession

The white cloth symbolizes purity and spiritual readiness. Its cutting indicates that the student has passed various stages of learning and is ready to face the exam.

h. Implementation of the Student Termination Test

Students are tested with empty-handed techniques and sharp weapons, testing their self-confidence, dexterity, and self-control.

i. Presentation of the Black and White Headband

Symbolizes the balance between strength and wisdom. This headband is a sign of validation that the student is ready to carry out knowledge with responsibility.

j. Thanksgiving Eating Jambar Rice Together

As an expression of gratitude and togetherness. Jambar rice symbolizes blessings and the value of mutual cooperation in the school.

According to the theory of symbolic interactionism, meaning is formed through social interaction and the use of symbols in communication. The three main concepts in symbolic interactionism, namely Mind, Self, and Society, are

the framework for understanding how the meaning of the procession of breaking the silat cikak bengkulu is constructed and understood by the actors.

Mind

According to George Herbert Mead, the mind develops through social interaction and symbol processing. In the termination procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu, students are tested not only physically, but also in understanding ritual symbols that are full of meaning. Mead emphasized that the mind helps individuals determine their response to something. In the severance procession, understanding the symbols forms the student's awareness of their roles and responsibilities. Such as accepting a black and white headband, for example, signifies readiness to move to a higher level, reflecting the internalization of Silat Cikak values. The langiran and absorption rituals also strengthen the function of the mind in internalizing values. Langiran calms the student's mind to be more confident, while the absorption with incense creates a solemn atmosphere and is a symbol of respect for ancestors.



Figure 4. Langiran Ritual by the Grand Master to the Silat Cikak Students

Source: Research Documentation, 2025

Mead argues that the mind is formed from social experiences. In this procession, the ritual becomes a means for students to process symbolic meaning, making it more than just a physical test, but also a process of internalizing values and identity within the Silat Cikak community.

Self

The termination process of Silat Cikak plays a role in shaping the student's self-identity through social interaction, according to George Herbert Mead's theory. This identity includes the "Me" aspect, which represents the norms of the school, and "I", which reflects the spontaneity of the individual. During the procession, students are tested in ego control, emotional maturity, and respect for opponents, strengthening the "Me" aspect. The advice of the great teacher instills the values of responsibility, perseverance, and honor. Meanwhile, the "I" aspect is reflected in the student's pride in their achievements, although it remains within the limits of social norms.

The black and white headband marks a change in status and serves as a reminder for students to remain wise in using their knowledge. In Mead's

perspective, individuals understand themselves through interaction with society (Mardiana, 2024). Thus, Silat Cikak students not only develop as warriors, but also as individuals who are responsible for maintaining and passing on the silat tradition.

Society

Society plays a central role in the formation of individual identity through social interaction and symbols (Wirawan, 2012). The termination procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu is not just a personal ceremony, but a social recognition from the school community. Students who complete the procession not only receive recognition, but also the responsibility to maintain the values of silat. Interaction in eating together with nasi punjung and the langiran ritual strengthens solidarity. This tradition emphasizes that individual identity is formed through the internalization of community values and norms, connecting students with a wider social network.

In the termination procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu, Mind, Self, and Society in symbolic interactionism form a repeating cycle. Mind develops through social interaction, allowing students to understand ritual symbols such as nasi jambar and langiran as a means of reflecting the values of the school. This understanding forms Self, namely the identity of the student as a warrior who has passed the test. The Me aspect strengthens the norms of the school, while I reflects the individual's expression in facing challenges. When identity is formed, students play a role in maintaining and passing on the values of silat, forming a Society that ensures the continuity of tradition. The school community again influences Mind, teaching symbols and norms to the next generation. This cycle ensures the existence and continuity of the values of Silat Cikak in the long term.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The termination procession of Silat Cikak Bengkulu is not merely a ceremony, but a form of ritual communication that strengthens togetherness, conveys symbolic meaning, encourages community participation, and ensures cultural continuity. This ritual not only strengthens social relations between students, trainers, and professors, but also becomes a means of conveying spiritual values and the cultural identity of the school. Based on George Herbert Mead's symbolic interactionism theory, this procession reflects the cycle of student identity formation through three main aspects, namely Mind, Self, and Society. Students understand the teachings of the school through the symbols in the ritual (Mind), internalize these values in the formation of self-identity as warriors (Self), and then bear the social responsibility to maintain and pass on traditions to the next generation (Society). This cycle continues to repeat itself, ensuring that the termination procession is not only an individual journey, but also a social mechanism that strengthens the existence and continuity of the Silat Cikak Bengkulu. Communication in this procession has an important role in strengthening community ties, preserving cultural heritage, and enabling the Silat Cikak Bengkulu tradition to remain relevant and adapt in the face of ever-evolving social and cultural dynamics.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

The focus of this study is limited to the meaning of ritual communication analysis in the termination process of Silat Cikak Bengkulu. Further researchers can develop this research by examining communication strategies that can support the Silat Cikak Bengkulu culture, considering that this silat is an original heritage from ancestors that needs to be preserved so that it is not eroded by the development of the times.

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